

# THE INTERWAR PERIOD, “A NEW ERA”. CREATING FAVORABLE CIRCUMSTANCES FOR THE FOUNDATION OF A ROMANIAN UNIFIED NATION- STATE

Iuliana Florentina TRIPON\*

**Abstract.** At the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Romania had become an important state in Europe and the Great Powers wanted it on their side. World War I strongly influenced Romania’s geo-political status as the year 1918 marked the forging of the unified nation-state, after the unification of the Romanian provinces. The most important goal of all Romanians had been achieved. After 1918, the economy began to rapidly develop due to the social reforms taking place immediately after the war. One of the factors contributing to the modernization was the implication in the political life. The former governments in the provinces were replaced by a fully Romanian government, which resulted in an increased number of Romanian officials. In urban areas, occupations became more diverse. Education and culture developed due to the interest for culture. Cities expanded significantly. The living conditions in rural areas enhanced a lot. As far as leisure time was concerned, besides the interest for social life, the Romanians became attracted by other ways of spending their free time. Due to those changes, the level of civilization of the Romanians had so much increased that it could be compared, under certain aspects, to that in Europe’s developed states.

**Keywords:** nation-state, Great Union, Romanian government, social reforms, Romanian education

## Introduction

In the first decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Europe seemed like “a huge camp” if we think of the excessive weaponization. Aggressive nationalism and the fight for the redistribution of the spheres of influence did not succeed in maintaining peace across the old continent. Historical injustices were committed to the benefit of those who were not at all thinking of fairly redressing them “subjugating entire nations within conquered borders”.<sup>1</sup>

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\*\*Societatea de Științe Istorice din România (Society of Historical Sciences from Romania), Arad Branch, 1 George Enescu Square, 310131 Arad. E-mail: iuliatripo@yaho.com

Franz Joseph I, the emperor of Austria, aimed not only at regaining the absolute power as a monarch, but also at modernizing Wien, while internationally he exercised a power politics.<sup>2</sup> The young generation from all subjugated states had to fight at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century for the regaining of their national rights.<sup>3</sup> As for Transylvania, that was the era of “intense Magyarization”, which began in 1907 under the school law project of Albert Apponyi and the “tenacious resistance” of the Romanian people that resulted in Romania choosing to fight in World War I on the Allies’ side, although it had signed a military alliance with the Central Powers.<sup>4</sup> However, after the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the “reckless aggression” on Serbia started and led in 1914 to the beginning of World War I, a conflagration that was going to destroy all the former state structures.<sup>5</sup>

Although, World War I was thought of as “nothing more than a conflict” for a long time, most historians have considered it the “founding event of the world we are now living in” since at the end of 1918, the three imperial monarchies in Central and Eastern Europe supporting “l’ancien régime” had all disappeared in one year, without any chance of being restored<sup>6</sup>.

The Allies were debating the new postwar order in Paris. The year 1918 was also the year that brought about important changes. On January 8, 1918, the president of the United States of America, Woodrow Wilson, who had financially supported the Allies during the war, held a speech about the “fourteen points” that had to be the basis of every peace treaty. The provisions promoted the liberation of the territories conquered by the Central Powers, the international disarmament as well as the right of all nations to self-determination. Thus, at Saint Germain, it was decided that the Austrian-Hungarian Empire was to be dissolved and that the new Republic of Austria, consisting of the central territory only, was to be founded. After the fall of the Russian Empire in November 1917, Lenin besieged the Government and formed the Council of the People’s Commissars, the first Soviet government. According to the Brest-Litovsk Treaty in 1918, the Bolsheviks had undertaken to guarantee the independence of the Baltic provinces in the Northern-Eastern Europe. Germany lost territories in favor of Poland, Czechoslovakia and Lithuania and had to pay for reparations to the countries it had invaded<sup>7</sup>. The dissolution of the absolutist empires led to the liberation of heterogeneous nations that “had been(...) carefully tied up together throughout the centuries”<sup>8</sup>.

On March 26, 1918, in Rome, the “Congress of Oppressed Nationalities of Austria-Hungary” took place. During the congress, the ethnical groups belonging to the Empire requested the recognition of their right to self-determination. From that moment on, every nation became an independent nation-state or was to be reunited with the nation-state that already existed<sup>9</sup>. At the end of the war, there were also states that extended their territories: Serbia, which formed the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes and Romania, through the unification of Bessarabia, Bukovina and Transylvania. After the last major confrontation in World War I, which had unfolded in the summer of 1917 and when the German-Austrian-Hungarian offensive in Moldavia had been stopped, Romanian soldiers won memorable battles at Mărășești, Mărăști, Oituz, and in the autumn of 1918, Bucharest became again Romania’s capital city<sup>10</sup>.

After the victory of the Allies against the Central Powers and the outbreak of the socialist revolution in Russia, peace was regarded both as a solution and “as a gateway to the future of mankind”<sup>11</sup>. While the Great Powers continued to argue for colonies and war damages, subjugated nations were only longing for their liberty and national unification. At the end of World War I, Romania had to win the esteem of the allied states, which had guaranteed, under the treaty of August 17, 1916, the recognition of the Romanian people’s legitimate right to national unity. Starting with 1918, the Romanian National Party resumed activities and adopted a declaration proclaiming “the independence of the Romanian nation under the dual monarchy”.<sup>12</sup>In March 1918, a group of Romanian politicians travelled abroad in order to organize “a propagandistic movement in favor of Romania”<sup>13</sup>. That was how the newspaper “La Roumanie” came to life in Paris, through which the Romanian immigrants intended to enlighten the European public opinion on the rights of the Romanian people from Transylvania, Banat, Crișana and Maramureș to unify these Romanian territories with Romania. At the same time, at the end of World War I, the intellectuals in the Romanian provinces, who at that time lived in Chișinău, laid the groundwork for a philological-historical study circle <sup>14</sup>, with the aim of proving the Romanian origin of Bessarabia<sup>15</sup>.

Starting with the autumn of that year, King Ferdinand I constantly received the call of the Allies asking Romania to make the so much needed political changes.<sup>16</sup>. Bessarabia was the first province to be unified with the motherland, as a consequence of the fall of the Russian Empire, by a resolution amended on March 27, 1918, by Sfatul Țării, the legislative body of Bessarabia, representing the Moldavians from Chișinău. In an atmosphere of celebration, “the political representatives and the public were hugging”. In the autumn of the same year, after the fall of the Austrian-Hungarian Empire, an Assembly of the Romanians from Bukovina was organized upon the initiative of the publicist Sextil Pușcariu. Thus, on November 28, 1918, in Cernăuți, the Romanians from Bukovina voted for the “unconditional and eternal unification of Bukovina (...) with the Kingdom of Romania”<sup>17</sup>.

However, until the unification of Transylvania with all the other Romanian provinces in the autumn of 1918, the delegates that were about to participate in the Great National Assembly of Romanians from Transylvania and Hungary were elected during a plenary meeting that took place in Arad. Elections had to be performed in such a way that “the National Assembly embodied, with the utmost possible dignity, (...) all the layers of our democratic nation”. 1,228 delegates were elected. Furthermore, the National Assembly decreed that the unification of Transylvania with Romania would take place on December 1, 1918, in Alba Iulia.<sup>18</sup>. All the barracks and houses and the private houses were specially prepared to welcome the guests. The place chosen for the assembly was the old “Military Casina” (a place where the balls and festivities of the Austrian-Hungarian army took place), and for the peasants, Horea’s Field, in the neighborhood of the fortress. As early as Thursday, the members of the welcoming committee waited for every train to arrive and “from that day, the great pilgrimage began, a pilgrimage so large that the old walls of the fortress had never before witnessed”<sup>19</sup>.

At Alba Iulia, in an atmosphere of celebration, bishops, delegates of the Romanian cultural associations, delegates of middle schools, delegates of the craftsman associations and military organizations as well as representatives of the young students, along with people from all social layers, were taking part at the Union. Thus, on December 1, 1918, the National Assembly of the Romanian People” decreed the liberation from the Hungarian rule. The representatives of the Assembly declared the Romanian people “as independent (...), and decided at the same time the unification with Old Romania, with the desire that (...) all Romanians living on the territory between the Dniester, the Tisza, the Danube and the Black Sea form a single Romanian nation under the rule of King Ferdinand I, the king of unified Romania”<sup>20</sup>.

At the same National Assembly, in the speeches held, people were also talking about the “eternal unification”, a goal aimed by the illustrious predecessors of the Romanian culture, but which took place later, in the autumn of 1918, according to Wilson’s proposal<sup>21</sup>. In the autumn of 1918, the leaders of the Romanians living in Transylvania supported the ideas of the American president. Vasile Goldiș, as member of the Romanian National Party, held a speech about the necessity of the union of Transylvania with Romania in the spirit of the “Fourteen Points”, with the intention to include in the Assembly’s Resolutions the democratic principles “as promoted by Wilson”<sup>22</sup>. At the National Assembly, Iuliu Maniu also held a speech in which he promoted the unification of all Romanians, considering that “our only force, that can keep us united in the future, is the one arising from the unification of all Romanians”<sup>23</sup>. The newly-founded Romanian State was to be based on the following principles: full national liberty of the co-inhabiting nationalities, full autonomous liberty for all religious faiths, establishment of a democratic regime in public life, unobstructed freedom of the press, partnership, meeting, and the same rights for industrial workers as in Western countries. Great Romania was achieved in 1918 with the help of the politicians from Transylvania, such as Iuliu Maniu, and of the authors of the Transylvanian Memorandum, as they were all “European spirits, (...) morally upright, profoundly religious and ethical citizens”<sup>24</sup>.

Given its historical importance, the National Assembly from Alba Iulia has long persisted in the memory of the people that had participated in that great historical event. Many participants did not know that the city was about to become the place where the unification of Transylvania with Romania would be decreed, most of them dreaming of a “federalized Transylvania”<sup>25</sup>. However, in the morning of a day in the beginning of winter, they were preparing, with a lot of enthusiasm, to take part in the decisions prefacing the long-awaited reform in Romania’s history. The Romanian publicist, Alexandru Ciura, who was one of the delegates at the Great National Assembly in Alba Iulia, described in a narrative the feast-like atmosphere in which the great event took place. It snowed all day on the eve of the departure for Alba Iulia, so people trudged ahead to the train. Trains stopped in every railway station or flag station. After they arrived to the city, they got lost in the crowd: “there was man by man standing, in mud and snow. (...) They were walking and holding flags, with priests ahead, wearing their best clothes, carrying banners that said: *We want to be united with Wallachia!* The gates of the fortress were adorned with national flags. (...) When the

unconditional union with the motherland was proclaimed, a burst of joy could be heard all over the city"<sup>26</sup>.

The historian Silviu Dragomir tells us "how the news had got to the battle field, in the prisoner camps, and a good part of them set off, as best as they could, some by train, others by horse carriage or even by foot, for the assembly"<sup>27</sup>. The atmosphere of celebration was described, as well, by Nicolae Valea, one of the inhabitants of Arad who participated in the Great Union. He confesses that: "I am carrying and will forever carry in my heart, as well as all the other participants, the moments of unspeakable joy and emotion that overcame all of us when hearing that the union of Transylvania and Romania was forever decreed"<sup>28</sup>. Impressed by the immensity of the people gathered in the city of the Great Union, a journalist from Sibiu said that: "The dignity that our nation has shown on this great national celebration day is impressive. No discordant note (...), nor the slightest mumbling given the harsh winter weather"<sup>29</sup>.

Even if, starting with the autumn of 1918, the diplomatic events favored the oppressed ones, the authorities in Budapest took all the efforts to stop the dissolution of Hungary. The government of the new Hungarian Republic, led by Károly Mihály, refused to officially recognize the act of the Union with Transylvania. Thus, during the transition period that followed until the international confirmation of the resolutions adopted in Alba Iulia, the Hungarian leaders intended to maintain their supremacy on the lands at loggerheads, using their civil administration still present in big cities. At the same time, the Hungarians were also supported by the provisions of the armistice from November 13, 1918 stating that "the civil administration will remain in the hands of the current government"<sup>30</sup>.

Given those circumstances, there were confrontations even after 1918. The battle in the Apuseni Mountains engaged Romanian forces against the Hungarian ones, as a consequence of the offensive plans of the communist government installed at Budapest.<sup>31</sup> Arad city, located in the region, had to suffer because of that situation. The Arad-based historian, Traian Mager, a witness of those tragical events, relates how the Hungarian guards were firing at the peasants from the Palace of the Prefecture<sup>32</sup>. The series of conflicts culminated with the arrival to Arad of the general Henri Mathias Berthelot, the commander of the French Army in the East. On December 29, 1918, Berthelot was received "with great triumph" by the Romanians at the "Crucea Albă" hotel, where the receptions took place. But the celebration atmosphere got overheated because of a group of Hungarians accusing the Romanians to have thrown mud on their flag. Fire shoots were heard on the street and there was panic all over the city. Peaceful persons were heading towards the City Hall, trying to get out of the stampede, but many of them were got killed by the bullets. The same evening, military mobs of the Republican Hungarian Guardists were scouring the streets, removing the Romanian inscriptions and devastating everything in their way<sup>33</sup>.

Due to the fact that the border of Hungary and Romania had not been definitely decided by the great powers, it was but "quite a narrow" trench that could be spanned by anyone. Generally speaking, Romanian and Hungarian border guards got along quite well, and sometimes even chatted, but while on duty they had to be "strict and upright"<sup>34</sup>. People living in Hungarian villages situated on the territory of

united Romania needed passports in order to be able to go to work. On the other hand, a vast majority of the Romanian people could not yet believe that their goal had been achieved and still lived with the fear of ending up again under the Hungarian rule. Moreover, the Hungarians persecuted the Romanians living on Hungarian territory. The leaders of the village were not allowed to leave the village as they were considered “betrayers of their own country”. The hostile attitude of the Hungarian people was generated by the hope that “nothing would come out of Great Romania”<sup>35</sup>.

Local authorities were looking for the help of the Romanian army. But the liberation of the cities of Cluj, Baia-Mare, Zalău, Sighet, determined the Hungarian authorities to take more and more severe actions in order to stop the putting into practice of the resolutions amended at Alba Iulia. In 1919, Transylvanian newspapers encouraged Romanians to fight to defend their country as the army that the Hungarians had made up, at the end of the war, of only 15,000 soldiers and their ships on the Danube had been seized by the Yugoslavs and the Czechs<sup>36</sup>. And even those soldiers had been recruited by paying them money or by force, as the Bishop of Oradea, Roman Ciorogariu related. On April 16, 1919, the Romanians started the offensive along the entire border and the Hungarian army was forced to withdraw as it did not succeed in maintaining its last points of defense. The Romanian Army managed to advance to the Transylvanian towns and cities that were still under foreign rule. On April 20, 1919, a regiment of the Romanian army led by the general Traian Moşoiu arrived to Oradea. At first, the people that had gathered in the square thought that the soldiers were French and burst out shouting frenetically “*Vive la France!*”, but the Romanian soldiers answered “*Vive la România!*”<sup>37</sup>. On May 17, 1919, lieutenant Vasilescu arrived in Arad in order to take all the formalities in order to join the Romanian Army. All the inhabitants of the city wanted to get to the City Hall in order to participate in that important event. The Romanian flag was flying on the City Hall’s edifice. Churches, the bishop’s palace, Romanian institutions, the General Insurance Bank, Romanian bookstores and many other buildings had also been decorated<sup>38</sup>. In Timișoara, the first units of the Romanian Army arrived on August 3, 1919. Troops marched carrying the Transylvanian flag in the square from the center of the city<sup>39</sup>.

In 1919, a Romanian delegation took part at the Peace Conference held in Paris. The Romanian delegation was made up of: Ionel I. C. Brătianu, Alexandru Vaida-Voevod, Constantin Angelescu. The prime minister, Ionel Brătianu, protested against the distinction made between the allies, by grouping them into “limited-interest states and unlimited-interest states”<sup>40</sup>, and refused the control over the minorities as a price for the recognition of the union, which led to the triumph of the principle of nationality. Romanians wanted to get the international confirmation of the resolutions amended in 1918. Therefore, in December 1919, the treaty recognizing the unification of Bukovina with Romania was signed, in June 1920 the Treaty of Trianon was signed, through which the unification of Transylvania with Romania was recognized, and in October 1920 the unification of Bessarabia with Romania was confirmed.

For the Romanian people, the year 1918 marked the beginning of a new era as the process of the formation of the Romanian unified nation-state came to an end

with the unification of Bessarabia, Bukovina and Transylvania with Romania. In addition, the part played by the Romanian state in the international relations increased during the postwar period, especially from an economic and cultural point of view, which led to "an outstanding breakthrough compared to the possibilities and achievements in the period before World War I"<sup>41</sup>.

Given the circumstances, the interwar period was considered, at that time, a "new era" as the war revised the entire legacy of the French revolution, generating a transition towards new cultural and moral ideas. However, the historical deed signed at Alba Iulia was not only seen as an overthrow, but more of a rebirth, as well as the Assembly in Blaj<sup>42</sup>. The optimistic perspectives of cultural, social and economic development of the new Romanian unified nation-state were made known in local newspapers from the very first day of 1919.

After the achievement of the Great Union, Romanian leaders aimed at smoothing away the disagreement before 1918 between the people and its rulers, as there were "only debts for one side and only rights for the other"<sup>43</sup>. From then on, leaders had to come up with a one-way work plan. The goal that all Romanians were longing for, was achieved step by step, by reforms imposed by the politicians educated and trained during the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

As a consequence of the unification of the three provinces, Romania became a medium-size country in Europe and the area of the country increased from 138,000 sq. km. to 295,049 sq. km. After Poland, it was the biggest state situated in the area between the Baltic Sea and the Aegean Sea. The number of its inhabitant also increased, from 7.9 million in 1915 to 14.7 million in 1919. The most populated provinces were Greater Wallachia and Transylvania<sup>44</sup>. From the ethnicity point of view, about 30% of the population were not Romanians, compared to the 8% percent before the war. Despite of that fact, the Romanians were the majority, as they made up for 71.9% of the overall population, followed by the Hungarians, Germans, Jewish and Ukrainians. But the ethnical percentages also varied depending on the region. For example, there were a lot of Hungarians in Transylvania, Crişana, Maramureş and a lot of Germans in Banat. Ethnical minorities were to be granted the principle of political and confessional equality "no matter their ethnical origin, language or religion"<sup>45</sup>. At the same time, minorities accounted for a significant segment of the urban population. Generally, the Romanian society was slowly heading towards the cities<sup>46</sup>.

Romania had 172 cities. The largest one was the capital, Bucharest, with 700,000 inhabitants, followed by the cities with a population between 110,000 and 115,000 inhabitants such as: Chişinău, Cernăuţi, Iaşi, Cluj, Galaţi. Among the most important ones we can mention Timişoara, Oradea, Ploieşti, Arad<sup>47</sup>.

After the war, the administration was organized based on the "administrative decentralization" principle, considered necessary in such a large state as it was impossible that all regional problems be solved by the government in Bucharest<sup>48</sup>. The Old Kingdom of Romania, Bessarabia, Bukovina and Transylvania had their own administrative regimes, until the final organization of the country. For example, starting with December 11, 1918, the leadership of the public services was entrusted to the Governing Council<sup>49</sup>. It was thus possible to transpose to everyday life the provisions of the Decree-Law regarding the leadership of that region<sup>50</sup>.

The four administrative units had their own characteristics and caused imbalances to the entire territory, both from the point of view of their territorial area as well as from the point of view of their location in the county. For example, the counties in Bukovina were 7-10 times smaller than the counties in Bessarabia or some counties in Transylvania. Thus, the responsibilities of local authorities were very different: if the authorities from Bihor had the responsibility of managing a population of more than 450,000 inhabitants, authorities from Bukovina had to manage a population 10 times smaller<sup>51</sup>.

In those circumstances, the need to find a form of organization for the cities arose at the beginning of the interwar period as it was in the interest of the country. On June, 1925, the *Administrative Law* was drawn up. According to that law, the territory of Romania was divided into counties, sub-counties, communes and villages<sup>52</sup>. It was decided that the counties were to be large-sized, with enough material resources, “in order to be able to implement a real local autonomy”<sup>53</sup>. Furthermore, municipalities were organized for the first time. Only county capitals, large and important cities in direct connection with the Ministry of Internal Affairs were considered municipalities<sup>54</sup>. Some of the communes in the close vicinity of old cities were included in the territory of the municipalities.

In order to lay the grounds for the Romanian state in Transylvania, starting with 1919, the Governing Council took actions to appoint prefects in all counties under its administration. For example, on July 5, the Romanian administration was established in Arad and the former prefect was forced to hand-over the office, even if he initially had refused to. At the same time, mayors were elected in every city and town as the heads of local administration, while the prefect was the representative of the central authorities in the territory<sup>55</sup>.

The process of office takeover continued. Specialist personnel was employed in the administration. The new servants had to take the oath of allegiance to the Romanian state as it was the only way they “could benefit from the favors offered by the Romanian state”<sup>56</sup>. The structure of the judicial power was to be reorganized also. In Transylvania, judicial authorities were local courts, rural and urban, tribunals and Courts of Appeal. At about the same time as the new territories declared united were freed, the process of takeover of tribunals and local courts started. The Ministry of Justice issued new ordinances in order to organize those institutions, according to which the jurisdiction of the counties ceased the collaboration with the Hungarian jurisdiction. The lawyers could not meet all the requirements as they were also involved in the administration. Therefore, it was decided that lawyers were exclusively to work for the consolidation of justice<sup>57</sup>.

Certain changes were also made in education. For primary schools, the Ministry of Religious Faiths and Public Instruction demanded the religious authorities to cut contact with the Hungarian government, “for all matters (...) related to education and culture”<sup>58</sup>, until the complete legislative unification was performed. Necessary measures were taken to reopen schools, but for that to happen, the high schools in the cities and towns were transferred under the authority of the Romanian state.

The changes to the legislative framework also enhanced changes in the way the Chambers of Commerce and Industry worked. Generally, after 1918, the Chambers limited their activity to the area of the municipality. New leaders were appointed to those institutions. In 1920, after the marking of the Romanian-Hungarian border, mixed companies emerged, such as the bank "Arădana" and companies with Romanian intellectuals as shareholders. At the same time, banks from Bucharest, such as The Romanian Bank, the Industrial Credit, the Marmorosch Blank, opened branches in Transylvanian cities<sup>59</sup>.

When the police forces were transferred under the control of the state, industrial affairs were no longer settled by the police captain, but by another administrative servant. The new state-controlled police structure consisted of, besides the police department in every city, intermediate ways of control and guidance of the public order activity<sup>60</sup>.

Romanian authorities also took charge of the postal services. Post office clerks, telegraph and telephone clerks had to fulfill their responsibilities according to the orders received from the General Directorate in Bucharest. The intention was to implement a service that allowed people to send money by postal money order in several cities and towns from Transylvania as soon as possible<sup>61</sup>.

Until the complete administrative unification, performed in 1925, the local administration of the cities was performed by the City Hall, according to the legal provisions from 1886<sup>62</sup>. However, the organization of the Romanian local administration faced a lot of obstacles in the beginning, especially because of the lack of qualified Romanian public servants because in Transylvania, before 1918, they almost did not exist, compared to the "overwhelming number of Hungarian public servants"<sup>63</sup>. That was why Romanian public servants were rapidly recruited among intellectual freelancers<sup>64</sup>. However, the Romanian state did not push away the minorities from managing their own interests, a fact proved by the participation share of those minorities in the public administration, which, until 1925, in Transylvania, was 49.67% higher than that of the Romanians in the former empire<sup>65</sup>.

According to article 1 of the law *Statute of the Public Servant*, drawn up in 1923, only the servants appointed after passing an exam were considered to have firmly occupied their position<sup>66</sup>. Once the Romanian administration was established in Transylvania, actions to facilitate the administrative unification at national level were taken and the Romanian language became the official language of public services<sup>67</sup>. Once the Romanian administration was established, all city, county and state councils together with other institutions had been ordered "to remove from the frontispieces the emblems of the former Hungarian regime"<sup>68</sup>. It was also decided that former street names were to be replaced with Romanian names<sup>69</sup>.

If before 1918 Romania as a free country was threatened and prevented from developing economically, at the end of the war, everyone hoped that the common fate and brotherhood on the battle field "amongst the sons of different nations, (...) would produce stable relationships for a cohabitation based on fairness and equity"<sup>70</sup>. After the Great Union, several political parties were created: The National Peasant Party and the People's League, led by general Averescu, which had a great influence. At the same time, the Conservative Party was dissolved, and the

National Liberal Party succeeded in dominating the Romanian political environment. The main general intention was to establish a Romanian democratic regime, each party fighting heavily to convince voters that its most important concern was the interest of the country. Governmental politicians also wanted to consolidate Romania's economic independence by increasing the intervention of the state in the economic life. The Union from 1918 had positive consequences over the entire society. The economy developed significantly compared to 1914: Romania's arable area increased from 6.6 million to 14.6 million hectares, the railway network from 4,300 km to about 11,000 km and the country's industrial potential was 235% in 1919, an increase determined by Transylvania and Banat<sup>71</sup>. By the end of the '30, the domestic production managed to provide almost all the industrial products demanded by the inhabitants of Romania. In addition, România was Europe's first petroleum producer<sup>72</sup>.

Finding a solution to the social and economic issues from Transylvania was "a matter of national existence"<sup>73</sup> for the inhabitants of the region. Given the fact that at the beginning of the interwar period the Transylvanian cities and towns did not belong to the Romanians, the intention was to conquer the existing urban centers through a state economic policy meant to create the necessary loans to help the Romanians participate more in industry, trade and the construction of real estate.

On October 15, 1922, at Alba Iulia, Ferdinand I was crowned king of all Romanians. The crowning of King Ferdinand I and of Queen Mary marked, in a symbolic manner, the historical union of the Romanian territories under one ruler and ensured, at the same time, the country's increased prestige internationally. The king promoted a series of reforms even during the war and in March 1923 a new Constitution was promulgated. Among the most important reforms we must definitely mention the electoral reform and the land reform in 1921. After World War I, the electoral reform introduced the universal, equal, direct, secret, mandatory vote principles for male citizens older than 21. Thus, the census vote dating from the time of Alexandru Ioan Cuza was eliminated. The change brought about major consequences: a higher number of voters, from 100,000 direct voters and 1,000,000 indirect voters in 1911 to 3,000,000 voters in 1919. During the first general elections using that voting system that took place in that year, Romanian citizens elected a single Parliament.<sup>74</sup> Another important change was the integration of the parties from the united provinces in the country's political life. The Romanian National Party from Transylvania and the Peasant Party from Bessarabia merged with the ones in the Old Kingdom. That fact led to a better representation of the parties they merged with, transcending the borders of the Old Kingdom. Politicians from the Old Kingdom carried out their work in the united provinces by visits, speeches and media diversification. Significant leaders of the parties from the provinces ended up leading the country. For example, Alexandru Vaida-Voevod, a representative of the Romanian National Party in Transylvania was elected Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 1919 and Ministry of Internal Affairs in 1928. Politicians focused more on the rural environment. Due to the provision stating all the citizens' right to vote for the Assembly of Deputies, Romania could be ranked among the well away European states.

After 1918, the agriculture became an important economic sector of the country. România largely exported agricultural products, which were up to 30% of the total exports<sup>75</sup>. The achievement of the Great Union also generated an activation of the peasants, “who played an important part (...) in the victories from Mărăști, Mărășești, Oituz”<sup>76</sup>. The peasants became a social force receptive to new ideas that emerged in all post-war European societies. Back to their villages, they no longer wanted to be slaves on their own lands. The collective mentality was significantly influenced by the Land Reform in 1921, which was absolutely necessary as the financial wealth of the Romanians had gotten worse because of the land crisis that took place at the beginning of the interwar period. The reform promised was to completely change the judicial regime of the agricultural property, as the largest part of that property was going to be distributed to the peasants working the lands.

6.6 million hectares were expropriated in the entire country. Thus, the largest land property was limited to 100 hectares, and the excess was distributed to the peasants in plots of 5-7 hectares<sup>77</sup>. According to the *Land Reform Decree-Law for Transylvania, Banat, Crișana and Maramureș*, the state had the right to expropriate all the land, no matter its type or area, that belonged to foreign landowners, either they were foreign by origin or inhabitants of the country who, according to the future law on citizenships, chose to acquire a foreign nationality<sup>78</sup>. The state had taken the decision to expropriate the land not only to help peasants become owners of larger plots of land, but also to support the development of national industry, by providing plots of lands to the workers and clerks with modest livelihood who wanted to have their own little households<sup>79</sup>. In Transylvania, for example, after the Land Reform was accomplished, small properties were 56.5% compared to 34.1% before 1918<sup>80</sup>.

The last phase of the land reform works was the land appropriation itself. Expropriated domains were divided in three categories of plots: whole plots, additional plots, for those who were entitled to a plot of land but already owned one and colonization plots, which could be as large as 16 yokes. The land reform works “were not carried out on nationalist criteria and no person entitled to a plot of land was excluded”<sup>81</sup>. Even if the small landowners became the dominant majority, the population growth generated the dispersal of the peasant-owned plots and therefore, the cereal production of the country could not reach the pre-war level sooner than 1929<sup>82</sup>. Nevertheless, the population succeeded in living with the crops obtained by the small landowners as the peasant families were numerous. But, very soon, they also started to produce goods in order to sell them. If in the past the Romanian peasants used to manufacture cloth materials on their own, during the interwar period “they preferred buying the clothes from the city”<sup>83</sup>. Once the land reform was accomplished, certain changes also occurred in cereal farming: wheat was less cultivated in favor of maize, which was mainly meant for export, while wheat was consumed by the farmers themselves in larger quantities than before. But, in exchange, “a delicate growth of national health and therefore, of the labor force was gained”, due to a more proper nutrition<sup>84</sup>.

Even if it had certain shortcomings, by the fact that it gave an impulse to the capitalist development of agriculture and weakened the part played by the

landlords in the country's political life, the Land Reform of 1921 was a reform that generated a transformation for the better.

All the reforms led to the creation both of a new social system and a political one, encouraging thus the transition from the undemocratic liberalism<sup>85</sup> to liberal democracy<sup>86</sup>.

As far as the social structure of the country's population was concerned, several major changes occurred after 1918. After the expropriation of the large landlords' properties, the social class of the nobility disappeared. The largest social class was that of the peasants. They represented 80% of Romania's entire population. The land reform resulted in the enhancement of their living conditions. The most dynamic class of the Romanian society was the bourgeoisie, made up of the big industrialists who contributed to the organization of the work and production at national level, the bankers and the big rural landowners that emerged after 1918 as it was thought that "the agricultural property was first and foremost an economic enterprise"<sup>87</sup>.

When new enterprises were founded and existing enterprises were modernized, the number of workers increased: 7% of the country's population worked in the industry, the qualified workers accounting for more than 40% of the total workers. The middle class also consisted of clerks, traders, craftsmen, the teachers and priests in the villages. Given the harsh living conditions, they were happy to be able to provide for their families<sup>88</sup>.

As far as the professional structure of all the country's inhabitants is concerned, the only statistical source in the interwar period was provided by the general census on Romania's population performed in 1930. According to that study, in urban areas the active population was about 50.2% while in rural areas it was 60.5%. The highest rate of active persons could be found in Transylvania<sup>89</sup>. In 1930, in the Crișana-Maramureș province the number of active persons was higher than the number of passive persons. As far as occupations are concerned, activities were much more diverse in the cities and towns than in villages and communes. There were freelancers, apprentices, owners, servants, persons who worked on their own, employees. As for the employees, 23% of them worked in the industry, 18% in public institutions, 12% in trade and banking, 7% in transport, 4% in health care and entertainment. However, the number of the persons working in the food industry or trade was increasing. The next ones were the workers in the manufacturing industry, constructions, wood and paper processing. There were much more men working in public institutions, while in the textiles industry, and especially in the loans and representations domain, women were predominant<sup>90</sup>. Furthermore, the emancipation of the women was an unprecedented event until 1918 in the Romanian society. At the end of the war, Romanian women demanded certain rights as they wished to have a job, their own responsibilities "for the sake of their families and country"<sup>91</sup>. Women rose higher up the social hierarchy due to their education and culture.

Nevertheless, industrial and commercial companies were mainly owned by only a few people. The records of the Chambers of Commerce and Industry showed that there were very few Romanian traders and craftsmen, even if in big cities such as Oradea, Arad, Brașov, Târgu-Mureș and they were mainly small pub owners, most of

them in the outskirts. The situation remained the same during the entire interwar period as the Romanians did not have enough money to start a business<sup>92</sup>.

In the villages, over 90% of the inhabitants worked the land, 88% of the country's arable area was cultivated with grains, when the Land Reform in 1921 was achieved. A small number of villagers worked in the "industry", owning small workshops. But, immediately after the war, the people dissatisfied with the situation of the country were trying to get passports in order to immigrate to America, many of them hoping to follow the example of those who managed to make a fortune. The attitude of those abandoning their lands and parental homes was often criticized by the interwar Romanian media as people did not want their compatriots to leave all their possessions to "the skillful foreigners (...), who get their hands on the country's riches"<sup>93</sup>.

If before the war education and culture were privileges of certain social classes, starting with the interwar period those values became more and more a common good of men<sup>94</sup>. The goal arose from the new concept of liberty, which was very different from the one in 1830, "when everybody had to handle matters all by themselves"<sup>95</sup>.

After the unification of the four historical provinces, four different education systems had to be adapted and integrated. The minister Constantin Angelescu succeeded in modernizing the Romanian education system: the Spiru Haret pattern was kept and the Austrian and Hungarian system patterns, very common in Transylvania and Bukovina, were eliminated. For that purpose, interwar governments voted in 1924 the *Law for elementary education of the state and normal primary education*, which stated that elementary education was to be mandatory for the children of all Romanian citizens. Elementary school was 7 years, and pupils who after 4 years of study abandoned school were to attend 3-year practical courses<sup>96</sup>. Thus, the intention was, first of all, to reduce illiteracy, to increase the number of the persons that could read and write. Results were not long in coming: in 1899, literate persons were about 22% of the population of the Old Kingdom, while in 1930 they were about 55.8%. In the provinces, such as Banat, Transylvania, Bukovina, Crişana-Maramureş the percentage of literate inhabitants reached 60% in 1930<sup>97</sup>.

The situation was different in the villages, where pupils used to attend school more in the winter because during the other seasons, they helped their parents with housework. School dropout was common in rural areas, as the buying of books was a difficult issue. The general opinion was that the teacher not only had the responsibility to educate the children, but also to provide continuous education for the adult peasant. Since the school was the main cultural institution of the village, conferences about agricultural works and the significance of religious holidays were also organized there. However, some differences could be seen between the education given to the children from the rural areas and those from urban areas, given the fact that education was adapted to the need of labor force in the area. Thus, pupils from rural schools that were transferred to urban schools had to repeat certain years in order to adapt to the education system<sup>98</sup>.

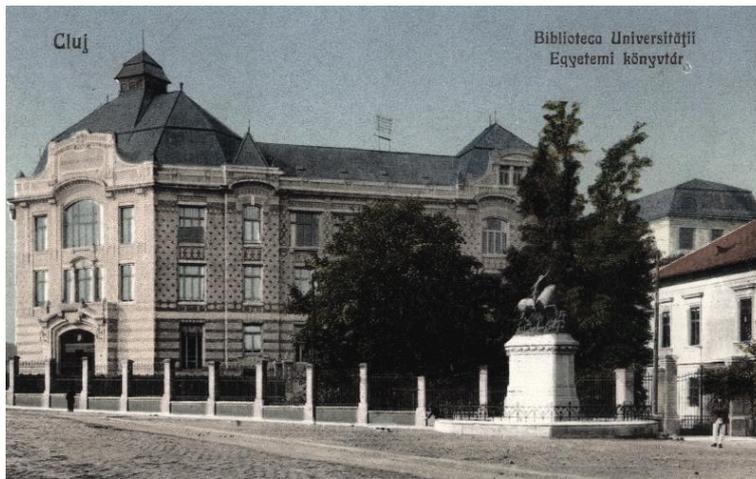


Figure 1. The University Library of Cluj.

Source: *Lucian Blaga* Central University Library, Cluj-Napoca

As far as secondary school is concerned, it became unitary and was organized in the same way all over the country. It consisted of two stages: a 4-year stage, the secondary school as it is nowadays, and a 3-year stage, the high school. Teachers were recruited among the young graduates of preparandias<sup>99</sup> or religious schools and, if necessary, among retired teachers<sup>100</sup>. In high school, the intention was to provide pragmatic knowledge so that the students are able to enroll for academic studies or attend a vocational school. There was also another type of schooling, namely commercial education. Secondary school was not mixed, there were schools for boys organized in high schools, seminaries, industrial colleges, economic colleges while the schools for girls were organized in civil schools, high schools, superior commercial colleges. The Romanians were mainly attracted by theoretical courses, not by the vocational ones, as most of them intended to enroll for academic studies<sup>101</sup>. When the Great Union in 1918 was achieved, the number of the students enrolled in the universities continuously increased. In 1926, Romania was ranked fourth in Europe, after Austria, Switzerland and France considering the number of students<sup>102</sup>. Compared to the previous period, young people preferred to study in the big cities of Romania. Universities from Iași, Bucharest, Cluj and Cernăuți were higher education establishments nationally and internationally recognized, which benefitted from prestigious professors.

Education in Romania also developed due to eminent teachers in different fields: mathematicians such as Traian Lalescu, remarkable philosophers such as Constantin Rădulescu Motru, historical sciences professor such as, Nicolae Iorga, rocket scientists such as Dragomir Hurmuzescu, literary critics such as Eugen Lovinescu, Gh. Ionescu-Șișești in the field of agronomy, sociologists such as Dimitrie Gusti, Simion Mehedinți in geography, Mihail Manoilescu in economic sciences. Due to these remarkable personalities, in the '30 of the 20<sup>th</sup> century Romania was to become a country with schools similar to those in Europe.

The period following World War I was an era of creativity. Romanians from all social layers experienced new ideas on cultural level: from philosophy to poetry. Several learned societies were founded in Cluj, which supported the efforts of the University from the city. The most known were: "The Association for study and social reform - Cluj Branch" "The Philosophical Society", "The Society for Sciences in Cluj". The modernization that the academic environment from Cluj had undergone was necessary because the heritage of the Hungarians did not fully meet either the modern scientific requirements or the special circumstances of our country<sup>103</sup>. As such, the Romanian historiography experienced a significant development, favored by the connections between the experts living on the entire Romanian territory. Transylvanian historians succeeded in participating in the study of the entire past of Romania "without limiting themselves to the regional issue only"<sup>104</sup>. Research became more methodical as yearbooks of the main cultural or educational establishments were drawn up. The accomplishments in the field were extremely numerous. There was also the work of the researches in archives, libraries, museums, as their work became the foundation of historical interpretation.

When the Great Union was achieved, cities and towns in Romania experienced several important changes generated by the urban development. In general, most of the cities had a "large area", after the incorporation of some communes as suburbs. If before the war the Transylvanian cities were mainly inhabited by a population with different ethnicity and language, after 1918 a significant exodus of that population towards Hungary occurred and its place was taken by the Romanians living in the rural neighboring areas.

In the cities, the iconic buildings were the city hall, the prefecture, the court, the high school, the university, the theater, the cinema, the museums, the banks, the hotels and the churches-cathedral.



Figure 2. *Iosif Muzsay*, a tailor shop located in the city of Arad.  
Source: *Românul* (Arad), year XIII, 1928, nr. 10, p. 2.

Shops gave the cities a western appearance because of the shop windows that exhibited outfits designed according to the fashion magazines from Paris and Wien. A lot of factories were also created. Ground floor buildings were predominant and in the '30. Districts with state-of-the-art villas were built. Public service buildings were also raised: libraries, Cultural Palaces, monuments in honor of historical personalities and heroes. In every city there were parks: „Trandafirilor park” in Timișoara, „Mihai Eminescu park” in Arad, where the inhabitants went to spend their free time<sup>105</sup>.

Houses in the cities were different, depending on the area where they were located. In the center, there were flats built inside old buildings, raised at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Public institutions were also located in the center. The center of the city was mainly inhabited by the upper middle class, writers, artists, diplomats, freelancers, but also by the leaders of the state administration. They benefitted of all the urban comfort: modern furniture, expensive carpets, paintings. The workers' houses were situated in the industrial area. But the most of the inhabitants of the city lived in ground floor houses. Houses had bright windows and simple furniture consisting of wardrobes, tables and “in some cases, desks and libraries”<sup>106</sup>.

Public transportation was modernized, old means of transport were in many cities replaced by electrical tramways or modern buses. If at the beginning of the

20<sup>th</sup> century, travelling by the horse-drawn tram “was a big event”, in the interwar period it was mostly used by clerks, workers, students and retired persons. Trains had state-of-the-art engines. The main itineraries were travelled by express trains, on the international route Bucharest-Budapest, with connections for Austria, Switzerland and France. Fast-speed trains travelled mainly within the country: from Bucharest to Arad, Timișoara and Oradea<sup>107</sup>. Starting with 1925, the plane became a usual and relatively inexpensive means of transport.



Figure 3. An ordinary day in the center of Arad.  
Source: *Alexandru D. Xenopol* County Library, Arad.

Villages were small-sized, with less than 2,000 inhabitants<sup>108</sup>. The structure of the village was different, depending on the geographical region: in the plain, houses were spread out in a line, on the hills, houses were grouped together while in the mountains they were spread out on appropriate plateaus. Immediately after the war, the intention was to modernize and develop, with the financial support of public authorities, the Romanian villages as in the neighborhood of modern cities there were still villages “lying in the obscurantism of the Middle Age”<sup>109</sup>. That situation was due to the fact that before 1918 modern civilization had almost no impact on their individual comfort of living nor on the way in which buildings were raised.

Therefore, after the achievement of the Great Union, local authorities took action to modernize rural areas and villages began to develop about the same time new public edifices were built: the mayor’s office, the school, the community center, the health center and a lot of churches. Newly built houses were larger and narrow streets connected one house to the other. Step by step, “sanitation” campaigns were initiated in the villages, trees were planted on the sides of the roads and ditches for water were dug at the end of the streets.

A statistical report from 1929 drawn up by the Ministry of Labor, Health and Social Protection showed that in the Romanian rural environment houses built of

wood or mud were predominant. Houses were most often made up of three rooms. As a source of light, people used oil lamps. Electric power was used only on the streets in the vicinity of the mayor's office<sup>10</sup>.

However, after 1918, the people living in the villages migrated to the cities, which was a natural process after all since a lot of them wanted a better life. Those not returning to rural areas were the peasants who did not own fortunes in the village or who owned very little land, and especially the youth who went to study in high schools and universities in the big cities<sup>11</sup>.

After 1918, there were a lot of ways to spend free time. The inhabitants of the cities liked to take walks both in the park and in the center of the city. „Corso” (a street in the center of the city serving as pedestrian esplanade) was a very appreciated place for leisure in the interwar period. During the summer, peddlers used to sell lemonade, pretzels and sugar candies. The esplanade was “overcrowded even in the autumn”<sup>12</sup>, as indicated by the newspapers describing the atmosphere in the big urban centers.

Modern life of Romania consisted of the pubs and restaurants located in the center of the cities, and their ambience attracted a lot of people. Some people preferred having coffee or tea in a pub where they could listen to the types of music popular in those times.



Figure 4. The opening of the *New York Café*, in Arad, was announced by a local newspaper. Source: *Românul* (Arad), year XIII, 1928, nr. 47, p.4

When World War I ended, people started to go to cinemas, especially the inhabitants of the cities, who were attracted by the modernizing changes occurring in that sector. Cinematic art was to have a great impact (...) on cultural life”<sup>13</sup>. In cities, movies of foreign studios were mainly played. In that period, a lot of new showrooms were opened, even in rural communes. Cinema performances were the artistic manifestations the most accessible to masses. At the same time, the people started to appreciate more and more the theater performances, due to the performances the actors offered. Many theater tours were considered “genuine artistic performances”<sup>14</sup>.

During the interwar period, classic music was the proof that culture was being appreciated. Philharmonic Societies from Romania regularly performed the

most known compositions of famous musicians: L.v. Beethoven, P.I. Ceaikovski, G. Enescu, W.A. Mozart, F. Liszt.

During the summer, some people chose to spend their free time on the Black Sea shore, in resorts like Mamaia, Eforie or Mangalia. Considered resorts for the elite in that period, they still had a Romanian-specific appearance, despite the modernizing changes that occurred at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century<sup>115</sup>. Going to the mountains was another way of spending free time in a very beautiful resort in our country. Mountain resorts attracted a lot of visitors due to their essential qualities: large uninhabited areas, fresh air<sup>116</sup>. The most visited mountain areas in the Romanian Carpathians were: Bucegi, , Prahova Valley, Sinaia, where modern villas and "first rank" restaurants could be found. Romanian balneary resorts were modernized mainly at the end of World War I and were similar to those in the Western world.

The Romanians also participated in the great national holidays. Every year, on January 24, the Romanians celebrated the Unification of the Romanian Principalities in 1859. Among the most important national holidays, there was the May 10, declared Romania's National Day as it marked the accession to the throne of king Carol I of Hohenzollern-Sigmaringen. National Holidays were celebrated every time with "great pump by the entire country"<sup>117</sup>. Starting with the interwar period, the Romanians celebrated "the liberation of Transylvania". Festivities began in the morning, with gatherings and meetings. Cities were decorated with the national flag. In 1920, the Heroes' Day was also declared national holiday and was celebrated in all the cities and communes of Romania on the day of the Ascension of the Lord<sup>118</sup>.

In rural areas, life was not at all monotonous, as those who did not know the village well enough, with its social structure and its own traditional culture, might have believed. During the interwar period, the inhabitants of the villages sometimes participated in their free time in the household works as in the rural area people were busy farming the land most of the year. Thus, during the evening get-togethers, the villagers used to work together, in a pleasant atmosphere, with people "singing, chatting, (...), cheering up"<sup>119</sup>.

In the villages, the weddings, balls and winter traditions were the main occasions for people to have fun. However, the most specific way of spending free time was dancing the hora. Horas were a performance for the entire village and were usually organized on Sundays or on holidays<sup>120</sup>.

Religion played an essential part in the life of the Romanian people. Going to church on holidays as well as pilgrimages to monasteries were a common habit. After 1918, most of the population was orthodox, followed by the Greek Catholic, Roman Catholic, mosaic faith, Reformed-Calvinist, Evangelical Lutheran, Mahommedan, Unitarian faiths. Among the Romanian provinces, the most homogenous from this point of view was Wallachia, where the orthodox faith believers were 99%. In Transylvania almost all faiths were present<sup>121</sup>.

The principles based on which Romania had raised were sound and strong after 1918, the economy and culture progressed in a continuous manner and the country "was ranked on a very promising modernization curve"<sup>122</sup>. About the interwar period in Romania, it is said that it was the best period in the history, also known as the "Golden Era" given the fact that in 1918 Romania had achieved its national goal,

prepared by at least three political generations before. For the Romanians living in Transylvania, Banat and the areas under the Hungarian rule, the Union in 1918 not only brought “a complete freedom” and the political oneness with Romanians from everywhere, but also paved the way for an integral national culture; from that moment on, the Romanian nation had its own national schools. For that reason, the Great Union has marked the interwar period in our history as “a defining moment”, being forever imprinted in the conscience of the Romanian people.

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- <sup>8</sup> Johnson, P., (2015), 27.
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<sup>18</sup>The city was chosen to host the assembly for historical reasons; it had been the capital city of Michael the Brave in 1599, when he had succeeded in achieving the first unification of the Romanian Principalities.

<sup>19</sup>*Alba-Iulia* (Alba Iulia), an I, 1918, nr. 4, p. 2, art. „Pregătiri pentru marea adunare”.

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- <sup>68</sup> *Românul*, an VIII, 1919, nr. 89, 1, art. „Aradul îmbracă haină românească”.
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- <sup>70</sup> *Biserica și școala*, an XLII, 1919, nr. 1, 1, art. „Bilanțul”.
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- <sup>72</sup> *Marea istorie ilustrată a lumii. România*, Vol. II, 163.
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- <sup>75</sup> *Enciclopedia României. Economia Națională. Cadre și producție*, Vol. III (Bucharest: The National Printing House, 1940), 295.

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- <sup>78</sup> Hamangiu, C., *Codul general al României. Viața românească*, Vol. IX-X (Bucharest: The „Library” Publishing House, 1919), 193.
- <sup>79</sup>*Legea agrară pentru Transilvania, Banat, Crișana și Maramureș* (Bucharest: „Viața românească”, Publishing House, 1921), 2.
- <sup>80</sup> Roz, Al., *Studii privind istoria județului Arad în perioada 1900-1944* (Timișoara: The Printing House of the West University of Timișoara, 1980), 92.
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- <sup>82</sup>*Istoria românilor. România Întregită (1918-1940)*, Vol. VIII 148.
- <sup>83</sup> Ionescu-Șișești, Gh., Cornățianu, N., *La réformes en Roumanie et ses conséquences*, (Bucharest : Publishing House of the Romanian Academy, 1937), 13.
- <sup>84</sup> Mihailca, Al., *Aspecte din istoria agrară a județului Arad. Partea a II-a. Perioada interbelică* (Arad: „Multimedia” Publishing House, 2001), 38.
- <sup>85</sup> Old Romania had not been a democratic society, but a liberal one. Although the participation in the political life was limited, the liberty of communication was unrestricted; and so was the liberty of movement. For example, in 1912, over 8 million letters were sent from Romania and about 7 million letters were sent to Romania.
- <sup>86</sup> Georgescu, V., *Istoria românilor de la origini până în zilele noastre* (Bucharest: „Humanitas” Publishing House, 1992), 221.
- <sup>87</sup> Manoiilescu, M., *Rostul și destinul burgheziei românești* (Bucharest: „Cugetarea” Publishing House, 1943), 54-55.
- <sup>88</sup>Manoiilescu, M., (1943), 65.
- <sup>89</sup>Șandru, D., *Populația rurală a României între cele două războaie mondiale* (Iași: Publishing House of the Academy of the Socialist Republic of Romania, 1980), 78.
- <sup>90</sup> Manuilă, S., *Recensământul general al populației României: din decembrie 1930*, vol. V: *Profesiuni*, (Bucharest: Publishing House of the Central Statistical Institute, 1940), 44.
- <sup>91</sup>*Transilvania* (Sibiu), art. „Drepturile și datorile noastre”, I/3 (1920), 320.
- <sup>92</sup>*Viața Ardealului* (Cluj), art. „Problema romanizării orașelor din Ardeal”, 2/16 (1935), 1-2.
- <sup>93</sup>*Unirea Poporului*, an II, 1920, nr. 45, 2, art. „Ardelenii noștri spre America”.
- <sup>94</sup>*Biserica și școala*, an LIV, 1930, nr. 4, 3, art. „Acțiunea socială a bisericii”.
- <sup>95</sup>*Societatea de Măine*, art. „Săptămâna economico-financiară”, I/10 (1924), 231.
- <sup>96</sup>Romanian Statistical Society, *Evoluția centenară a învățământului în România*, (Bucharest: Economic Publishing House, 2018), 57.
- <sup>97</sup> Scurtu, I., (2009), 225.
- <sup>98</sup> Olari, T., “Educația între 1918-1949” în *Z.DocS* [Online] Available via: <https://zdocs.ro/doc/educaia-ntre-1918-la123nweq2pv>.
- <sup>99</sup> Preparandias were schools that prepared teachers. Starting with the 19<sup>th</sup> century, when the first establishments of that type were created, preparandias were believed to be “the foundation of all other establishments”. The Romanian Preparandia was the first pedagogical school from Romania and was founded in Arad in 1812.
- <sup>100</sup>*Analele profesorilor români din Ardeal, Bănat și părțile unghurene*, (Sibiu: „Frideric Roth” Printing House, 1919), 20.
- <sup>101</sup> Romanian Statistical Society, (2018), 57.
- <sup>102</sup> Treptow, K. W., *A history of Romania* (Iași: The Center for Romanian Studies, 1996), 445.
- <sup>103</sup>*Anuarul Universității din Cluj*, anul I, 1919-1920, (Cluj: The Printing House of the Institute of Graphic Arts „Ardealul”, 1921), 2-11.

- <sup>104</sup> Pecican, O., *România interbelică: istorie și istoriografie* (Cluj-Napoca: „Limes” Publishing House, 2010), 146.
- <sup>105</sup> Scurtu, I., (2009), 19.
- <sup>106</sup> Scurtu, I., (2009), 173.
- <sup>107</sup> *Enciclopedia României. Țara Românească*, Vol. II (Bucharest: The National Printing House, 1938), 31.
- <sup>108</sup> *Marea istorie ilustrată a lumii. România*, Vol. II, 164.
- <sup>109</sup> *Societatea de Mâine*, art. *Probleme ardeleni*, I/10 (1924), 212.
- <sup>110</sup> Scurtu, I., (2009), 162.
- <sup>111</sup> Scurtu, I., (2009), 29.
- <sup>112</sup> *Știrea* (Arad), an IX, 1939, nr. 2216, 2, art. „Ritmul vieții de azi”.
- <sup>113</sup> *Aradul. Permanență în istoria patriei* (Arad: “Casa Științei” Publishing House, 1978), 596.
- <sup>114</sup> *Românul*, an XII, 1927, nr. 3, 3, art. „Aradul cultural și artistic în 1926”.
- <sup>115</sup> Zimmermann, S. I., *Regele Carol I în opera Reginei Elisabeta* (Bucharest: „Curtea Veche” Publishing House, 2014), 56-57.
- <sup>116</sup> Pușcariu, S., „Tourisme et Parcs Naturels”, în *Cultura* (Cluj), I/4 (1924), 1.
- <sup>117</sup> Scurtu, I., Buzatu, Gh., *Istoria românilor în secolul XX (1918-1948)* (Bucharest: „Paidea” Publishing House, 1999), 87.
- <sup>118</sup> Hamangiu, C., (1919), 346.
- <sup>119</sup> *Școala Vremii* (Arad), an VI, 1935, nr. 4, 22, art. „Idei despre sat”.
- <sup>120</sup> Scurtu, I., (2009), 316.
- <sup>121</sup> *Marea istorie ilustrată. România*, Vol. II, 167.
- <sup>122</sup> *Historia* (Bucharest), XII (2013) “Generația „Crinului Alb”. Dilema unei epoci: țărani sau muncitori? [Online] Available via: <https://www.historia.ro/sectiune/actualitate/articol/generatia-crinului-alb-dilema-unei-epoci-581794.html>.