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**Between Words and Reality:
Studies on the Politics of Recognition and
Changes of Regime in Contemporary Romania**

by
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The Council for Research in Values and Philosophy

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Introduction

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Societies in transition in former communist Europe are confronted with problems deriving from the mentality conserved from two totalitarian systems. A thorough understanding of these societies requires knowledge of the cultural and political values of their respective contemporary history. From this standpoint, the case of Romania is not different from other states in East-Central Europe. It's situation is, however, relatively less known throughout the world; the cultural and historical diversity of its regions create certain difficulties in the valuation of the past and present of the country. Therefore, researchers have come up against difficulties when they approached this country's history. For example, quite often whenever they speak about Romanian identity they refer to the Romanian ethno-culture exclusively without considering the existence of, and interaction with, other cultures in the same area. Partial access to information as a consequence of the dictatorial regimes, the shortage of authentic scholarly debate, the substitution of academic discourse by one that is propagandistic over a long period of time, are only a few of the factors which have made Romania's communication with the world more difficult.

The perpetuation of the stereotypes from one generation to another was possible since there was a lack of concern with setting up a civil society. As can be seen in the present book, many of the drawbacks of post-war Romania are due to the fact that modern European values have only partly been assimilated. Even the issues concerning the communist system can be explained through this late modernization. I have mentioned the most widely known myths -- among them those deriving from the issue of the ethnic nation-state and that of the cultural minorities -- which led to the creation in East-Central Europe of a type of identity different from that in the West. The modernization of a large segment of the population depends, to a large extent, upon improvements in education especially of the new curricula in the social sciences and humanities, and upon state recognition of the multiple cultural traditions. I have presented the politics of recognition promoted by multiculturalism as complementary to interculturality. Therefore, I have considered the multicultural and intercultural perspectives as new approaches to Romania's contemporary history and politics. By 'multiculturalism' I mean the end of the hegemony of one culture over another with the aim of gaining proper respect for each of them; whereas 'interculturalism' implies the interaction of different cultures and acceptance of the fact that ideals can transcend the limits of a certain culture.

This volume, *Between Words and Reality: Studies on the Politics of Recognition and Regime Changes in Contemporary Romania*, covers fragments of Romania's recent history and politics in five distinct studies. They have been elaborated with the aim of providing new information and evaluations for those interested. The author has considered as well some fragments of the past especially those that could reveal the country's diversity, and therefore the richness of the regional values within it.

It could be asked why the regions of Transylvania and the Banat have special weight in this book. The question is the more legitimate since the title of the book refers to Romania, rather than to its geographical areas. A few arguments come to support the author's option. First, Transylvania and Banat have played an important role in the assertion of the cultural awareness of the Romanians and in the definition of their political identity. Secondly, the same regions were part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire until 1918 and after their union with the Old Kingdom of Romania

were the most advanced in local administration within the new Romanian nation state. Thirdly, the existence of populations of other linguistic and/or religious origins than the majority one (Magyars/Hungarians, German-Saxons, German-Swabs, Jews, Ukrainians, Serbs, Gypsies/Roma, Czechs, Slovaks and Bulgarians), made these regions multicultural and intercultural. Consequently, the cases of Transylvania and Banat were chosen for their relevance as for the politics of recognition of minorities. It should be noted that the minorities had a considerable role in the country's domestic policy and in its international relations which can be identified in each political or regime change in Romania.

This will be observed in the studies which approach the transition from the empire to the nation state, the fate of the Greek-Catholics after World War II, and Timișoara's role in the political changes of 1989 and the collapse of communism.

The first study of this book, namely the Jewish question in the transition period from the Austro-Hungarian Empire to the Romanian state presents a case of the process of integration into the new state as experienced by a religious community. Approaching the issue from a political perspective, this study explains the difficulties which appeared in the above community when the multicultural administrative entity was replaced by a monoculturally-oriented state. The issues concerning education in minority languages, the relationships between the majority and minorities today, are developed in the study dedicated to civic culture and human rights in an intercultural perspective. An example of multicultural education is given by the case of the "Babeș-Bolyai" University of Cluj. The theoretical explanations of the multiple identities of the Banat County, the most western region of Romania, are accompanied by concrete examples and by appended documentation. This part of the country is an example of diverse cultural values which result from coexistence and explain the meanings of transculturality in border regions. Finally, the inter-confessional relationships are examined in the relations between the Orthodox and the Greek-Catholic communities in the communist years. The role of certain parts of the civic society which survived in Transylvania and Banat, and which opposed the totalitarian system, are highlighted in the studies dedicated to the political changes of 1989.

The coherence of the volume derives from its themes, namely, the organization of the contemporary Romanian political thinking on civic values; multi- and intercultural education as a preamble to civic education; presentation of the relationship between history and politics in the process of modernization of the nation-state; and the stage of the promotion of democratic values reflected in the relationship between society and state institutions.

As compared to the classical studies, those included in *Between Words and Reality* give new interpretative directions in history and politics. Their fragmentary aspect is counter-balanced by the approach of a few key topics, by revealing the threads that connect the cultural background to politics and by the issues which derive from controversial moments in the political thought and practice. The appended documentation has eased the burden of factual scientific comment, while the theorization has advanced ideas and hypotheses which could contribute to a debate on key-concepts in East-Central Europe. A thorough approach to these issues is timely and monographs and syntheses are necessary further steps.

Why *Between Words and Reality*? The East-Central European world has quite repeatedly lived its own utopias rather than reality itself. This area was emancipated later than Western Europe, and not in-depth, which made possible the perpetuation of social inequalities and demagoguery.

I express gratitude to my wife, Simona Neumann, for her contribution in preparing the English text of this volume, as well as to Professor George F. McLean of The Catholic University of

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1

From the Austro-Hungarian Empire to the Romanian State: On the Jewish Question in a Disputed Territory

The Extension of the Community Life During the Second Half of the 19th Century

The political changes and the reorganization of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, in 1867, by setting up the double Austrian and Hungarian rule, brought great changes in the lives of the Banat region Jewry. First of all, there was the emancipation which recognized equal rights with all linguistic and religious communities. Then, there was acceptance of the divisions in the community by the Jewish administration according to their different orientations (i.e. Orthodox, Neologue or Reformist, *status-quo*, etc.). Finally, the Jews were able to play an important role in the economic and diplomatic relations with other regions and countries on the continent. More than before, the interests of the Empire were placed first and foremost. In Prussia too, the emancipation of the Jews in 1812 was directed particularly to the benefit of the state and less to the benefit of the communities. The Austro-Hungarian Empire took advantage of the coexistence with the Jewish bankers and entrepreneurs. There is evidence that some of the Jews played important roles as financial counselors and advisers to the Emperor's court or to ministers in charge of economic missions and diplomatic relations. In the 17th and 18th centuries such privileges belonged to a restricted group of individuals whose activity only occasionally favored the Jewish communities as a whole.

However, it is equally true that after 1867 a large number of Jews who lived in the multinational empire got the right of free movement. They set up communities in many towns and also in rural areas; they opened factories and plants and concluded commercial contracts in various fields. Moreover, they distinguished themselves in the sciences and arts. This shows that the rights stipulated by the law of the emancipation were granted not only to a privileged category, but also to some social layers which could not longer be ignored.

The above also were related to the process of Magyarization, which was accepted by a part of the Jewish intelligentsia. This phenomenon was taking place in many regions of the empire, including that of Banat. It began during the 1848 Revolution years and included an important number of Jewish families. Things did not happen uniformly all over Central and East-Central Europe. Economic development and the need for manufacturers, traders, bankers and industrialists led to an increase of the Jewish population in the cities even during the decades prior to the 1848 Revolution. Although situated in the periphery of the empire, the Banat region, too, witnessed such an increase in new members.¹ This phenomenon must be related also to the Habsburg's policy of adjustment to regional needs for modernization, a phenomenon in which the Jews were not only intermediaries in the state-owned financial and industrial enterprises, but also played the role of a liberal bourgeoisie.² Therefore, it is important to understand the mutations that followed with the appearance of the liberal doctrines in the empire's policy. State control did not disappear since centralism proved to be one of the most efficient forms of political rule and administrative coordination.

Until 1867, the Jewish communities were compelled to pay special taxes to the local authorities, namely, the tolerance tax, the tax for building private and public properties, the tax for meat and the tax for associations.³ Their independence was limited. As the documents of the Jewish

Community of Timișoara reveal, the important litigations and the formal provisions of the administration were sent either to the Chief Rabbi or to the president of the community. This shows that the governors preferred to maintain relations with the person empowered with the right of representation exclusively.⁴ The gaining of citizenship was a process similar to that in the 18th century, which required individual approval from the local magistrate and the Royal Council.⁵ Though such relationships were of medieval origin, they continued to be practiced in Timișoara at the middle of the 19th century. The difference consisted in the fact that, while during the Middle Ages power was in hands of the nobility, under the absolute monarchies the control belonged to state.

Emancipation during the Dual Empire brought a few changes. It led the Jews to choose liberal professions, but especially to assume the risk of integration into the city life, namely, in building plants and factories, in trade of important products, in the initiation of urban planning, in setting up and developing a civil society. As for the situation of communities, their interests were directed toward the preservation of their religion. The rabbi's role was reduced to his relationship with the central political bodies in issues concerning the community in general.

The distribution of the Jews in the Timiș, Caraș and Arad counties, the growth of the number of their communities and incomes (proved, among others, by their financial possibility to build new synagogues, some of them quite costly) indicate that after 1867 the Banat Jewry experienced a period of affirmation and that their achievements were acknowledged. Even though authorities stated such prerequisites as assimilation for their emancipation, this aspect was not relevant to the region to which we are referring. The evidence is the preservation of the traditional Jewish practices, stimulated by the possibility of cooperation on different issues among the various communities of Banat. Even during tense historical moments (i.e. the Revolution of 1848), the entire population of Timișoara cooperated. Representatives of the Catholic, Protestant, Orthodox and Jewish denominations prayed together for liberty in *Parade Platz* (which later became *Szabadság Tér* and today *Piața Libertății*⁶ [*Libertății Square*]), being influenced by the revolutionary events which took place in Vienna and Pest. The tolerant spirit of the population in the area, due first of all to the confessional and linguistic diversity, created a favorable environment for the development of the Jews.

From the 1870s through the 1890s documents record the existence of Jewish communities in the following centers of the Banat region: Timișoara, Vîrșeț, Gătaia, Buziaș, Lipova, Ciacova, Recaș, Biserica Albă, Deta, Arad, Șiman, Șemlac, Pecica, Chișineu-Criș, Curtici, Sîntana, Pîncota, Lugoj, Caransebeș, Bocșa, Orșova, Oravița, Făget, Reșița, and Balinț.⁷ In great majority, they had statutes approved by the Ministry of Religions in Budapest or by the local government. Many of them had a rabbi, a synagogue, a school, a cemetery, two or more choristers and clerks, as well as necessary funds to run their traditional religious activities. The statutes preserved in the archive of the Jewish Communities of Timișoara testify about a good community administration, that there was a correlation between the programs of the small communities and those of the larger ones in the important cities. Each document records the members' responsibilities; the way the religious procession was carried on; the names of the spiritual leaders; and the existence of a synagogue.⁸

What does the above information add up to? Firstly, community organization was extended to the rural milieu; the Jewish population's professions were diversified through such occupations as hairdresser, barber, dyer, weaver, butcher, waiter, confectioner, brewer, photographer, furrier, tailor, carpenter, jeweler, antiquary and bookseller.⁹ Their involvement in broader professions, such as physician, lawyer, engineer, teacher, merchant and economist, provided a chance for an open relation with the society which populated the Banat. Finally, some archival materials reveal

that the economic power of many families increased as a consequence of their activity as manufacturers, landlords, factory owners and directors of commercial and industrial firms. This explains how the community was able to support rather large expenses such as the construction of the Neologue synagogue in the *Cetate* district of Timișoara from 1860 through 1865,¹⁰ and in the *Fabric* district in 1895, or the reconstruction of community office buildings.

Doubtless the Jewish capitalists of Timișoara -- whose investments in the city economy were felt by the entire population -- were able to support the whole construction policy. This easily can be seen from the fact that in building the synagogue in the *Cetate* district, the Jewish community was in position to resort to engage famous construction firms in the empire in acquiring building stones, and purchasing and installing the faience, the terracotta, the windows and the decorative patterns. A clearer picture of their wealth, can be gained from the fact that, for the glass materials needed for construction *K.K. Landesbefugte Huren & Fenster Fabrik* of Vienna asked for the sum of 8,294 Austrian Gulden;¹¹ for the *Almaser* marble ("Almaser Marmor") they charged the community with the sum of 3,014 gulden;¹² for the terracotta 3,323 Gulden were paid to *Heinrich Drasche K.K. Pr. Thonwaaren Fabrik Inzedorf am Wienerberg*.¹³ The firms that furnished those materials were from Vienna, Budapest, or from other small Austrian, Hungarian or Banatian towns. Such dispersion required covering the expenses of both the transportation of the materials and for moving and putting up the workers. In the same circumstances, the committee charged with the construction of the synagogue invited a Viennese architect, Carl Schumann, to design the building.¹⁴ The financial resources invested for the raising of the *Cetate* district synagogue, proved that the Jews of the capital city of Banat had entered a new stage even during the years preceding the granting of equal rights. Similar synagogues were built in many places of the region; this shows that this is due not only to the demographic boom, but also to the liberal thinking of many Jews who formed an important layer within the bourgeoisie.

A contemporary researcher drew attention to the "Habsburg myth" maintained by the Dualist Austro-Hungarian Empire, an aspect that cannot be ignored in analyzing the particular situation of the Jews in the empire.¹⁵ The monarchic administration often disregarded the real problems of nationalities. It resorted to the traditional form of centralism, though admitting certain cosmopolitan ideas coming from the 18th century Austrian Enlightenment. This explains how it allowed religious and national pluralism, only to the degree that this could be exploited for the benefit empire. This determined the response of its nationalities which were in a period of cultural and political emancipation. Under the influence of the German-Prussian philosophy and political ideas, they invoked the artificial issue of identity, that is, they resumed the theory of the folk's spirit (*Volksgeist*) in a different reading in order to justify the demand for recognition of their own entities.¹⁶ In the case of the Jews, the so-called assimilation which would have been taken place in the territories incorporated to Hungary, like Banat, did not obstruct religious education. The best evidence was the crisis of consciousness, which led to the development of a strong Zionist movement. It is true, however, that many Jewish families within the empire were looking for a distinct spiritual expression, which implicitly was a sign of their dissatisfaction. The Jewish cultural phenomenon at the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century Vienna - so clearly expressed through the works initiated by many scientists, artists, and also by such important politicians as Theodor Herzl - were strongly echoed in Banat as well.

It is interesting to highlight that, on many occasions, the Jewish attraction to liberalism was reinforced by the myth of the almighty state and of the state's authority. Professed throughout Europe, especially after the French emancipation, the attraction to liberalism continued to be motivated by the insecurity of the Jewish community's existence in Diaspora. Anti-Semitism was

not a characteristic feature of the population in the Banat. However, here too, especially the community leaders manifested exaggerated obedience to the state institutions. In this respect, the emancipation only partly changed the situation. From such a political outlook originated the idea of inviting Emperor Franz Joseph I to the opening ceremony of the synagogue in the *Cetate* district of Timișoara. Though the synagogue had already been officially inaugurated in 1865, after the ending of the construction, the representatives of the Jews of Timișoara insisted on having the emperor himself attend the event. Therefore, a second inauguration of the same synagogue was organized. A memorial plaque, unveiled at that event, records the presence of Franz Joseph I in the synagogue of the *Cetate* district of Timișoara, on May 7, 1872 as follows:

“On the occasion of His glorious visit, honoring us with His presence and bringing His merciful sign of consent, Franz Joseph inaugurated once again our most beautiful and holy synagogue. We wrote this marble plaque for the memory generations to come as a testimony that the generosity of the Habsburg Dynasty extended over all denominations.”¹⁷

As religious freedom was observed, the functioning of the communities depending on their different orientations was accepted, and pluralism became a reality for a century and a half, why was another official inauguration necessary? Certainly, it was not necessary; however the community leaders often exaggerated their attitude before the officials in order to capture their goodwill. The lack of political flair was associated with the unconditioned temptation of many Jews to be assimilated to Hungary’s middle class. Tense moments, even if more reduced in scale in comparison with other regions, would not be missing from time to time, from either the social or the political-administrative life of the region of Banat. We would emphasize that, even if the Jews were accepted as inhabitants with equal rights and duties, being subjects of the official regime, they were considered second rank citizens in Banat, as well as in other regions of East and Central Europe. From this point of view there were similarities between the Austro-Hungarian rule and the Romanian governance after 1918.

The Social and Cultural Aspirations: The Question of Assimilation

Many eminent Jewish personalities of Banat participated in the public life of the Dual Empire. Teachers, industrialists, physicians, merchants, bankers and journalists took part in the administration of the factories, towns and cities, in building up the banking system, in editing the modern press, and in ensuring the flow of information, ideas and goods. Among the most frequently quoted names during the second half of the 19th century, we would mention the entrepreneur Ignat Deutsch, brewer in Timișoara. Under his direction the *Fabrikshof-Bierbraure-Aktiengesellschaft* firm achieved high prestige;¹⁸ Samuel Singer, constructor and patron of the first textile mill in Timișoara, laid the basis for the future enterprise for wool industry;¹⁹ landowner Ignatz S. Eisenstädter, who was one of the important Jewish community presidents and under whose leadership the Neologue synagogue in the *Cetate* district was inaugurated in 1865 and 1872 respectively;²⁰ lawyer Ignatz Hirsch, the leader of the bar of law attorneys in Timișoara;²¹ physician Alexandru Schossberger, director of the pediatric polyclinic in the capital city of Banat; and dr. László Lengyel from "Pester Lloyd" and Ernst Lengyel from "Az Est" dailies. Entrepreneur, Armin Neumann, studied construction engineering at the University of Chicago, and later developed many commercial and industrial networks in the Austro-Hungarian Empire; he

also projected many districts of the city of Lugoj in Banat, cooperating with famous construction firms from Vienna and Budapest.

David Oppenheimer, the Chief Rabbi of Banat; Jacob Steinhardt, the Chief Rabbi of Arad; J. Weiss and I. Hartman, Rabbis of Lugoj; L. Hirschl, Rabbi of Vinga and Rabbi Moses Hirschfeld, all were the continuers of the famous Chorin Aron. The *Sepharadim* creed had demonstrated its ability to function autonomously both through the existence of a synagogue of its own in the *Fabric* district in Timișoara, and through the activity of the well-known Jewish (*kosher*) butcher Salamon Alkalay (whose children worked their way up in the empire's cities, including Vienna). The coexistence of the *Sepharadims* and *Ashkenazims* not only met no restrictions and provoked no disputes within the Jewish communities, but was an example of peaceful coexistence. The rabbis' activities responded to the increase of the Jewish population and they met the needs of the communities. The rabbinical institution became powerful at the end of the 19th century and at the beginning of the 20th. Timișoara had a great western-oriented Jewish community headquartered in the *Cetate* district, three Orthodox communities with seats in *Fabric*, *Mehala* and *Josephin* districts, an ante status-quo community and the Spanish rite -- both in the *Fabric* district.²²

The religious life of the Banat Jewry did not differ from that in other parts of the empire. Sometimes in order to hire the Chief Rabbi of Banat there were organized competitions that were advertised in the most popular dailies and reviews throughout the Austro-Hungarian Empire such as the "Pester Lloyd", the "Freie Presse" and the "Neuzeit". That was the case in 1874 when, no less than thirty-three rabbis of the highest rank and well known Talmudists from many centers of Central and Eastern Europe -- where communities with long tradition had existed before (such as Vienna, Krakow, Linz, Prague, Bratislava, Esztergom, Szombathely, Zagreb, Tîrgu-Mureș and Bucharest) -- competed for this position.²³ Since none of the candidates received two-thirds of the total number of votes needed for the job, the Rabbinate of Timișoara was led by a celebrity of the Judaic world in the empire for a few years. His name was Dr. Immanuel Löw, the Chief Rabbi of Szeged. After six years, the rabbinic chair of Timișoara was filled by Dr. Moritz Löw (Löwy Mor) in 1879. The rabbi had studied at *Hochschule für die Wissenschaft des Judentums* at the Department of Humanities within the University of Berlin and at the University of Würzburg. Highly appreciated by his co-religionists for his knowledge, Löw was committed to the study of Talmud, he wrote many works about the history of the Jews and studies on Judaism; he became known through his teaching activity within the circles of the famous rabbis of Central Europe. This example speaks for itself about the outstanding importance of the rabbinical center of Timișoara. That indicates an excellent match of the Judaism professed in Banat with that professed throughout the empire.

Indeed the prosperity of the Jews of Banat is revealed by the new wave of settlers in Timișoara. From 1860 to 1910 the Jewish population in the capital city of Banat tripled its number. In 1860, 425 Jewish families (2,360 people) lived in the city. They practiced their religion in four synagogues.²⁴ In 1871, from a population of 34,000 of inhabitants, the number of Jews was 3,982, or 12.36 %. In 1880, statistics indicate 4,019 persons, or 12 % of the total inhabitants of the city. In 1890 their number increased to 4,870, or 12 %; in 1900 to 6,057, or 14.2 %; and in 1910 to 6,728, or 15.5 %.²⁵ It should be mentioned, as well, that during the second half of the 19th century the Austro-Hungarian Empire became a favorite place for the Jews. This partly explains the sense of the demographic movement in Banat. If, in 1840, the number of the Jews was 239,000 throughout the empire, their number increased to 826,000 in 1900 and to 910,000 in 1910, representing five percent of the total population of the empire.²⁶

Another relevant issue is that of assimilation. The use of the “Hungarian Mosaic confession” wording, introduced by Hungarian policy makers who intended to transform the empire into a nation-state, had a tremendous effect on the Jews, especially in the regions under Hungarian jurisdiction. Disregarding the religious orientations defined during the Jewish Congress in 1868-1869, many Jews preferred the assimilation as a form of their intellectual, social and economic progress. Even under these circumstances, it was a matter of appropriation of the Hungarian language as mother tongue, rather than religious assimilation. In 1890, the 55.6% of Jews in the empire accepted Hungarian, and in 1910 it was 73.3%.²⁷

As for the evolution in the religious life, mixed families appeared without considerably modifying the structure of the communities during this period. From 1869 to 1909 the Jewish community belonging to Hungary lost 4,666 faithful.²⁸ Statistics indicate certain tendencies departing from the framework and customs of traditional life. New documentary research shows that the Magyarization process took place more rapidly in the case of the Neologue Jews than in that of the Orthodox Jews which continued to speak Hebrew, Yiddish and German languages. The situation did not differ in Banat. Hungarian, as the spoken language moved into the first place. Yiddish remained in many cases the language used in the family exclusively or in the communitarian milieu. German became a secondary language in more than half of the Jewish families, and bilingualism (Hungarian and German) continued to be practiced. The ratio between the German and the Hungarian as spoken languages by the Jews of Banat, from 1880 to 1910, was inverted. According to the *Statistic Bulletin of Hungary*, in 1910 the percentage of the Jews who spoke Hungarian was 65.3 in Timișoara and 96.1 in Arad. The highest percentage in the regions of Banat, Partium, Maramureș and Transylvania, altogether, was in Oradea, namely 97.4% (according to *Erdélyi Magyar Évkönyv 1918-1929*, No. I., Kolozsvár: Juventus, 1930, p.109). Hebrew was taught in Jewish schools and continued to be preferred in the Orthodox’s sermons. The mixed families resulted from inter-marriages increased in number as a consequence of the diverse social and multi-cultural composition of Banat. This happened during the last decades of the empire, and it would be repeated in Romania during the interwar period.

A more accurate picture is found in the statistical data resulting from documentary research. The marriage registers in the Archive of the State of Marriage of the City of Arad record for 1890-1940 a significant number of marriages between Jews and Roman-Catholics, Protestants, Greek-Catholics and Orthodox.²⁹ However, during the above-mentioned period, the marriages within the same (Jewish) religion prevailed, oscillating from 7 in 1895 to 23 in 1911, 45 in 1919, 36 in 1925, 27 in 1933, 35 in 1935, 22 in 1938 and 12 in 1940.³⁰ Statistics show continuity in the Judaic religious life, and that the appropriation of one or other of the regional languages and cultures did not mean loss of identity. The cultural Magyarization had not always been equivalent with assimilation; the meandering path of the history of Banat seldom made that possible. On the contrary, the building of synagogues at the end of the previous century is convincing evidence of the preservation and continuation of religious life. This must be acknowledged in order to avoid confusion between integration and assimilation. The Jews of Banat were integrated into the social, economic and administrative life of the region. At other times, they were the group that stimulated the forming of the civic society. The cultural pluralism and the multilingualism of Banat stimulated the appropriation of the ideas of self-respect, trans-community communication, loyal competition and professional ethics. The Jews had often been an example in this part of the world situated at the periphery of the Austro-Hungarian Empire -- a region that compared with others had less been touched by the vainglory of ethnicity. Therefore it was not about assimilation in the classical sense

of the term. After the unification of Banat with Romania in 1918, the policy of the Banat Jews showed that one of their important tendencies would be to assume a distinct religious identity.

Political Options During the Transition from the Austro-Hungarian Empire to the Romanian State: From Integration to Zionism

The nationalist and communist historiographies in Romania granted circumstantial interest to the history of the minorities in general and of the Jews in particular. That is why the political ideas and the contributions to the country's culture brought by the linguistic and religious minorities are very little known. Hence a confused understanding of history has often resulted, reducing the approach of the past to an ethnicist interpretation. The community diversity of Banat, more likely visible in the urban milieu, enabled Timișoara to have more initiatives in organizing a civic society beyond the ethno-national identity of its citizens. The Romanian-Hungarian-Serbian dispute at the end of the war concerning the inclusion of the region in one of the three nation-states which were outlined at the time (namely Romania, Hungary and Yugoslavia), explains why many political circles in Timișoara, were interested in a trans-national political solution.³¹ In any case, the basic idea of such initiatives was not to create barriers based on confessional and/or ethno-national belonging.

In such a context, the Jews divided themselves into many fractions. The choice of some of them was reduced to the struggle for a social position and implicitly for equality of rights with all citizens. Under the impact of the Hungarian revolution in Budapest, there were heard "voices" that embraced the socialist ideas. To better understand the situation, it should be noted that the social-democratic movement in Banat was much stronger than in the neighboring regions. Timișoara and Reșița were two centers with a great number of workers and with a strong trade-union organization. The presence of the Jews in the social-democratic movement of Banat had an important role. There were intellectuals among the many handicraftsmen and workers, for example Alfred Horowitz and Ernst Burger.³² Along with Jews and Magyars, an important part of the German population embraced a social-democratic orientation. Romanians, too, took over these ideas, but their number was small compared to that of the minorities. Parallel to the socio-democratic orientation, there were Jewish groups that wished to be recognized as a distinct national minority within the Romanian state. For this reason, on November 12, 1918 a meeting of the Jewish population of Timișoara was held, in which 400 handicraft workers, traders, physicians, lawyers and military officers participated.³³ It should be highlighted that some of the Jews were involved in the policy-making of the city and the whole area, at times succeeding to key positions. Otto Roth's case, appointed as governmental commissioner of Banat by the authorities of Budapest, was characteristic for the diversity of the Jews' condition in Timișoara in that historical period of time. Otto Roth was a political figure deeply involved in the changes that occurred in the capital city of Banat. He proclaimed the Republic of Banat within the borders of Hungary, and himself its civil commissioner. After this event, he worked in favor of an autonomous republic of Banat. In fact, he represented the concerns of many political groups and social communities in whose name he acted. As for the Jewish question, Roth was of the opinion that an equality of rights was enough. He accepted that there would be no contradiction between the promotion of social democracy and assuming a national identity.³⁴ The difference between Roth's vision and that of the mass of the Jews (which was to provoke prolonged contradictions) was that the former understood by 'identity' either assimilation to the Magyar nation or recognition of a supra-identity. As an outcome of the

November 12th meeting, there was set-up the National Jewish Council of Banat, which later became the National Jewish Union of Transylvania and Banat.

The reorganization of Central and Eastern Europe after the war, the creation of the nation-states on the basis of the peace treaties signed at Saint Germain and Trianon, provoked changes in the Jews' consciousness. The Jewish bourgeoisie, who had a very important role in Timișoara, Lugoj, Reșița, Caransebeș and Arad was compelled to adapt to the new political circumstances. Such bourgeoisie was strongly connected to the economic life of the empire and integrated into Hungarian society. It belonged to a cosmopolitan life and the styles of communication specific to the empire; that is, it belonged to the past. The newly established Romanian administration required the Jewish bourgeoisie to adjust to the new circumstances and to make the necessary steps in this sense, namely: to appropriate another language and culture – the Romanian one; to set up a new community administration in view of the new organizational forms; to appropriate Romanian legislation, regarding minority rights; to obtain political representation within the frame of the new state; to establish contacts with authorities; and to define political options correlative to their religion or nationality. By that time the Jews of Banat distinguished themselves in the region's economy, social life and culture. They were educated in Hungarian schools and were in contact with the Hungarian administration. Many of them took up the Hungarian citizenship having Jewish religion. In 1917, for example (only one year before the fall of the empire), when 200 years of community existence were celebrated in Arad, the Jews still showed their loyalty to the Austro-Hungarian Empire.³⁵ Therefore the shift of views was not an easy one. It supposed not only solving the dilemma of identity -- which implied a quite large segment of the population, but also a quick reorganization in light of the new political situation. More precisely, compared to other minority communities, the Jews of Banat had to face the situation of the so-called "double background" assumed during the Austro-Hungarian Empire, namely the Hungarian and the Mosaic ones, which presumed the redefinition of the terms concerning identity. Many debates occurred, often similar to those of the emancipation period.

Unlike in other European regions, the Neologues were in the majority in Banat, hence the problem of unification of the communities with the aim of recognizing their minority condition within the Romanian State. Such unification happened in 1922, due, among other causes, to the pressure of the Jewish Orthodox Congregation of Timișoara, which expressed its fear before the increase of the Neologue Jewish community.³⁶ Thus it felt a need to represent the Jews' political interests within the former Austro-Hungarian provinces by the Jewish National Union of Transylvania and Banat. As far back as 1918, this political body played an important role in solving the Jewish question. During the interwar period, Jewish solidarity with the Zionist ideal was spread successfully. National awareness on the part of the Jews was promoted by all Zionist organizations which were set up in the cities of Transylvania and Banat regions. Among the initiators of the Zionist movement in these regions there could be mentioned the jurist Ioan Ronai of Alba Iulia, the rabbi Jordan Alexandru of Făgăraș, Moses Samuel Glasner and dr. Chaim Weiszbürg of Cluj. The outstanding progress of the Zionist movement was owed to Alexandru Marmorek's activity, a first rank public figure of the European Zionism. As university professor and director of the Pasteur University of Paris, Marmorek knew quite well the concerns and problems of the Hungarian Jewry. He was born in Vienna, where he worked along with Theodor Herzl for a time. While working in Paris, he was elected president of the Zionist organization of France. He arrived in Timișoara at the end of the World War I, as physician attaché around the French troops of Antanta, entrusted with the prevention of the potential Romanian-Hungarian-Serbian conflict in Banat. Under those circumstances he decisively contributed to the commitment of the Timișoara Jewry to the Zionist

ideal.³⁷ In December 1918, the representatives of the Jewish Zionists delegated Alexandru Marmorek to represent them in international meetings. This happened when Marmorek left for Switzerland, the Netherlands and France, where he would meet leaders of the European powers. In an article published in "Uj kelet" newspaper in Cluj it was asserted that the Timișoara Jewry called the attention, through this professor, to the unhappy situation caused by the nationalism that surrounded them everywhere in Central and Eastern Europe. They also mentioned that, during the new postwar period, only a very good organization, based on Jewish national criteria, could save them from the pogroms that were not far away. Things must be assessed differently from one region to another, the differences being relatively important in the behavior of the new authorities. The "Uj keket" daily in Cluj (1918-1940) and the "Neue Zeit - Uj kor" daily in Timișoara (1920-1940) regularly advocated the ideological reorientation of the Jews. The latter became the official body of the Union of the Jews of Transylvania and Banat.

In Arad, where the branch of the above-mentioned Union was set up in 1920, the support for the Zionist movement was felt through the agency of the Orthodox Jews, of the *Aviva-Barisia*, *Noar-Haționi* and *Șomer Hatzair* music groups, the *Hakoah Sport Club* and of the *Wiza* Women organization.³⁸ However, controversies concerning identity would prevail in community life of Arad during 1920-1936. While Dr. Eugen Singer and Josif Kalmár, the president and vice-president respectively of the Arad branch of the National Union of the Jews of Timișoara and Banat, asserted that the Jews represented a nation, the president of the Neologue rite community, Dr. Henrik Shütz, argued that they were only a religious denomination. "The Jews of Arad account themselves as Magyars", said Shütz. This opinion was shared by the Chief Rabbi, Dr. L. Válvölgyi and by his homologous in Oradea, the Neologue Chief Rabbi, L. Kecskeméti.³⁹ Despite misunderstandings, Zionism in Arad won many sympathizers, and the pro-Magyar assimilation trend lowered its intensity. The reasons for such a turn were enough: the rising anti-Semitism, spread by the extreme right circles in Hungary; the acts through which the Jewish students were terrorized in the *Superior Dacia* University in Cluj, the uncertain status for the liberal professions, and the policy of removing Jews from the public offices.⁴⁰ All were situations that required the adoption of measures of self-defense.

In Timișoara things were only partly similar to Arad. The controversies were between the cosmopolitan liberal-bourgeoisie and the Zionists. Generally speaking, the retort addressed to the supra-national liberal groups came from the political organizations, either Jewish, Schwab or Hungarian.⁴¹ In Lugoj, another multicultural city in the Banat region, there were three local dailies namely the "Banater Bote", "Lugoscher Zeitung" and "Drapelul". These newspapers reflected both the multicultural and the intercultural aspirations of the population, on the one side, and the ethno-national, on the other. Therefore, one can conclude that the cultural life in Lugoj continued the pluralist tradition of the city.

The Jews rallied around the "Banater Bote" magazine whose patrons were the Schlingers, while the Germans rallied around the "Lugoscher Zeitung", which belonged to the leader of the German movement, Heinrich Anwender. "Lugoscher Zeitung" became a propaganda publication which advocated the political rights of the German community. The Jewish-German publications in Lugoj promoted convergent ideological trends, providing about the Unitarian cultural life of the Germans, Romanians, Hungarians and Jews. The Romanian intelligentsia had not always shared this kind of approach of the local cultural phenomena. A notice published by "Lugoscher Zeitung" on May 8, 1921 is notable because it quite faithfully described the state of mind of the city in that period: "We did not make any distinction among Germans, Romanians, Magyars and Jews to the present because we show our respect for other cultures."⁴² The debates on the cultural and political

orientations of the Jewish community in Lugoj directly followed Banat's entering into the composition of the Romanian state. The meetings were lead by Dr. Henrik Berdach, and there were discussed the possibilities of an efficient organization. The financing of the activities related to worship and children's education in the Jewish schools were the topics much emotional discussion.⁴³ From 1920 to 1922, the Zionist ideal had not yet been formulated in the Jewish milieu of Lugoj. It would be appropriated by some representatives when a group deputized by the Lugoj community took part to the great reunion in Timișoara on May 27, 1923, the so-called "Great Meeting of the Jews of Banat and Transylvania Regions", or more precisely the Banat and Timișoara. The city of Lugoj was represented by Dr. Henrik Berdach, the president of the community, Chief Rabbi Emanuel Manó, Dr. Moritz Deutsch, Dr. Jacob Klein, Dr. E. Neumann and dr. L. Sebestyén.⁴⁴ That seems to have been the moment when the Zionist ideology began to be outlined for a part of the Lugoj Jewry.

At this meeting delegates discussed the so-called unification of the Jewish movement in Banat and Timișoara. The intention was explicitly formulated on May 14, 1923 by the presidium of the Israelite community of Timișoara through a notice to the prefect of the Timiș County:

"The Jews of Transylvania and Banat would like to merge in order to support their common interests. For this purpose, they will hold a general top-level meeting on May 27, the current year [1923, n.n], at 5:30 p.m. in the consultation room of the Israelite Community of Timișoara, situated on Mărășești street."⁴⁵

A few days later, on May 17, the representatives of the Native Jewish Union of Bucharest, too, led by the well-known lawyer, Wilhelm Filderman, expressed their desire to organize a conference on the issue of the unification of all the Jews in Romania. Filderman addressed himself to the president of the Jewish Community of Timișoara, lawyer Adolf Vértes, as follows:

"The exceptionally grave circumstances, which we are passing through, show that the anti-Semites -- in their fight for our extermination -- do not stop to consider legal issues or human reasons. The harsh pain we experience is due, for everyone who attentively examine the facts, to the complete lack of cohesion between the Jews in the new territories and those in the Old Kingdom. The Native Jewish Union has thus far, the difficult mission of providing a legal situation for the Jews in the Old Kingdom through the inscription of their emancipation in the Constitution, protecting in the meantime (in cooperation with the Jewish members of the parliament) the Jews' rights within the new territories. This Union calls today the Jews in the new territories to organize, being deeply convinced that it is the sole and the most effective way to fight against the anti-Semites. In order to achieve our purpose, we have the honor kindly to ask you to participate in the meeting to be held in Bucharest on May 27-28, this year, at 4:00 p.m. in the building of the Union of the Jews of Romania, 11, Soborului Street (*Cultura*Gymnasium). For this occasion we call together notables from all the provinces. On this occasion there will be laid the foundation on which the Union of the Jews in Romania will be created. The organization will comprise all Romanian citizens of Jewish extraction and will decide upon the calling of a general congress of the Jews from Romania."⁴⁶

Though similarities existed, the problems of the Jews in the Banat and Transylvania communities were not the same as those in the Old Kingdom. Therefore, no approach to the problem was the same. Since 1920, the question arose of correlation of the Jewish communitarian

activities among all Romania's regions. The above-quoted letters between the state bodies and communities, as well as between the Union of the Native Jews and the Israelite Community of Timișoara, reveal such a tendency. It could be concluded that the inter-community relations were developed more or less *pro forma*, keeping a distance, and not always showing great promise. It is not less true that the different history of the communities from one side to another of the Carpathians hindered adaptation and rapid merging. Also the different moments of emancipation delayed merging. Last but not least, the ignorance of the Romanian language by the majority of the Jews of Banat and Transylvania (especially during the first decade after the unification) was a difficult obstacle to overcome.

Where did the lack of functionality come from? The Grand Meeting held in Timișoara indicated that the Jews in the new regions of Romania were interested in clarifying their aspirations, trying to overcome their accents in speaking, owed to their multiple extractions. If, from linguistic and cultural points of view they belonged -- as we have seen -- to the cosmopolitan area of Central Europe, as for the rite they oscillated between the Jewish Orthodox and the Jewish Neologue trends. Against such an intricate background, the Zionists were those who tried, and also succeeded, to provide another option; one that not only did not exclude the existent religious rites but promised to enrich them. Zionism had to offer the hope of coming into the light. The participation of the three Jewish communities of Timișoara, namely the Neologue, the Orthodox and status quo, in the above-mentioned meeting, has always been cited as an example of successful cooperation. Personalities of the Banatian and Transylvanian Judaism were present such as Miksa Drechsler and Jacob Singer, Chief-Rabbis of Timișoara; Ernst Deutsch, Chief-Rabbi of Caransebeș; Jacob Rothbart, the President of the National Union of the Jews of Timișoara; Dr. Henrik Shütz, the President of the Neologue Community of Arad; Dr. Miksa Klein, the Vice-President of the National Union of the Jews of Cluj; the President of all communities of Timișoara; and numerous intellectuals who represented small communities such those in Deta, Reșița, Lipova, Chișinău-Criș, Sînnicolau Mare and Curtici.

The wording of the interacting viewpoints had a great resonance among the participants. At the meeting, the approach of the identity question was essential. Issues relating to denominations, to scheduling cultural and sports activities, to the national propaganda and to the awakening Jewish identity awareness were also highlights of the meeting. Ways of putting into practice the spiritual awakening programs were mentioned. Dr. A. Vértes expressed the aim of the meeting in the following words:

“We have considered that the time has come to invite envoys from the Transylvanian and Banatian communities and from the national associations to our great reunion held today (May 23, 1923) and dedicated to the great ideal of unification of our dispersed forces in different political orientations, so that we could direct them to the universal benefit of the Jewry”.

The aspiration toward a national identity was more than obvious. The Jews of Banat, Crișana and Transylvania not only intuited the importance of their reorganization based on new principles and with different aims from the previous ones, but were fully aware that their survival would depend on the unification of their movements. The constitution of a statute would have been considered a symbol of the idea of liberation. The meeting of Timișoara on May 23, 1923 set the basis of a firm Zionist trend. Its success depended to a great extent on the understanding of the priorities in the new emancipation process.⁴⁷

The Zionist policy openly affirmed by the Banat Jews did not mean lack of loyalty to the Romanian State. The majority of the Jews made this option without detriment to the security of the state where they lived. It should be noted that -- especially during the first phase of their existence under the jurisdiction of the Romanian State -- the Jews of Banat and Transylvania wanted to set up their own representative body. This was not only because their concerns were particular to those regions, but also because the parties to which they were oriented, namely the Romanian National Party (which later became the National Peasant Party) and the Magyars' Party, disappointed them by neglecting their situation. For example, on the occasion of the 1927-1928 elections, on the lists of the Magyars' and the Liberal Party, the Jews of Banat and Transylvania succeeded in obtaining only two places in the Romanian Parliament (see the political situation of the Jews in "Erdélyi Magyar Évkönyv", 1930, p. 119).

The government in Bucharest frequently stimulated the tendency toward cultural and linguistic division, especially by favoring the policy of Romanianization. Diplomatically led some times, and by force at others, the relationship with the interwar Romania minorities was part of a medium and long-term strategy, through which either their assimilation, or determining their emigration was aimed by the authorities.⁴⁸ Even though the Zionist movement had already been affirmed, the Jews of Banat continued to support cultural convergence, pleading for multilingual and trans-communitarian communication according to the social and cultural structure of the region. From the perspective of the history of political ideas, the segregation based on the so-called ethnic criterion was counterbalanced by the liberal and social-democratic aspirations in Banat. This attitude would be found again later, during Ceaușescu's nationalist-communist dictatorship.⁴⁹ Almost always the relationship between the Jews and the Romanian authorities was ambiguous, an aspect to which other researchers call attention, as well. On the one hand, the officials in the interwar Romania allowed the functioning of the Jewish-owned commercial and industrial firms and also accepted the opening of Jewish schools; while on the other, the community was labeled - - according to some police reports -- as being "dangerous and non-integrable."⁵⁰ At some other times, the intelligence service reports stated that the Jews distinguished themselves through "speculation which is their everyday bread". Finally, in the documents that offer information about the development of the 1920 strike, they are considered "elements of propaganda and agitation."⁵¹ Was all that fear at all justified? Were the Jews in the regions of the former empire interested or, moreover, able to jeopardize the integrity of the Romanian state set-up as a consequence of the Versailles Peace Treaty? Taking into consideration the presentation of the Jews' situation and their preoccupations during the transition period from the Austro-Hungarian jurisdiction to the Romanian one, there is no basis to believe that they being suspected and under surveillance would have been justified. As for the anti-Semite political orientation of the authorities, it can be affirmed that this already had a tradition in the cultural and political life of the Old Kingdom.

The Economic Situation and the Contribution to the Interwar Romanian Civilization

The activities undertaken by the Banat Jewry during the aftermath of the World War I reflect a particular attraction toward the liberal professions such as engineering, law, teaching, medicine, chemistry, manufacturing and trade. Their prestige during the last decades of the Empire show the acknowledgement of the social and economic usefulness of their activity and confidence in their practice of these professions.

The traditional professions were, in turn, advantageous and to a great extent could be turned into business in the new Romanian State. For example, 38% of the Arad Jews and of the

neighboring area were handicraftsmen at the beginning of the 20th century.⁵² Meanwhile, commerce acquired a privileged place in every city of Banat and in the rural milieu, as well. Therefore, 55% of the Arad Jews were merchants;⁵³ they would contribute as much as they did in the empire to the economic development of the interwar Romania. Nor did things differ in Lugoj. In every family, at least one member was involved in mercantile activities.⁵⁴ There were a quite large number of petty merchants among the Jews of Reșița and Oravița, but also educated traders coming from the large centers of the former empire.⁵⁵ The Jewish trade firms were highly appreciated in Timișoara and the cooperation among businessmen lent economic and political stability to the city. The sense of style, of Viennese origin, practiced by the Jewish merchants, was also appreciated both by the city's inhabitants and by visitors, as well. This aspect, too, contributed to the development of special relationships between the Jews and the Germans, the Magyars and the Romanians. The admiration of their ability for organization and their dynamic contribution to the various aspects of life has to be taken into consideration whenever we try to understand the Jews' position in Timișoara's and Banat's society.

The entrepreneurs had special success as the Romanian state was bound to use their professional and managerial abilities against the background of its general shortage of specialists. It is equally true that the prestige of the Jews' spirit of initiative among the population of Banat dampened, for a while, the tendencies of Brătianu's National Liberal Party to substitute Jewish with Romanian entrepreneurs. As the number of minorities was high in Banat during the interwar period, interest in the region's economic growth prevailed over theories and actions based on ethnicity which came from the interwar Romanian governments. The textile industry in Timișoara benefited from substantial contribution from the Jewish entrepreneurs, since the owner, the co-owner, or the director of the wool mill were Jews.⁵⁶ The names of the Singers and of the director and shareholder, Theodor Hecht, among others, should be noted. The glove, shoes and hat factories in Timișoara were either managed or owned by Jews. Quite often the most capable foremen and workers of those enterprises came from among the Jewish milieu. The same was the case of the brewery in Timișoara, where their presence was traditional⁵⁷ and was resumed during the World War II when the Jewish contribution was once again of first importance in the functioning of this industrial sector in the city. The examples are numerous; among them the chief engineer, Francisc Theiss, the production manager of the factory from 1979 to present.

The economic life of the city of Arad, too, was enriched by the Jews. Along the Magyars and German Schwabs, they formed the middle class of the city. The textile mill of the Neumanns, set-up in 1900, was famous during the interwar period. In 1940 this textile mill was lead by the most famous member of this family, namely the baron Franz von Neumann (or known also as Ferenc Neumann of Végvár). The Jewish participation in the textile industry of Arad was significant; out of a total of 13 textile mills, seven belonged to Jews. In the chemical industry, out of 12 enterprises, four were Jew-owned. In the field of construction material, out of 4 enterprises three were owned by Jews. Out of 16 printing houses existing in the city, seven belonged to Jews. The vinegar factories of Arad (as well as in Lugoj and Timișoara) belonged to Jewish entrepreneurs. The Jewish participation in the wood industrialization is indicated by the *Czettel Factory*, set up in 1926. The car industry experienced continuous development, as a consequence of the activity of the Grundman enterprise set up in 1924. The numerous handicraft shops are other examples of their economic involvement.⁵⁸ The Jewish properties in the villages of Arad County are also conclusive arguments for their contribution to the region's prosperity; ten mills, three timber factories, one spirits factory, three oil press mills, a weaving mill, a ballast pit, and a stone exploitation. These data come from the expropriation provisions of the Jews in the rural milieu of Arad during 1942,

expropriations dictated by General Ion Antonescu's regime.⁵⁹ The presence of a few large banks highlight the major role of the Jewish bankers. It is especially about the *Arader Allgemine Sparkasse*, *Arader Comitats Sparkasse*, the *Italian Bank* and the *Romanian Bank Society*.⁶⁰

A reconstitution of the industrial and commercial life of interwar Lugoj indicates the massive presence of the Jewish capital investments. In a city with 18-20,000 inhabitants, where the Jewish population increased to about 1,000, its activity grew manifest in the pharmaceutical industry, where the *Carol Brothers* and *Bodi Vértes Bros.* became renown; in grist and bakery where the *Klára Mill* held the monopoly; in the textile industry where the *Braun*, *Barat & Lengyel* and *The Textile Enterprise* (the later being the property of the *Krammer Brothers*, having around 700 workers) were very well developed; and in the toy industry which was led by *Sidon and Jaulusz*. There were three prosperous printing houses which also functioned in Lugoj, namely the *Auspitz* - whose patrons were the *Schlingers*; *Husvét and Höffer* -- led by Maximillian Dreichlinger; the *Sepher* printing and publishing house led by Lajos Giskalay and Sziklay. All these printing houses had bookshops in order sell their own products. In the period from 1925 to 1935 Weicherz banker managed the well-known *Cărășana Bank*. Moreover, the Jewish handicraftsmen played a special role in maintaining the specific features of the urban life of the former empire. Watchmakers and jewelers had a tradition which dates back to 1872, the Braun family being the most renown in these fields. The Bronfeld tailor shop offered up-to-date clothes; the *Bristol Café* of Stefan Solomon's was one of the most appreciated restaurants in downtown Lugoj. As in Arad, in Timișoara, too, the main boulevards were renown not only as promenade, but as shopping rows, as well. Among them, there were properties of Jewish families.⁶¹

The Jews of Banat were not only the bourgeois middle class, nor the ferment of the economic life. Being concerned, to the same extent, with the cultural life and assuring a relaxed multi- and intercommunity life, they promoted a civic society, as they had in many of the empire's centers over time. Composer Gheorghe Kurtag who was awarded with the Herder Prize, singer Oskár Kálmán who performed as vocalist in the Budapest Opera, professor of medicine Hugo Strausz who was the dean of the Faculty of Medicine in Cluj, Rabbi Emanuel Lenke and the family of the famous physicist Teller, all are relevant examples of the aspirations of Lugoj Jewry. In almost all cities of the Banat, the Jews created -- through their education, cultural tradition and economic standard -- the proper environment for stimulating artistic and scientific values. The merits of the composer Max Eisikovics from Timișoara were known by all music lovers in Romania. The stimulating activity of the Arad Philharmonics' players, among whom Magda Weil, Tiberiu Kalusner, Maria Berend and many others, contributed to the development of Romanian's cultural patrimony. Jews who achieved a great international reputation originated in this region, as for example Gabriel Banat (Jean Gabriel Hirsch) who made a brilliant career in the U.S.A., being launched in New York by George Enescu.

The inter-communitarian relationship functioned, which partly explains the continuation of relatively good living standards in the case of the Banat Jewry during the interwar period. The situations of conflict were insignificant until the setting up of Charles II's and Ion Antonescu's dictatorships. As the Jews assimilated the language of the newly established state they naturally cooperated with the Romanians. Less in the Banat and more often in Transylvania and Crișana, the suspicions of the Romanian population against the Jews were due to the use of the Hungarian language by the latter. The authorities supported these suspicions, which were echoed among the youth. This happened in Cluj in 1922, when Jewish stores were devastated, and Jewish students were expelled from the *Superior Dacia* University, their synagogues destroyed, and their prayer books burned in front of the statue of Mathias Corvin. This sore festered when a number of faculty

members of the above-mentioned university joined the anti-Semite manifestation. These did not include those with a social democratic orientation and some, such as Professor Papilian from the Faculty of Medicine, maintained flawless behavior defending the students and faculty members of Jewish origin.⁶² Where during 1921-1922 academic year the Faculty of Medicine at the University of Cluj had 357 students of Jewish origin, in 1927-1928 their number decreased to 13. The total number of students in this department was 151, which means a percentage of 5.5 Jews (according to "Az Erdélyi Zsidó főiskola halgatók", in *Erdélyi Magyar Évkönyv*, 1930, p.117). Given the above-mentioned circumstances, many Jewish students in the Banat and Transylvania had to do their studies in the capital cities of Central and Western Europe. The non-liberal policy of the so-called 'liberals' in Romania and the neo-Phanariot orientation of the ruling political groups who undermined democracy were some reasons for the extent of the anti-Semitic trend. Eventually this policy was echoed in the western part of the country, in the most cosmopolitan region of Romania which had long been exempted from extremist political trends.

Notes

1. The number of the Jews increased during the Revolution of 1848. For instance, the Jews in the Caraş-Severin Committal were spread – according to the imperial statistics drawn up in 1848 – in the main cities such as Lugoj, Caransebeş, Oraviţa and Reşiţa, and in many rural places like Cliciova, Şuşani, Sudriaş, Tîrgoviştea, Balinţ, Gruin, Sîlha, Coşteiu Mare, Coşteiu Mic, Făget, Bîrna, Rădmăneşti, Bara, Cladova, Remetea, Ohaba Lungă, Lăpuşnic, Ierşnic, Pădureni, Topleţ, Ohaba Sîrbească, Jdioara, and many others. In the middle of the 19th century the Jews in the villages of Banat had diverse professions. They were tailors, soap makers, shopkeepers, physicians and innkeepers. There were 87 Jewish families in Lugoj in 1848, with an average of four children each. That situation prevailed and would even grow during the second half of the 19th century, according to *Conscriptio Judaeorum. 1848 Zsidó összeírások*, Komitate Krasso. Aufbewahrt, Budapest, Filmtár B, 1722, *Magyar Országos Levéltár* [The Hungarian State Archive]. In 1852, the Jewish population of Timișoara was 1,551 in a total population of 20,500 representing 7.5% of the total population, according to J.N. Preyer: *Monographie der Königliche Freistadt Temesvár. Monografia oraşului liber crăiesc Timișoara* [The Monography of the Free Princely Town of Timișoara], re-edited by Adam Mager, Eleonora Pascu and Ioan Haţegan (Timișoara: Amarcord Publishing House, 1996), p. 240.

2. See Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, (Harvest Books, 1973). The interpretation of the Jewish role as a tool of modernization used by the state only partially corresponds to the situation in Hungary and Banat. It is true that the leaders involved in finance and business continued to develop the kind of activity undertaken by the old noble families in the empire, that is, to serve state interests. A change of the situation took place with the development of a liberal bourgeoisie, which took initiatives to modernize the economy. The industrialists, entrepreneurs and merchants would have not only a considerable weight, but also a stimulating role within the East-Central European societies, which were considerably less developed as compared to the western ones. The Jewish participation in the Revolution of 1848 in Hungary and Austria was a clear sign of their involvement in the new process. See in this respect the presence of the Timișoara and Arad Jewry in the most important events. According to J.N. Preyer, *op.cit.*, p.213; *The History of the Arad Jewry*, drafted by Dr. Schönfeld Iosif, Glück Eugen, Kovách (Eichner) Gheorghe, Krausz Avraham (Ştefan), Prof. Kovács Géza, Engineer Waldmann Johannes, D.R. Gordon (Újhelyi) Toma, (Tel-Aviv: Minimum Publishing House, 1996), p.58.

3. See *The Archive of the Jewish Community of Timișoara (AJCT)*, File no.3, diverse documents, records, regulations, bills, and proceedings for the period of time from 1850 to 1859.

4. *Ibidem*, sheet 130. Letter to the Chief Rabbi, David Oppenheimer, signed by the town and regional officials, dated January 18, 1856 and holding the seal with the following inscription: “Bürgermeisteramt des Landes Hauptstadt Temesvar”.

5. *Ibidem*, see *File no.2: Diverse documents, registers*, sheet 28, which is a copy of a document from 1813 sent by the Jewish community of Timișoara to the authorities, through which they requested citizenship. In the same sense of very strict control of demographic movement in Timișoara, see also sheet 29, which is a copy of a document required by the Austrian officials dating back to 1815. From the documents it results that 62 Jewish families lived in the *Cetate* district, 33 families in the suburbs of the *Cetate* district, and 13 families waited for a solution to their uncertain situation. According to *Ibidem*, File no. 2, sheet 112 -- which is a document dating back to 1835 – it results that the Jewish community of Timișoara requested the naturalization of 10 German Jews and of 10 Spanish Jews. Everything was under the control of the authorities and especially the financial contribution, which was checked to the last penny.

6. Johann Nepomuk Preyer, *op.cit.* pp. 213-214. In the days of March 1848 a lot of minor incidents took place, namely the demonstrators’ anti-Semitic outbursts. They were kept under control by the authorities.

7. *AJCT*, File no. 56/1922-1926, sheets 123-4 which contain an ample table about the existence and functioning of the above-mentioned communities at the end of the 19th century. According to *Ibidem*, File no.8/1871: *Diverse documents, proceedings, correspondence, bills*, sheet 22, the communities in the above-mentioned places were subordinated to “Hoher Israelitischer Landescongresz”. Moreover, there were communities in Vinga, Ineu, Cernei and Șipet, too. In Vinga, (a locality which gained the rank of municipality during Maria Theresia, with a majority of Bulgarian population of Catholic denomination) the existence of a community is proved by the Jewish cemetery. In Ineu, where a synagogue was standing up to the 1960s, there are also signs of an old Jewish cemetery situated in the southern extremity of the small town.

8. In *Ibidem*, File no.6/1870, sheets 3-12 see, for example, the statutes of the Jewish communities of Lipova (a small town located in today Arad County), which contain the rights and obligations of its members, the developing of the cult proceedings and the functioning of the synagogue. In this sense, see also “Statut für die isr. Religionsgemeinde Șimand” (1870), *Ibidem*, sheets 13-19. The statutes of the Arad communities can be found in the *Archive of the Jewish Communities of Arad (AJCA)*, File no.5/1845, sheets 1-12 and 1-60. In the second half of the 19th century the relations between the communities of Arad and Timișoara were very close, the community of Arad being even subordinated to the one in Timișoara. For example, the statutes of the Israelite society of Arad were sent for approval to the *Landesrabinat* of the capital city of Banat (Timișoara). See such statute in *AJCT*, File no.5/1865-1869, sheet 215-218.

9. *The Archive of Mayoralty of Arad*, years 1895, 1896, 1897, 1898, positions 1, 2, 10, 11.

10. *AJCT*, File no.4 from 1860-1864, sheets 41-55, containing the reference material on the expenses supported by the members of the Neologue community of the *Cetate* district in Timișoara to build the synagogue situated in what today is Mărășești street.

11. *AJCT*, File no.4, sheets 104-105 from 1863.

12. *Ibidem*, sheets 88-90 from 1863.

13. *Ibidem*, sheets 189 from 1864.

14. *Ibidem*, File no.4, sheets 78-79, year 1863. See also file no.5/ 1865-1869, sheets 40,41,43 from 1865.

15. Jacques Le Rider, *Modernitatea vieneză și crizele identității* [The Viennese Modernity and the Crisis of Identity], Romanian edition by Magda Jeanrennaud, (Iași: "A.I. Cuza" University Press, 1995), p.33.

16. Victor Neumann, *The Temptation of Homo Europaeus (The Genesis of the Modern Ideas in Central and Southeastern Europe)*, (Boulder, New York: Columbia University Press, East European Monographs, 1993), chapter V. Idem, "National Political Cultures and Regime Changes in Eastern and Central Europe" in *The History of Political Thought in National Context*, edited by Dario Castiglione and Iain Hampsher-Monk, (Cambridge University Press, 2001), pp. 228-247.

17. See the memorial plaque at the entrance of the synagogue, recording the presence of the Emperor Franz Joseph I at the time of the opening, in 1872. The plaque is of white marble, by the *Kerschek & Kubichek* Timișoara firm. Regarding the celebration organized on the occasion of the synagogue's inauguration, see also Singer Jacob's *Temesvári rabbik a XVIII-ik században* [Rabbies of Timișoara during the 18th Century], (Seini, 1928), p. 43.

18. See engineer Francisc Theiss's, *Album jubiliar, 275 de ani 1718-1993. Fabrica de bere din Timișoara* [Jubilee Album: 275 years of the Timișoara Brewery. 1718-1993], (Timișoara, 1993).

19. See *The Romanian National Archives. Timișoara County Branch*, Documentary Wool Industry Stocks, file of 1904. The Ministry of Commerce informs the Municipal Council of Timișoara about the intention to build a wool factory and about fulfillment of his project beginning with 1905.

20. Jakab Singer, *op.cit.*, p.47.

21. *Ibidem*, pp. 37 and 27 note 1.

22. *AJCT*, File 77/1943, sheets 357-360. Written statement addressed by the Timiș-Torontal County Office of the Jews to the Jewish Center of Bucharest. The document presents a brief history and the way of organizing the communities of Timișoara during its different stages.

23. Singer J., *op.cit.*, pp.48-49.

24. *Ibidem*, p.41.

25. Josef Geml, *Alt-Temesvar im letzten Halbjahrhundert 1870-1920*, (Timișoara, 1927), p.128.

26. George Barany, *Magyar Jew or Jewish Magyar? (To the question of Jewish Assimilation in Hungary)* in "Canadian-American Slavic Studies", vol.8/1974, 1, p.1-144. According to Hildrun Glass, *Zerbrochene Nachbarschaft. Das deutsch-judische Verhältniss in Rumänien (1918-1938)*, (München: R. Oldenbourg Verlag, 1996), p.36.

27. According to *Magyar Zsidó Lexicon* [Hungarian Jewish Lexicon], (Budapest, 1929), p.232.

28. According to Hildrun Glass, *op.cit.*, p.37.

29. According to the *Archive of Arad Mayoralty: The Register of Marriages for 1895-1940*.

30. *Ibidem*.

31. Hildrun Glass, *op.cit.*

32. *Ibidem*, p.138. The author highlights that a clear distinction was made between the social-democratic trend and the communist one.

33. "Temesvarer Zeitung" daily, November 12, 1918. Also according to "Temesvári hírlap" daily, November 12, 1918.

34. Among the politicians who advocated for the recognition of the national minorities and the social democrat ones there were no contradictions as alleged by certain books that approach the topic monoculturally. In this sense it must be emphasized that many books written by Romanian

historians are still tributary to the totalitarian political regimes. So far, the approach to the history of the region in discussion through a nationalist perspective is often obvious. This results not only in ignorance of the Banat minorities' issue, but a deliberate ignorance of the complex history of the region. The emotional reasoning invoked in recovering the past draws upon an obvious reserve on behalf of the educated people. The presentation of the facts in the ways favorable to the majority or corresponding to the myths sketched about the past is still a common practice in the Eastern and Southeastern European countries. A value judgment of the history of political thought which marked the transition of the Banat from the Austro-Hungarian administration to the Romanian state depends firstly on thorough documentary research and on the familiarity with the Romanian, Hungarian and international bibliography on the topic under discussion.

35. See *Istoria evreimii arădene* [The history of the Arad Jewry], p.64.

36. "Temesvarer Volksblatt", March 27, 1922.

37. See in this respect the article entitled: *Mármerek professzor, a kelet és Délmagyarország zsidóság külföldi képviselője* [Professor Mármerek, the Overseas Representative of the Jewry of Eastern and Southern Hungary], in "Új Kelet", no.1/1918.

38. Apud *Istoria evreimii arădene* [History of the Arad Jewry], p.68.

39. *Ibidem*, p.67-68. The contradictory viewpoints were formulated in interviews and articles published in "Új Kelet", no.73/October 6, 1920, no.145/July 7, 1921, as well as in "Aradi közlöny" on October 5, 1921.

40. *Ibidem*, pp.66 and 69.

41. Hildrun Glass, *op.cit.*, p.291.

42. "Lugoscher Zeitung", May 8, 1921. See also Hildrun Glass, *op.cit.*

43. AJCT, File no. 55/1920, sheets 105-110 (*Jegyzőkönyv felvetett Lugoson a Lugosi izr. Hitközségnek 1920 éve október 31-én tartott rendes közgyűlésen*) [Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting Held at the Israelite Community in Lugoj, on October 31, 1920], including a notice on the Lugoj community leadership discussions about the organization and orientation of the local Jewry. Forty interventions are mentioned in the document.

44. *Ibidem*, File no. 56/1922-1926, sheets 273-289 (*Az 1923 évi május hó 27-en megtartott bánáti és aradmegye országos zsidó nagygyűlés*) [The Banat and Arad County Jewish meeting held on May 27, 1923].

45. *Ibidem*, File no. 56/1922-1926, year 1923, sheet 339.

46. *Ibidem*, File no.56/1922-1926, year 1923, sheet 317. For the reorganization process of the Jewish communities of Banat and Transylvania in accordance with the new political context, see also *Ibidem*, File no. 55/1920, sheets 73-75, including a copy of the letter sent by the Israelite community of Timișoara to the Ministry of Arts and Religions, as a reply to the ordinance no. 38 095/1920, given by the same Ministry.

47. *Ibidem*, File no. 56/1922-1926, year 1923, sheets 273-289.

48. See *Istoria evreilor din Banat* [History of the Jews of Banat], Atlas Publishing House, București, 1999. See the chapters about *Carol II and Ion Antonescu's Regimes*.

49. Victor Neumann, "Multicultural Identities in the Europe of Regions. The Case of Banat County", Public Lecture presented at the Institute for Advanced Study/Collegium Budapest, on February 22, 1996 (discussion Papers Series no. 34, September 1996). See also Idem, "National Political Cultures and Regime Changes in Eastern and Central Europe" in *The History of Political Thought in National Context*, edited by Dario Castiglione and Iain Hampsher-Monk, (Cambridge University Press, 2001), pp. 228-247.

50. Hildrun Glass, *op.cit.*, p. 100. Dr. Glass's documentary survey highlights the German-Jewish relationships in the Romanian regions which were parts of the late Austro-Hungarian Empire. She describes the adaptation, integration or isolation modalities of the two minority communities as well as the type of relationship between them and the Romanian communities. A good German-Jewish coexistence in Banat, in 1918-1938, results from her book, a phenomenon that will take a different turn during Carol II's and Ion Antonescu's dictatorships.

51. Hildrun Glass mentions that the Jewish question in Transylvania and Banat approached by the intelligence services of the General Headquarters of the Army in 1920 (June 5-12 and October 18-24), referring in this respect to the National Archives of Bucharest, Royal House Stocks, 20/1920; 6th Army Corps, the Service of the General Headquarters, Office II, no.6; *The weekly informative bulletin concerning the internal situation*, Historical Archive, Stocks II, no. 432 and 437. According to H. Glass, *op.cit.*, p.100.

52. See *Istoria evreimii arădene* [History of the Arad Jewry], p.61.

53. *Ibidem*.

54. According to a conversation with Mr. Ladislau Bloch in Lugoj on May 5, 1996. Mr. Bloch was technician and a swimming and polo instructor who lived his whole life in Lugoj. He knew most of the Jewish families which played an important role in the economic and cultural life of the town. He comes from a handicraft family, very much appreciated in the interwar and postwar Lugoj. The Jewish Community Archive of Lugoj disappeared during the communist regime, because of the negligence of the previous community administration.

55. According to the dialogue with Ms. Piroska Farkas in Timișoara, on March 26, 1996; she was born in Bozovici (Caraș-Severin County) in 1903 in a Jewish family, which identified itself with the state of mind of the former Austro-Hungarian Empire. She was a pediatrician and lived a complex life. She witnessed all the political changes of the 20th century, each of them being a new experience for her from both its human and her Jewishness points of view. She provided detailed information about the social life of the Jewry involved in the economic life of Reșița and Oravița; she also described the customs of that time. She gave many reasons to support the Jews' integration into the wider multicultural community of the Banat.

56. See the *Romanian National Archives. Timiș County Branch*, The Wool Industry Stocks.

57. Indeed, after World War II, the presence of the Jews in the brewery as engineers, accountants and brewers was constant. See the employees' list in F. Theiss's *Album jubiliar, 275 de ani 1718-1993. Fabrica de bere din Timișoara* [Jubilee Album, 275 years of the Timișoara brewery.1718-1993.], (Timișoara, 1993). We could mention, among others, the director Francisc Weinbach, the chief engineers Ernst Klein and Francisc Theiss, and the chief accountant Francisc Salzberger.

58. See the statistics made by the historian Géza Kovács of Arad in *Istoria evreimii arădene* [History of the Arad Jewry], p.149.

59. *Ibidem*, p.151.

60. *Ibidem*.

61. Among the well known commercial firms in Lugoj we should mention: Pick & Nach (photoshop), Hirsch (clothes shop), Carol Vértes (chemist's), Neumann (clothes shop), Schwartz (clothes shop), Kincs&Tauber (grocery), Reisz (spicery), Popper (haberdasher's), Klein (general store), Filinger (clothes shop), Neumann (liquor shop), Rechenbach (candle shop), Holzer (cloths shop), Spitzer (clothes shop). Reconstitution was possible thanks to the dialogue held with Mr. Ladislau Bloch on May 5, 1996.

62. According to the discussion with Ms. Piroska Farkas held on March 26, 1996. In 1922, Ms. Farkas was among the students who were expelled from the University, being a witness of the events in Cluj.

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Banat region was part of the Habsburg and Austro-Hungarian empires from 1718 through 1918. After World War I, in 1918, it became part of the Romanian national state. Its capital city has been Timisoara.

Civic Culture in Banat and Transylvania: The Role of Timișoara in the 1989 Transformation of the Romanian Political Order

The cultural model of Central Europe carries a political message with its own meaning for understanding the regime changes in the region. In order to proceed to an analysis of the civic culture in Banat and Transylvania, one must take into consideration that these regions (as well as others with similar historical traditions, such as Silezia, Moravia, Galicia, Slovakia, Croatia, Bukovina) were emancipated later and only partially in comparison with the French, North Italian and Dutch regions. Certain relationship with the West-- maintained by the religious and aristocratic elite -- functioned as a result of the echo of Renaissance humanism and the Lutheran-Calvinist Reform. This elite was tempted to develop its own set of values in a way similar to the West when Banat and Transylvania became parts of the Habsburg Empire in the 18th century. Sometimes it succeeded in spite of its economic and social handicaps. As for the masses, modernization took place no later than the end of the 19th century. Only then, did the proper moment for Banat and Transylvania arrive and a large scale transition toward the modern world.

Between 1880 and 1918 an unprecedented demographic explosion happened in the towns of the region. New and numerous buildings were constructed not only in the big cities, but in small towns, too, giving them a European architectural configuration. New administrations were set up following the model of the great burghs; economic production was diversified; international trade regulations used across the whole continent were adopted. Culture would play an important role in preparing the wide-reaching social transformations. The setting-up and development of a middle-class had priority. Also the multiplication of the associations concerning culture, the arts, vocational training, science and, generally speaking, everything that could bring about changes in the mentality of the masses was encouraged. Enormous expenditures were made at the time in order to support setting up the infrastructure and the civic society of Banat and Transylvania. That explains why, in Transylvania, not only cities such as Cluj (Kolozsvár), Brașov (Brassó/Kronstadt), Sibiu (Nagyszeben/, Hermanstadt), Tîrgu. Mureș (Marosvásárhely), but also such smaller towns as Turda (Torda), Deva (Déva), Miercurea-Ciuc (Csíkszereda), Sfîntu-Gheorghe (Sepsiszentgyörgy), Odorheiu Secuiesc (Székelyudvarhely), Hunedoara (Vajdahunyad), Zalău (Zilah), Șimleul Silvaniei (Erdélysomlyó), succeeded in creating their own social and economic structures. In the Banat region, not only the cities of Timișoara (Temesvár), but also Reșița (Resica), Lugoj (Lugos), Jimbolia (Zsombolya) and Sînnicolau Mare (Nagyszentmiklós) were developed. In Bihor County (situated in the western part of Romania), the city of Oradea (Nagyvárad) was rapidly developed and became a symbol of the cultural vanguard. Satu-Mare (Szatmárnémeti) and Carei (Nagykároly) were open to various social and economic developments that eased or determined numerous contacts with western European regions.

During the interwar period, numerous former provinces of the Austrian-Hungarian Empire became the leading forces of industrialization and urbanization in the respective nation-states. The cases of the Bohemian and Moravian regions in Czechoslovakia are relevant in this respect. However it was not the case of Banat and Transylvania regions in newly created Romanian state after the World War I. Although it was more advanced with respect to its institutions and community life -- as compared to other provinces of Romania -- Transylvania became

subordinated to a less developed decision-making center, namely to Bucharest.¹ As a consequence, the region which had been modernized after Central European models of civilization fell under the influence of the political and economic interests originating in the former Turkish Empire. This explains why Romania's integration into Western civilization was delayed. Even though the French and Prussian cultural sources were somehow accepted (i.e., the elite was formed under their influence), they were not relevant for the modernization of the Old Kingdom of Romania. These aspects should not be neglected when we evaluate the political thought in Romania of that time. The discrepancies between elite and masses were not adequately taken into consideration. These differences were more visible in the southern and eastern parts of Romania, but none of its governments was sufficiently preoccupied to diminish them during the last century, although some of them made notable contributions to the modernization of the country.

In this context, let us analyze Timișoara prior to becoming a city in the Romanian state. According to historical studies, it was the most industrialized and the most modern city in the eastern part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. In 1910, Timișoara -- the capital city of Banat with a population of 72,555 inhabitants -- had got two technical universities, two Episcopal chairs, 62 small and medium sized enterprises, 132 professional associations, 7 daily newspapers, 17 printing houses, a philharmonic society, and many scientific associations. The city became the most important center of the Hungarian side of the empire, following Budapest.² It was ahead all the cities of Transylvania. Moreover, its openness was due to the multilingualism practiced by the large majority of the population in a very natural way. It had been usual for them to speak German, Hungarian, Romanian and Serbian for long periods of time. The name of the city itself has four forms according to the four languages spoken: Timișoara (in Romanian), Temesvár (in Hungarian), Temesburg or Temeswar (in German) and Temisvaru (in Serbian). Without going into details, it should be noted that this city was the most important center of the first outstanding regional modernization. Timișoara has put a touch of its spiritual physiognomy on the whole Banat region as has Cluj on Transylvania. The former has always been oriented toward a plural community life,³ while the latter has been mainly tempted to define itself in connection with its ethnic and linguistic identities. The frustrations caused by the subordinate position of Cluj to Budapest and, beginning with 1918, to Bucharest delayed the adoption of the principles characteristic of an open society.

The previously historical information is useful for a more accurate description of Timișoara's physiognomy during the years following the anti-Ceaușescu uprising. It is possible that, due to its historical background and civic culture, the population of this city more easily adopted a critical attitude against the authoritarian and especially against the totalitarian policy. Despite the demographic changes after World War II, and despite an exaggerated surveillance (initiated by the political police) against the persons belonging to minority communities, the inhabitants of Timișoara and the newcomers had been able either to perpetuate or respectively to imitate the civic values practiced by the interwar generations. Due to this fact, beyond compare to any other city's situation in communist Romania, Timișoara continued to distinguish itself by an exemplary civic organization. The merit of understanding the great chance of cooperation and therefore, of organizing a civic society, belongs to those people who felt, thought and acted beyond their ethnic and confessional affiliations.⁴ Feeling themselves more comfortable with their status as citizens of the *borough*, they acquired in time openness towards diversity of any kind. This attitude would have not been possible in linguistic and religious communities over-preoccupied by their own ethnic-identity. It is not just an environment of mutual respect between the majority and minorities, but also coexistence where the individual's community-oriented education seemed to be — and

sometimes was — essential. It is worth remembering the wish of a large segment of the population to live in freedom, to conduct business, to freely move across the borders, to have free access to information. Their interest for stable welfare standards had always been their life philosophy. Nor was the concern for money, household and material values neglected during the last years of Ceaușescu's regime. Even during the food shortage at the end of the '70s that was harsher during the '80s, there were social layers that succeeded in maintaining a reasonable living standard. The Mehala flea market stocked by goods coming from abroad, namely from Yugoslavia, Hungary, Austria and Germany, played an outstanding role in preserving and stirring up interest in the Western products. Authorities tried to suppress these markets repeatedly. As for the thirst for information of Timișoara's middle class citizens, one can remark that they had often watched the Belgrade, Novi-Sad and Budapest television broadcasts. They used to manufacture special antennas in order to intercept the TV programs from the neighboring countries.

The Rejection of the Closed Society

The elite was educated in the old spirit of the city; in other words, it became the fruit of the local habitat. It was not idealized by the masses, nor did it try to impose itself as a model. Its sense of normality was surprising compared to the behavior of the intellectuals in other towns, or cities of Romania. The Timișoara elite still preserved some of the characteristics of the Central European intelligentsia.⁵ That explains why the Bucharest authorities expressed a kind of reserve for the values of this city, an attitude which continued to be manifested even after the regime changes in December 1989. Undoubtedly, the cultural elite of Timișoara did not benefit from an extensive promotion in the national media. It was due to the fact that the Banat County, as a border region, had uncontrollable contacts with its Central European neighbors. Moreover, the Banat has been populated by minority groups, too, to whom the authorities have always looked with a constant suspicion.⁶ In the latter sense, the surveillance of the Hungarian, German, Jewish and even Serbian communities was notorious. It could be demonstrated, however, that a kind of decent living was possible as a result of the civic environment of Timișoara.

The communists aimed at indoctrinating the population with a different ideology than that of the liberal bourgeoisie. There were, however, many examples that certified that they did not succeed in their endeavor. Why did they fail? On the one hand, the preservation of a Central European state of civilization, deriving from the 18th century Austrian cosmopolitanism, made possible the coexistence of the traditional communities of Timișoara, namely the German, Hungarian, Romanian, Serbian and Jewish ones. On the other hand, the intercultural and the inter-confessional phenomena in the region explain the inhabitants' rejection of the ghetto-life and the idea of the purity of origins. Moreover they expressed a greater reserve for the traditionalist ethnic policies⁷ of the official ideologists which built on the background of the dictatorial regimes of Antonescu in the '40s, and later of Ceaușescu. The perpetuation of the urban habit of association and setting up new social segments willing to adapt themselves to the changes which occurred in post WWII Europe, made the survival of the civic society possible. Like the cities of Lemberg or Cernăuți, Timișoara has been a pre-eminently intercultural city, where -- unlike the neighboring regions -- the ethnic barriers have not been relevant. An important question that could be raised is: how has the civic culture been preserved and also how has it been able to contribute to the political transformation of 1989? A few distinctive phenomena took place in Timișoara during Ceaușescu's rule which represented an avant-garde in the content of ideas. The cultural activities implicitly or explicitly were carrying the touches of nonconformism and of a hidden protest. A way of

freethinking was developed due to some intellectual and artistic societies and also to social-communitarian ones. Among them -- the *Sigma Group*, the *Aktionsgruppe Banat* of the German language writers, Professor Eduard Pamfil's *Bionics Club*, the multilingual society within the Writers' *Association*, the inter-confessional reunions, cinema halls and the *Phoenix* band – were outstanding for their activities. They all expressed dissatisfaction and critiques of the regime, namely, the rejection of the “wooden tongue” and of the totalitarian ideology.

The European Synchronization

The *Sigma Group* represented a vanguard movement in the Romanian art, as it offered new understanding and definition of the world, by appealing to the industrial aesthetics, marketing, industrial geometry, complementary colors, design, descriptive geometry, and bionic study. Iosif Király, an alumnus of the Art School of Timișoara, where the *Sigma Group* members used to teach, introduced us to these elements in the Timișoara of the '60s, when the intellectuals were concerned rather with the act of inward creation than with the past.

“In fact” — he confesses — “we had no spare time for the past; the present was so eventful, we were living each moment with such an intensity that there was no more room for anything else. Art and culture were produced right under our eyes”.

The high school students were reading not only Sartre, Kafka, Joyce, Ionesco, and Hesse, but also an avant-garde literature in the field of the social sciences written by Marshal McLuhan, Alvin Tofler or Nicholas Schoffer. They were listening to music by Shostakovici, Schönberg, Bartók or Stravinski. The environment was a stimulating one, the students were being treated by their teachers as peers; this fact gave them a feeling that they could walk shoulder to shoulder with their teachers to new horizons. Stimulated by art motion pictures, foreign books and journals, by lectures on the history of arts and the study of the visual languages, they also discovered the activity of the *Sigma Group* in the neighborhood. The group's influence was so powerful — Király says — that their disciples set up their own artistic workshops, where they would debate the philosophical issues concerning the contemporary world.⁸ The students' exhibition of 1976 at the *Kalinderu Gallery* in Bucharest was to confirm the existence of a prestigious workshop without comparison in Romania at the time. An art critic compared the student exhibition in Timișoara with “a living ensemble, open, caught unguarded in full swing, in full development. The dense atmosphere of a balanced respect for tradition floated above it, along with the spirit of the sober and courageous experiment, free from any prejudices or other snobbish claim.”⁹ The critic also noticed with indignation that the exhibition was not advertised even though the works could have given birth to a genuine emulation. It was clear that the Timișoara Art High School was unique among the art schools in Romania, therefore the question arose about which art faculties were prepared to take in such graduates.

The *Sigma Group* — set up around Ștefan Bertalan and Constantin Flondor, also including famous artists such as: Doru Tulcan, Molnár Zoltán, Diet Sayler — has become a reference point not only in the field of the arts, where it decisively contributed to the renewal of the language of the fine arts, but also in the field of ideological debates. The wish for a renewal was obvious with all these artists. That is why, in the '60s, they became the promoters of a way of communication different from the communist-dictated one.¹⁰ The various subjects put forward, the artistic education striving for open systems, the study of nature, the outrunning of the established forms,

and the introduction of experimental study, all this made possible the evolution of a special environment in the cultural milieu of Timișoara. The group's preoccupations speak about a dynamic universe, about their intention to stimulate a permanent public dialogue. The emphasis on the personal experiences of each of the artists' who belonged to the *Sigma Group* or was influenced by it, is to be noted. The existence of an *avant la lettre* constructivism was to impress the experts and the public at the Nürnberg biannual exhibition in 1969 and indicated not only participation at an international artistic forum, but also a real European synchronization of the Timișoara group. The way art started an authentic dialogue with science gathered positive comments from the most authoritative critics in Romania and abroad. *Sigma* was not only a symbol of authenticity, but also a team spirit such as had never been seen in other intellectual clubs in Romania. Such a milieu bespoke a cultural and social confrontation, and it soon showed up.

Eduard Pamfil: The Aspiration for a Gradual Reconstruction of the Civil Society

Professor Eduard Pamfil was the coordinator of the psychiatry seminars in Timișoara, and he also conducted the *Bionics Club* to which artists, musicians, philologists, historians, mathematicians and philosophers belonged. This club set up a genuine ritual of ideas, fruitful debates and non-conformist theories. The meeting between the painter, Ștefan Bertalan — the initiator and animator of the *Sigma Group* — and Eduard Pamfil was symbolic for the creative milieu of the city.

Pamfil's ideas expressed an ideal way of communication between the emotional and the intellectual sides of the human being.

“Bertalan is” — Pamfil used to say, thus defining himself, too — “a champion of anti-conformism. All the things, all the gestures, all the speeches that can end in a comfortable and placid way are safely avoided, if not even unbearable for him [...]; everything he does is touched by his wish of being an entity striving for something, nourished by the continuous stress of being dissatisfied with himself.”¹¹

The civic education he had got in his family and in the Paris school that he attended right after the war, made Professor Eduard Pamfil one of the primary reference points for many generations of young people who approached the values of humanity. Pamfil's political ideas were stimulated by his scientific and philosophical results. He did not have followers, as did other philosophers had in Eastern Europe, particularly in Czechoslovakia, Hungary or Poland. The role of his criticism of the totalitarian political system, in various occasions, had not always been really understood, but it stimulated his thinking with the aim of finding its way out from under the influence of the neo-Stalinist dogmatism. He had the same tendency to gradually reconstruct civic society just as had the Czech, Polish and Hungarian dissidents. He referred to them whenever he could, however, without succeeding to start a proper movement of protest. His refined speeches on the occasion of his numerous lectures, and his analyzes of the social phenomena, gave evidence of his deep understanding of the world. The support he offered to all those who were persecuted by the regime was substantial. The Psychiatric Clinic of Timișoara and the Psychiatric Hospital of Gătaia had already been a refuge for the protesters to the communist regime, for the so-called misfits and for those who had the courage to oppose the anti-human measures of the Ceaușescu's. He became a model simply because he succeeded to communicate in a language that was completely liberated from commitment to the totalitarian ideology. Professor Pamfil was a keen supporter of the

European orientation in culture, and he was against the traditionalist trend imposed by the media and educational system. He was involved in the city's life more deeply than any scholar. His presence in the literary milieu, at art exhibitions and in the concert halls, gave him the opportunity to form genuine cultural clubs and to speed up the process of forming the individual. Eduard Pamfil was the symbol of morality which could not be doubted, not even by his enemies. This was the reason why the clubs he initiated preserved not only a civic attitude, but, above all, a way of reflecting normality.

The Rejection of the Totalitarian System

In addition to the previously mentioned groups, the *Universitas* think-tank was set up affiliated to the Student House of Culture. It was known also under the name of *Aktionsgruppe Banat* [The Banat Action Group]. More directly related to the contemporary social and political problems, very soon the group turned to a championing rejection of the official ideology. It was made up of young writers of German language; among them, Gerhardt Ortian, William Totok, Richard Wagner, Ernest Wichner, Anton Sterbling, Rolf Bossert, Anton Bohn, Werner Kremm and Johan Lippet, are worth remembering. This society was intensely active during the first half of the '80s. The texts written by its members in Romanian and German were published in various periodicals in the cities of Timișoara, Brașov, Sibiu, Cluj and Bucharest. The group was well informed on trends in world literature and, also, on the political ideas in Germany and Austria. The pacifism of the "beat" generation marked the group members profoundly. They had been well educated and analyzed seriously the newspapers and journals of the time, the legal system and Ceaușescu's discourse, in order to understand the main trend in Romanian policy. The group was at times criticized by the official cultural media. It soon drew the attention of the *Securitate*, the political police. Under suspicion since early '70s, *Aktionsgruppe Banat* was accused of plotting against the communist regime. The young German writers published or read in public poems and essays with a content that denounced the substance and nature of the existing regime. Many of poems read in the *Universitas* Society (*Aktionsgruppe Banat*) suggested the group's anti-communist attitude. These included *Entscheidungsfragen bei einem Macht-Prozess* [Decisive Issues in a Trial of the System], *Mit Chile im Herzen* [With Chile in Our Hearts], *Allerhand aus einem Modejournal, das ziemlich teuer und kulturausgerichtet ist* [Various Matters in a Rather Expensive Fashion Magazine Whit Cultural Biases]. In fact, their author, William Totok, was one of the most suspected and harassed members of *Aktionsgruppe Banat*, and finally was sent to prison.¹²

The group played an outstanding role in the development of opposition against the totalitarian system. Both conformism and opportunism were rejected alike, but as the historian, Peter Motzan, noted there were both polemic and prescriptive commitments in the activist and participative lyricism of these poets. The presence of Richard Wagner and Rolf Bossert, of William Totok's reflections and questions, of the family saga transposed in ample and detailed narration, and of the questioning of the past from perspective of the present (as in Johann Lippet's case), all this demonstrated how this group focused on a reality that aspired to be ideal. Everything *Aktionsgruppe* did was a proof of detachment from political exhibitionism encouraged by the totalitarian national-communist system. The communist authorities suspected the Romanian Germans of entering into conflict with the government. This served as their pretext for opposing the protest attitude of the German writers of Timișoara.

In fact, this was another reason to encourage and speed up the emigration of this minority to Germany. It is worth remembering that some members of the *Aktionsgruppe Banat* claimed

affiliation to Marxist ideology, though the Romanian national-communism had nothing in common with Marx. Moreover, it was the period when the Ceaușescu regime was approaching the extreme-right orientation through chauvinist, racial, and anti-Semitic behaviors. Some newspapers in the Federal Republic of Germany reported about the dissidence of the German language writers in Timișoara, and expressed their astonishment to find out that, in a communist country like Romania even the Marxist writers were interdicted. Under the title *Kulturpolitik mit Polizeieinsatz. Marxistische Rumäniendeutsche stören die revolutionäre Ruhe ihres "sozialistischen" Staates* [Cultural Policy and Police Repression: The German Marxists of Romania Disrupt the Revolutionary Peace of their "Socialist" Country],¹³ Dieter Schlesak described the paradoxical situation when not only were some writers silenced in a communist state because of their Marxist ideas, but even the doctrine-oriented debates were forbidden. *Aktionsgruppe Banat* criticized the populism of Ceaușescu's propaganda that distorted the Romanian realities.

Although the activity of the Society died out after a few years, its merit lay in the fact that it defended the dignity not only of its members, but also of a city prosecuted by the authorities particularly because of its cosmopolitan orientation. *Aktionsgruppe Banat* was very active in city life during 1972-1975, but its initiatives did not move the civil society to demonstrate against the social order. Still the German writers showed that a way of opposing the system was possible becoming an example for their fellow-citizens. A few years later, Petru Ilieșu — one of the best-known and appreciated poets of the '80s — was influenced by the ideas of the German group in Timișoara. His outlook, similar to that of his generation, was fed by his contact with the world of music. In charge of the Music and Dance club at the Student House during his student years, he was influenced by Western rock music. Consequently, in 1982 Ilieșu conceived a protest manifesto against Ceaușescu's regime. It included such slogans as: "Down the Criminal Ceaușescu!", "Down the Communist Party!" which were repeated also by the poet, Alexandru Gavriliu. Soon arrested after went public with his protest, Ilieșu was questioned and later set free through the intervention of Nikolaus Berwanger,¹⁴ the ex-editor-in chief of the German newspaper. Once more, the population could see that beside the subservience imposed by the regime, an attitude of protest was possible.

The Phoenix Band: A Spokesperson for the Younger Generation

Among the cultural events with great impact on the youth was the *Phoenix* band. There is almost a consensus that this rock band contributed one of the strongest forces of social cohesions in Timișoara and had a positive echo all around Romania. *Phoenix* was a symbol of the people of Timișoara, particularly of the younger generation, which grew up in the cultural and artistic environment of the city. It was a multicultural group whose members were Romanian, German, Hungarian, Serbian and Jewish musicians. The band became distinctive because of its sharp perception of the social and political realities. The lyrics they sang were manifestos of the young generation: protests against indoctrination and against mediocrity. The group found its own style, and cultivated a proper view of the interaction of the area with the European culture. In the '60s, *Phoenix* was inspired by the musical and photographic themes of the hippy movement. "The popular ideas, the Bohemian mentality and the picturesque aspect of the representatives of the peaceful *flower power* rebellion fascinated us" — Nicu Covaci, the leader of the group, remembers.

“We were convinced that that was the way; any young man who desired to free himself from the false morality and narrow mindedness of the leaders, had to follow it. Some radio stations were forbidden, some art and music magazines or even journals from the West were considered decadent and were forbidden as well. The censorship was even more obvious and more powerful in the whole of cultural and social life. All this was trying to turn aside the dynamic flow of change which had become evident. But those who were struck by the virus of liberty were able to cross the barriers and find the information they wanted. Each issue of “Bravo”, “Musical Express” or “Rolling Stones” was read hundred of times, devoured by excited young people who were trying to identify with their idols.”¹⁵

The period of the ‘60s, coincided with endless searching for identity, and also for ways to appeal to the audience. The songs expressed the thoughts and feelings of a generation which, mocking the stereotypes, strove for free expression. *Phoenix* showed that in Timișoara a movement of the young people who spoke their minds and ignored formalism was born.

The challenges of the generation, whose spokesperson was the band of Nicu Covaci, Florin Bordeianu, Josef Kappl, Mircea Baniciu, Günter Reininger and Béla Kamocsa, became a real problem for the authorities. The surveillance of *Phoenix* became the responsibility of all institutions in charge of propaganda in the county of Timiș and the city of Timișoara. The non-conformist conduct of the band’s members, their clothes, and the new type of social relationship they promoted, i.e. the lack of inhibition before the authorities, created a new atmosphere in many social milieus. The lyrics of their songs were also the work of some writers who grew up in the academic environment of Timișoara, among them, Victor Cârțu, Șerban Foartă and Andrei Ujică are the most representative ones. There was a kind of communication between those who wrote the lyrics, the musicians and the audience, which reflected a hidden revolt against the communist authorities, against the marginal condition of the younger generation, and against all those who were trying to forbid the right to look at the Western world. *Phoenix* was a distinctive cultural and social landmark due to which a special attitude in the post-war Timișoara was possible. For Timișoara *Phoenix* constituted a continuous mocking of the communist authority, and multiplied the number of young people who later were to contradict the official ideology. In the ‘60s through ‘70s a new generation emerged which did not have many things in common with the communist party.

The leader of the *Phoenix* band was right when he remembered that very few people believed in the communist slogans during that period. “Only the schmucks, whom I instinctively disregarded, were still flapping their mouths and wanted to convince people why they did not believe in themselves”, Covaci used to say. However, the idea of communism continued to be at work in various social strata, often with personal interests being much more predominant than the sincere attachment to the ideology. Verticality thrived in the Timișoara milieu, and the *Phoenix* band encouraged it in each of its concerts. The visionary side of the songs proved that the band did a political job by keeping awake the consciousness of the people who faced a system that falsified values. The stress was put on the Romanian folklore inspired songs — which Nicu Covaci and some music critics considered important in the band’s destiny. The option was also an ideological one, a compromise willy-nilly with the communist system which became again reflected by nationalist ideals. It was not the only successful farce of Ceaușescu’s regime, but it was one of the slickest, and its consequences lasted for a long time.

The Echo of the Hungarian Revolution of 1956

Every culture influences smaller or larger social groups. As was demonstrated, these were means of protection against the abuse of the totalitarian system. However there were some instances in Timișoara when the society adopted an explicit political orientation and took a stand against the domestic communist regime or against Soviet domination which extended over the countries in the whole East-Central European area. The phenomenon of rejection of the extreme-left ideology was much more obvious inasmuch as the very low salaries, ideological lies, controlled and centralized economy, and absence of organization menaced the very biological existence of the people of Banat who used to have higher living standards compared to that of the population in some other regions of Romania. In 1956, the citizens of Timișoara, Lugoj, Arad, Reșița -- workers, civil servants and students -- protested against the Soviet invasion in Hungary. Their solidarity with the Hungarian revolutionaries was so strong that, at a certain moment — i.e. the last week of October and the first week of November — it seemed that such manifestations were out of the communist authorities' control. The revolution that would happen three decades later appeared ready to start in western Romania. Manifestos were spread all over the country, with the following messages: "We are against the USSR", "We don't want to learn Russian" and "Bring down Georghiu-Dej and his clique of parvenus!", "We struggle for a better life and freedom!", "Students, fight against the intervention in Hungary of the butchers from Kremlin!", "Well done, Hungarians!", "Freedom must come to Hungary and soon will come here, too!". The example of the actions initiated by the students from the Medical and Pharmaceutical School in 1948, but mainly the civic conscience of the students of the Polytechnic Institute who, in October-November 1956, had the courage to organize protests and to formulate anti-totalitarian claims similar to those of the revolutionaries in Budapest, demonstrate that the citizens of Timișoara were not indifferent to the social order, Soviet pressure, and humiliation before Moscow, which was deciding the level of life.

The Hungarian revolution of 1956 had huge impact on the academic milieu of Timișoara, many belonging to other social strata who spread detailed information about what was going on in Budapest alarmed the communist executive of the region and the government. The movement organizers, namely Teodor Stanca, Aurel Baghiu, Friedrich Barth, Ladislau Nagy, Aurelian Păuna, Nicolae Balaci, Gheorghe Pop and Caius Muțiu, reflected a very deep understanding of the problems the East-Central European world was confronting with, and particularly those of Romania. The above-mentioned organizers were the messengers of a great social discontent.¹⁶ The Students instigated similar actions to those in Hungary, and conceived memoirs with a social-democratic content. They became also interested in the relationship between the Hungarian and Polish actions, thus manifesting remarkable political consciousness. The rejection of the Soviet domination and the intervention of the Russian army were topics often debated by the students of the Polytechnic Institute of Timișoara. The starting point of the anticommunist actions was the discontent regarding the subordination of the East-Central European countries to the system imposed by the Russians. Due to the military intervention in Hungary it was for the first time that this was properly perceived by thousands of people. The shortcomings of the Bucharest communist regime, the false news which spread by the central press and which contradicted all that was going on in the neighboring country was discussed.

The information received from *Radio Kossuth* became the main credible source regarding the revolutionary actions in the Hungarian capital. Because Timișoara was situated near the border, it had many who spoke Hungarian and news about the events in Hungary spread quickly. The protesting students of Timișoara put in their memories calls against the substance of the communist

totalitarian system, namely: abolishing the cult of personality; the rational development of the economic sectors; establishment of commercial relationships with all interested governments, the capitalist ones included; withdrawal of the Soviet troops settled on the Romanian territory; and that the country be governed according to its interests and decent living conditions.

The trial which followed the students' movements shows the worries of the Gheorghiu Dej regime concerning the events in the capital city of Banat, Timișoara. The Court of Justice concluded that the students had tried to start a full movement, similar to the one in Hungary, and it seemed that this was so. The leaders of the Timișoara movement were sentenced each to eight, six and four years, respectively of "correctional prison" according to the decision of the Military Court. There was also a second group of students sentenced according to the same arbitrary verdict. One of the punitive measures of the government against the students of Timișoara was to forbid any kind of association. In spite of this order, a great variety of cultural and civic societies were born shortly after the events. Although surveillance was tougher, the organizers found new stratagems.

The Need to Change the Social Order

In the '60s and '80s, the discontent of the civic society materialized in clandestine emigrations, in novels and poems which contained a hidden criticism of the Ceaușescu regime, in the research of some subjects (in the field of social studies) who were in disagreement with the officials, and in the refusal of some courageous citizens to enlist and accept the ideology of the system. In spite of all this and the population's effort to resist a social order which was destroying the individual day by day, one cannot state that there was an organized project and plan to set-up a new administration for a democratic regime before 1989 in the social and intellectual milieus of Timișoara. The representatives of the civic society limited themselves to sporadic appeals and did not succeed in proposing a political alternative. Did they lack pragmatism or the courage to go all the way? Both, I think. Perhaps the absence of a systematic preoccupation for political problems forbidden in any training institution for decades was the real cause.

Despite the numerous evidences of the civic cultural activities in Timișoara in the communist period, it is obvious that there was no democratic opposition similar to the "Charter 77" of Czechoslovakia, the *Solidarność* (Solidarity) Union of Poland, and the dissident intellectuals of Hungary. In addition, the condition of a secondary city inside the country and the absence of any local autonomy hindered the genesis and co-ordination of a movement similar to that in the neighboring countries. In spite of the above-mentioned shortcomings, Timișoara became the first city of Romania in which most of its population was aware of the need to change Ceaușescu and the communist rule.

The protest of the Hungarian Reverend Tőkés László against the destruction of the villages in Transylvania was well received by the local population. His dissident activity began in 1981-82 with the clandestine periodical "Ellenpontok" and continued up to the end of the '80s as the head of the Calvinist Church in Timișoara. Unlike some other dissidents, Tőkés was encouraged by the ability and availability of the Hungarian authorities and press, which explains the unique character of the actions in the area of Timișoara. The opposition of the congregation on December 15th and 16th, 1989 against the attempt to remove Reverend Tőkés was the key moment which started the great revolt against Ceaușescu's regime. The protest of the Calvinist congregation was received and assured by a significant segment of the city's population which understood that the sufferings of the minority (the Hungarians) were similar with those of the majority (the Romanians). His

house surveillance on December 15th had turned into the great anti-Ceaușescu and anticommunist demonstration during the following days.¹⁷ The *Securitate* political police promoted and supported tense relationships with the neighboring countries, mainly Hungary. The western part of Romania, especially Timișoara was under continuous surveillance. Among the measures constantly promoted by the authorities was the cultivation of suspicion at the level of interpersonal and inter-confessional relationships as well as an attempt to compromise the peaceful cohabitation of the Romanian majority with the German, Hungarian, Serbian and Jewish minorities. In spite of this pressure that had lasted for decades, what happened in Timișoara in December 1989 was a landmark for the contemporary history of East-Central Europe. The civil society of this old city was not completely destroyed and this could generate the feeling of solidarity and the incendiary demonstrations which decisively contributed to the change of the social and political order.

Notes

1. According to Gusztáv Molnár, “Problema transilvană” [The Transylvania Issue], in *Altera* (Tîrgu-Mureș: Liga Pro-Europa, 1998), no.8, pp. 42-67.

2. Sármany Parsons, “Die Rahmenbedingungen für die Moderne in der Ungarischen Provinzstädten um die Jahrhundertwende”, in Andrei Corbea-Hoișie, J. Le Rider (eds.) *Metropole und Provinzen in Altösterreich* (Iași: Polirom – Vienna: Böhlau, 1996).

3. According to Victor Neumann, *Multicultural Identities in the Europe of Regions. The Case of Banat County*, public lecture given at the Institute for Advanced Study/ Collegium Budapest on February 22, 1996; published in Discussion Papers Series, no.34, September 1996; and F. Liebhardt, *Banater Mosaik. Beiträge zur Kulturgeschichte* (Bucharest: Kriterion, 1996).

4. The centralist policy in Romania during 1990-1996, accompanied by a nationalist discourse, delayed economic reform. Lately the city has gone through many changes. The multicultural configuration was considerably modified since many families belonging to the German, Hungarian and Jewish communities emigrated. The civic culture was deeply affected because the city was populated with newcomers from the countryside and from more backward regions in comparison with the Banat-Transylvania area.

5. See Ion Nicolae Anghel, *Cartea cu Pamfil* [The Book with Pamfil] (Timișoara: Amarcord, 1996).

6. See William Totok, *Aprecieri neretușate. Eseuri, articole și interviuri 1987-1994* [Unretouched Appreciations: Essays, Articles and Interviews], (Iași: Universitatea Al.I.Cuza, 1995); and Victor Neumann, “Ebrei dopo diluvio. Gli orfani della Mitteleuropa”, in *Lettera Internazionale*, (Rome, 1997), No. 54, pp. 62-64.

7. The traditionalist or nationalist option is characterized by advocating Herder’s *Volksgeist* idea according to which the progress of the linguistic communities depends on the adoption of a socio-organic model. This nationalism pays great attention to the native values created in the rural milieu. Such an ideology – always conservative, often xenophobic and anti-Semite – had many partisans in the states of the East and Central Europe.

8. See I. Király’s story in Ileana Pintilie, Ștefan Bertalan, Constantin Flondor and Doru Tulcan (eds.) *Creație și sincronism european. Mișcarea artistică timișoreană a anilor ‘60-‘70* [European Creation and Synchronism. The Artistic Movement in Timișoara of the 60s-70s], (Timișoara: The Art Museum, 1991).

9. See Andrei Pleșu’s article: “Un liceu de arta plastică și câteva întrebări” [An Arts Highschool and a Few Questions], in Ileana Pintilie, Ștefan Bertalan, Constantin Flondor and Doru

Tulcan (eds.) *Creație și sincronism european. Mișcarea artistică timișoreana a anilor '60-'70* [European Creation and Synchronism. The Artistic Movement in Timișoara of the 60s-70s], (Timișoara: The Art Museum, 1991).

10. Ileana Pintilie, "Punctele cardinale ale mișcării artistice timișorene 1960-1996" [The Cardinal Points of the Artistic Movement in Timișoara] in: *Experiment in arta românească după 1960* [Experiment in the Romanian Art after 1960], (București: The Soros Center for Contemporary Art, 1997).

11. Ion Nicolae Anghel, *op.cit.*

12. William Totok, *op.cit.* William Totok, the dissident, the documents of the local *Securitate* show that he was charged because he promoted a bourgeoisie ideology in his poems and favored distrust for the law and for the totalitarian rule of Romania. According to his criminal record, file no. 2899 of 1975 by the above-mentioned police he was arrested for the offense of "propaganda against the socialist order".

13. Dieter Schlesak, "Kulturpolitik mit Polizeieinsatz. Marxistische Rumäniendeutsche störe die revolutionäre Ruhe ihres <<sozialistische>> Staates", in *Frankfurter Rundschau* of July 10, 1976.

14. Nikolaus Berwanger, German journalist and poet, represented all the minorities of Romania in the Central Committee of the Romanian Communist Party. In spite of his collaboration with the regime, he had great merits, such as having really protected many persons. The newspaper he edited for many years was the most liberal of all in Timișoara during the hard times of Ceaușescu regime.

15. Nicu Covaci, *Phoenix însă eu ...* [Phoenix, But Me...], (Bucharest: Nemira, 1994), p. 115.

16. According to M. Sitaru, *Rezistența anticomunistă. Timișoara 1956* [The Anti-Communist Resistance. Timișoara 1956], (Bucharest: Sophia, 1998); and T. Stanca, "Timișoara 1956. Filmul evenimentelor. Am fost printre organizatorii mișcării studențești" [Timișoara 1956. The Story of the Events. I Was One of the Organizers of the Students' Unrest], in : 22 Review, (Bucharest, 1990), II, nr.44. See also A. Baghiu, "Memoriul studenților timișoreni din 1956. Cum a fost reprimată prima revoltă împotriva comunismului" [The memorial of the Timișoara students of 1956. How the first revolt against communism was suppressed], in: Timișoara Review (Timișoara, 1990), I, nr.124.

17. Denis Deletant, *România sub regimul comunist* [Romania under the Communist Rule] (Bucharest: Fundația Academia Civică, 1997).

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Political Changes in 1989 Romania: Between Words and Reality

The historical past of the areas situated at the confluence of Eastern and Southeastern Europe demonstrate that the cultural and political thought interaction and unity have always been matched by diversity. This peculiar situation calls for a thorough analysis to consider local and regional factors, the evolution of the respective communities under multinational state administrations, the process of formation of the identities, and last but not least the interests of the smaller or larger groups. From this viewpoint, Romania has some distinctive features as compared to other states in the above-mentioned area. Firstly, her modernization was influenced by France in the Old Kingdom, and by the former Austrian empire in the regions of Transylvania, Banat and Bukovina. Secondly, the formation of Romanian national consciousness reflects the political thinking promoted by Herder and Hegel, namely the German model. A third aspect is the Byzantine-Orthodox legacy, which is hardly compatible with the western Catholic, let alone the northern Protestant, traditions. Last but not least, the traditions and the everyday way of living, shaped for centuries by the Turkish influence and which often came in contradiction with those under the Viennese influence, could never be totally overcome in Romania even after more than a century as an independent state.

The beginning of Romanian modernity coincides with the effort to become part of European culture. To be more specific, while the Wallachian and Moldavian intelligentsia adopted the European cultural and political-administrative models and the Western values, while studying in Paris during the middle of the 19th century, the Romanian speaking Transylvanian and Banatian intelligentsias adopted the civil and political culture professed in the Austro-Hungarian Empire from 1880 to 1914. What are the differences between the French and the Austrian models?

Romania did not have an educational system that was shared and largely accessible. Hence, the various social strata had different ways of speaking. There was faulty communication between the urban and the rural milieus, between creators and receivers, between the cultural circles and those who aspire to them. This was due to the parallel assimilation of history, to different family experiences from one case to another and from one region to another, to the uncritical acceptance of the past ideologies, and especially to the “elitism” of a self-sufficient elite which for decades rejected the goals of the social pedagogy.

The Issue of Terminology

Thus far the analyses of the December 1989 has brought more controversy than understanding. Though the above introduction is necessary, I will approach the topic from a different perspective in order to circumvent the risk of partisan interpretations. The efforts of social scientists to provide acceptable concepts and discourses should not be ignored, especially when the past is at stake. I prefer a theoretical approach, conceived not so much with the mechanism of overthrowing the dictatorship than with epic of the events. Hence, I do not go into the details of the conflicts, nor discuss the circumstances under which people disappeared or at whose command the demonstrators were repressed. Rather, I was very interested in the extent to which changes of December 1989 could be defined through the term: “revolution”. This approach has as reference point the data selected in function of their importance to understanding the truth. From “incomplete revolution” to “entangled revolution”, from “popular uprising” to “*coup d'etat*”, an impressive

number of interpretations have been given to what happened at the end of 1989 in Romania. None seems satisfying; at any rate, I do not believe that any can cover, fully and credibly, the phenomenon, taking into account history and sociology.

The description of the events must be matched by an evaluation of the phenomena in the past and an unambiguous terminology. Only in this way would any type of definition of an event be possible. One cannot use the term “street gathering” instead of “revolution”, or “revolution” instead of “popular uprising”. The meanings of the words used in an analysis should not be allowed to drift. If interpretations do not follow some minimal rules, inaccuracy might overwhelm the reader leading to mistaking the fictitious for the real. Mixing truth and circumstantial fantasy wonderfully helps *ad-hoc* ideologies, confusing people, and atomizing society. Even whenever the documentation is rich and directly linked to the event, or whenever description and the awareness of the facts seem to meet the reader's expectations halfway, a correct understanding of terminology is necessary. Reinhart Koselleck -- the historian who began a recent trend in Germany and considerably improved the tools for historical discourse -- believes that the research on concepts has become a minimal condition of historical knowledge, and that history is a field of human societal evolution.¹

It is useful deciding the universally accepted meaning of the term “revolution”. The historian, sociologist, philosopher and political scientist understand “revolution” as a complete change of administrative structures and of the political ruling power, which implies a majority of the social group aspiring to the radical change of a system. I believe that many of us know, or at least accept, on the ground of rational explanation of the contents, that a revolution also implies a well-articulated program, a group of political leaders able to take over central or local power, and a long training in the theory of radical change. I shall try to explain the political phenomenon of December 1989 starting with the question: was there or was there not a “revolution” in Romania? Compelling a term to cover the sum of events only partially uncovered so far is a most strenuous task.

The Popular Uprising of Timișoara

What can be ascertained if we look to the Timișoara of that moment? What can be found about what happened in Bucharest in the same December 1989? We can remark that a civil society, incredibly well preserved under the dictatorship, existed in Timișoara. There also existed a civic attitude created by clubs and groups of writers and scientists in the capital city of Banat region. I described in the second study of this book how years before '89 the *Phoenix* rock band had generated a non-conformist attitude and opposition to the regime among the younger generation. I also presented how the Mehala flea market -- where free trade was practiced and merchandise approximated Western standards -- had a considerable role in reinforcing silent opposition to the communist regime. I noted the beneficial impact of the media in neighboring countries (i.e. Yugoslavia and Hungary) inciting the discontent of the people in Timișoara. The *Aktionsgruppe Banat* -- the group of the German writers -- were a landmark of civic anti-totalitarianism in the 1970's Timișoara, unique in the nationalist-communist Romania.

Was such a state of spirit -- let us call it “unfavorable” to the dictator and inducing seething protest -- to cause a revolution? Did there exist a group that, in the 1980s, might have prepared the ideas necessary for a revolutionary program, other than the manifestos written by a few brave people such as poet Petru Ilieșu? Were there identifiable leaders, able to take over local power, as a professional alternative to the Communist Party staff of dilettanti? I do not believe that there existed an intelligentsia, a lab where the great ideas of the 1970s-80s, as expressed by *Charter*

'77 in Czechoslovakia, or *Solidarnosc* (Solidarity) in Poland, could have been processed. Evidence that Timișoara was inside the circuit of political ideas specific to Prague, Budapest or Warsaw is scant. There is enough explanation for the absence of such a group that could have helped to dub the December '89 events a "revolution".

In Timișoara we can speak about an ample movement against Ceaușescu's regime, as well as against totalitarianism. This firstly arose because of the wish for freedom and for a decent private and public life. The people in Timișoara proved their decision openly to protest against a regime incapable of realizing the economic and political management of the country. The great '89 uprising in Timișoara reflects such understanding. Timișoara became then the terrain of an authentic demonstration against Ceaușescu, a bourgh sending a beam of hope over Romania. Its inhabitants took the political power by surprise. The huge collective voice of the population sent a clear message of the need to remove the dictator. The most common slogans during the demonstration in the Opera Square, should reflect the ideas of the times. "Down with the dictator!", "We want freedom!", "We want our Christmas star, not this crazy Tsar!", "We want passports!", "Let him be judged here in Banat!". But nothing beyond simple change can be induced from them, no premeditation can be detected. The spontaneous protest movement suggests no prior leaders and projects carefully thought over in detail or at least in ideology. Protest focused on freedom should be valued as such, i.e. as an expression of a marvelous civic spirit that life is not worth living if one cannot speak his or her mind on the politics of the regime. But, no matter how valuable such things are, a truly revolutionary program or organization which could have led to basic change in the state administrative structure did not exist at the time.

What the people in Timișoara were waiting for was a reaction of other urban communities in Romania, especially in Bucharest. The time lag between the uprising in Timișoara and that in Bucharest testifies to the absence of a revolutionary project meant to overturn Ceaușescu, let alone the whole regime. It seems important here to note the obvious communist mechanism for isolating Timișoara from the rest of the country, as well as of forcefully repressing the movement. The scenario used in repressing the '87 uprising in Brașov was considered for Timișoara. All the more surprising was Ceaușescu's leaving for Iran, which seemed to suggest some ambiguity in the attitude of clan's close supporters. The communist structures in Bucharest seemed not quite to know how to react to the Timișoara uprising. It also seems rational to suppose that the dictator may have been misinformed by the communist milieus and the presidential staff as to what really happened in the capital city of the Banat.

Timișoara's provincial-city status had never allowed equal treatment with the capital, Bucharest, a fact proved also during the peaceful and somewhat democratic developments of the interwar period. It is characteristic of centralized regimes to exploit the remote provinces and run them through institutions appointed by the political power. Diplomatically or militarily to control any type of rebellion was a principle of an older strategy to which the national communist regime took no exception. And twelve years later it can be seen better and with less prejudiced that the problem of the minorities must be taken into account, the revolution in Timișoara was triggered in Maria Square, in front of the Hungarian Calvinist Church.² This topic called for continued attention upfront during the dictatorship, and powerfully echoed in the neighboring countries' media, as well as in the Western world. The Schwab-German population was in mass emigration, a fact very well known by the communist leaders.

The same could not be stated about the Hungarian minority in Timișoara, a population less numerous than the German one. The hostile action by an individual in some minority population would often be regarded as disloyalty to the Romanian nation-state. Reverend László Tókes's

protest was directed against Ceaușescu's projects meant to destroy the rural civilization in Transylvania. For ideological reasons the *Securitate* initiated the Reverend's surveillance in the spring of 1989. As a consequence, the core of the matter was Ceaușescu's opposition to the Hungarians in Transylvania and Banat, and to Hungary's more liberal politics. Such matters are not to be overlooked in an accurate understanding and identification of the political phenomenon. In solidarity with its Reverend, the Calvinist-Reformed community called for intervention, but the people of Timișoara reacted only in December '89: the mixed discontent of the religious community and of the society at large triggered the spontaneous uprising. In Maria Square, the vicarage of László Tőkés provided a flame, which the town dwellers extended over the whole city. It was a totally unexpected civic spirit on the part of the citizens that led the town December 16th to 21st.

This unexpected link, which made possible the broad popular uprising possible, was foreseen neither by the *Securitate*, nor by the ex-leaders who created in Bucharest a small circle of opponents led by Silviu Brucan and Ion Iliescu. This is seen from the letter of six ex-communist leaders, Brucan among them, broadcasted through the BBC and Radio Free Europe. It was a protest coming from inside the Communist Party against Ceaușescu's dictatorial policy. The signatories criticized Romania's economical situation, the country's isolation, the official politics regarding minorities and the dictator's nationalist orientation. However, it contained no reference to a plan aimed at replacing the dictator, nor hints as to the places where the popular uprisings should take place. As an author of the above-mentioned letter, and one who coordinated the December '89 political changes, Silviu Brucan was in no way connected to the uprising in Timișoara. One can conclude that neither the popular uprising, nor the institutional conflict in Bucharest can be directly connected with the events in Timișoara. There exists however a non-premeditated connection of the respective interests of the two cities. The movement in Bucharest, starting with the meeting at which Ceaușescu was driven away, saved Timișoara from an even more cruel repression. Once it happened this moment could promote a unity of ideals for a larger segment of the Romanian population. But nothing mentioned thus far is in any way characteristic of a revolution.

Philosopher Isaiah Berlin says that as long as social forces do not coordinate based on ideas, they remain "blind and vagrant."³ The nonexistence of anti-communist programs indicates, at least, inconsistency of action by the rebelling masses and by leaders entering the public stage after the initiation of the protest movement. That is how, instead of revolutionary ideas, reformist ones inspired by Gorbachev's orientation stole the stage rather than the trends promoted by Prague, Budapest and Warsaw. The facts speak for themselves: there were no previously trained leaders for a power takeover, and no articulate programs, based on the need for change of the communist regime. The appearance of Ion Iliescu and Silviu Brucan at the time when the popular uprising should be directed to some definite goal is well known. The ex-Communist leaders led the uprising; no revolution could be possible from such a background. Consistent with this interpretation is the unprepared state of the intelligentsia at that time and the impossibility of action against the background of dictatorship and close surveillance of the population by the *Securitate*.

The Uprising in Bucharest

Let us consider the facts. The popular uprising was triggered in Bucharest by Nicolae Ceaușescu's discourse delivered in the *Palatului* Square on December 21, 1989. The idea of organizing a meeting attended by large masses of people seemed to come from the dictator's staff. Ceaușescu wanted to temper the masses as a consequence of the Timișoara uprising which started

on December 16. He labeled the protesters as being traitors. The dictator's speech took no regard either for the discontent and the tragic situation in Timișoara, or for the state of mind of the Bucharest people in those days. Even a teenager might have found incredible his promises about better living conditions. Yet that was the time when great popular protest had to be quieted. Conflict between the army and the population developed at the crossroads and major squares of the capital. The citizens built barricades in defense against military repression. At the moment the state institutions in Bucharest – just like in Timișoara -- seemed uncertain about the need for such action and about how all that was to end, no matter how the protesters acted. Ceaușescu's abrupt desertion of the communist headquarters and departure by helicopter on December 22nd, suggests that either part of the military and political leaders had remained loyal in spite of the situations of the moment, or his personal guard military elite group betrayed him. For the latter, a possible argument could be that the dictator himself mentioned -- during the Tîrgoviște trial -- that he probably had been betrayed by some of the persons then acting as judges for he could recognize faces loyal to him up to December 22nd among the people in the room of his ad-hoc trial. No serious approach of such events can overlook this argument on the pretext that they belonged to the defeated and not the victor. What is striking us on the 22nd is not so much the massive protest as the jailing of the dictator by the communists. Both top military and reformed communists on the blacklist of the moment involved themselves in that jailing process which was to precede proper political changes.

The example of Victor Atanasie-Stănculescu (general in the Romanian Army close to Ceaușescu's) is major, if not singular. In an interview with Gelu Voican-Voiculescu⁴ (member of The National Salvation Front) he described the executions of the Ceaușescus after a brief trial in Tîrgoviște. This emphasizes the role, in fact the agreement, of the communist state institutions in the changes that were to come.

In fact, the anti-Ceaușist desiderata had been stated long before by Silviu Brucan and his partners in the famous letter already mentioned. The street protests in Timișoara seemed to have pressed the moment before its own time, which made the development of a coherent scenario even more difficult. When such statements are made, one should duly notice that the letter conceived by the six former communist leaders covered a number of the basic ideas. In reality, the reform program broadcasted on the national TV station came from outside the groups who had fought on barricades.⁵ The authors of the regime reform came into the spotlights under pressure from the street; they were the outcasts of the communist party, or at best, those acting in the second line. We shall never have enough evidence to untangle the web of larger or smaller details marking the trajectory of power as it passed from one hand to another. However, a part of such evidence has come into light in the past twelve years, and apt argument can support it.

Why did the new leaders come to the fore? It is all too possible that the support offered by the Communist Party, army and *Securitate* staff may have been decisive, once they took sides with the protesters in favor of replacement of those who held the power. Ion Iliescu – leader-to-be of National Salvation Front (FSN) – was presented by the national TV on the balcony of the Central Committee headquarters. He was seconded by Petre Roman (a name unknown at the time), a genuine surprise for the masses of people gathered in the Palace Square. Iliescu seemed to be a quick and acceptable political solution against the background of his relative popularity, based in the '70s when he was excluded from the top communist executive. He was well received in the provinces, as well, his name being invoked in Timișoara as a valid solution under the circumstances.

Beyond all this, in 1989 the Romanians had little knowledge about ideologies, which made it difficult for them to be pragmatic. Many citizens had become co-participants in the development of the events, expressing only a general wish in the media: let it be done with, the sooner the better. This explains how the left wing could take over the power, though not without violence -- immediately after Ceaușescu's arrest; the confused decision making; and the conflict among institutions and various actors of the old regime who intended to preserve their positions or even to get more important ones. Silviu Brucan once said that it would be difficult to prove that the popular uprising in December '89 had a political right wing character. This seems correct, for how else is one to understand that the calls for reform in Timișoara and Bucharest proved to have left wing political contents, and the co-ordination of the masses was done by reformed, ex-communist former leaders.

One Debatable Doctrinaire Topic: The Romanian Left Wing

The Romanian left wing is a topic which needs a thorough examination to define its limits against the background of the December '89 protest movement. To be more specific, I am considering the effort to redeem the Marxist political ideas, an attitude enhanced by Mikhail Gorbachev's political speeches and his *Perestroika* in the Soviet Union.

During the period 1985-1989 I happened to visit frequently homes and circles of former professors of Socialism in Romanian universities, of journalists active during the first communist decade, and also of authentic professors of Marxism. Thus I came to know about their direct or indirect relations with the Soviet Embassy in Bucharest and with the intelligentsia in Moscow. They circulated Russian media literature there, just as Hungarian, German and Serb media literature was circulated in Timișoara.

While in western Romania, the Belgrade and Budapest television broadcasts became the main source of the world news, in Bucharest, the Moscow television broadcast was one of the most creditable. There were cases, in such milieus when I learned how various ex-communist leaders related to one another, at times happening involuntarily to witness such meetings. It was easy enough to see how their knowledge and information came from the Moscow media of the time. Some of the people I am talking about had been in constant contact with Ion Iliescu, a fact which counted for bravery and could suggest disaffection from the dictatorship. Professor William Marin, told me of such encounters with Ion Iliescu and frequent talks on political topics, during the former's brief stay in Bucharest.⁶ A letter written after 1990, that I came to possess, testifies that William Marin, a former university professor in Timișoara, had been in contact with Ion Iliescu long before.

In the house of one of the FSN leaders-to-be, we had a long and open talk on political issues⁷ which revealed that in Romania of that time an attempt existed for at least an alternative to dictatorship. This was a ray of hope. On the other hand, I found intriguing the ideas that invariably propounded Moscow as a model, as well as the distance separating the world of the guests invited there from the world of authentic scholars. Then, it seemed important to me to discover that our respective university training and cultural backgrounds, which shaped our thought and ideological propensities, were so far apart. Various political concepts were circulated there, touched by the Marxist doctrine, which did not correspond to my Western-oriented views.

Somewhat different was the case of the professors of Marxism, or of the Marxist historians, I met at that time, yet who had placed themselves at a distance from the regime, the dictator and his personal dictatorship. They were valued for their work and able to articulate their thought into

some consistent doctrine, or at least, a decent vision of the contemporary panorama such as Henri Wald and Paul Cornea in Bucharest, David Prodan and Andrei Roth in Cluj. The impact of their reflections was imperceptible in the political milieu invoked above, but quite remarkable for the younger generation of intellectuals in search of pragmatic models and solutions. They seemed to have nothing in common with the people surrounding Ion Iliescu. The intelligentsia influenced by Gorbachev reflected exclusively ideological argument and highlighted impersonal forces found in all historical events.

A certain slyness of History made it possible for the communists trained and shaped in the '50s to enter a second time into the forefront of public life in Romania. Taking advantage of their expertise, of favorable political circumstances and of the ability to reform their discourse, they managed to advance the first reasonable political program for a post-Ceaușescu regime. Things were thought up in closed circles, in the absence of the genuine dissidents and in non-communication with the masses of people, which resulted in a trail of political confusion and tragic moments in December '89. Against the background of an almost non-existent political culture, or minimal freedom of expression -- a prerequisite for a critical spirit or a pro-democratic social layer -- I might reasonably state that no other type of transition could naturally have developed.

Were the ex-communists interested in preserving power after the dictator was removed? Today's panorama over the evolution of the Romanian political stage entitles us to state that the reformed communist left wing retained the privilege of ruling the state in the new configuration. Unfortunately, Romania had no creditable alternative to the communist group. As a protagonist of the December events, Brucan admitted to sheer evidence when he declared with panache: 'The train was in the station and we were the only ones who could get on. What were we to do, say no? So we climbed on.' The question is: how? The idea of overturning Ceaușescu was no secret, indeed, many knew about it at the time Gorbachev visited Romania. All the neighboring countries' events during the period 1985-1989 heralded the end of dictatorships, if not of communist regimes. The USSR -- as possessing the most conservative left wing -- understood the signs of the changing times once Gorbachev acceded to power. In Hungary, Czechoslovakia and Poland, forces antagonistic to the communist regimes had been built throughout the '80s, calling for the later defeat of communism. Romania lagged behind, because of Ceaușescu's rigid and closed system. Outer influences had become evident, both in their own way, Timișoara and Bucharest ranking first in absorbing them, as compared to other towns of the country. Under such circumstances, the theory of an international conspiracy is perfectly consistent with a nationalist interpretation, itself contrary to the political tendency in contemporary Europe.

Conspiracy or Coup d'Etat?

None of the great powers liked Ceaușescu's regime, and it happened that in international reunions the Romanian dictator would be disavowed. Direct or indirect encouragement of the few dissidents who existed was as real as the discouragement of Romania's state policy by many Western states. Romania's neighbors were truly worried by the preservation of an anarchical political system, and the USSR could not have agreed with Bucharest's anti-*Perestroika* policy. Yet, the tabloid journalists, so deft in political, diplomatic and military scripts, offered a different variant. Conspiracy was in vogue during dictatorship, and it continued in many milieus through the twelve years after Ceaușescu was gone.

This later approach was circulated not only by the extremist Greater Romania Party, but also by a part of the new opinion leaders, such as journalists, university faculty, writers, politicians,

and directors of institutes researching the communist totalitarianism. No wonder, therefore, that we read or hear about statements naming as the over-turners of the inconvenient Romanian dictator "the Westerners", "the Germans", "the Americans", the "NATO", the "IMF", or the "Roman-Catholic Church". In other variants, the "mafia" of the minority population is to be credited for the December '89 popular uprising. Let us remember the invectives around Tókés's action, or around the action related to the supposed role of the Jews, freemasons, Greek-Catholics and Gypsies in the political change of December '89. It may be duly noted that inventing inside and outside enemies was a concept familiar to Ceușescu's political doctrine, and also an old-time practice, specific to dictatorships and authoritative regimes. If brutal government and discriminatory doctrines are the means by which totalitarian spirits impose themselves, it is nonetheless true that the intention of reviving them is frequently met within the obscure circles of any democratic state.

In countries with a relatively poor pluralist experience, or where traditionalism is still in power -- as it is the case of Romania -- the "conspiracy paradigm"⁸ was quickly recovered after 1989. Anti-Western voices could be heard, and also the idea that the moral authors of the ex-dictator's murder were the Jews. "Ceaușescu was killed by a bunch of criminals [...] because he was a dignified Romanian, because he defied the Jews". Other fantasies show the perverted logic of the extremist national-communists, stating that the post-WWII dictatorship in Romania fell under the "freemason-Zionist coup in December 1989."⁹ One well-known champion of the above theory considers that Ceaușescu was overthrown following the action taken by irresistible forces, hostile to the Romanians.¹⁰

A group of authors speaks of a "revolutionary *coup d'etat*", meaning that a popular uprising and the *coup d'etat* overlapped and inter-conditioned each other.¹¹ While the popular uprising wanted to overthrow communism and return European values, the *coup* wanted to replace Ceaușescu. The uprising was spontaneous; the *coup* was premeditated months or even years before. The people rebelled non-violently while the conspirators "based themselves on violence". Finally, the former aspired to "economic normality, while the ideology of the *coup d'etat* meant to set up some *Perestroika* type measures following Gorbachev's model.¹² Definitions are appealing, attempting to apply classical academic formulas to a political reality where appearance is often misleading. Were we to consider only the historical background, we would notice that Romania's politics is difficult to understand in the absence of a good knowledge of the mentalities particular to the cultural and ideological area of East-Central and Southeastern Europe.¹³

A description of the trifling events going on in a burgh such as Timișoara, indicate that the popular uprising could not have resulted from "provocative agents" as Ceaușescu stated in his discourse of December 21st. Timișoara managed to be the hard nut to crack of the Romanian dictatorship, insisting on the arguments which ruled out the idea of manipulation in December '89. Political scientists who champion such ideas are not far from the "conspiracy paradigm". Even if they decently approach the topic of assessing Ceaușescu's Romania, their generalizations do not contribute to any better knowledge of the overthrow of the national communist dictatorship. An interpretation lacking both evidence and rational theoretical arguments is hardly convincing. It does not quench legitimate inquisitiveness and does not help creative imagination to get an image within the limits of normality. It is true that Bucharest, if compared to Timișoara, showed a different composition of social layers. Rural collectivities transferred to Bucharest of the '70s were a lot larger than those in Transylvania and Banat. Social variance is the specific difference that gives an important, specific color to the type of uprising in the two cities under consideration.

In the '80s Bucharest was economically disorderly. Civism was a concept known to, and applied by, only a small percentage of the population. Huge plants and works, but also public

services, with workers scantily trained and lacking a decent life, all became problematic. The administration was obsolete and could not cope with the rapidly overcrowding city (over two million inhabitants), and with the ensuing incapacity to assure minimal lodging, food supply and transportation. Do these reasons support the idea of manipulation? Are they background circumstances which determined the state of mind of the people of Bucharest, a sensitive point where manipulation could have been easily effected? There is one insufficiently argued hypothesis which would accredit the idea that events in Bucharest were triggered by a happy interaction between the protesters and the forces of order. In such a vision, a part of the communist political leaders and another one of the military leaders staged some provocative action. Thanks to the National Romanian TV station which recorded on tape Ceaușescu's last speech and his last meetings we have a material in need of study in the above sense.

Did popular resistance, when faced by armed detachments, generate a revolutionary character for the uprising? Barricades in the center of Bucharest were real, as were the fights and the many dead and wounded. One cannot fake days on end of protest, nor the anti-Ceaușescu, anti-national-communist slogans. Masses gathered in the squares of the capital were the true image of discontent. So how should we interpret such facts? The absence of political landmarks should be noticed when we talk about masses. On the other hand, we could even agree that a population lacking a civic attitude hardly ever rebels, even in difficult living conditions. Consequently, such a population is vulnerable and subject to manipulation by political and military leaders opposed to the dictator.

The leader of one of the action groups for overthrowing Ceaușescu in December '89, General Nicolae Militaru, supported such an interpretation. He said that a *coup d'etat* was impossible at the end of the '70s, but by '89 had become so. Why so? Because the moment had to come when the austerity policy of the national-communist regime made such action legitimate.

“Militaru allegedly planned a *coup* as early as 1984, together with Ion Iliescu and also Ion Ioniță, Ministry of the Defense, and János Fazekas a high party activist. Two scenarios had been considered: either a small group of putschists getting quick support from the population; or the putsch comes together with a popular uprising which later would have to be gotten under control.”¹⁴

Popular psychology was an ace up the sleeve of many of those who wanted to overturn Ceaușescu.

Silviu Brucan is a strong case in point. He is one of the ideologists of the former Romanian Communist Party who knew very well the mass reaction to various stimuli and made public statements to this effect. In spite of some fictions he created around the events of December '89 and his deterministic logic originating in the Marxist-Leninist theory of history part of his diagnosis concerning the evolution of the Romanian social segments and political ideas, remains. He symbolized the idea of progress in the communist party. He had first-hand knowledge of political organization and doctrines and longtime contact with the Western world and diplomacy; he had been the head of *Scînteia*, the most important communist newspaper; and thus became the ideologue of 1989 Romania's political metamorphosis.

All during the '90s, Silviu Brucan was one of the most listened to political analysts in Romania. His opinions being often taken up by the political powers, thus shaping the way the communist leaders chose to cope with the new circumstances. The wind of change in 1989 did not blow on political leadership and cultural models opposed to national-communism. This is

important and is consistent with the fact that non-communist intellectuals did not seize their chance to ascend to the leadership of the democratic state to be. I will explain why.

Recent polls, by the Romanian Sociology Institute, show that only 41 percent of the Romanians still believed it was a revolution after all, while 36 percent say it was a *coup d'etat* and 4 percent suspect something other than the above. The events of 1989 escaped control; they were scarcely prepared and the minimal plan of the reformist communists did not apply as designed. Facts prove that the temporary government -- set up after Ceaușescu was overthrown -- would have been inconceivable without the reformer ex-communists. Such assessment does not overlook the disputes of the national communists, those within the army or the advance to front stage of creditable anti-communist protesters, such as Doina Cornea, Ana Blandiana and Mircea Dinescu.

What we can say today considering both the events and the rules of the academic sciences approach is that the popular uprising was accompanied by a *coup d'etat*. Ideological change was promoted by the most active and pragmatic reformist communists; the army and *Securitate* supported the protesters. In the absence of the two latter institutions, Ceaușescu and his regime could not have been felled. The army has been considered as an example, because almost invariably, the army is liable for the success, or the failure, of a rebellion against a political regime. "A government or a party to whose control a country's army is subjected is politically indestructible."¹⁵ In December '89 part of the high officials in the Romanian army turned disloyal to Ceaușescu, which was decisive for the political change. This explains the *coup d'etat* which followed the popular uprising, or interacted with it.

To more thoroughly cover the medley of facts, one more explanation can be considered, namely that the absence of freedom before '89 made impossible the development of an authentic dissident movement, and the formation of an intelligentsia which should have been capable of peacefully taking power out of the hands of the communist party and avoiding bloodshed. Since everything was still in the hands of the old masters -- even the management of change -- the term "revolution" for what happened in December '89 can only come through imaginative empathy. The protests, the indictments, the complaints, all point to poor understanding of what happened or, at best, to sentimental reference.¹⁶ Myths have a sentimental component; recent or remote history may only be understood based on rational argument. Therefore an earnest effort at expanding the borders of knowledge remains always useful, making also possible the observation of the facts and the assessment of their meaning and value.

The Political Act Defining the Revolutionary Desiderata: The "Timișoara Proclamation"¹⁷

Political change immediately following the overthrow of the dictatorship is worth a thorough examination. The *Proclamation*, conceived by the intellectual elite in Timișoara, covered a few basic ideas which had impact on the development of Romanian political thought. In fact it is a novel articulate discourse where the specific radical character of any revolutionary process is obvious, as also is the trend towards a genuine pluralist democracy. Cohesive with the other East-European countries, the *Timișoara Proclamation* advanced the idea of abolishing communist totalitarianism right then and there.

"We declare ourselves against typical communist manipulation through class struggle and antagonism of social layers. The Bolsheviks took the power in 1917 based on the concept of class struggle, and after 1944 the Romanian communist nomenclature threw one social class against the other and tore society into shreds, to better control it through terror."¹⁸

The authors of the *Proclamation* were familiar with the proletarian dictatorship manipulation, and connoisseurs of the Stalinist texts used in Moscow or the Soviets world. This is how they had the expertise necessary for deconstructing the 20th century left-wing utopias. One of them, George Șerban, had taught Marxism as a faculty member in the Social Science Chair of the Polytechnics Institute of Timișoara. As a consequence, his critique of the old practices was based on pertinent examinations of the theory of the communist state.¹⁹ The *Proclamation* explicitly states the idea of freeing society of the “captive mind.”²⁰ Decades of nationalist-communism had so brainwashed the Romanians that the *Proclamation* actually met with antagonism. Thus the document issued on March 11, 1990 under the title of *Timișoara Proclamation* chose to denounce the indictment of the historical parties, the ideology of class struggle, the revival of chauvinist nationalism and age discrimination. The document is valuable as the first to denounce the left-wing reformed communists' access to power in the Romanian state.

The *Proclamation* makes it crystal clear that Timișoara rose "against the whole of the communist regime and its nomenclature and does not mean to serve as a springboard for a few anti-Ceaușescu Romanian party communists. Such people climbing to the top deprive the deaths of the revolutionary heroes of all meaning. They might have been accepted twelve years ago, if in the 12th Congress of the Romanian Communist Party they had joined Constantin Pârvulescu (former leader of the Communist Party, marginalized by Ceaușescu, who opposed the dictator's regime) and overthrown the dictatorial clan. They were in top positions, the moment was ripe, but they chose not to do so.”²¹

Such judgment should be read considering the circumstances, namely an ad-hoc government, general instability of the economy, inter-ethnic and inter-denominational disputes, anonymous threats, scant democracy, mono-cultural manipulation of opinion, and political apocalypse. The *Proclamation* should also be read in the light of conscientious overreaction to the events in December '89. Yet the document shows the maturity of the political discourse of the new intelligentsia. The remark concerning the risks in the preservation of the obsolete administrative structures is objective.²² What remains questionable, and cannot be overlooked by an independent analyst is the Marxist moral-historical theory.

This is only a minimal critical analyze, meant to bring on stage the significance of the political ideas. Items seven and eight of the document judges the morality of the communist political class, which is requested to withdraw until “steady state and national reconciliation” is achieved. Item seven of the *Proclamation* literally says, "The cowardice of the reformer communists in 1979 cost us the hardest ten years of dictatorship and a painful genocide." The election law was to forbid the right of candidature to ex-communist and *Securitate* leaders. Karl Popper argues that if the moral futurist expresses disagreement with the moral conservative on the side of the existent power, it is equally true that the moral conservative can direct his criticism contrariwise. The moral conservative can say that the moral futurist is a coward for placing himself on the side of the future power, i.e. of tomorrow's government.

I do not support such a Marxist moral view because there is no law in sociology which make it simple to choose one moral code or another. Cases such as the above require compromise. Therefore I will focus on the fact that the theory of morality, invoked by the Timișoara intellectual elite in the *Proclamation*, and based on Marxist ideas, was to generate confusion and ideological dispute. First of all, it induced in former enrolled communists fear of exclusion from their various jobs and social positions. It also stirred self-defense in the ad-hoc government by a show of authoritarianism in contradiction with the freedom begot in December '89. This will become even

more evident if we accept that at the beginning of 1990 a vengeful, hard wing of the former regime -- a segment of the nationalist-communist nomenclature -- came upon the public stage. The *Timișoara Proclamation* had a definite positive audience, its political content opening constructive debate, but it is also received acid criticism. The dispute around the above-mentioned items came out of insufficient maturation of the population, out of the power's inability to communicate, and out of an incomplete or callous phrasing in the document, when it came to changing the leaders.

Let me be understood here. The *Proclamation* has definite positive aspects. It said in items nine and ten that economic reform was a must, as was private economy and better productivity for higher wages. Moreover, as per item eleven, economic and administrative decentralization was promoted, as well as experimental implementation of the market economy in the Timiș County, based on foreign capital attracted through local expertise of executives. What the authors had in mind was a pilot structure for the whole of Romania, not a cut off province. George Șerban expressed his regret for the fact that its supporters diminished the *Proclamation's* value exclusively to item eight, while the document's antagonists abused item eleven as a pretext for denigration.²³

Why was no other town in Romania but Timișoara the vortex of such change of political ideas? How was it that the first genuinely revolutionary program appeared first in the Banat region with the formation of the group of signatories²⁴ in relative contrast to the Bucharest intelligentsia that took over the power on December '89? The new type of political discourse focuses on liberal ideas and on the underdevelopment of political thought compatible with the ways of Central Europe, freed from communism, and also on the desideratum for European integration. Such discourse is revolutionary, propounding the need for deep change. No vision of the document will be correct unless expressly remarking the non-violent character of the ideals of a segment of Romanian population's, in contrast with the trend chosen by Ion Iliescu's political group. In spite of its positivism, the *Timișoara Proclamation* was largely misunderstood.

What the document attempted was to generate a positive public opinion in favor of real change. It is worth mentioning that failures of this revolutionary intent was due largely to the fact that different regions in Romania held different political and economic responses to the discomfort created by the centralist regimes; to the low level of civic spirit of Romania's citizens (only a few towns rose in rebellion in 1989; the towns which followed Timișoara were Arad, Lugoj, Sibiu, Cluj, Brașov, Bucharest, Iași, and Reșița). The gap between Timișoara's revolutionary ideals and the poor accomplishments nationwide in 1989-1999 Romania can be explained through the persistence of obsolete political and administrative institutions, through the political antagonisms leading to nothing positive in the real world, through the inaccurate reading of capitalist ideas. These led to delayed decision making for economic reform, preservation of the obsolete public administration, continuation of monopolist ownership of the key strategic economic areas, (i.e. electricity, coal, gas, metal industry, road building), and continuation of centralism in state policies concerning most professional areas, all hindering regional development and private competition. It goes without saying that, against such a background, Timișoara itself could not function as intended. Moreover, not only did the estranged old town inhabitants not show up with investments, as predicted in the *Proclamation*, but one important part of the population emigrated to Germany, USA and Canada. Prejudice and failures thus delayed the appearance of a better competitive system which would be better able to cope with world competition. Does all this explain December '89? We have to admit that a good part of the arguments above are personal in character and provide a brief comment in the light of the development of political ideas.

Notes

1. See R.Koselleck, "Geschichte", in *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe*, (Stuttgart: Clett-Cotta, 1975).
2. This does not mean that I tend to state bits of truth as selected through a grid of minority groups' political preferences, as I will also avoid focusing exclusively on the martyrs; overstatement of both the former and the latter aspects would make creditable research impossible. As to a positive possible working method for the historian, a liberal philosopher of our century once said: "Let us not view the past through the victors' eyes only, but let us not lean too much on the victims, as if truth and justice were the secured privilege of martyrs and minorities. Briefly, let us try to be fair, even when a whole squadron of people are at stake." See Isaiah Berlin, *Four Essays on Liberty*, translated into Romanian by Laurențiu Ștefan-Scalat, foreword by Mihail Radu Solcan, (Bucharest: Humanitas, 1996), p. 183. Twelve years after the events in 1989 people tend to either one trend of interpretation or another, therefore the assessment of events is far from settling on the right position and from getting general approval from the Romanian audience.
3. See Isaiah Berlin, *Patru eseuri despre libertate (Four Essays on Liberty)*, translated by Laurențiu Ștefan-Scalat, foreword by Mihail Radu Solcan, (Bucharest: Humanitas, 1996).
4. *Profeții despre trecut [Prophesies on the Past]*, "ProTv" Television broadcast, Bucharest, December 5th, 1999.
5. See Octavian Paler and Gelu Voican Voiculescu, over the hidden side of the Romanian revolution (I), in the *Curentul* daily, Bucharest, December 13th, 1999, p. 13.
6. Professor William Marin was a Marxist-oriented historian in Timișoara University with whom I was in close contact in the '70s to the '90s. We were not friends, nor did I share all of his views; yet, surprisingly, I often found out that he had an understanding at variance with his colleagues or the official communists. Beyond our disagreements over concepts, our relation was legitimate in our common attempt to fight the chauvinist-nationalist and anti-Semitism cultivated by the old regime. William Marin was well read in the German media and well informed on the social-democracy trend. He had benefited from a scholarship from the Friedrich Ebert Foundation of the German Social-Democrat Party. He had also deep understanding of the USSR in the '90s.
7. It is about Professor N.S. Dumitru, one of the persons who took part in the first provisional political team set up in state power in December '89.
8. See a general analysis of the topic in George Voicu, "*Paradigma conspiraționistă*" [The Conspiracy Paradigm], in "*Sfera politicii*", nr.70, 71-72, 73-74. According to philosopher Karl Popper "Conspiracies do exist, undeniably. But what is remarkable, and in spite of all evidence, denies the theory, is the fact that few come to a good end. Conspirators seldom see their work through". According to *The Open Society and its Enemies, II, Hegel & Marx*, (London: Routledge, 1966), see the translation into Romanian, by D. Stoianovici, *Societatea deschisă și dușmanii săi*, vol II, (Bucharest: Humanitas, 1993), p. 108.
9. Radu Theodoru, *Nazismul sionist [Zionist Nazism]*, (Alma Tip Publishing House, 1997); according to George Voicu, *l.c.*, in *Sfera politicii*, no. 73-74, p. 69.
10. Ion Coja, *Marele manipulator și asasinarea lui Culianu, Ceaușescu, Iorga [The Great Manipulator and the Assassination of Culianu, Ceaușescu and Iorga]*, (Bucharest: Miracol Publishing House, 1999), pp. 205 and 249, according to George Voicu, *l.c.*, in *Sfera politicii*, no. 71-72, p. 65. (Ion Coja teaches linguistics in Bucharest University, and is a regular contributor to the *România Mare* [Greater Romania] extreme-right and nationalist review).

11. Anneli Ute Gabanyi, *Revoluția neterminată* [*Revolution Without an End*], (Bucharest: Fundația Culturală Româna Press, 1999), p. 159.
12. *Ibidem*, p. 160.
13. See Victor Neumann, “Die bürgerliche Kultur in Siebenbürgen und im Banat: Die Rolle Temesvars in den politischen Umgestaltungsprozessen vom Dezember 1989”, translated from Romanian into German by Herbert-Werner Mühlroth, in *Halbjahresschrift für südosteuropäische Geschichte, Literatur und Politik*, 11. Jahrgang, Heft Nr.1, Mai 1999, pp. 38-51. See also the study of this book entitled: “Civic Culture in Banat and Transylvania: The Role of Timisoara in the 1989 Transformation of Political Order”.
14. Anneli Ute Gabanyi, *l.c.*, p. 162.
15. Thomas H. Greene, *Comparative Revolutionary Movements. Search for Theory and Justice*, Englewood Cliffs, 1984, p. 129, according to Anneli Ute Gabanyi, *Revoluția neterminată*, [*Revolution Without an End*], (Bucharest: Fundația Culturală Română Press, 1999), p. 171.
16. Isaiah Berlin, *op. cit.*
17. Proclamația de la Timișoara. *The Proclamation of Timișoara. La Proclamation de Timișoara. Die Proklamation von Temeswar*, March 11, 1990, the "Timișoara Society", 1994.
18. *Ibidem*, p. 10.
19. For a recent analysis on Marx's philosophy see Paul Ricoeur, *L'ideologie et l'Utopie* (Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1997), pp. 41-149.
20. The purpose of the *Timișoara Proclamation* was to explain the reasons underlying the December '89 uprising, as well as to offer minimal doctrinaire landmarks for the next stage. We will confine ourselves to placing such projects in the context of the Romanian political thought at the end of the '90s.
21. See item 7 in *Timișoara Proclamation*, p. 12.
22. *Ibidem*, item 8, p. 12. The item quoted was that the new elections law should deny to former communist party and *Securitate* leaders the right to run for Parliament or for Presidency, for the following twelve years.
23. See George Șerban, “Afterword” in *Timișoara Proclamation*, p. 41.
24. George Șerban, the main author of the *Proclamation*, not only belonged to a new generation, but also to a new school of thought and mentality. G. Șerban, graduated from the History-Philosophy Department of the *Al.I.Cuza* University in Iași, Romania. At the end of the '70s he moved to Timișoara, where he was quickly adopted into the socio-cultural life of the city due to his family contacts and his interpersonal skills. He had some managerial and ideological expertise as a former leader of the *Communist Students' Association* in Iași and put these to good use. In the '80s he co-operated in the *Forum Studentesc* [Student Forum] Review, and meanwhile made efforts to study modern European history and its revolutionary processes. He was particularly interested in the 1945-1948 process of the communists taking power. Writer and critic Alexandra Indrieș, one of the prominent figures in Timisoara's cultural life, was his mentor. As a former political prisoner, an open minded and flawlessly moral person, Alexandra Indrieș was for many young people of the '80 an intellectual to measure oneself against. To George Șerban she was a true model, and also the person who connected him with the civic society of Timișoara. After 1989 the two continued to work together in editing the revolutionary newspaper *Timișoara*.

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Proclamația de la Timișoara. The Timișoara Proclamation. La Proclamation de Timișoara. Die Proklamation von Temeswar, March 11th, 1990, "Timișoara" Society, 1994.

Silviu Brucan was the former editor-in-chief of the main communist daily, *Scînteia*. Ion Iliescu was the former leader of the Romanian Communist Youth Organization. They both were marginalized by Ceaușescu at the beginning of the '70s due to their reformist-communist ideas.

Civic Education and Human Rights in an Intercultural Perspective: The Case of Romania

One of the major issues of Central and Eastern Europe since the fall of the Iron Curtain has been the development of civic society. In some regions a tradition of civic and human rights education already existed, and its continuation has depended on the respective country's educational policy and on decentralization. Also, in certain regions local administrations once played an important role in stimulating the coexistence of the different linguistic, religious and professional communities. These places partially preserved their multi- and intercultural character, which promoted open societies. As a consequence, these communities today are able to adjust more rapidly to the dynamics of the contemporary world, and to understand and promote pluralism and democracy. The promotion of civic and human rights education through an intercultural perspective depends both on the rational evaluation of the past, and on attempts to re-define concepts that lay in the background of the formation of the Central and Eastern European nations and states. Retrieving the multiple values that contributed to the first modernization of the area might contribute a corrective to narrow monocultural ways of thinking about the world.

Here I present the Romanian case since this issue has not thus far been approached systematically in the light of these considerations. In the first part I describe the historical and political context in Central and Eastern Europe during the modern period. This would highlight that contemporary Romania has inherited different linguistic, cultural and religious groups, as well as notions and patterns regarding the political and intellectual history. Then, I proceed briefly to present the Romanian educational system, its obstacles and possible solutions in addressing intercultural education. Finally, I give two examples: one is a study case of the "Babeş-Bolyai" University of Cluj, a city of Transylvania with predominantly Romanian, Hungarian and German speaking populations. This part presents an example of multicultural educational policy with its strengths and weaknesses. The second example refers to the region of Banat, an area where peaceful coexistence among many cultures and religions made possible intercultural education.

The Historical and Political Framework

For a closer approach to the issue, I have introduced the main political ideas of Central and Eastern Europe during the 18th and the 19th centuries. These were the intellectual references of the modern Romanian state, and the domestic and international political context that contributed to state formation. The study reveals as well the ideological options in the communities of this area over the last two centuries. The political and administrative legacies left behind by the histories of the two empires, the Habsburg and the Ottoman, enables one to discover where the issue of interculturality have come, how it survived, and what pedagogical role it might play today. Nineteenth century concepts – like ethnicity or *Völkischekultur* - are still in circulation in certain countries of Central and Eastern Europe, Romania among them, thus justifying the necessity for the revaluation of the political and educational ideas in this area. The reference bibliography in the background of nationalism emphasizes why multi- and intercultural education was *a priori* rejected in favor of monocultural and collectivist education.

A well-grounded approach to this issue in Central and Eastern Europe requires on the one hand, taking account of the content and the flow of information in the 18th and 19th centuries and, therefore, the effort of emancipation, and the effort of consciousness raising, on the other. The processes are not taking place in the same way throughout the above-mentioned area. Economic policies (i.e. the ones of the Habsburg Empire during the Enlightened Despotism of Maria Theresa and of Joseph II) decisively contributed to create a real communication network, thus raising small intellectual revolutions. In spite of the difference in mentality between Western Europe, on the one hand, and Central and Eastern Europe, on the other, one could see that the intellectuals were successful in regions where they succeeded in spreading Enlightenment ideas, where they managed to introduce pragmatic information in their communities, and where they were concerned with the understanding and translating literary, philosophical and political works.¹

Even though the Habsburg Empire included an enormous variety of communities inside its borders, it was committed to encourage their emancipation from the medieval mentality and it passed legislation that imposed linguistic, cultural and religious diversity. Under the pressure of the German *Aufklärung* (Enlightenment), the empire provided the minimum training to its people necessary for their economic development. Illiteracy of an important part of the communities living in Central Europe was overcome for the first time in the years of the Enlightened Despotism (1780-1790). The normative restrictions of the Austrian state were aimed at developing the bourgeoisie and capitalism, at gradually replacing traditionalism with modernization, and at providing quite uniform living standards in all the regions under its rule.

The Habsburgs' concern was to achieve a kind of "Austrian consciousness" that would ensure the empire's unity and security. Vienna insisted on imposing its reference system and to enforce its power over all its provinces through more or less discreet proceedings.² These measures met the empire's political interests. The imperial concern for raising the administrative and economic competences to a satisfactory standard played a challenging role for the small developing linguistic communities inside its borders. However, despite the monarchy's effort to build the "Austrian consciousness", ethno-nationalist movements began to develop in the first decades of the 19th century under the influence of Prussian cultural and ideological propaganda.

I will particularly emphasize the period of intellectual assimilation and mutations as regards reflection about life and the historicist trend of the history of thought. However, beginning with the Romantic period the sophism of metaphysical historicism prevailed over the critical spirit. Analyzing the lag in the East-European countries, István Bibó concluded that as the national frame was not destroyed in this part of the continent, the bourgeois revolutions at the middle of the 19th century only resurrected the medieval endeavors. He considered all medieval entities in Central and Eastern Europe to have survived either through institutions, or in a symbolic way through memories. Despite their provincialism, they represented a political stimulus which was hardly negligible in relation to the Austrian power which otherwise was neither too old nor too well rooted. According to the same historian, things were not very different in Southeastern Europe, where the Ottoman Empire was not able to force the Balkan nations into a proper national structure, namely to create integrated bodies, valid for any independent political entity.³

This cannot be understood in the light of nationalism exclusively as developed in the scheme proposed by Bibó. On the one hand, the religious and linguistic traditions of the regional communities within both empires were preserved in spite of all difficulties and, on the other hand, modern emancipation was belated due to the lack of administrative and political structures to surpass the backward mentalities. More specifically, the regions under discussion benefited neither

from the Enlightenment nor from the Religious Reform in the Western acceptance. These two movements echoed in Central Europe, but not in the Balkans.

Even in the 18th century, Southeastern Europe did not fall under the Western influence; there were even less of the religious, cultural, scientific and political disputes which opened and deeply marked the modern world. The very few exceptions of cultural and political endeavors to modernize the state and society in Southeastern Europe -- the case of scholars Theophil Corydaleu and Dimitrie Cantemir -- are quite atypical for the area. Though it contains multiple cultural heritages (i.e. the Greek, Thracian, Roman and the Byzantine) Southeastern European civilization was not touched by the changes produced by the scientific and political thinking of the Renaissance. To what historic and political processes was this isolation due? Many reasons are invoked by historians in answer to this question, the Turkish occupation usually being in the foreground. But facts revealed through documentary research show that historians are seldom right in referring to this argument. There are other reasons which cannot be ignored, such as: the weight of the Orthodox religion in the political and juridical life; the rejection of the religious Reform and its doctrine; the Church-State relationship; the caste privileges and their role in the political circles; the importance of the rural community in forming mentalities; and the proclamation of obedience to the dominant social category.

One has to admit as well that both the Habsburg and the Ottoman Empires contributed to the spread of a new tolerance; to the promotion of East-West dialogue, to the development of trade policies; to introducing and spreading some bourgeoisie principles; and to the political emancipation of the people. The coexistence of different denominations such as the Catholic, the Orthodox, the Lutheran, the Calvinist, the Jewish and the Mohammedan was possible due to the permissiveness of Vienna and Constantinople.

The assertion of the national identities contributed to setting-up the national states in Central and Eastern Europe. The temptation of each group to write its own history was due to their political interests in shaping national awareness. The elaboration and propagation of the question of identity in the most varied forms generated a normative outlook about the past and the future. Education through history became the main goal of intellectuals and policy makers. The new approach to the past consisted in purposefully highlighting the issue of "origin", in generating archetypes, in using the sophism of the metaphysical historicism and in overlapping dreams and illusions with reality. This practice would eventually lead to the creation of the "ethno-national" myth that had to fulfill the political options of the communities no matter where they lived. Instead of the imperial cosmopolitanism, the local political circles would promote the monocultural pedagogy and respectively ethno-differentiation as identity ideology.

During the first decades of the 19th century, a few German theorists and philosophers who advocated the nation-state concept won great sympathy, becoming either the most read scholars or, simply, reference points for a few generations of educated people in Central and Eastern Europe. Among them were Johann Gottfried Herder is to be mentioned whose work fascinated not only his generation, but especially the next (the revolutionaries of 1848). Along with Fichte's work, Herder had a brilliant ideological career and became known especially through his *Ideen zur Philosophie der Geschichte der Menschheit*.⁴ We must ask what was most notable in this Romantic philosopher's work and how it succeeded in becoming a reference point in Central-Eastern Europe's political literature. It is a question that is challenging to the degree that it invites unconventional answers.

Herder was attracted by almost all the sciences of that time: the philosophy of history, the history of culture and of humanism, and the history of religions and peoples' mythology. The

attraction to greatness was primary in his mind as on this depended the people's happiness or unhappiness, their demeanor and physiognomy, their conversation and occupation. The same feeling of greatness inspired his appetite for poetry and for stories and might equally have determined his interest in speculation and the so-called very "essence" of philosophy. The propensity towards language and folklore, specific to Romanticism had a very clear political motivation, namely nation-state building. According to Herder, language is the stimulus of the soul's resources, for culture and for the "deepest education". His enthusiasm for his own language had no limits. In his view, language must be the bridge linking between different provinces; moreover, a good education could be received exclusively in the language of the people and of the country in which one was born. He established a subtle way of approaching individual biography through one's place of origin. The submission to space becomes defining and confinement within language borders favors creation. These viewpoints were quite simple to assimilate, all the more so in societies where individualism was rejected *ab initio*.

Herder's benign internationalism, is reflected in his interest for the African past mixed with attraction for Asian history, Southeastern European ethnography and ancient languages, where nations were perceived as individuals or super-individuals.⁵ All this contributed to the foundation of his nation-state theory. In the German philosopher's view unity and diversity are features describing all lasting creations of nature. He stated also that education, formation and the way of thinking the human being were genetic, wherefrom arise the particularity of national features. Herder thought about himself as being contemporary with an end of an era; he considered that the political systems were in crisis, and hence unstable. In his view, the old political practices were not sufficiently flexible to adapt the nation-state theory. In fact, Herder wanted to teach people to understand everything through their historical determination. The success of his ideology came to life through the nationalist doctrine in many regions of the Habsburg Empire and territories of the Ottoman Empire.⁶

Fichte played a similar role in the modern history of political thought by widely promoting certain myths. This is not about the Fichte of *Wissenschaftslehre*, but the Fichte who wrote *Reden an die Deutsche Nation* in 1807-1808, a work that contributed to the "nation" concept elaboration, more exactly to the concept of "Romantic autopoetic nationalism". Fichte's image of the Frenchman as the archetype of the enemy is a quite notorious example of inciting and manipulating public opinion. The irrational nationalism formulated by the philosopher was taken over and adapted by the intelligentsia of Central and Eastern Europe, which became the teacher of the nations. This concept can be found today, in the image of diversity, of majority-minorities relations, and of the relationship between neighboring nations. Fichte also inspired the idea that it was not concrete reason, but the metaphysical status that ensured the outstanding historical achievements of a nation.

Recent studies reveal that many variants of European nationalism exist, namely, those inspired by Herder and by Fichte.⁷ The neo-Greeks, the Romanians, the Magyars (Hungarians), the Albanians and the Serbs immediately took Herder as a milestone when they find out that he advocated their right to express themselves in their respective languages. Living in the 1848 revolutionary milieu of Paris and having at his disposal the French edition of Herder's main work, *Idées sur la Philosophie de l'Histoire de l'Humanité*, the Romanian politician, Nicolae Bălcescu, was deeply committed to such concepts as, "historic destiny" and "grandness". He assimilated both from Herder and from Edgar Quinet all that referred to the issue of ethnic unity. Herderianism, more than any other political philosophy, would raise not only interest but also passion within the intelligentsia and policy making community. The textbooks during the 1848

Revolution afterward promoted the *Völkischekultur* (folk culture) ideas. The translations into Romanian, Hungarian, Greek and Serbian of excerpts from the German Romanticists' works demonstrate their influence within the intellectual and educational milieu in Central and Eastern Europe.

An important role in circulating his ideas was played by revolutionary programs, namely by the Revolution of 1848 itself in the Romanian Principalities. They became so popular that it is not surprising that, in Central and Eastern Europe, many politicians applied ideas elaborated by Herder without citing their author. This was the time when an irresistible wish for a rapid recovery was making itself felt, namely, the first aspiration of the peoples in the eastern half of the continent to be perceived as European. One witnesses, at the same time, the losing sight of the ability for information selection; the lack of critical spirit; the copying of the commonly used methods by the most advanced countries and regions while ignoring the economic, social, and administrative possibilities of the Central and Eastern Europe. Enthusiasm captured mainly the intelligentsia who became the first political class in the area. This partially explains the ideological confusion on the eve of the 1848 Revolution, marking both political thought and policy making itself. The ambiguity of the ideals advanced by the revolutionists of 1848, namely liberalism and nationalism, would generate serious theoretical disputes on which depended the revolution of the political life in this region.

In the Romanian context of the assimilation of the notions of "nation" and "nation-state" history became the promoter of *Volksgeist*, namely, it proved the active role played by culture (especially the folk culture), by race and class, in a word, the superiority of the collective structures over the individual ones. Alongside historians, there were archaeologists, ethnographers, journalists and writers in the area who drew upon the German Romantic works to look for the ancestral origins of their communities. In Central and in Eastern Europe only a few of the dominant trends of the Enlightened political rationalism penetrated, and there was not sufficient time to develop the very few concepts to set-up coherent political thinking and pluralist and civic education based on reason and individual responsibility. This aspect had dramatic consequences both in the economic field, whenever the implementation of liberal doctrine was at stake, and in the social one. The concept of "ethnicity" substituted for the concept of "national". The myths about the purism of origins, about the common religious traditions and the continuity of living in the same area, replaced the liberal and the socio-democratic values spread by the French Revolution of 1789. Mass movements and politics demanded a new political style which was possible through ethno-nationalist propaganda promoted by schools.

In the modern and contemporary history of Romania, the peasantry represented the ideal of purity of people. This is why the concept of *peuple* had in Romania different connotations from those known in France. To be more specific, while "people", or "*peuple*" defined the dynamics of social emergence for the Western world, for Central and Eastern Europe, the same term defined the nature of the national peculiarity.⁸ This can well be noticed in the way the scholars understood to approach the issue of citizenship, and referred to the question of the emancipation of certain minority cultures and religions especially during the second half of the nineteenth century. However, in the case of the 1848 revolutionaries, the influence of the French liberalism promoted by the Great Revolution (1789) was felt for a very short time. The failure of their approach in Central and Eastern Europe -- including the Romanian Principalities -- is due not only to the late acceptance of the liberal ideas and to the very few public and private institutions that wanted to adopt the political orientation of the century, but also to the lack of intermediary social categories, able to perceive and multiply the messages that revolutionized the Western political system. A few

important aspects support the above statement such as the lack of a proper administration at the beginning of the modern epoch, ignorance of the capitalist economic rules, the absence of a dynamic bourgeoisie connected to the goods market of the time, and a very thin urban social layer. The traditions of the rural collectivist way of life played a decisive role in preserving the discrepancies among the regions under discussion, and between these regions and the advanced countries. The difference between the elite and the masses was significant and in some countries it has remained until today.

The main idea here is that the historical and political background made it possible for the influence of the German Romanticism to be quickly assimilated and opened the process of its taking root in the ethno-national idea. Diverse cultural and political pedagogies turned Herder's, Fichte's and Hegel's works into reference points for the Central and Eastern European intelligentsia. One can recognize such sources when the same segment undertakes a political crusade in the name of the "collective soul". *The historia magistra vitaesyntagm* that was discovered with real satisfaction in the 19th-20th centuries by writers, historians and politicians in Hungary, Serbia, Romania, Bulgaria or Greece turns imperceptibly into a way of thinking about politics.

The educational system and the level of development of civic societies in East-Central and Southeastern Europe have often remained dependent of the historical reference points discussed above. I refer particularly to the monocultural orientation and to the ethnicist criterion associated with the educational process. The concrete case of the pedagogy in contemporary Romania demonstrates this. Therefore I chose it as an example and I describe it in the following part of this study.

The Educational System in Romania and the Development of Civil Society

This section concerns the multi- and intercultural realities of contemporary Romania, as well as the aspects related to the origins of the social and cultural pluralism. It emphasizes particularly the assimilative tendencies of the official educational system that hindered the assertion and the development of civic society.

Due to their history countries in Central and Eastern Europe have many common features. In Romania, intercultural education was not under serious consideration until the collapse of communism. There were a number of reasons why this form of pedagogy lagged behind, especially the lack of competencies in this field. The conservative political trends did not encourage the development of an open pedagogy to promote trans-cultural communication. Being at an incipient phase, civil society has only sporadically intervened in this process without having the expected impact on the key figures in culture and education, let alone on the politicians in power. The diverse cultural heritage of Romania could be capitalized through intercultural education.

The *Education Law* passed by the Romanian Parliament in 1995 mentions that the state promotes the principles of a democratic education and that its organization and content cannot be structured along exclusivist and discriminatory political, ideological, religious and ethnic criteria. The right to a differentiated education is incorporated in the concept of educational pluralism.⁹ The national educational system is comprised of:

- kindergarten including: low, medium, and high/preparatory school groups;
- compulsory education, including primary and secondary schools;

- post-secondary education including: high-school, vocational school, apprentice schools;
- higher education including: colleges and universities, postgraduate education (MA, MSc, MBA etc.), and doctorate.

The process of education is subordinated to the Ministry of National Education which has the following structure: Department of Financial Control; Department of International Relations; Department of Higher Education and Scientific Research in Higher Education; Department of Human and Financial Resources; Department for European Integration; Department for Primary and Secondary Education; Department for School and Extra-curriculum Activities; Department for Education, Strategy, and Development; Department for Education of National Minorities; Department for Education of Romanians Living Abroad; Department for Co-ordination of the Reform Project for Primary and Secondary Education; Department for Co-ordination of the Reform of Higher Education; Department for Curricula and Teachers Training; the *Socrates* National Agency; the *Leonardo* National Agency.¹⁰

An introduction to the responsibilities of the Ministry of National Education will reveal the type of principles that lie in its background. According to the *Education Law No. 84 of 1995*, the Ministry of National Education bears the following responsibilities:

- "to co-ordinate and control the national educational system;
- to organize the school network;
- to establish the number of pupils per school, by consulting with the schools, the local authorities and other interested local companies;
- to approve the educational plans, curricula and textbooks for primary and secondary education;
- to organize national contests for the development of textbooks and to finance their publication;
- to elaborate the methodology for the university entrance examination;
- to co-ordinate scientific research on the education system;
- to approve the establishment of secondary schools, vocational training schools, colleges and faculties;
- to approve regulations regarding the organization and function of the subordinated units;
- to elaborate, approve and distribute education materials;
- to co-ordinate the activity of subordinated university libraries;
- to supervise the training and specialization of teachers;
- to appoint, transfer and keep the records of personnel in public schools;
- to assess the national education system;
- to elaborate and implement the long and short term strategies for educational reform;
- to elaborate the specific norms for the school constructions and facilities;
- to establish the procedure of recognition for the studies and diplomas;
- to establish the structure of each year of study, final exams, entrance examinations and school holidays for primary and secondary education;
- to develop and control the assessment system for pupils, students, teachers and professors;

- to distribute to each of its subordinate units the due share of budget and to ensure the units comply with the financial established norms;
- to develop, diagnose and assess studies for the reconstructing and modernization of the educational system;
- to develop specific programs for students with special needs (emotional, physical and psychological ones);
- to manage the administrative staff;
- to cooperate with the Romanian Diaspora in order to promote education in Romanian language abroad.”¹¹

Therefore, the Ministry of National Education assumes the following responsibilities: to guide, control, elaborate and establish the assessment criteria of the professional merits and of approving the promotion of teachers and faculties; to establish the curricula for the primary, secondary, high and vocational schools; and to establish the salaries for the teachers, faculty and administrative staff.

The universities and educational research institutes are also subordinated to the Ministry of Education. The autonomy of the state universities is merely on paper since many of the university senate proposals must be approved through ministerial order. Accredited private educational institutions also are under the control of the evaluation committees set-up by and within the same Ministry. The possibility of real competition is controversial in this case and quite often such methods encourage corruption in the process of accreditation of the private educational institutions. The centralist policy of the Ministry – often politically based – makes it easier for the coalition of parties in power to interfere in educational policies. The impossibility to taking decisions without consulting the higher bodies in a form of pyramidal organization essentially prevents or delays the solving of a great many of the problems of public education. The impossibility of autonomously coordinating the educational activities of universities and the County General Inspectorates obstructs not only the self-administration but also the training of trainers, teachers and faculties according to the region's social needs, interests and financial possibilities. The same centralism inherited from the previous totalitarian regimes and perpetuated by some paragraphs of the *Education Law No. 84 of 1995*, facilitates the intervention of the state officials in the administration of local institutions.

A General County School Inspectorate, headed by a General Inspector, manages the regional school network of primary and secondary education. The School Inspectorate, established in each county, is comprised of:

- “the Managing Board composed of the general inspector (president), the deputy general inspectors, the specialty inspectors, the director of the Teachers Resource Centre, the chief accountant and the legal adviser of the Inspectorate;
- the Advisory Council, composed of school directors/principals, prestigious teachers and professors, parents, representatives of the local authorities, of the religious communities and of the local companies.”¹²

The General Inspector, his/her deputies, and the Head of the Teachers’ Resource Centre are appointed by the Minister of Education. The main responsibilities of the County General Inspectorate are:

- “to recommend a local school network to the Ministry of Education;
- to set-up, with the approval of the Ministry of Education, public education institutions including kindergartens, primary schools, lower secondary schools, and institutions of vocational and apprenticeship training;
- to ensure the appropriate personnel for educational institutions;
- to organize and supervise scientific research;
- to co-ordinate the organization of entrance examinations, graduation examinations and of school contests;
- to control the educational process in the dependent institutions; and
- to co-ordinate the activity of the Teacher Resource Centre and of school libraries.”¹³

The General Inspector of the County General Inspectorate is also president of the Council of Administration (Managing Board).¹⁴ This essentially means that all decisions are made by one single person who has absolute power, without being subjected to control by a board. The situation is similar with the school directors/principals, who are simultaneously presidents of the School Boards and presidents of the Councils of Administration. School principals direct the institutions of primary and secondary education. According to the law, the School Board and the Managing Board assist the principals in their governing activity. The principal and the assistant principals are appointed by the General Inspector.¹⁵

This centralized organization of the educational system hinders civic society initiatives. For instance, the non-governmental organizations set-up to promote education and culture must obtain the approval of the Ministry of Education and/or the Ministry of Culture to function.

How does the state relate to the relationship between the majority and minorities, and what role does it grant to these relations in the civic education?

According to Article no. 6 of the Constitution of Romania (adopted in 1992) “the state recognizes and guarantees to persons belonging to ethnic minorities the right to preserve, develop, and express their ethnic, cultural, linguistic and religious identity”. According to the same article, “the measures of protection taken by the government to preserve, develop and express the minorities’ identity must be in accordance to the principles of equality and non-discrimination regarding other Romanian citizens”. The *Law of Education* states that “the Romanian citizens have equal rights and free access to all levels and forms of education irrespective of the social and material condition, gender, race, nationality, political or religious affiliation of the individual”.

However, much of the wording and content in this law allows for contradictory interpretations of the above-mentioned issues. For example, the legislator introduced stipulations that can be interpreted as restrictive such as: “during the secondary and the high school period, the *History of the Romanians* and the *Geography of Romania* are taught in Romanian”, or “the main subjects -- in the public education (vocational, apprentice school, economical, administrative, agrarian, forest and agro-alpine schools), as well as in post high school -- are taught in Romanian, providing, as much as is possible, assimilation of the specialized terminology in the mother tongue.”¹⁶

The use of the “History of Romanians” syntagm instead of “History of Romania” for subject taught in high school and university has brought ideological disputes because it perpetuates 19th century clichés and incites contradictory viewpoints between the majority and minority populations. The law of 1995 does not reflect any systematic concern to preserve the richness of diverse traditions that might facilitate a quicker access to a pluralist culture for the Romanian citizens. The lack of stipulations regarding the study of diversity which might benefit the entire population, means only a diminution of Romania's chance to adjust to its inner multiculturalism,

to the cultural diversity of Europe, and to a democratic mentality where the role of multicultural citizenship is primordial.

A few notes about minorities and regional diversity in Romania – the legacies of history – could be explanatory and would introduce the hypotheses concerning multi- and inter-cultural education.

Minorities in Romania and Their Experience with the Educational System

Romania has a population of 22,760,449 inhabitants (according to the census of January 1992), including a population composed of many different linguistic and religious communities. The majority group is represented by Romanians. The minorities include: Hungarians (Magyars), Romas (Gypsies), Germans, Serbs, Ukrainians, Slovaks, Czechs, Croatians, Turks, Jews, Russian-Lipovans, Bulgarians, Poles, Armenians, Greeks and Italians. The most numerous minority is the Hungarian (Magyar), numbering 1,620,199 inhabitants (according to the above-mentioned census). The number of the Roma (Gypsy) population is quite uncertain, but in the 1992 census it is listed as about 409,723 inhabitants, although other statistics show 1.8 million people.¹⁷ Other minorities are quite small in number (see *Appendix 1*). Two communities which once played a major role in Romania's history have decreased sensibly, namely the German and the Jewish which had 550,000 and 420,000 inhabitants respectively right after the World War II. A large number of people from both communities left Romania during the communist dictatorship for political and economic reasons.

Contemporary Romania's population shows, for the most part, a long period of living together since the Middle Ages. Multiculturalism has been favored here by the geographical diversity of the regions as well as by their administrative and political affiliation to the empires that ruled in the central, eastern and southeastern part of Europe, namely the Habsburg, the Turkish and the Tsarist. The regions of Transylvania, Banat, Maramureş and Partium were parts of the Hungarian Kingdom during the Middle Ages, from the 11th through the 16th centuries.

From 1542 through 1699, Transylvania was the only region in Central and Eastern Europe which held the status of autonomous principality, being compelled to pay a yearly tribute to the Turkish Empire. The Hungarian Kingdom was conquered by the Turks at Mohács in 1526; thus the Hungarian political class was restricted to the East, in Transylvania. The autonomous towns and villages of Transylvania needed to secure good communication and understanding among its communities. All groups living in that region were represented in the legislative bodies. The Transylvanian nobility was not divided on linguistic criterion. The documents of the *Transylvanian Diet* of Turda (1557) stipulated that "everyone lives after the law he chooses". In 1568 the *Diet* proclaimed the complete freedom of faith, thus generating a form of tolerance among the four recognized denominations in Transylvania at that time, namely the Unitarian, Calvinist, Catholic and Evangelical.

Banat was an Ottoman province from 1552 to 1716 known under the name of *Sanjak* of Timișoara (*Sanjak* = a subdivision of the Turkish province), and it was included in the Pashalik of Buda. For two centuries, all the above-mentioned regions were included in the Habsburg Empire which became, after 1867, the Austro-Hungarian Empire.

Bessarabia was part of the Tsarist Empire, and Wallachia, Moldavia and Dobrugea were either under the influence of the Ottoman Empire or under its direct rule for five centuries.

Bukovina, another border region of Romania (part of it is included, today in northeastern Romania, and another part, in Ukraine) had a meandering history itself. It had been the meeting

point of the Polish, Russian, Austrian, and Romanian political and economic interests for five centuries. Hence the inheritance of a cultural patrimony of great diversity.

Generally speaking, the empires facilitated coexistence of many linguistic and religious communities within the same region. At times, they played the role of arbitrators between two or among more groups whenever the viewpoints regarding their origin, historical right, religion and administration were divergent. The community pluralism was born from the politics of those empires, kingdoms and principalities directly. It is obvious that this pluralism generated emulation in every respect: institutional, financial, commercial, scientific and artistic. The plural history of the area during the 16th through the 19th centuries created the premises of modernization.

Two essential aspects should be noted: firstly, the existence of many different cultures based on different languages – namely multiculturalism; and secondly, the mixture of cultures that generated a civilization with multiple origins – namely interculturality. In the latter sense, the Romanian-Hungarian coexistence is the consequence of living together over a long time, dating back to the Middle Ages. The same holds true for the Romanian-German, Romanian-Turkish and Romanian-Jewish coexistence. All this set a specific imprint on the contemporary Romanian civilization, generating many similitudes as well as many particular features according to the different regions.

One of the deficiencies of the Romanian educational system has been that it has not questioned the equality of opportunity for education in minority languages. Although the *Education Law of 1995* stipulates that minorities have the right to instruction in their respective mother tongues (See *Appendices 2,3,4*), the County School Inspectorates do not always consider the demographic reality. That is, when institutions plan their curricula they deprive children belonging to minority communities of their right to learn in their mother tongue. Moreover, the need to set up schools with teaching in languages other than the majority's often is ignored. There are cases when School Inspectorates do not respect the children's right to continue their instruction in their mother tongue at the vocational schools or other apprentice schools.

The Roma (Gypsy) children's integration in the school system has not been completely neglected, however it has not been very successful either. Many facts and explanations are put forward today to explain the problem of integration of this minority in schools and society. These include the lack of Roma specialists and, therefore, a lack of a working strategy with these children and the ignorance of the means of communication specific to the Roma community. The integration of the Roma communities continues to be a problem in many Eastern and Central European countries as well. It is not only a social question, but also a cultural one. This aspect, too, must be considered when civic education of the whole population is addressed. The educational curricula must be seriously adjusted in order to eliminate racist voluntary or involuntary ideologies and practices of the trainers and of political and cultural authorities. Virgil Petrescu, the minister of education (1997), stated in an interview that education in Romania, on the whole, suffered from its administrative system, respectively from its excessive centralism.¹⁸ This situation has been perpetuated by the weak organization of the civic society.

Obstacles and Solutions in Addressing Intercultural Issues in Schools

The legacy of the mental reflexes inherited from the extreme right and extreme left totalitarian regimes determined Romania's lagging behind in promoting interculturally oriented education. The traditionalist thinking, the collectivist habitat which causes suspicion, and the tendency to assimilate the individual into the crowd are visible obstacles in promoting interculturality. The

idea of sacrifice is advocated in the name of the collective good exclusively. Individualism, on the contrary, is often attached to selfishness. This has its origins in the medieval rural community, and has been well preserved until the present day. A society structured on rural ideals and forms of living rejects the urban rules. The transition from village to city requires passing from one set of values to another, an aspect completely ignored, for instance, by Ceaușescu's dictatorship, which initiated the forced industrialization and the great migration of the village people to the factories in urban milieus. Examples of cultural maladjustment to the urban milieu are the discriminatory attitudes against the old, sick and disabled, against homosexuals and women -- attitudes that lay at the origin of resentments against other linguistic and confessional communities (Hungarian, Roma, Jewish) than the majority.

This is the background of the main factors obstructing the civic education through an intercultural perspective, and hindering the understanding of the role of the pluralist thinking, accepting and respecting diversity and the human rights irrespective of gender, faith, customs, nationality and language. Linguistic discriminations, racist and anti-Semitic behaviors are consequences of a poor civic education. The anti-Hungarian, anti-Semitic and racist articles, studies and books do not encounter any major reaction from the civic society -- another indicator that civic education is in its incipient phase. The Democratic Union of the Hungarians in Romania (UDMR) draw the FUEN's attention (The Federal Union of European Nationalities) to these discriminations through a report presented on the occasion of the congress held in Timișoara on May 15-19, 1996. The lack of a real interest for minorities in Romania has been visible not only as regards the Hungarian minority, but also the German, Roma, Turkish, and Russian-Lippovan ones. The cultural values of these communities are generally ignored. The promotion of their personalities in the country's cultural life is rather casual and when it happens the reason is to prove "political correctness" or respect for the minority rights. The reference to such individuals/personalities is quite inexistent in Romanian universities and in the Romanian language mass media. Under these circumstances, the Hungarian (Magyar) minority has taken some steps to preserve its culture. Its political body set up a department for cultural and confessional issues and organized a cultural society of the Hungarians in Transylvania: *The Organization of the Intellectual Life of the Hungarians of Romania*.

The official educational system is only partly adapted to European rules; hence its permissivity for chauvinistic manifestations, and anti-Semitic and racial orientations. Even though a few scholars called the attention on the discrepancies between the theory/policy that rules Romanian and Western education, it seems that the Romanian ministry officials have never noticed that the mission of a modern education is to prepare a well educated professional middle class to assume the rules of the society where it lives.

The negligence of the civic education is visible at all educational levels. The trainers and teachers are not themselves satisfactorily prepared to teach the fundamentals of civic education. It is no less true that the gaps in education are due to the lack of financing. During the totalitarian regimes the stress was put on information and indoctrination in the detriment of the individual education; this fact left deep consequences in the mental reflexes of the teachers and students. The superficial approach to interethnic and intercultural topics has visible consequences in civic society, in learning and assuming the human rights, and in establishing a natural communication between two or more communities.

The legal and institutional framework to address the issue of minorities was set-up through the Council for National Minorities, a centralist body without the necessary professional background for promoting inter-community relations.

To conclude, the main obstacles perceived in addressing intercultural education are determined by:

- the attempt to preserve the 19th century political ideology promoted by the states of Central and Eastern Europe after 1848, by assuming that the nation and ethnicity are overlapping;
- the lack of culture regarding the rights and obligations of the citizens;
- the conservation of an attitude specific to the close, totalitarian societies;
- the ignorance of minority languages and cultures;
- the minor role of individual initiative;
- the persistence of a centralized political and administrative system;
- the use of stereotypes in textbooks, thus encouraging a nationalist-oriented education;
- the tacit suspicion and inequality of opportunities for the members belonging to minority communities, and for those belonging to mixed families;
- ignorance regarding the Holocaust and World War II; and
- the influence of mass media in creating and perpetuating myths.

Solutions to these obstacles might include:

- the introduction of compulsory multilingual education for all pupils and students in regions with mixed population;
- the elaboration of history, literature, geography, and ethnography textbooks which include information about the culture, traditions, language, and religion of the minority communities living in Romania, as well as data about the convergences between these cultures and the majority one;
- the introduction of laws against any kind of discrimination against minorities;
- granting equal opportunities in professional competition to all the citizens irrespective of their nationality, sex, religion and race;
- the decentralization of the educational system by granting legal opportunities for local educational organizations in minority languages;
- the introduction of new history curriculum in secondary and high schools, to promote the convergent dimension of the cultures and to mould open mindness, responsive to alternatives, giving up the stereotypes which feed chauvinistic, anti-Semitic and racist political speeches;
- the usage of the common cultural heritage to the benefit of the country's culture;
- the teaching of civic education courses at the primary and secondary educational level;
- the dissemination of local intercultural examples in primary schools, high schools, colleges, universities, cultural institutions and the mass media; and
- the promotion of the principles of anti-racist education in schools.

The “Babeş-Bolyai” University of Cluj-Napoca: A Way of Addressing Multicultural Education

Higher education in Hungarian is a controversial topic in Romania’s cultural and political life. The disagreement comes from the kind of education conducted in the East-Central and South-Eastern European states where monoculturally oriented education dominates over the multicultural and/or intercultural. The phenomenon must be seen in relation to the political thinking which developed in terms of ethno-cultural and ethno-differentialist criteria, both of them building the

ethno-nationalist identity myth, whence the question of minorities and the policies of subordination, assimilation, exclusion (in extreme cases), or recognition (in lucky cases) have emerged. The Hungarians of Romania -- as well as other minorities such as the Germans, Ukrainians, Serbians, Jews, Slovaks, Russians, Turk-Tatars, Roma (Gypsy), Armenians, Italians, Greeks – have their own communities established in different regions in Romania dating back for centuries. Like the Romanian majority, they consider that the region where they live is their native land and wish to be treated as citizens of equal right rather than as a tolerated community of second rank status. The education conducted in minority languages has its incontestable role in the preservation of the pluralist traditions of Transylvania region and of Romania in general.

I shall begin with some statistics concerning the “Babeş-Bolyai” University whose statute became the object of controversy. From 1958 to 1993 the number of students enrolled at the “Babeş-Bolyai” University who studied in Romanian increased from 2,917 (in 1958) to 10,102 (in 1993), and the number of students who attended classes in Hungarian increased from 1,266 to 1,917. During the same period there was a decrease in the number of German students, from 102 to 54, and the number of students belonging to other minorities from 102 to 9.¹⁹

From 1993 to 2000 the situation changed. In the 1997-1998 academic year there were 76 programs in Romanian, 27 in Hungarian, 8 in German and 3 in international languages. In the same year, the total number of students enrolled at the “Babeş-Bolyai” University was 16,684 (Romanian citizens), out of which 13,578 studied in Romanian, 3005 in Hungarian, 74 in German and 27 in other languages. The day taught courses included 14,768 Romanian citizen students: 11,840 of Romanian nationality, out of which 11,806 studied in Romanian; 2,827 Hungarians, out of which 1,975 studied in Hungarian; 74 Germans, out of which 31 studied in German. Along with these there were 23 Roma, 1 Ukrainian, 1 Italian, 1 Turk, 1 Slovene. The postgraduate studies were attended by 646 students, out of which 506 were Romanians, 135 Hungarians and 5 Germans. Out of the total of 69 programs, 2 ran courses in Hungarian and the rest in Romanian. No subject was taught in German.²⁰

In the 2000-2001 academic year, the “Babeş-Bolyai” University of Cluj served approximately 32,000 students enrolled in 18 departments, comprising 105 undergraduate programs in Romanian, Hungarian and German as well as 123 postgraduate programs. There are also more than 1,200 members in the teaching staff. The “Babeş-Bolyai” University is committed to organizing degree programs taught in Romanian, Hungarian and German. From a total enrollment of 32,000 students, 25,848 are being taught in Romanian, 4,508 in Hungarian, and 690 in German.²¹

The multicultural profile of the University reflects this multilingual foundation that is rooted in the historical and cultural background of the region. The University officially endorses the multicultural approach in its statute and has adopted a multicultural foundation. The document “*Implementation of a Multicultural Structure of the University*” was voted on and accepted by the University Senate in April 1997. It was enacted to promote education on its own terms, strengthening the multicultural profile of the university. Out of the 18 departments of the “Babeş-Bolyai” University, currently 13 integrate Hungarian instruction and 9 departments combine German instruction with Romanian. Two departments, namely the Department of Protestant Theology and that of Roman-Catholic Theology offer programs entirely in Hungarian.

The “Babeş-Bolyai” University provides undergraduate programs in three languages as follows: 45 degree programs in Hungarian, 12 degree programs in German, and 86 degree programs in Romanian. Such data analysis reveals an inequality of specializations among the different mother tongues. The numerical proportion criterion was applied to the “Babeş-Bolyai”

University exclusively, and the preservation of minority cultures as a whole depending on the percentage of the total population in Romania was not taken into consideration.

The Hungarian and German speaking students are entitled independently to elect their representatives in the teaching boards of their departments and in the University Senate. Each program of study has its own autonomy in establishing the number of teaching positions and the student enrollment for each program. Each department has a Vice-Dean representing the Hungarian minority and coordinating the activity of the Hungarian line of study in that department. Moreover, a Vice-Rector has overall responsibility for all departments. There are twenty Hungarian and German representatives on the administrative boards of the University (Vice-Rectors, Deans, Vice-Deans and heads of departments).²²

Is “Babeş-Bolyai” a multicultural university? Apparently, yes, but in fact it is quite difficult to define it in these terms. Perceived as an outcome of the politics of recognition, the multicultural approach has encountered incredible difficulties in the societies whose democratic practice is still incipient. This is firstly because the monocultural and totalitarian political traditions left deep marks on people’s memory, and secondly because the non-governmental organizations are still insufficient and relatively weak in promoting an articulated view on civic education. As for the state institutions, neither they are prepared for such a tremendous re-consideration, nor have they a credible team of experts to contribute to the appropriation of the necessary information concerning minorities.

However, the desire to implement educational programs taught in more languages and the continuity of education in Romanian and Hungarian exists in the case of the “Babeş-Bolyai” University. There is also the intention to enrich the multi-linguistic program though promoting German as a third instructional language. What can be ascertained from a sociological analysis? The Romanian majority and the Hungarian minority – the two linguistic communities who claim their respective rights in higher education at the “Babeş-Bolyai” University of Cluj – both plead for the preservation of their respective, culture, tradition, and denomination. Moreover, both communities have discovered their origins, history and archetype through self-definition. Consequently, they adapt their curricula to their respective cultural motivations. The issue, however, in such situations of two or more cultural coexistence, is that of communication and reciprocal transfer of ideas, values, aspirations, working techniques and common socio-professional activities. In this regard, the approach to the issue of coexistence does not seem to have gotten beyond its formal frame. Hence, the risk of conflicts may at any time be activated by ethno-nationalist ideologies which remain at the basis of Transylvania’s cultures and education. Pedagogy under multicultural rather than intercultural emblem, understood as a separation on ethnic background, has as consequence non-recognition or ignorance of the other community’s culture, religion and traditions.

It is true that the university leadership wished to promote each community’s rights through their respective students, faculties and administrative staff. The existence of study-tracks in many languages is in practice and could become fertile in promoting Transylvania’s cultures. All these merits do not obscure the fact that the practice of two or three languages by the entire faculty or by a large group of students remains a future goal. The students enrolled in the Hungarian and German sections speak Romanian, too, beyond their respective mother tongues, while the majority of the Romanian students do not speak -- and are not taught in -- Hungarian or German, as well.²³ On the other hand, there are many cases where students enrolled in Romanian day programs study in English.

The situation is similar with regard to the faculty and staff. A state of suspicion marks the relationship between the two linguistic communities' intelligentsia. Though either apparently or by virtue of political correctness they agree to work together, quite often they ignore the others' academic results. This is because either they do not have access to their respective language and culture, or they do not show interest in the diversity that is close by at hand. The academic works published at the "Babeş-Bolyai" University Press support this assessment: under *Studia Universitatis Babeş-Bolyai* the 21 series of reviews are published in English, Romanian, French and German, but not in Hungarian.

Last, the university administration is not conducted in two or three languages. The official documents, diplomas and certificates are issued exclusively in Romanian; the rector is elected, with no exception, from the Romanian majority. Since the majority of the faculty in the Senate is Romanian, every decision concerning the instruction in a language other than Romanian could be ignored or rejected. Decisions are at the stake of the Romanian speaking faculty within the department councils including situations when issues regarding the Hungarian or German study tracks are discussed, when it is about hiring or promoting Hungarian or German speaking faculty members or when it is about the continuation or interruption of the Hungarian or German language study tracks. On this basis, the administrative process is in danger of generating inequality and has encountered a few misunderstandings between the two academic communities, also at the political level.

The formal approach to mutual relationship, not only made it possible to consider the multiculturally oriented measures as artificial, but also encouraged the Hungarian community leadership to request setting up a separate university in its mother tongue. The idea of a Hungarian language university shortly became a part of the political program of the Democratic Union of the Hungarians in Romania (UDMR). For the time being the debate has moved to the Romanian Parliament and in central and regional publications, becoming an ideological controversy where the thesis of the linguistic and cultural differentiation is fueled by ethnographic interpretations. As Andrei Roth has remarked, the debates do not have a chance of succeeding as long as they are developed in a nationalist paradigm. He is one of the few faculties of the "Babeş-Bolyai" University who teaches in all three languages: Romanian, Hungarian and German.

In his book *Naționalism sau democratism* [Nationalism or Democratism] (Tîrgu-Mureş/Marosvásárhely: Pro Europa, 1999), Andrei Roth remarks that there is a chance for a reasonable solution, but for this the discussion has to be transferred from the field of the ethno-nationalist symbols to the real one. Two issues have to be clarified, namely: the social need of higher education in Hungarian; and the concrete way to answer this need by state decision. Roth pleads for finding a solution for Hungarian language education, but not in its "current structural formula". He argues that there is no need to set up an autonomous state (public) institution for the Hungarian language higher education and that for the lack of students and competent faculty the Hungarian minority would not be able to maintain such a parallel structure. Furthermore, it would divide the present infrastructure of the "Babeş-Bolyai" University at a time when neither the existent one is sufficient nor the state is willing to provide the necessary resources for new investments.²⁴

The solutions suggested by professor Roth refer to:

- the acceptance of the Hungarian (as well as German) as equal languages used in the institution's public and official discourse, so that the university could become really bilingual or trilingual;

- institutional assurance for the minorities to fill -- through elections and on a rotating basis – top-leadership positions in the university, not only “deputy” positions;
- the establishment of parallel chairs (departments) in Hungarian for every specialization assuring the right of autonomous decision making;
- the minorities’ must be represented in the university Senate, so that the functioning and development of the departments and chairs in Hungarian and German languages be protected from the discretionary wish of the ethno-national majority.

All these proposals contain rational working hypotheses that, once applied, could create a natural coexistence among the multicultural groups. Andrei Roth refers to the ethno-national principle at the foundation of the cultural identity and politics of Romania. It should be added, however, that a solution for a multicultural and intercultural educational system -- like the one which tried in Cluj – has to highlight the importance of the language and culture much more than either the ethnic criterion or that of the majority-minority proportion. That is, the practice of bi- or tri-lingualism within the “Babeş-Bolyai” University irrespective of pertaining to a particular community seems to be the long run solution that could generate a kind of equity. Only by recognizing that Central and Eastern Europe needs now to redefine the ‘nation’ concept (justified by the old and new territorial, ethno-racial and religious conflicts) will it be able to better understand the importance of overcoming the false association between language and nationality, or between nationality and land.

Some theoretical explanation of multiculturalism in a comparative perspective is needed. The development of multiculturally oriented higher education at the “Babeş-Bolyai” University is the result of the Western models. The openness for study in many languages is a positive fact in itself, but it should not be put in direct relationship with the ‘ethnic’ criterion, for language does not mean ethnicity. What precisely has not been understood either at the “Babeş-Bolyai” University, or in the theories of some American academics such as of Charles Taylor²⁵ who have advocated the multiculturalism thesis? Firstly, this type of pedagogy has been practiced in terms of regions, but not of the nation or nation-state, nor in the majority-minority proportions. Secondly, extrapolations cannot be made from other continents to Central and Eastern Europe because of different legacies. The majority-minorities proportion cannot be everywhere the same, and therefore do not follow a rigid model. To impose a so-called “model” can lead to disastrous outcomes, of which the case of the former Yugoslavia is the most obvious example. The interpretation of a multi- and intercultural phenomena must take account the local contexts. This could promote a political and pedagogical philosophy, correlated with the rights of all the linguistic and religious communities, and thus eliminate the possibility of voluntary and involuntary discrimination.

What should be kept in mind as fundamental regarding the concept of ‘regional identity’? There should be granted equal opportunity to each person to become co-participant to the activities within the public sphere without limiting racial, ethnic, religious and linguistic criteria, and setting aside the numerical basis of his/her community of origin. Thus, the freedom of option for each person could be kept as far as his/her identification with one or another local or regional group is concerned. In this case one’s identification with two linguistic, religious, social-communitarian groups at the same time or successively should be possible. This is how, quite often, a new reference point is born in regions where the cultural horizons (which differ in time) fuse or are in a process of fusion to the benefit of civil society (*societas civilis*), and of a prosperous political and economical administration.

As social and cultural coexistence is possible within a city or a region, it should also be possible among different cities, regions and states. 'Trans-culturality', presumes the right of the equal development of trans-urban, trans-regional, trans-national, and trans-continental relationships. This means that we have to deal with a correlation between educational and philosophical ideas in every integrative process. The 'multiple identity' concept differs from 'multi-culturality' and 'trans-culturality' because it emphasizes a denial of the theory of absolute values. The 'multiple-identity' concept stresses that nothing justifies operating hierarchically and in terms of an exclusive basis through 'ethnicity', 'race', 'denomination', 'region' and 'nation-state' basis. If by 'trans-culturality' Harvey Siegel²⁶ understood "ideals which transcend individual cultures", then by 'multiple identities' I mean the similarity of human values, their common origin, the possibility of assuming a plurality of cultures through claiming more than one cultural identity at a meantime.

Regions like Transylvania – where Cluj is situated with its "Babeş-Bolyai" University – reflect to such a trans-cultural approach to identity. The case of Pristina University in Kosovo and respectively its role in promoting segregation proceeding from a false multicultural idea is a signal of the mutations that could appear in the practical life. Hence there is need for a comparative perspective on the evolution of the values around which the individual's personality was formed and which guide a certain society. As rather complementary than as an alternative to multiculturalism, the concept of 'multiple identities' provides a way out of the frame of the ethno-cultural and differential (ethno-nationalist) prejudices to which political thinking is still tributary.

The numeric principle generously invoked by "Babeş-Bolyai" University in their presentation materials only summarizes the thesis of multiculturalism, without taking into consideration the realities. A normal coexistence of many groups does not necessarily mean a definition on an ethno-nationalist basis, either of the regions under discussion or of the educational institutions. Therefore, an alternative to the monoculturally oriented education has to be found in a natural way by professing the multicultural pedagogy from which permanent reference to the more profound senses of trans-culturality and inter-culturality must not lack.

The most interesting and attractive forms of the coexistence of many cultural identities could be found in border regions. They preserve the interest in "Otherness" and enable borrowing values from different cultures. In these areas particularly, civic education includes the principles of interculturality and trans-culturality.

The Interculturality of the Banat Region: an Argument to Overcome the Controversies Based on Ethno-Cultural Criteria

What are the most convincing reference points in present day Romania for teaching civic education and the human rights through an intercultural perspective? To answer this question I have chosen Banat, a border region located in western Romania, with multilingual and pluricultural background that might offer possible examples in the above mentioned sense.

This area shows more convergence than any other in Central and South-eastern Europe; it shows also how the coexistence of many cultures and different languages has been possible. The phenomenon -- defined today in the term of interculturality -- not only did not cause major conflicts, but was able to stimulate the development of a community where the interests in the name of civilization have been placed above ethnicity, or beyond closed communities. The inter- and multicultural features which have survived until now cannot be idealized; now as in the past the merit of their preservation belongs to its inhabitants rather than to the policies of the authorities

such as the nationalist policy of the last decades that concerned the very existence of diversities all over Romania.

The examples in the next paragraphs might be found in other regions as well. The outcomes of the intellectual life and of civilization belonging to different linguistic groups have been turned into a common patrimony through their cohabitation. The acceptance of the idea that this patrimony has multiple identities contributes to a better understanding of both history and the contemporary world. Generally, the cultures in the border regions of a country are plural ones. They cannot be found completely in a single language. Thus the Banat region cannot be studied through the fruits of Romanian culture alone.

Situated in the western extremity of Romania, Banat is an area of multiple dialogues. Its intercultural make-up is the result of the cohabitation of several populations: Romanians, Germans, Hungarians, Serbs, Croats, Jews, Bulgarians, Slovaks, Bohemians, Gypsies (Roma) and Turks — it is the result of confessional encounters between Christian Orthodox, Catholics, Protestants, Calvinists, Jews and Moslems (Appendices 6-9).

The society which has developed in Banat from the eighteenth century onwards is the product of an exchange of opinions and material values. How can this phenomenon be explained? Ideas did not remain at an abstract level; they were developed in the course of an education in which multilingualism, the assimilation of traditions and customs, the interaction of religions, and the alliances of cultural aspirations with religion were fundamental. Crucial to this process was the coalescence of different groups on the basis of mutual interests. This is manifest in the appearance of mixed families, both ethnically and denominationally. Interculturalism developed in the form of a double or multiple cultural inheritances.

Banat was a model of peaceful coexistence from 1800 through 1938, an example of mutual understanding and intercultural and inter-confessional relations²⁷ (see Appendices 6 - 9). Despite a number of significant demographic dislocations due to the discriminatory measures imposed by Ceaușescu's nationalist-communist regime, a sense of civic society was retained in the above-mentioned area. This took place in defiance of xenophobic, chauvinistic and anti-Semitic provocations. The region's mentality continues to be tolerant today, despite the fact that its ethnic configuration has completely changed (see Appendices 10-14). Multilingualism continues to characterize around 20-30% of the population.²⁸

The use of two, three or even four languages in the Banat region is an uncommon phenomenon in Europe. The multilingualism of the people living in this part of Romania dates back one and a half, or in some cases even two, centuries. The wide dissemination of this phenomenon can be observed in all historical periods, despite the tendency of the national culture and language to extend its influence to the detriment of minority cultures. The need to communicate and to understand their cultural heritage, alongside economic interests, was the reason for learning the languages of neighboring communities. The region's multilingualism could be described as the common inheritance of every inhabitant. Remarkably, none of the ethnic or religious groups viewed multilingualism as a threat. Rather, it was perceived as a way to bring people together. The educational dimension of this phenomenon has been well understood by the region's inhabitants, resulting in a cultural heritage that now belongs equally to all.

In societies of this kind, diverse by virtue of their very genesis, recognition of the role of the intercultural education is an important step.²⁹ In Banat multilingualism has been supported by the school and the family. Romanian is the dominant language, being the mother tongue of the majority; in most primary and secondary schools teaching is in Romanian. The school curriculum stipulates the study also of English, French, and German. Teaching conducted in German,

Hungarian, Serbian, Slovakian, and Bulgarian is maintained as a local tradition. Education was set up in Romany, at the request, for the first time, of the Roma (Gypsy) minority. From a linguistic point of view diversity -- which is a part and parcel of the culture of the Banat region -- generated as a complementary aspect the desire to establish secondary schools that provide instruction in English and French. In Timișoara, for instance, after the collapse of communism, the “Shakespeare” and the “Jean Louis Calderon” high schools have been established.³⁰

The practice of multilingualism -- the result of the social interaction between the Romanian majority and the Magyar/Hungarian, German, Serb, Bulgarian, Jewish, Slovak and Roma/Gypsy minorities -- is closely linked to the historical process of modernization; rather than being imposed from outside, diversity and multiple identities have emerged naturally.

Despite difficulties and the absence of links between bureaucracy and mainstream politics, on the one hand, and the expert analysis of the multiethnic and multilingual configuration, on the other, there are still a few schools in Banat that provide education in minority languages. In both Timișoara and Arad there are German-language primary schools and high schools; while in Lugoj, Reșița and in the German-populated villages, there are modules that provide education in German (see Appendix 5). Experience of cultural interaction between Germans, Magyars and Romanians has given rise to an interesting phenomenon: the desire of many Romanian and Magyar native speaking students to study in high schools that provide instruction in German. As a result of the emigration of Germans and Jews, eighty percent of the students in these schools have Romanian as their mother tongue.

Teaching in the Hungarian language has a tradition dating back for more than 150 years. There are primary and secondary schools or classes that provide education in Hungarian in Timișoara, Arad, and Lugoj, as well as in other towns and villages in Banat region (see Appendix 5). The decline in the number of Hungarian speakers is the result of assimilation and the rise of the proportion of mixed families in which the Romanian language prevails. It is also the outcome of the political pressure from the nationalist-communist regime in the 1980s, the impact of which has still been perceived after 1989.

The Serb schools meet the needs of over 40,000 local inhabitants. Primary schools are run in every village with a Serb or mixed population, while the “Dositej Obradović” high school in Timișoara provides continuity in Serb language study (see Appendix 5).

The Slovakian primary and high school in Nădlac serves the Slovak minority. They offer a basis for cultural interactions between Romanians and Slovaks which has evident benefit in view of the European ideals of integration. The Bulgarians find themselves in a similar situation.

Multilingual education in Banat is able to function today due to a particular life-style and mode of civilization. Nevertheless, the active support -- both material and spiritual -- of the authorities is essential. This could be based on a number of considerations: new generations of specialists could be formed more quickly to develop the region; and it could also facilitate relationships with Central and Western Europe and with Balkans. This could mean the beginning of a deep transformation of mentality and behavior, at present hindered by the legacy of previous totalitarian regimes and economic backwardness. The population’s efforts indicate that Banat is an East-Central European region where the emergence of an open society can be readily envisaged.³¹

As previously mentioned the present population of Banat can be divided roughly into two major categories: those who belong to the region by birth and ancestry and those who migrated from other regions of Romania during the last six decades. Most social analysts of the region have observed, however, that in many cases newcomers have embraced the region’s specific

multicultural *modus vivendi*. Those able to accept the local religious, linguistic and cultural diversity have adopted gradually the peculiarities of the everyday life-style from the region's "indigenous" inhabitants. They adopted the style of house construction, the local cuisine, and the manner of celebrating cultural traditions. Newcomers have assimilated even the folkloric patrimony of Banat and many expressions from the German, Hungarian and Serbian languages. Even more interesting for the sociologists and historians of mentalities is the fact that many of these migrants have learned some Hungarian and German. A few of them have preferred mixed marriages; others have developed relationships with Hungarians and Serbs from Banat. The development of such relationships was based on economic exchanges. The businessmen in Banat -- in the process of reacquiring the "universal" rules of trade -- were the first to realize the importance of economic transactions with other minorities. Even the craftsmen, whose businesses were threatened by Ceaușescu's totalitarian regime, are recovering not only their economic, but their social role.

The Romanian majority originating in Banat continues to have good relations with the minorities. Until 1989 xenophobic and nationalist ideologies were quite rare in the region due to the middle class that understood the multicultural identity of the region. Nationalist extremism has its origin in both an inferiority complex and in misguided notions of superiority. Twenty-five years of nationalist-communist dictatorship (1965-1989) and the interwar ethno-nationalist ideology promoted by the centralist political system also left its mark on education. Information concerning linguistic and religious minorities deliberately was expunged from textbooks; the teaching of modern languages fell into disuse; and every attempt was made to impose a single culture -- that of the majority -- and to ignore diversity. The authorities went so far as to prohibit the public use of the regions' name in order to obscure its geographical, ethnographic, linguistic, and religious variety.³² Some families living in Banat (fewer than in other regions of Romania) were influenced by populist and extremist ideology in the course of a veritable crusade against civism, culture, religion and diversity. Communication and contacts between the Germans, Hungarians, and Serbs of Banat and people in Germany, Hungary and Serbia respectively, contributed to maintaining the flow of information between these countries and Romania. During the crisis the proximity of the former Yugoslavia and Hungary constituted an opening for diversity. Until 1989 the world could be watched through TV channels broadcast from Budapest, Belgrade and Novi Sad. Social relations between majority and the ethnic minorities could not be pigeonholed in accord with a particular ideology, for reality always contradicts mere assertion, however credible arguments were brought forward to back it up.³³

The remarkable relations among the minorities of Banat have always been supported by the region's widespread multi-lingualism. Magyars/Hungarians also speak Romanian and German; the Serbs and Bulgarians have always been bilingual, the Romanian language has been adopted as a second language in families. The Jews have been generally multilingual and the Slovak minority in Nădlac has spoken both Romanian and Hungarian as well as Slovakian. Social relations among minorities have been multifarious and have taken the form of cultural cooperation, of recognition and respect for the traditions of other regions. Their extensive linguistic resources have enabled the local cultural minorities to acquire a thorough understanding of the particular inheritance of the Banat region. They have been largely sensitive to such ideals as the equality of all citizens. Germans and Hungarians come together under the auspices of the Calvinist, Lutheran and Catholic Churches; the latter Church also brings together the small Slovakian and Bulgarian minorities. Cultural differences and mentalities which have been the product of centuries of living together may be perceived in every aspect of the public life of the minorities.³⁴

A deep sense of democracy persists in Banat due to the pluralism generated from the bottom to the top by a multicultural society. To what extent does the present population of Banat itself comprehend the role and importance of multi-lingualism and interculturalism and what efforts is it prepared to make to safeguard the future? The particular nature of the region could be endangered and its well-being and stability greatly enhanced if the educational system is not fundamentally reformed.

Nationalism continues to play an important role in Romanian politics. Many political scientists – such as Andrei Marga (minister of education between 1997- 2000) -- assert that nationalism has interposed itself between communism and democracy, leading to stagnation and promoting reactionary tendencies of the conservative social groups.

“These groups stress the Latin origin of the Romanian people, but Latin language is studied less in Romania than in non-Latin countries. They proclaim their adherence to Orthodoxy, but they have not generated a serious religious culture; they proclaim a sense of justice as their chief morale virtue, but until 1989 Romania was ruled by the most sinister dictatorship from Europe in the last decades. Moreover, the emigration of Jews and Germans cannot be viewed separately from the nationalist influence on the government policy. Economic decline and falling living standards led to uncertainty and restrictions for minorities.”³⁵

The Educational Significance of Interculturalism

Education could play a major role to solve the problems of nationalism. The main advantage of the historical model provided by the Banat is its intercultural and trans-cultural nature. The recognition of the minorities’ right to develop their respective cultures and languages within the borders of a nation state depends largely on the attitudes of the majority. Here education -- both at school and at home -- can have a considerable influence. The plurilingual approaches which have emerged historically in Banat have been strongly combated by nationalist-communist groups in Romania. The European integration of Romania will depend on the flexibility of the regional population, on its abilities to set a good example of communication among diversity.

The interculturality of Banat region and the civic education promoted by school and professional associations could be a starting point and an outstanding example for the younger generation. Why is this the case? Different cultural information sources tend to emphasize the positive role of social interaction. The bilingual or trilingual education of the minorities in Banat has resulted in a diversity of cultural viewpoints. An education system that uses the past to construct a modern European man would be extremely effective; and when one talks about Europe, one has in mind not East and West, but mutual relations and symbiosis.³⁶ The multiple identities of Banat may contribute -- as long as demagoguery and forced imposition are abandoned -- to rebuilding the bridges between Eastern Europe and the West.

The rediscovery of the intercultural history of Romanian regions like the Banat, Maramureș, Partium, Transylvania and Bukovina has a deep importance. It is a matter of replacing a factional and a partial standpoint with a liberal and open one. It is a matter of generating spiritual support consonant with social realities, with the multi-linguistic and multi-confessional nature of the country. It is a matter of recovering a *modus vivendi* that is concordant with the traditions of the region on the basis of diversity and tolerance.

The development of civic society very much depends on education. Not only the population of Banat, but also of the neighboring regions could be approached from an intercultural

perspective. The examples offered by the historical background could stimulate the development of the trans-cultural relationships among people living in Romania.

Banat and Transylvania might serve as good starting points for the historical reconciliation between Romania and Hungary, not only on the basis of everyday relations, but also as a model of contemporary trans-national communication. The history of cultural relations between these two nations should be studied as a foundation to support and develop regional tolerance.

Perhaps the best chance for the European integration of the former communist states is to build upon aspects of their own regional past which point in the direction of a pluralist identity and democratic development. In Romania, the regions of Banat, Partium, Maramureș, Bukovina, Dobrugea and even historical Transylvania are border regions. This is why it could act as a mediating agent for the development and deepening of social modernization. Obviously, the legacy of the communist regime can only be overcome after great efforts. The functioning of a pluralist society is deeply dependent on the educational reform where civic education is addressed through an intercultural perspective.

Notes

1. For a detailed presentation of the cultural and political life, of the multiple identities and their convergence in Central and Eastern Europe during the Enlightenment period, see Victor Neumann, *The Temptation of Homo Europeus. The Genesis of the Modern Ideas in Central and South-eastern Europe*, (Boulder, Colorado; New York: Columbia University Press, 1993), East European Monographs, pp. 125-149, the chapter: "Homo Europaeus and the Intellectual Revolution of the Enlightenment".

2. The examples offered by the process of the emancipation of Romanians and Serbs in the Empire are relevant in the sense. See, also Keith Hitchins: *The Romanian National Movement in Transylvania, 1780-1849*, (Harvard University Press, 1969); Idem, *The Idea of Nation: The Romanians of Transylvania 1691-1849*, (Bucharest: Științifică și Enciclopedică, 1985); Andrija B. Stojkovic, *Filosofski pogledi Dositeja Obradovica. Les vues philosophiques de Dositej Obradovic*, (Beograd, 1980).

3. Bibó István, "A kelet-európai kissállamok nyomorusága" [Misery of the Small States of Eastern Europe, o.n.], in Idem *Összegyűjtött Munkái* [Complete Works, u.n.] 1, edition prepared by István Kemény and Mátyás Sárközi, with a foreword of Arpád Szölösi and with an introduction of Zoltán Szabó. (Munich: Magyar Szabadegyetem-Bern, 1981), pp. 202-252. See also the French edition: István Bibó, *Misère des petits Etats d'Europe de l'Est*, translated from Hungarian by György Kassai, (Paris: Editions l'Harmattan, 1986). Bibó was one of the most important characters of intellectual and political life in Central and Eastern Europe. From the perspective of the history of political thought it can be said that he was the personality who mostly contributed to opening political thinking in Hungary. He was and still remains a first rank theorist to whom the Hungarian political culture in recent decades relates. His works refer both to the confusions in the history of political thought, and to the history of Hungary and the neighboring countries' as well.

4. *Ideen zur Philosophie der Geschichte der Menschheit*, was the work that stirred positive comments in all cultures of Central and Eastern Europe. It was a first rank reference during the region's Europeanization because its political messages met the aspirations of the forming nations in the mentioned regime. German culture and civilization was greatly enjoyed by the population of these regions, often being considered a point of absolute reference. The lack of a critical spirit and of the possibilities of comparing -- justified only through the perpetuation of isolation inside

a folk culture for a long time -- encouraged shallow and one-sided reception. We could mention, among others, that the Anglo-Saxon political and philosophical thought did not play an important role in Central and Eastern Europe. For Herder's reception by Romanians and Hungarians, see Victor Neumann: *Convergente spirituale. Studii privind istoria relațiilor politice și culturale în Europa Centrală și de Est, 1750-1850* [Spiritual Convergences. A Survey on the Political and Cultural Relations in Central and Eastern Europe, 1750-1850], (Bucharest, 1986), pp. 16-38, 38-56, and 84-103.

5. Isaiah Berlin, *Four Essays on Liberty*, (Oxford University Press, 1992).

6. The first French edition of his main work: *Idées sur la philosophie de l'histoire de l'humanité*, translated by Edgar Quinet, (Paris, 1834) circulated in Greece and Romania. In Bohemia, Hungary, and Transylvania the work was read in the original. For its influence in Transylvania, see, for example, Iosif Wolf: "Die rumänische Herderrezeption im Vormärz und Perspektiven", in *Cahiers roumains d'etudes litteraires*, no. 2, 1979. For Herder's influence in forming of the neo-Greek political culture, see C. Th. Dimaras: *Neoellinikos diafotismos*, (Athene, 1977).

7. See Endre Kiss, "A Typology of Nineteenth Century Concepts of Nationhood", in *East European Quarterly*, XXX, 1, Spring, 1996, pp. 27-62.

8. István Bibó, *op. cit.*, p. 207.

9. See *Education Law 84/1995* published in Romania's Gazette, year VII, number 167, 31st of July 1995, Title I: "General Provisions", Article 5, Paragraph 2, and Article 12, Paragraph 2.

10. "Central authorities" in *The Structure of Education and initial Training System in Romania*, The Euridyce Unit Romania, October 1996, pp. 3-4.

11. See Title IV, Chapter I, Article 141: "Administration of education" in *Education Law 84/1995*.

12. See "Regional authorities" in *The Structure of Education and initial Training System in Romania*, The Euridyce Unit Romania, October 1996, p. 4.

13. *Ibidem*, p. 5.

14. See Title IV "Administration of Education", Chapter II "School Inspectorates" in *Education Law 84/1995* that says: "The general inspector is the president by right of the Council of Administration (Managing Board)". This statement facilitates the breach of position, the centralism of decisions, the lack of a democratic control of the mentioned institution's management.

15. See "Institutional levels" in *The Structure of Education and initial Training System in Romania*, The Euridyce Unit Romania, October 1996, p. 5.

16. See Chapter XII, Article 22, Paragraph 1: "The education for persons belonging to national minorities" in *Education Law 84/1995*.

17. As of the informal statistics, the number of Hungarians (Magyars) in Romania is about 2.3-2.5 millions of inhabitants. Cf. Ellemér Illyés, *National Minorities in Romania: Change in Transylvania*, (Boulder, Colorado; New York: Columbia University Press, 1982), *East European Monographs*, p. 33. See also Andrew Bell, "The Hungarians in Romania since 1989", in *Nationalities Papers*, vol.24, no. 3, 1996, pp. 492-505. for the official statistics, see the "Romanian statistics of 1995" in *The Educational System in Romania. Tuition in the Languages of National Minorities*, printed by the press of The Romanian Government.

18. See the interview with Virgil Petrescu, the minister of education, in 22 review, no. 8, issue of February 25, 1997, pp. 8-9.

19. See: “The complaint of the Democratic Union of Hungarians from Romania (UDMR) containing the objections and requirements in the field of teaching in the languages of Romania’s minorities, with special reference to the Magyar community” in *Documentele UDMR* [Documents of the UDMR], 2, (Cluj, 1994), pp.18-23. The restriction concerning the Hungarian language usage in the Romanian higher education until ‘89 has been recorded in the international press, as well. See Janusz Bugajski “The Many Faces of Nationalism” in *Uncaptive Minds*, a journal of information and opinion on Eastern Europe, published by the Institute for Democracy in Eastern Europe, Washington, vol.8, no.3-4, 1995-96, p.24.

20. Cf. *Buletinul Statistic* [Statistical Bulletin], No.5, “Babeş-Bolyai” University-INFO.

21. About the “Babeş-Bolyai” University. Official Presentation on its World Wide Web (<http://www.ubbcluj.ro>).

22. *Ibidem*.

23. From a total of 32,000 students, 4,508 speak Hungarian and Romanian and 690 German and Romanian. In the case of the 25,000 students that represent the Romanian-speaking majority, multiculturalism is an abstract notion.

24. *Naționalism sau Democratism*, [Nationalism or Democratism], (Tîrgu-Mureş/Marosvásárhely: Pro-Europa,1999), pp. 241-272; see also Victor Neumann, “Intercultural Pedagogy as an Alternative to a Monoculturally Oriented Education: The Case of Romania”, in Kenneth Cushner (ed.), *International Perspectives on Intercultural Education*, (New York: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc, 1998).

25. Charles Taylor, *The Politics of Recognition, in Multiculturalism. Examining the Politics of Recognition*, edited and introduced by Amy Gutmann, (Princeton University Press, 1994).

26. Harvey Siegel, “Multiculturalism and the Possibility of Trans-cultural Educational and Philosophical Ideals”, in *The Journal of the Royal Institute of Philosophy*, Cambridge University Press, vol.74, no. 289, 1999, pp. 387-409.

27. István Bibó, *A kelet-európai kissállamok nyomorúsága* [The Misery of the Small States of Eastern Europe n.n] in *Oszegyűjtöt munkái* [Complete Works], vol.1, (Munich: Az Európai Protesztáns Magyar Szabadegyetem - Bern, 1981), pp. 202-252. The French edition: *Misere des petits Etats d'Europe de l'Est*, translated from Hungarian by Kassai György (Paris: Editions l'Harmattan, 1986).

28. According to *Anuarul statistic al României* [Romanian Statistical Yearbook], (Bucharest, 1994).

29. Pieter Batelaan, “Education interculturelle en Europe”. Work in manuscript, consulted through the author’s goodwill in 1994.

30. These two schools teach in English, and respectively in French.

31. For the situation of the 19th century, see *Die Projektirte Banaterbahn von politischen, mititarischen und volkswirtschaftlichen Standpunkte beleuchtet*, (Vienna: L.W. Seidel u.Sohn, 1870), p.1.

32. In this sense see the textbooks written between 1975-1990. The new history textbook entitled *Istoria Românilor* [History of Romanians], was elaborated by the Ministry of National Education for high schools. This textbook does not contain significant modifications, but retains the style of the previous history textbook. Significantly, many chapters cover national propaganda, ignoring the regional history and the multiple cultural identities.

33. A slightly different type of relationship between the majority and minorities could be seen for the Roma/Gypsy minority. This is due, on the one hand, to the lack of civic education on the part of this minority and, on the other, to the absence of real awareness of the Roma/Gypsy’s

traditions by the rest of population. Their labeling in the local press does not promote relations of mutual tolerance. This is, probably, the most delicate subject concerning the relationship between majority and minorities in Banat, in Romania and in other countries or regions in Eastern Europe. There is need for sociological studies to provide the necessary database for creating civic education programs for the Roma/Gypsy population.

34. See the statistics of Department of Minorities within the Ministry of Culture of Romania, on the minorities' cultural organizations; there are 37,000 Swabs; 124,000 Hungarians; 22,000 Serbs; 7,000 Croats; 9000 Slovaks; 1,500 Bulgarians; 1,800 Jews; 10,000 Ukrainians.

35. Andrei Marga, *Filosofia unificării europene (Philosophy of European Unification n.n)* (Cluj: Apostrof, 1995), p. 219.

36. Questions concerning a common European identity and trans-national communication, were discussed at a meeting organized by Warsaw University on September 28-30, 1995 on the theme “*What is Europe? - Revisited*”. In the workshop entitled “The History of the Idea of Europe” I raised the problem of including the history of Central and Southeastern Europe in a “History of Europe” course planned for the Open University system. The subject has been a continuing focus of intellectual discussions. Ten years ago, Hugh Seton Watson raised some major questions concerning the European Community. One of these questions was the possibility of an economic and political movement convergent with the common cultural sense of Europe. Starting from the multiple historical experiences he went on to conceptualize the term “Europe”. This is very necessary since the fall of the Iron Curtain. See H. Seton Watson, “Where is Europe? From Mystique to Politique”, in *Encounter*, July/August 1985, vol. LXV, No.2. For another evaluation of the term see Geert Hofstede, “Images of Europe”, in *The Netherlands Journal of Social Sciences*, vol. 30, August 1994, no.1, pp. 65-82.

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The Greek-Catholics and the Orthodox in Contemporary Romania (1948-1999)

The Greek-Catholic denomination is different from the Orthodox one by the fact that the former recognizes the Pope as the supreme head of the Church. Unlike the Orthodox the former practices the Eucharist with leavened and unleavened bread; the Holy Spirit comes not only from the Father but also from the Son. Like for the Roman-Catholic Church purgatory is the place for purification. Its structure is similar and it follows the same discipline and dogmas. The hierarchy is established by Papal rules. High offices are nominated through Papal decrees. Masses, fasts and holidays are similar to those of the Orthodox Church. There are different names for the Greek-Catholic Church, such as the Catholic Church of Byzantine Rite, and the Church United with Rome. Among the elements of controversy the subordination to the Pope has always been the most provocative.

Studies and articles that deal with the relationship between the Orthodox and the Greek-Catholic Church in Romania are dominated by religious and sometimes even political partisanship. Many of the articles and studies are signed by the representatives of the clergy. Historians, for whom one or the other of the Churches has become an important issue, have also written. Most highlight the documentary information (excerpts from the diocesan archives, from the old books, from the press of the time). This is important for the knowledge of the past, but these studies and articles often do not achieve the level of an objective analysis. Both Church hierarchies have encouraged propaganda literature or apologetics which do not correspond to the objectives of an academic study. Some works serve as first hand bibliographic references for historians: D.Prodan's book: *Supplex Libellus Valchorum. Geneza națiunii române modern* [*Supplex Libellus Valchorum. The Genesis of the Modern Romanian Nation*] and Francisc Pall's monograph entitled *Inochentie Micu-Klein*. They deal with the situation of the two Churches during the 18th century, mostly with that of the Greek-Catholic one, and highlight the national dimension of the religious phenomenon.

Little is known from the perspective of the history of cultural and political ideas; the convergences and divergences between these two cults have to be studied with detachment. What I have in mind is a comparative presentation of the evolution of the two faiths during the postwar period, mostly in the years of the communist dictatorship and during the first post-communist decade. The strict suppression of the Greek-Catholic Church drew my attention to some historical aspects insufficiently or not at all known till now. I wanted to insist upon some facts and data that show why, under the Soviet totalitarian regime, the survival of the Greek-Catholic community was impossible. Last but not least I tried to show which were and still are the aspirations of the Greek-Catholics, and the reasons for perdurance of dogmatic differences with the Orthodox. I tried to find out why the conflict between these two Churches continued even in the recent decade and why they did not come to terms. The history of the religious life is strongly linked to the history of ideas and political events of the Romanian nation. The groups that governed during the Old Kingdom and the inter-war periods of Romania was always influenced by the idea of religious adherence. By virtue of the traditional dependence between the two spheres of activity, the Orthodox Church was so involved in policy making that its representatives wanted higher state ranks. That was the case of the Patriarch Miron Cristea, who became a member of the executive for several months during the regal dictatorship of Carol II of Romania.

While, in the inter-war period the Orthodox Church took advantage of the material and moral support of the nation state, the Greek-Catholic Church survived through its own efforts. In the years immediately after Transylvania's integration into the Romanian state, the Greek-Catholics were subjected to discriminatory practices from the spiritual leaders of the Orthodox Church, from the media and from some politicians.¹ The Transylvanian Orthodox bishops, as well as the patriarchs of Bucharest, repeatedly minimized the role of the Greek-Catholics in the process of Romanian emancipation. The first denigrated the latter's dogmas and granted them only minor positions in the organizational problems of the religious and cultural life of the majority.

Among the anti-Greek-Catholic forms of propaganda which echoed in interwar society, some was initiated by the Orthodox Bishop of Transylvania, Nicolae Bălan. His cooperation with the representatives of the extreme-right, the Iron Guard, and with the fascist general, Ion Antonescu, indicate both a continuation of interdependence between state and the Orthodox Church, and lack of a culture based on the idea of a possible opposition against the dictatorial political system. In the years of the extreme-right dictatorship, the Orthodox Church supported the regime. Some of its leaders offered their assistance in the service of the ideology and the political action of Ion Antonescu.² During this period, the Greek-Catholics preserved their dignity, refusing to collaborate with the political power. Their ideology was an ethnically oriented, but state politics was differently perceived. In opposition to the Orthodox priests who, in their majority, joined the fascist movement known as the Iron Guard, the Greek-Catholic priests, in the majority served the Church. As the situation of Transylvania was different from the rest of Romania as far as the linguistic communities, the regional culture and the mentalities were concerned, the Greek-Catholic leaders adopted a position specific to the area, which allowed them to assert their proper identity.

The contribution of Greek-Catholic bishoprics of Transylvania to the organization of the anti-fascist resistance was highlighted in a documentary study written by Gh. Zaharie and L. Vajda.³ During the war, the bishop of Cluj, Dr. Iuliu Hossu, was one of the prelates who constantly militated in favor of the Romanian-Hungarian dialogue and understanding. He stated:

"We will accomplish our mission on Transylvanian soil [...] where our ancestors sleep their eternal sleep so that their sleep would be a source of blessed peace and a bridge of reconciliation between the two nations, who are doomed together in the middle of this world cataclysm."

This was his address⁴ to regent Horthy of Hungary when he visited Cluj on September 15th, 1940. There were instances when the bishop tried to mediate between the dictatorial governments of Budapest and Bucharest. Dr. Hossu intervened in helping the Jewish population of Cluj with food while it was concentrated in ghettos, and protected their refuge in Romania during their deportation to the concentration camps of Auschwitz.⁵

The end of World War II and the setting up of the communist regime under the pressure of the Soviet army was the first tragic moment in the history of the two Romanian Churches. The unification of the two institutions was possible only by denouncing the *Concordat* with Vatican on July 17th, 1948 and by elaborating the new law of cults on August 4th, 1948.⁶ Both acts were formulated by the authority of the Orthodox Church and of the communist regime. Greek-Catholics hold that had the Orthodox Church not collaborated with the communist regime, their cult would not have been abolished. The survival of the Roman-Catholic Church of Romania and the resumption of its relation with Vatican a few years after communism give witness to this.

In 1948 the state and the new Orthodox hierarchy organized important activities in view of unification of the Greek-Catholic Church with the Orthodox. The anniversary of one hundred years since the 1848 Revolution was a proper opportunity for the latter to defame the merits of the Greek-Catholics. Nicolae Bălan, who by a subtle personal policy and by cooperating with the communist regime, had succeeded in keeping his position of Bishop of Transylvania, was one of the most active propagandists.⁷ He was the most appropriate person to attack Romanian religious pluralism, as the communists knew about his pro-Iron Guard and pro-Antonescu activities. He was a person suited for the new political regime imposed by Moscow. This explained the fact that Nicolae Bălan was the one who addressed the keynote speech in Blaj on May 15, 1948.

In the presence of the members of the government and those of the Communist Party, he called for the unification of the Churches asserting:

"The Habsburgs cut into two our nation in Transylvania to weaken us and to more easily rule. Today they no longer have power over us, and, therefore, cannot hinder us in reuniting. Today, when the People's Republic of Romania guarantees equal political, economic, cultural and religious rights, keeping up the spiritual gap caused by the severe situation around 1700 for the Transylvanian Romanian people, means abandoning the mission of our working class at the dawn of the future. As a descendent of the ancient bishops of Bălgrade (Alba-Iulia) who had under their protection the whole Romanian life in Transylvania, I am addressing you whom the foreign interest had driven away from our good mother, the Orthodox Church, a warm fatherly call to come back home."⁸

The bishop adapted his previous hostility towards the religious diversity of the Transylvanian Romanians to the new political situation. In 1936 -- on the occasion of a Congress of the Romanian Orthodox Fraternity -- Nicolae Bălan spoke in the same terms about the need to abolish the Greek-Catholic Church. He saw in the Catholic denomination a real threat for the future of the "Romanian people". According to this way of thinking, coping with the ideology of both the extreme right and extreme left wing, the idea of unity between the two religions was dictated by "our racial instinct itself."⁹ This tendency to cooperate with any type of regime in order to keep power is not unique in Romania's public life as the fascist and communist totalitarian regimes did the same. The ideological content of Bălan's discourse was taken over by Iustinian Marina, the new Patriarch of the Orthodox Church voted by the Romanian Parliament. On May 24th, 1948 he declared:

"If the first Patriarch of the country, Miron (Cristea, our note), legislated the political and national unification of Romania, the duty of the third Patriarch will be to unify the Churches under one hierarchy."¹⁰

Iustinian Marina, who was in charge of the abolition of the Greek-Catholic Church, spoke about the "painful" split of the two Romanian religious institutions "that lasted for 250 years". In his address of June 6th, 1948 at St. Spiridon Church on the occasion of his appointment as Patriarch, he asked the Greek-Catholics to rejoin Orthodoxy. He vaguely evoked history, mingling it with the national militantism of the previous centuries, and political motifs of the moment. According to him, the Greek-Catholic Church was reminiscent of the Habsburg Empire, an outcome of the "intrigues" of the Viennese House and a hope for the Pope's propaganda in Romania. Therefore, the Romanian Orthodox Patriarch considered that the return of all Romanians to one single Church

must be equivalent with their liberation from a humiliating "tyranny". Iustinian Marina asked rhetorically:

“What does separate us? Nothing else but your obedience to Rome. Return to your faith, to the Church of your people, of your and our ancestors. All our energy that we have used up to now for the defensive battle to save our religious and national being must be put, from now on, in the service of our Romanian state, the People's Republic of Romania, in order to consolidate the independence and sovereignty of our democratic state.”¹¹

The discourse of the high representative of the Orthodox Church highlighted the obsession of the uniqueness of the Orthodox faith, the overlapping of the national ideas with those of religious faith, and also the recognition of the new state form, imposed by the communists. It was a belief that coincided with Moscow's intentions and also with the ethno-nationalist trend of a part of the Romanian intelligentsia.

Practically, the year of 1948 meant the abolishing of the Greek-Catholic Church and passing into illegality of all its activities. Once the signal was given, the Greek-Catholic priests willing to compromise were recruited. They could not resist the pressures and threats against them and their families. A meeting in the gym of the "George Barițiu" high school in Cluj on October 1st, 1948 of thirty-six representatives of the Greek-Catholic Church established the delegation that would go to Bucharest for the great reunion. The Synod Act of October 3rd, signed by the participants, meant practically the legalization of the unification of the two cults and thus the status of illegality for the Transylvanian Church. One of the priests testified about the event:

“We were taken from home to Cluj by the militia. The police guarded the Congress Hall. The debates were short. As the designation of the chairman (Archpriest Traian Belășcu) was according to orders, he did not know what he was to say. At that moment Priest Zagrai handed him a text and he read it with a trembling voice. Discussions began. The <<witnesses>> in the hall interrupted them. Everyone had to sign [...] From that moment we were taken to the residence of the Orthodox Bishop, Colan, and from there to the railway station. On the road we were given first meal of that day. At *Athené Palace* we were under surveillance. That day (October 3rd) we were free after having signed all papers and after having attended a *Te Deum* at the *St. Spiridon* Church. We were treated with such violence that one of us lost his mind. I do not know why we signed; I think we were drugged.”¹²

The real abolishment of the Greek-Catholicism took place on December 1st, 1948, by the decree of the “high presidium of the People's Republic of Romania, No. 358.”¹³ First rank personalities of the Greek-Catholic world did not sign the documents for joining Orthodoxy, although among the signers there were many of the archpriests with authority. The most important prelates behaved in accordance with the dogmas of their denomination and proved to have remarkably strong characters. Archpriests Iuliu Hossu and Ioan Suciuc were among the most active opponents and did not recognize the act of unification. Iuliu Hossu was excommunicated by a decree of the chairman of the "congress" framed in Cluj on October 1st, 1948. In a letter addressed to all dioceses under his jurisdiction he asked that both his position as defender and continuer of the Catholic denomination and the above-mentioned excommunication decree be brought to the attention of all Greek-Catholics.

The Apostolic Nuncio of Bucharest, and archbishop Gerard Patrick O'Hara of Savannah also came to the defense and in a letter addressed to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on October 2nd, 1948, he spoke about the outrageous attitude of the Romanian government that did not respect religious liberty. In spite of its declarations the civil power committed itself to religious persecutions. Its initial commitments were violated by facts "carefully prepared and very subtly coordinated, in various parts of Transylvania against the Greek-Catholic Church". Gerald O'Hara said that this attitude was unworthy for a civilized state.¹⁴ The protests of the Greek-Catholic and those of the Roman-Catholic bishops addressed to the Petru Groza government had no effect. All rural communities in Tîrgu-Lăpuş, Boiereni, Vadu-Crişului, Sopteriu-Mureş protested against the act of October 3rd. The peasants were defeated; they were abused, imprisoned for many years and their goods were confiscated. The Greek-Catholic Church was dispossessed of its goods. They were partly taken by the state and partly by the Orthodox Church.¹⁵ At the time when Greek-Catholic Church was outlawed it had got an organizational structure called "The Metropolitan Province of Alba Iulia and Făgăraş", with the seat in Blaj. It included the Archdiocese of Blaj, coordinated by Bishop Dr. Ioan Suci, apostolic administrator; the Diocese of Cluj-Gherla headed by Bishop Iuliu Hossu; the Diocese of Oradea-Mare lead by Bishop Dr. Valeriu Traian Frenţiu; the Diocese of Lugoj, lead by bishop Dr. Ioan Nălan; the Diocese of Maramureş lead by Bishop Dr. Alexandru Rusu; and the metropolitan office of *locum tenens* in Bucharest headed by Dr. Vasile Aftenie. The Metropolitan Province had got around 2 million members, 1900 parishes, 1900 churches and 1835 priests. In the same Province there were 9 monastic orders with 28 houses, 424 monks and nuns, 20 high schools for boys with a total of 3352 pupils, 14 high schools for girls with a total of 2800 pupils, 4 orphanages and asylums for senior people, and 6 publishing houses that printed 20 weekly and monthly revues in approximately 250,000 copies.¹⁶

The above-mentioned data show that the Greek-Catholic Church was a complex institution, well organized, and including an important part of Transylvania's Romanian population. As one can see from the enumeration of the dioceses, except the Bucharest office of *locum tenens*, all the others were situated in Transylvania. Statistics of the interwar period show that the percentage of Greek-Catholics against the Orthodox was 64.3 percent in Maramureş County, 42.7 percent in Cluj County and its suburbs, 60 percent in the Satu-Mare County, 60 percent in Năsăud County and the neighboring zones, 52.5 percent in Sălaj County, 32.4 percent in Mureş County.¹⁷

The reasons for abolishing the Greek-Catholic Church were political. To grasp the political significance of the anti-Greek-Catholic attitude, it must be noted that the pro-western orientation of the Church played an important role in the process of education of the Romanian population of Transylvania, namely, in its adoption and maintenance of high living standards in comparison with the Orthodox population. The same Church stimulated the intellectual aspirations of its parishioners and educated them in the western European work ethic. This also explains why coexistence of the Greek-Catholic Romanian population with the Magyar and German minorities was more likely in zones with multi-linguistic population. The idea of belonging to the same Catholic Church had often been a bridge linking various ethnic groups that lived together for centuries.

An analysis of the facts reveals that either the tendency to simplify the explanation or the effort to reduce it to conflicting ideologies does not convey a real understanding of the phenomenon. Rather, that must be based on the geographic history and on the history of cultural and political thinking. According to these, in the case of Romania, the difficulty of cooperation between the two cults did not lie in the lack of a single religious discourse, as the leaders of Orthodoxy tried to demonstrate and the communists wanted to believe, but in the contradictory

religious and cultural orientations: one Eastern Slavic-Byzantine and the other Western Roman-Catholic, and the confrontation between the two sets of values -- Oriental or Balkan and European. Probably thus we can better understand why the Greek-Catholic Church had become one of the most detested opponents of the Soviet-communist regime and why, on the other hand, the Romanian Orthodox Church immediately accepted the new regime and had cooperated with it.

The systematic persecution of the Greek-Catholics began in 1948 and lasted for a long time. The Bishops Valeriu Traian Frențiu, Alexandru Rusu, Ioan Bălan, Iuliu Hossu, Ioan Suci, and Anton Durcovici, as well as the priests Ludovic Vida, Gheorghe Bob, Ioan Moldovan, Augustin Felea and Tit Liviu Chinezu, were all imprisoned. The same was the case with the papal prelates Zenovie Pâclișanu and Augustin Maghiaru, and the Bishop of Timișoara, Augustin Pacha.¹⁸

Bishop Vasile Aftenie was murdered on May 10th, 1950 by the communist authorities and today is considered one of the martyrs of the Romanian Greek-Catholic Church.¹⁹ Many ordinary priests who refused to convert to Orthodoxy were sentenced to prison, treated as political prisoners. They were subjected to forced labor in the construction of the Danube-Black Sea Canal and the Bicaz hydro-power station. They were tortured, and isolated in barren villages of the Bărăgan steppe (situated in southern Romania) which were without any modern means of transportation. Their properties were confiscated and their family members were fired from their jobs. The majority of the Greek-Catholic priests' children were expelled from high schools and universities or not allowed to attend universities. Their evacuation from the parish houses was done by force, menacing them with prison. Whenever they opposed the priests and parishes faced trial by court-martial. This was the case of nineteen people sentenced in Tîrgu-Mureș on April 18th, 1952,²⁰ of some important representatives of the clergy of Maramureș²¹, and of Archbishop Dr. Ioan Deliman.

Despite persecutions, the activity of the Greek-Catholic Church could not be stopped. The free priests organized masses at their homes, namely Ioan Ploscaru in Lugoj, Nicolae Pirea in Cluj and Alexandru Todea in Reghin. Therefore, they became the targets of a new wave of imprisonment. Even under special circumstances like this, the parishioners did everything to preserve their convictions. The nuns of the "Mother of God" Congregation and the priests Nicolae Pirea, Augustin Silvestru Prunduș and Ioan Bejan in Cluj carried out important duties in this sense. The cooperation of the Piarist Church of Cluj was exemplary.

Literary clubs and societies of Romanian writers of Transylvania cultivated Greek Catholic values as much as they could. The translation into Romanian of religious meditation works by priest Gheorghe Neamțiu was of great importance. An important role in maintaining the Catholic denomination among the Romanians was played by the "Vatican" and "Radio Free Europe", which regularly broadcast masses by priests Vasile Cristea, Ovidiu Bejan and Alexandru Mircea.

In the years of the communist regime, the resistance movements were carried on in centers with previous Greek-Catholic tradition, such as Reghin, Cluj, Lugoj, Baia-Mare and sometimes even in Bucharest. Relations between the two Churches were tense during the communist dictatorship. The Orthodox Church manifested itself indifferent to the crisis situation of the Greek-Catholic Church. It also took a hostile attitude, publishing defamatory articles in its revues, namely in *Telegraful Român* of Sibiu, the *Biserica Ortodoxă Română* review in Bucharest, and in other metropolitan publications of the Orthodox cult. The Romanian totalitarian communist state controlled not only the cultural and political opinions, but also the religious life of the population.²² This attitude satisfied the nationalist pride of some of the representatives of the Orthodox Church, who saw in Greek-Catholicism a danger to ethnic and national unity. This could explain why the state often manipulated cults according to its ideological orientations.

Orthodoxy, as an official institution cooperated closely with the regime, accepting that the Ministry of Cults, set-up by the government dictate its ideological orientation, select its personal, and run its international and domestic relations. While the Orthodox Church was free to develop its activity, the Greek-Catholic Church was interdicted, as it could be the main opposition to the communist totalitarian state. Without trying to compare the sufferings, physical and moral, and the material deprivation, even the Orthodox world was under surveillance by the regime from 1948 to 1989. There were situations when Orthodox priests from Transylvania and Banat manifested understanding for the Greek-Catholic traditions, unofficially admitting their continuation. Thus happened, for instance, in Lugoj and Timișoara where the rites of both Churches were respected on the occasion of many Christian holidays. After the collapse of Ceaușescu's regime in December 1989, the Greek-Catholic Church tried to regain possession of its assets. By the decree law no. 8 of December 30, 1989 issued by the provisional government (installed after Ceaușescu's removal) the decree of October 1, 1948, which forbade the activity of Greek-Catholics, was annulled. All goods belonging to the Greek-Catholic Church were returned, by decree-law no. 126 of April 9th, 1990, namely churches, schools, residences, hospitals, orphanages, and so on. The most important problem was and still is, however, the retrocession of churches. The only region where some of them were given back without problems is Banat. This was due to the tolerant attitude of the local population and to the decisive contribution of the Orthodox Archbishop of Timișoara, Dr. Nicolae Corneanu. Thus the Lugoj Church became one of the most important diocesan Greek-Catholic churches.

The situation was different in Cluj, Maramureș, Sălaj and Bistrița Năsăud counties, where the conflicts between the two institutions degenerated repeatedly.²³ The mixed committees that periodically gathered did not always reach a common viewpoint in order to solve the problem. The final sentences were in favor of the Greek-Catholics in most cases, but these were not observed. In some other circumstances, the retrocession was delayed without any reason. There are towns where even today mass is held under the open sky. This happens because the Orthodox Church wants the problem solved by the dioceses. The mixed committees came to the same conclusion on December 1998 and January 1999. Usually, the representatives of the government do not interfere, as they do not want to risk losing their popularity before the electorate.

The hierarchy of the Greek-Catholic Church was reestablished immediately after the 1989 events. The bishops of the Greek-Catholic dioceses of Romania were nominated by the decision of Pope John Paul II on March 13th, 1990. They were Alexandru Todea Archbishop of Alba-Iulia and Făgăraș, who was replaced by Bishop Lucian Mureșan as he became severely ill; Ioan Ploscaru, Bishop of the Lugoj Diocese; George Guțu Archbishop of the Cluj-Turda Diocese; Vasile Hossu Bishop of the Oradea Diocese; Ioan Chertes Archbishop of the Cluj Diocese. In March 1991, Alexandru Todea was elected president of the Confederation of the Greek-Catholic Episcopate of Romania, and in 1991 he became cardinal by a Papal decree. The congregation is not so large today as during the interwar period, but it is constantly increasing. There are areas (i.e. Maramureș County) where statistics indicate the existence of 140,000 faithful after the 1992 census. Their number increased during the last years and, therefore, there was considerable friction for the churches in the villages and towns of the above-mentioned region.²⁴ Also in Maramureș County there are 240 parishes and 13 districts with Greek-Catholic archbishops. All these data contradict the opinion according to which "the Greek-Catholics have hierarchy and bishops, but do not have faithful and even ask their retrogression."²⁵

The Greek-Catholics' discontents intensified as the solving of the patrimonial problems was postponed *sine die*. The disputes in Cluj in 1998 and the beginning of 1999 degenerated into

violent conflicts between the two congregations. In one of the churches lawfully regained by the Greek-Catholics a conflict broke out between the parishioners. This was due to the Orthodox Bishop of Cluj who, during the '90s had maintained a hostile atmosphere, relating his own activity to the xenophobe National Unity Romanian Party and nationalist-extremist Mayor Gheorghe Funar. On the part of the Greek-Catholics' the lack of tact and diplomacy of the journalists and of some of the people show the existence of certain resentment. Without doubt political ideas contributed enormously to the conservation of the above-mentioned spirit. In the '90s, Cluj was the place *par excellence* where both the religious disputes between the Orthodox and Greek-Catholics and the ideological-administrative disputes between the Romanians and the Magyars, took place. Is it about a collision of two cultural options or are these remnants of Ceaușescu's communist-nationalistic regime? What happened in Cluj at the decision-making level suggested that modernization was involved. It could be that the modest echo of the school and media affected the political milieu and especially the masses. The poor education of many social segments makes them easily manipulable by political leaders. The revival of the religious life of Greek-Catholics was unexpected by Romanian and international public opinion. It demonstrated the survival of different spiritual aspirations within the Romanian society, which was quite surprising after half a century of communist oppression.

As for the clarification of doctrinaire issues, a real inter-confessional debate did not take place. A part of the dissensions between the Churches were taken up by the cultural press, but no fair way of solving the problem has yet been found. Above the contractions between the cultural stereotypes there is a social and political reality conferred by the Western orientation of the Greek-Catholic Church for over three hundred years, namely its affiliation to the modern European civilization mentioned in the first paragraphs of this chapter. The fact and consequences of communist times is close to that of religious groups belonging to nations of Central Europe and the role there of schools, seminaries, priestly vocations and dogmatic rigor.²⁶ These activities, as well as church dogma, constitute a bridge between Orthodoxy and Catholicism.

As the challenges of the modern world were not subjected to a discussion, Orthodox Church leaders were unable to make the necessary distinctions in order to preserve the autonomy of the cult. Thus an explanation of the clashes of the two Romanian cults in Transylvania could be that the Orthodox Church was not reformed. Other causes might be centralism and disregard of the particular regional problems. The two totalitarian regimes took advantage of the fact that some of the champions of the Orthodox Romanian Church detested democracy, more specifically the pluralistic forms of the social, religious and cultural existence. The overlapping of concepts of "state", "church" and "nation" was possible because not only the representatives of the church and politicians cultivated the intellectual ignorance, but also the lay intelligentsia. This led to each cult demanding its right to speak in the name of the nation, to advocate the expression "Church of the nation", and claiming competence in problems that concern exclusively the state and the civic power. In this respect, it should be noted that the revival of Greek-Catholicism in Transylvania after 1989 coincided with the 19th century type discourse, which is full of resentments.

The first visit of the Pope in Romania, a majority Orthodox country, was due to the existence of Greek-Catholics, to their sufferings during the communist regime and to the need to sustain them in their attempt to regain the position they lost in the religious and cultural life of Transylvania. The meeting between the Pope John Paul II and the Patriarch Teoctist was admired by the Romanian Orthodox clergy. The trans-confessional message of the Pope was resumed by the words "all people should be my family - and all Christians be one". The two cults were invited

to meditate and the following political step of the Romanian majority was to depend to a great extent on the content of the inter-confessional dialogue.²⁷

The visit of Pope John Paul II in Romania in May 1999 revealed that both cults were prepared for dialogue. In his speech the Pope evoked the idea of mutual understanding between the two Romanian cults. He highlighted the merits of the Greek-Catholics during the anti-communist resistance period, and suggested that one Church should not evoke the past to the detriment of the other. The Papal message gained the admiration of the Romanian public irrespective of confession and did away with the false image cultivated by the anti-Catholic folklore.

The Romanian Orthodox Church accepted the Pope's visit, and through the voice of the Patriarch supported ecumenism and cooperation with the democratic forces in Romania. On that occasion, the Romanian Orthodox Church had to face the problem of secularization, closely linked to the functioning of one of the basic principles of modern world. The Church proved itself open to dialogue and to facing the problem of revising the anti-modern orientation that had estranged it from the traditional values of Western Europe.

Notes

1. The Greek-Catholic Church is the result of the unification of a part of the Romanian Orthodox faithful in Transylvania with the Church of Rome. That is, a number of Orthodox accepted to convert to Catholicism under the leadership of their bishops, keeping some specific elements to the Orthodox denomination. This phenomenon happened between 1697-1701. The suggestion came from Emperor Leopold I of the Habsburg Empire who initiated the whole action by the Act of 1692. The meaning of unification was both religious and political. The unification should have led to the Catholic assimilation of the entire Romanian population of Transylvania; its conditions were transformed into political claims by the representatives of the Greek-Catholic clergy. They asked for an end to mere toleration, the right to have positions in the administration of Transylvania and of the Empire, and the right to have Romanian schools and to use the Romanian language. The Greek-Catholic Church made the first important step toward forming the collective identity awareness of the Romanian population in Transylvania. The goal of assimilation in the founding of the Church stimulated the forming of an intellectual elite and the emancipation of part of the population. The unification with the Church of Rome opened the way to literacy and development of a generation of scholars known as *Școala ardeleană* [*The Transylvanian School*]. The unification also contributed to a better understanding of the concept of the Austrian *Aufklärung* idea and of the “nation”.

2. This was the case of Nicolae Bălan who accepted the position of Metropolitan Bishop over the territories occupied by the Romanian army during its campaign side by side with the Nazis against the Soviet Union. On the other hand, the same Bishop advocated before Antonescu, stopping the deportation of the Transylvanian and Banat Jews to the extermination camp of Lublin. See Alexandru Șafran: *Un tison arraché aux flammes. Mémoires*, (București: Hasefer, 1995). In a chapter of my book, *The History of the Jews of Banat Region*, to be published at Tel-Aviv University, I have mentioned the role played by baron Franz von Neumann in preventing the deportation of the Jews from Timișoara, Arad and Turda. See also Victor Neumann; *Istoria evreilor din România. Studii documentare și teoretice* [*The History of the Jews of Romania. Documentary and Theoretical Studies*], (Timișoara: Amarcord, 1996).

3. Vaida L. Zaharie, *Rezistența antifascistă în partea de nord a Transilvaniei* [*Anti-Fascist Resistance in Northern Transylvania*], (Cluj, 1974).

4. See *Şematismul Episcopiei greco-catolice de Cluj-Gherla [The Calendar of the Greek-Catholic Bishopric of Cluj-Gherla]* for 1947 p. 65, according to Silvestru Aug. Prunduş, Clemente Plăianu, Alexandru Nicula, Ion M. Bota, Ion Costan, *Cardinal Iuliu Hossu [Cardinal Iuliu Hossu]*, (Cluj: Unitas, 1995), p. 117.
5. Silvestru Aug. Prunduş; Clemente Plăianu; Alexandru Nicula; Ion M. Bota; Ion Costan, *Cardinalul Iuliu Hossu [Cardinal Iuliu Hossu]*, (Cluj: Unitas, 1995).
6. Alexandru Raţiu, *Persecuţia Bisericii Române Unite, [The Persecution of the Romanian United Church]*, (Oradea: Imprimeria de Vest, 1994).
7. The Chief Rabbi of Romania, Alexandru Şafran, intervened in his favor. See Alexandru Şafran, *op. cit.*
8. Al. Rădulescu; C. Sădeanu, *Reîntregirea Bisericii Româneşti din Ardeal [Re-unification of the Romanian Church in Transylvania]*, (Bucharest, 1948). See also Alexandru Mircea; Pamfil Cârnaţiu; Mircea Todericiu, “Calvarul Bisericii Unite” [“The Ordeal of the United Church”] in the volume: *Biserica Română Unită. Două sute de ani de istorie, [The United Romanian Church. Two Hundred Years of History]*, (Cluj: Viaţa Creştină Publishing House, 1998).
9. *Unirea*, Greek-Catholic newspaper, Blaj, issue of November 7, 1936.
10. According to the *Drapelul nostru [Our Flag]* newspaper, Baia-Mare, no. 29/1948, p. 2.
11. Al. Rădulescu; C. Sădeanu, *Op.cit.*
12. According to Alexandru Mircea, Pamfil Cârnaţiu, *op.cit.*, p. 253.
13. Ioan Bota, *Istoria Bisericii Universale, [History of the Universal Church]*, (Cluj: Viaţa Creştină, 1994).
14. See the documents published in the volume: *The United Romanian Church. Two Hundred Fifty Years of History*, pp. 257-258.
15. Ioan Ploscaru, *Scurtă istorie a bisericii române [Short History of the Romanian Church]*, (Timișoara: Signata Publishing House, 1994).
16. *Ibidem.*
17. *Romanian Statistical Yearbook, 1930.*
18. Valeriu Achim: *The Sighet Prison Accuses*, (Baia Mare, 1991), p. 59.
19. Ioan Bota, *Istoria Bisericii Universale, [History of the Universal Church]*, (Cluj: Viaţa Creştină, 1994).
20. *Ibidem.*
21. According to the *Graiul Maramureşului [The Voice of Maramureş]* newspaper, year IX, no. 64/1998, p. 2.
22. Except for the Orthodox all the other cults were under surveillance by the authorities. No other denomination was so oppressed as the Greek Orthodox one; no other was outlawed but the Greek-Catholic faith. Even the neo-Protestant cults were considered less “dangerous” than the Greek-Catholic one and in some cases the formers were even allowed to keep international relations and to get material help from overseas.
23. See, for example, the articles in *Graiul Maramureşului* newspaper, Baia Mare, year X, no. 42/1999.
24. *Romanian Statistical Yearbook, 1992.*
25. Teodor Damşa, *The Greek-Catholic Church in Historical Perspective*, (Timișoara: West, 1994), p. 246.
26. Dialogue with Vicar George Surdu, head of the Romanian Greek-Catholic Mission in Paris, July 19, 1999.

27. On June 10, 1999 a new meeting of the joint Orthodox and Greek-Catholic Committee was held; it analyzed Pope John Paul II's visit to Romania. According to *Vestitorul Unirii* (review of the Greek-Catholic Bishopric), Oradea, year VIII., No. 1, 1999, p. 2.

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Conclusions

Knowing Romania under the social, political and cultural aspect is useful and critical. It is useful for Romania is a state with an amazing cultural richness, situated at the crossroads of many cultures; it is critical for scholarly research often has been based on political interests, either in defense or in disapproval. The present volume – which is not a monograph – explains the past through the plurality of its cultures, analyzes the present political situation through the perspective of the events that provoked the collapse of the 1989 dictatorship. Comparatively it discusses the education process through an intercultural perspective. The studies cover the problematization and understanding of the Romanian phenomena during different periods in the 20th century.

What is new in the present volume? The study concerning the Jewish question presented the tendencies existing in the political context of the transition from the Austro-Hungarian Empire to the Romanian nation-state. Among these tendencies were: 1. The wish of the Banatian and Transylvanian Jews to become a minority culture in the new country; 2. The formulation of their aspirations concerning their own state identity through the Zionist movement; 3. The integration and assimilation into the Romanian society and culture. The Jews of the former Austro-Hungarian Empire represented a cosmopolitan group. Their history had been reconsidered after World War I, depending on the cultural and political values of the nations and states in the midst of which they happened to live. The controversies arising under that circumstance explain both the peculiarities of the Jewish milieu and the way in which the Romanian authorities perceived the issue of integration of both the socio-cultural and communitarian-religious values of a different group into its national policy.

The attention I have focused on the regions of Banat and Transylvania can be useful in covering the complex politics of recognition in contemporary Romania. For example, clarification of civic culture with regard to multicultural education and interculturality allows for insight into the causes that made possible of the revolt against the nationalist-communist dictatorship in Timișoara – the most cosmopolitan city of the country. The opposition practiced by the cultural-linguistically minorities, such as the Hungarian and the German, had a quite strong domestic and international impact. The towns in the above-mentioned provinces played a decisive role in ensuring an atmosphere contrary to the totalitarian political system.

The clarification of the multiple character of the Romanian world seems all the more necessary as a large number of studies dedicated to Romanian history and culture directly or indirectly took up positions in the favor either of the majority or of the minorities. Usually, such a way to moot a question does not help in forming a coherent picture of the problems that have confronted this country as a whole. And, because the disputes are highlighted through employing a relatively different set of cultural values (visible in the Romanian-Hungarian case in particular), I have considered that the issue of education should play an important role in the articulation of the contemporary social programs. This is why, the study about civic education in an intercultural perspective, focused on the contemporary educational system, for the school is an institution whose reformation could contribute to the modeling of democratically oriented mentalities.

I should highlight in the conclusions of this volume the outcomes of the study about the popular revolt of 1989. If the provocation of changes in ideological respect had the most active and pragmatic advocates among the reformist-communists, the Army and the *Securitate* became supporters of the demonstrators. The study of the political events at the end of 1989 highlighted that the position of the Army in the confrontations was extremely decisive. Why so? Because

almost always the success and the failure of a revolt against a political regime depend upon the Army's position. In December 1989, a part of the senior military officers of the Romanian Army did not remain loyal to Ceaușescu; this fact contributed decisively to the political transformation.

In order to see more exactly the mixture of contradicting facts, I availed myself also of another explanation, namely that the interdiction of the freedom of speech before 1989 made impossible both the coagulation of authentic dissidence and the formation of an authentic intelligentsia, which peacefully could take over power from the communist party. Under the circumstances, when everything was at stake for the former political class, the set-up of changes inclusively, only an effort of imaginative empathy could lead us to use the term of 'revolution' to name the events of '89 Romania. This is why they were defined in terms of 'popular revolt joined by a *coup d'état*' and why one study and also my book is entitled *Between Words and Reality*. The Romanian citizens' protest, accusations and complaints indicate either a poor understanding of what happened or, at least an emotional response. Since only the legends include emotional components, I considered that the recent history of Romania has to depend on the above-mentioned rational arguments. An honest effort to extend the frontiers of knowledge is possible as soon as one focuses on understanding the facts.

Between Words and Reality is a volume of studies that aspires to changes in the discourse regarding history, religion, and politics in Romania. The critical survey of the cultural values – as proposed in this book – could provoke academic approaches useful in the redefinition of the nation idea in East-Central Europe. This is the more so as the cultural-political concepts of the 19th century on the strength of which the state entities of the region continue to contrast themselves one against the other are completely obsolete. This fact does not require comment, if we admit that the recent tragedies in former Yugoslavia had as a starting point the ethno-cultural differentiation of Romantic origin.

Appendices I

Appendix 1 Population of Romania by Nationality[1] (census of January 7, 1992)

Nationality	Number
Romanians	20,352,980
Magyars	1,620,199
Romas (Gypsies)	409,723
Germans	119,436
Ukrainians	66,833
Russians-Lippovans	38,688
Turks	29,533
Serbs	29,080
Tartars	24,689
Slovaks	20,672
Bulgarians	9,935
Jews	9,107
Croatians	4,180
Czechs	5,800
Poles	4,247
Greeks	3,897
Armenians	2,023
Other nationalities*	8,420
Non-declared ethnic background	1,047
Total population:	22,760,449

Appendix 2
The System of Pre-University Education in Romania by
Teaching Languages in the 1994-1995 School Year[2]

Teaching language	Units and sections	%	Total number of children and pupils	%
Total country	28,566	100	4,288,332	100
Total minorities	2,814	9.9	232,645	5.4
Magyar	2,395	8.4	207,765	4.8
German	302	1.0	20,949	0.5
Ukrainian	20	-	821	-
Serbian	37	0.1	969	-
Bulgarian	3	-	188	-
Slovak	39	0.1	1,370	-
Czech	7	-	200	-
Croatian	5	-	144	-
Turkish	4	-	184	-
Roma (Gypsy)	1	-	30	-
Greek	1	-	25	-

Appendix 3
Pre-University Education System in Romania by Educational Levels and Teaching Languages in the 1994-1995 Academic Year[3]

I. Preschool education

Teaching language	Units (u)	Section (s)	Total (u+s)	%	Total no. of pupils	%
Total country	12,027	638	12,665	100	715,514	100
Total minorities	700	638	1,338	10.6	56,316	7.9
Magyar	659	468	1,127	8.9	47,487	6.6
German	15	148	163	1.3	7,248	1.0
Ukrainian	5	5	10	-	387	-
Serbian	4	10	14	0.1	358	-
Bulgarian	-	2	2	-	164	-
Slovak	12	-	12	-	321	-
Czech	2	-	2	-	75	-
Croatian	3	-	3	-	73	-
Turkish	-	3	3	-	148	-
Gypsy	-	1	1	-	30	-
Greek	-	1	1	-	25	-

II. Primary education (grades 1-4)

Teaching language	Units (u)	Section (s)	Total (u+s)	%	Total no. of pupils	%
Total country	5,861	301	6,162	100	1,335,973	100
Total minorities	293	301	594	9.6	73,434	5.5
Magyar	272	199	471	7.6	64,695	4.8
German	2	70	72	1.1	7,442	0.6
Ukrainian	-	6	6	-	237	-
Serbian	3	14	17	-	318	-
Slovak	12	9	21	-	527	-
Czech	4	-	4	-	120	-
Croatian	-	2	2	-	71	-
Bulgarian	-	1	1	-	24	-

III. Middle school education (grades 5-8)

Teaching language	Units (u)	Section (s)	Total (u+s)	%	Total no. of pupils	%
Total country	6,760	394	7,154	100	1,160,838	100
Total minorities	281	394	675	9.6	62,900	5.4

Magyar	272	340	612	8.6	58,242	5.0
German	2	49	51	0.7	4,113	0.3
Ukrainian	-	2	2	-	35	-
Serbian	1	3	4	-	121	-
Slovak	5	-	5	-	384	-
Czech	1	-	1	-	5	-

IV. Secondary education (grades 9-12/13)

Teaching language	Units (u)	Section (s)	Total (u+s)	%	Total no. of pupils	%
Total country	1,176	100	1,276	100	757,673	100
Total minorities	51	100	151	11.8	33,306	4.4
Magyar	42	89	131	10.3	30,774	4.0
German	6	8	14	1.4	2,024	0.3
Ukrainian	-	2	2	-	162	-
Serbian	1	1	2	-	172	-
Slovak	1	-	1	-	138	-
Turkish	1	-	1	-	36	-

V. Vocational and post-secondary education

Teaching language	Units (u)	Section (s)	Total (u+s)	%	Total no. of pupils	%
Total country	1,258	51	1,309	100	318,334	100
Total minorities	4	51	55	4.2	6,689	2.1
Magyar	4	49	53	4.0	6,567	2.0
German	-	2	2	-	122	-

Appendix 4
Number of Students Belonging to Some National Minorities,
Students Who Attend Schools with Teaching in Romanian Language
and Study, Upon Their Request, Their Mother Tongue
The 1994-1995 Academic Year[4]

Mother tongue	No. of units	Total No. of stud.	Stud. grd. 1-4	Stud. grd. 5-8	Stud. grd. 9-12	Total no. of teachers
Ukrainian	51	7,265	3,559	3,647	59	92
Russian-Lipovan	15	1,711	712	942	57	21
Turkish	43	1,936	1,149	749	38	56
Polish	6	317	152	165	-	7
Bulgarian	4	541	271	140	130	11
Serbian	11	241	114	109	18	14
Slovak	7	159	42	117	-	6
Czech	3	103	17	86	-	3
Croatian	6	602	315	287	-	7
Greek	1	11	5	6	-	1
Roma (Gypsy)	8	302	247	-	55	8
Armenian	2	45	37	8	-	2
Italian	1	38	16	22	-	1
Total	158	13,271	6,636	6,278	357	229

Appendix 5
List of the Secondary Schools and Sections Providing Teaching in
the Languages of the Minorities in the 1994-5 Academic Year
(By Counties)[5]

Hungarian language

A. Counties and Secondary Schools Providing Hungarian Teaching Language

Alba

1. "Bethlen Gábor" Academic Secondary School in Aiud
2. The Roman-Catholic Theological Seminary in Alba Iulia

Arad

"Csiki Gergely" Industrial School Group in Arad

Bihor

1. Ady Endre" Academic Secondary School in Oradea
2. The Reformed Theological Seminary in Oradea
3. The Roman-Catholic Theological Seminary in Oradea

Braşov

- 1."Aprily Lajos" Academic Secondary School in Braşov
2. "Rab István" Academic Secondary School in Săcele

Cluj

- 1.The Reformed Theological Secondary School Seminary in Cluj
- 2.The Unitarian Secondary School Seminary in Cluj
- 3.The Romano-Catholic Theological Secondary School in Cluj
- 4.The Academic Secondary School No. 2 in Cluj
- 5.The Academic Secondary School No. 3 in Cluj

Covasna

- 1."Székely Mikó" Academic Secondary School in Sfîntu Gheorghe
2. "Mikés Kelemen" Academic Secondary School in Sfîntu Gheorghe
3. "Bod Peter" Normal School in Tîrgu Secuiesc
- 4."Nagy Mózes" Academic Secondary School in Tîrgu Secuiesc

Harghita

- 1."Marton Àron" Academic Secondary School in Miercurea Ciuc
2. The Secondary School of Arts in Miercurea Ciuc
3. The Roman-Catholic Theological Seminary in Miercurea Ciuc
4. "Tamási Àron" Academic Secondary School in Odorheiu Secuiesc
5. "Palló Imre" Secondary School of Arts in Odorheiu Secuiesc
6. "Bányai János" Industrial School Group in Odorheiu Secuiesc

7. The Industrial School Group No. 2 in Odorheiu Secuiesc
8. The Sanitary School Group in Odorheiu Secuiesc
9. The Agricultural School Group in Odorheiu Secuiesc
10. "Benedek Ellek" Normal School in Odorheiu Secuiesc
11. "Salamon Ernő" Academic Secondary School in Gheorgheni
12. "Gábor Áron" Industrial School Group in Vlăhița
13. "Petőfi Sándor" Academic Secondary School in Dănești
14. "Puskás Tivadar" Academic Secondary School in Ditrău
15. The Agricultural Secondary School in Sînmartin
16. The Academic Secondary School in Corund
17. The Academic Secondary School in Zetea
18. The Agricultural School Group in Joseni
19. The Roman-Catholic Theological Seminary in Lunca de Sus

Satu Mare

1. The Reformed Theological Secondary School Seminary in Satu-Mare
2. "Ham János" Roman Catholic Theological Secondary School Seminary in Satu-Mare
3. The Roman Catholic Theological Secondary School Seminary in

Carei

4. "Kölcsei Ferenc" Academic Secondary School in Satu-Mare

Sălaj

The Reformed Theological Secondary School Seminary in Zalău

Timiș

1. "Bartók Bela" Academic Secondary School in Timișoara
2. The Roman-Catholic Secondary School Seminary in Timișoara

Municipality of Bucharest

"Ady Endre" Academic Secondary School

B. Secondary Schools Providing Sections in Hungarian Language

Arad

"Gheorghe Lazăr" Academic Secondary School in Pecica

Bihor

1. "Mihai Eminescu" Academic Secondary School in Oradea
2. "Petőfi Sándor" Academic Secondary School in Săcuieni
3. The Academic Secondary School in Valea lui Mihai
4. "Iosif Vulcan" Normal School in Oradea
5. The Secondary School of Arts in Oradea
6. The Industrial School Group - Oil Industry in Marghita
7. The Industrial School Group in Salonta
8. The Agricultural School Group in Valea lui Mihai
9. The Agricultural School Group in Oradea

Bistrița-Năsăud

"Andrei Mureșanu" Academic Secondary School in Bistrița

Brașov

- 1."Constantin Brîncoveanu" Industrial School in Brașov
- 2.The Energetics School Group in Brașov
- 3."Stefan Octavian Iosif" School Group in Rupea

Cluj

- 1."Brassai Sámuel" Academic Secondary School in Cluj
2. The Academic Secondary School No. 4 in Cluj
- 3."Andrei Mureșanu" Academic Secondary School in Blaj
- 4."Ocatavian Goga" Academic Secondary School in Huedin
- 5."Petru Maior" Academic Secondary School in Gherla
- 6."Mihai Viteazul" Academic Secondary School in Turda
- 7.The Music Secondary School in Cluj
- 8.The Adventist Theological Secondary School Seminary in Cluj
- 9.The Electrotechnical School Group in Cluj

Covasna

- 1."Oltul" Industrial School in Sfîntu Gheorghe
- 2.The Economic, Administrative and Catering School in Sfîntu Gheorghe
- 3."Puskás Tivadar" Industrial School in Sfîntu Gheorghe
4. The Secondary School of Arts in Sfîntu Gheorghe
5. The Agricultural School Group in Sfîntu Gheorghe
- 6."Gábor Áron" Industrial School Group in Tîrgu Secuiesc
- 7."Kőrösi Csoma Sándor" Industrial School Group in Covasna
8. "Baróti Szabó Dávid" Industrial School Group in Baraolt
9. "Apor Péter" Industrial-Agricultural School Group in Tîrgu Secuiesc
- 10."Perspectiva" Industrial School Group in Sfîntu Gheorghe

Harghita

- 1.The Wood Industry School Group in Miercurea Ciuc
- 2.The Machine Building Industrial School Group in Miercurea Ciuc
- 3."Joannes Kájoni" Economic, Administrative and Catering School Group in Miercurea Ciuc
- 4.The Mining Industrial School Group Bălan
- 5."Orbán Balázs" Academic Secondary School in Cristuru Secuiesc
- 6.The Machine Building Industrial School Group in Gheorgheni
- 7.The Agricultural School Group in Gheorgheni
- 8."O.C.Tăslăuanu" Academic Secondary School in Toplița
- 9.The Building School Group in Miercurea Ciuc

Hunedoara

- 1."Traian" Academic Secondary School in Deva
2. The Academic Secondary School in Petroșani

Maramureș

- 1.The Assembly Engineering Industrial School Group in Baia-Mare
- 2."Gheorghe Șincai" Academic Secondary School in Baia-Mare
- 3."Mihai Eminescu" Academic Secondary School in Baia-Mare
- 4."Dragoș Vodă Academic Secondary School in Sighetu Marmăției

Mureș

- 1."Al.Papiu Ilarian" Academic Secondary School in Tîrgu Mureș
- 2."Uniunea" Academic Secondary School in Tîrgu Mureș
- 3."Bolyai Farkas" Academic Secondary School in Tîrgu Mureș
- 4."Mihai Eminescu" Normal School in Tîrgu Mureș
- 5.The Secondary School of Arts in Tîrgu Mureș
- 6."Avram Iancu" Industrial School Group in Tîrgu Mureș
- 7."Gheorghe Șincai" Industrial School Group in Tîrgu Mureș
8. "Electromureș" Industrial School Group in Tîrgu Mureș
9. The Industrial School Group No. 1 in Tîrgu Mureș
- 10.The Industrial Chemistry School Group in Tîrgu Mureș
- 11.The Forestry School Group in Tîrgu Mureș
12. The Assembly Engineering School Group in Tîrgu Mureș
13. The Agricultural School Group in Tîrgu Mureș
- 14."Mircea Eliade" Academic Secondary School in Sighișoara
- 15.The Academic Secondary School in Reghin
- 16."Petru Maior" Industrial School Group in Reghin
- 17.The Forestry School Group in Sovata
18. The Academic Secondary School in Tirnăveni
- 19.The Academic Secondary School in Band
- 20.The Academic Secondary School in Singeorgiu de Pădure
21. The Academic Secondary School in Miercurea Nirajului

Satu-Mare

- 1.The Normal School in Satu-Mare
- 2.The Academic Secondary School in Carei
- 3.The Machine Building Industrial School Group No. 3 in Satu-Mare
- 4.The Industrial School Group in Tășnad
- 5.The Agricultural School Group in Carei
- 6.The Agricultural School Group in Livada
- 7.The Machine Building Industrial School Group in Carei

Sălaj

- 1.The Academic Secondary School in Zalău
- 2."Gheorghe Șincai" Normal School in Zalău
- 3."Simion Bărnuțiu" Academic Secondary School in Șimleu Silvaniei
- 4.The Industrial School Group in Cehu Silvaniei
- 5.The Industrial School Group in Crasna
- 6.The Industrial School Group in Sărmășag

7. "Al.Papiu Ilarian" Industrial School in Zalău
8. "Iuliu Maniu" Industrial School Group in Zalău
9. The Agricultural School Group in Șimleu Silvaniei

Sibiu

1. "Octavian Goga" Academic Secondary School in Sibiu
2. "Axente Sever" Academic Secondary School in Medias

Timiș

1. The Auto School Group Timișoara
2. "Electromotor" Industrial School Group in Timișoara

German Language

A. Secondary Schools Providing German Teaching Language

Arad

The German Academic Secondary School in Arad

Brașov

"Johannes Honterus" Academic Secondary School in Brașov

Sibiu

"Brukenthal" Academic Secondary School in Timișoara

Timiș

"Nikolaus Lenau" Academic Secondary School in Timișoara

Municipality of București

"Hermann Oberth" Academic Secondary School

B. Secondary Schools Providing Sections with Teaching in German

Brașov

The Energetics Industrial School Group in Brașov

Caraș-Severin

The Academic Secondary School No. 4 in Reșița

Cluj

"George Cosbuc" Academic Secondary School in Cluj

Mureș

"Joseph Haltrich" Academic Secondary School in Sighișoara

Satu-Mare

"Mihai Eminescu" Academic Secondary School in Satu-Mare

Sibiu

1. "Andrei Saguna" Normal School in Sibiu
2. "Axente Sever" Academic Secondary School in Mediaş
3. "St.L.Roth" Academic Secondary School in Mediaş

Timiş

"C.Brediceanu" Academic Secondary School in Lugoj

Slovak Language

Secondary Schools Providing Sections with Teaching in Slovakian

Arad

"J.Gregor - Tajovsky" Academic Secondary School in Nădlac

Serbian Language

A. Secondary School Providing Teaching in Serbian

Timiş

"Dositej Obradovic" Academic Secondary School in Timisoara

B. Secondary School Providing Sections with Teaching in Serbian

Caraş-Severin

The Industrial School Group in Moldova Nouă

Ukrainian Language

Secondary Schools Providing Sections with Teaching in Ukrainian

Maramureş

1. The Normal School in Sighetu Marmăţiei
2. "Dragoş-Vodă" Academic Secondary School in Sighetu Marmăţiei

Appendix 6
The Population of the Banat Region in 1774

Nationality	Number of inhabitants
Romanians	220,000
Serbians and Greeks	100,000
Germans	53,000
Magyars and Bulgarians	2,400
Jews	340

Source: Johan Jacob Ehrler, *Das Banat von Ursprung bis Jetzt*

Appendix 7
The Population of Timișoara in 1851

Nationality	Number of inhabitants
Germans	8,775
Romanians	3,807
Magyars	2,346
Serbians	1,770
Jews	1,551
other Slavs	712
Gypsies	179
Greeks	39
Italians	22
Turkish	18
Others	2,810

Source: J.N. Preyer, *Monographie der Königlichen Freistadt Temesvar*, Temesvar, 1853

Appendix 8
The Most Important Denominations in Timișoara in 1851

1. Catholic
2. Orthodox
3. Greek-Catholic
4. Protestant
5. Jewish

* Source: J.N. Preyer, *Monographie der Königlichen Freistadt Temesvar*, 1853

Appendix 9
The Main Denominations of the Banat Region in 1851

Confession	Number of inhabitants
Orthodox	679,556
Catholic	614,577
Augsburg	50,911
Helvetic	26,127
Jewish	16,214
Greek-Catholic	11,612

Total: 1,398,997

Source: J.N. Preyer, *Monographie der Königlichen Freistadt Temesvar*, Temesvar, 1853, p. 231.

Appendix 10
Demographical Statistics of the Banat Region in 1992

Nationality	Number of inhabitants
Romanians	1,096,768
Magyars	124,703
Germans	37,812
Roma	31,650
Serbians	22,982
Ukrainian	10,036
Slovakians	9,215
Bulgarians	7,594
Croatians	3,665
Czechs	3,532
Jews	1,848
Lippovan-Russians	160
Polish	107
Greeks	55
Turkish	44
Armenians	38
Tartars	6
other nationalities	4,878
undeclared nationalities	35

Total inhabitants of Banat Region: 1,352,803
Ethnical and confessional minorities: 257,202

Source: *Romanian Statistical Yearbook*, 1994.

Appendix 11
Demographical Statistics of Timiș County, 1992

Nationality	Number of inhabitants
Romanians	561,200
Magyars	62,866
Germans	26,722
Serbians	17,144
Roma	14,836
Ukrainians	6,468
Bulgarians	6,466
Slovaks	2,229
Jews	625
Czechs	389
Croatians	299
Lippovan-Russians	160
Polish	107
Greeks	55
Turkish	44
Armenians	38
Tartars	6
Other nationalities	344
undeclared nationalities	35

Total inhabitants of Timis County: 700,033

Ethnic and confessional minorities: 140,000

Source: "Population. Demographical Structure", in *Romanian Statistical Yearbook*, 1994, Vol. 1.

Appendix 12
Demographical Statistics of the Caraş-Severin County
(in the Banat Region), 1992

Nationality	Number of inhabitants
Romanians	143,373
Serbians	4,092
Croatians	3,366
Roma	3,299
Czechs	2,917
Ukrainians	2,728
Germans	1,710
Magyars	929
Slovaks	226
Bulgarians	6
Other nationalities	4,155

Total inhabitants of Caras-Severin County: 165,400

Ethical and confessional minorities: 22,027 (14 percent)

Source: *Romanian Statistical Yearbook*, 1994.

Appendix 13
Demographical Statistics of the Arad County
(in the Banat Region), 1992

Nationality	Number of inhabitants
Romanians	392,195
Magyars	60,908
Roma	13,515
Germans	9,380
Slovaks	6,760
Serbians	1,746
Bulgarians	1,122
Ukrainians	840
Jews	299
Czechs	226
other nationalities	379

Total inhabitants of Arad County: 487,370
Ethnical and confessional minorities: 95,175 (19.5 percent)

Source: *Romanian Statistical Yearbook*, 1994.

Appendix 14
Mother Tongue in Timiș County

Mother tongue	Number of inhabitants
Romanian	573,662
Hungarian	61,088
German	24,934
Serbo-Croatian	16,298
Romani	9,298
Bulgarian	6,140
Ukrainian	5,802
Slovak	1,925
Czech	737

From 700,033 inhabitants in Timiș county 140,000 speaks 2 or 3 languages and 20 percent have other mother tongues than Romanian.

Source: *Romanian statistical Yearbook*, 1994.

Notes

[1] Source: The Government of Romania, The Council for National Minorities: *The Education System in Romania, Tuition in the Languages of the National Minorities. The 1994-5 School Year*, p.42. Including those persons who declared themselves to be Carashovenians and Csángs (2,775; respectively 2,165)

[2] Source: The Government of Romania, The Council for National Minorities: *The Education System in Romania, Tuition in the Languages of the National Minorities. The 1994-5 School Year*, p.42.

[3] Source: *The Educational System in Romania: Tuition in the Languages of the National Minorities. The 1994-5 academic year*, pp. 43-44, The Government of Romania.

[4] Source: *The Educational System in Romania, Tuition in the Languages of the National Minorities. The 1994-5 School Year*, p.45, The Government of Romania, The Council for National Minorities.

[5] Source: The Government of Romania, The Council for National Minorities: *The Education System in Romania, Tuition in the Languages of the National Minorities. The 1994-5 School Year*, pp.45-48.

About the Author

Dr. Victor Neumann is Professor of History of Modern and Contemporary Europe and of History of Political Thought in Central and Eastern Europe at the West University of Timișoara, Romania. He is also Director of the Institute for Liberal Studies -- Timișoara (Romania). His main research interests are in Romanian and East-Central European intellectual history, majority-minorities relations in Romania and interculturality and multiculturalism.

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His international experience also includes lectures, presentations and research conducted in the U.S.A., United Kingdom, Germany, France, Italy, Israel, The Netherlands, Poland and Hungary. He was fellow of the Central European University (Hungary); Hebrew University (Israel); IREX (USA); the Netherlands Institute for Advanced Studies, Wassenaar; Friedrich Ebert Foundation, Bonn (Germany); Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin (Germany); Institute for East and Southeastern European Studies – University of Vienna (Austria); Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales - Paris (France); Maison des Sciences de l'Homme – Paris (France). For 1995-1997 he was awarded a NATO Individual Research Fellowship. The first edition of his book, *Tențatia lui Homo Europaeus. Geneza ideilor moderne in Europa Centrală și de Sud-Est* [The Temptation of Homo Europaeus. The Genesis of Modern Ideas in Central and Southeastern Europe] (Bucharest: Stiintifica,) was awarded the “A.D. Xenopol” Prize of the Romanian Academy.

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