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# **HABITUS ATQUE HABITUDO - CLOTHING AND IDENTITY IN THE ROMAN ARMY**

Fábián István\*

## **Abstract**

*One of the most important characters in the history of the Roman Empire was the soldier. Instrument of Roman imperialism and element of civilization, the soldier was a heavy presence not only in historic and literary sources but also in everyday life. Usually (and wrongly) depicted by modern sources as an individual dressed all time in armor and wearing his weapons, the Roman soldier had a great variety of clothing (beside the armor) and instruments which contributed to his sense of identity in Roman society. The aim of this paper is to emphasize a few aspects in which soldiers could identify themselves in civilian society.*

**Keywords:** Empire; military; armor, clothing; identity.

*Habitus atque habitudo-* described Apuleius, not without irony, the Roman soldier met in his journeys.<sup>1</sup> „Although very short, this portrayal is interesting because it expresses (...) a component of instinctive respect dictated by a form of elementary cautiousness towards the soldier, selected to represent and defend the imperial authority”.<sup>2</sup> That is why the character and ethos of the Roman army was determined before everything by its role of war machine and instrument of imperial power. However, in order to fully understand the functionality of the army, someone should go beyond the investigation of the official military structure and approach it as a community or a group of communities. Innumerable studies have contributed to our knowledge of this institution, of its development, and of its significance in various contexts and from various aspects. In fact, the Roman imperial army is no doubt the most thoroughly studied and best-known army of the Ancient world. Many of the possibilities to describe or to define the characteristics of “*le métier de soldat*” have therefore been explored, such as the legal aspects, privileges and restrictions that came with military service in the imperial army, the soldier's daily life and religion, or the reconstruction of military training and combat. However, only few studies appear to have attempted to examine the collective expectations, ideals, attitudes, and beliefs of the imperial Roman military community as reflected by their own statements in the documentary and archaeological

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<sup>1</sup> [http://www.intratext.com/ixt/LAT0533/\\_PD8.HTM](http://www.intratext.com/ixt/LAT0533/_PD8.HTM) Apuleius, Aranyszamár, 10,1,2 *Die sequenti meus quidem dominus hortulanus quid egerit nescio, me tamen miles ille, qui propter eximiam impotentiam pulcherrime vapularat, ab illo praesepio nullo equidem contradicente dictum abducit atque a suo contubernio - hoc enim mihi videbatur sarcinis propriis onustum et prorsum exornatum armatumque militariter producit ad viam. Nam et galeam nitore praedicantem et scutum gerebam longius relucens, sed etiam lanceam longissimo hastili conspicuam, quae scilicet non disciplinae tunc quidem causa, sed propter sarcinarum cumulo ad instar exercitus sedulo composuerat.* Accesat 10.06.2104.

<sup>2</sup> Andrea Giardina, *Omul roman*, Iaşi, Editura Polirom, 2001, p. 98.

evidence.<sup>3</sup> The great number of archaeological, epigraphic, historiography and literary sources made the study of this social group more feasible than any other segments of the Roman society. Before all, the archaeological sources are those who by revealing objective aspects like clothing, weaponry, the use of public and private space emphasize the distinction between soldier and civilian society.<sup>4</sup>

For the Romans war represented the supreme fulfillment of the community's values. During war, the citizen could reveal his *virtus* and, in brutal confrontations with the „enemies of the Roman people and state”, he could aspire to *gloria* and *laus*, which once achieved became the common heritage of a family. War represented the arena in which Romans, rich or poor could make use of their *bia* -as Polybius asserted<sup>5</sup>. This term designated the desire to use force without provoking fear in own community but to obtain its praise.<sup>6</sup> War defined Roman community and it was a necessary element of the social balance. State - *res publica* - would be destroyed by internal problems if community would be kept aside from the battlefield. War became a vehicle of social mobility because soldiers (especially from the lower social segments) obtained certain benefits: the founding of veteran colonies, ascension to the rank of *centurio* which allowed a quick social elevation are the main coordinates of the integration of the soldier in a society as aggressive and shifting as a battlefield.

“In connection with military equipment, the ‘identity’ of Roman soldiers can have number o meanings. It may refer to the identity of soldiers as military men with their own language of rank and position within the armed forces community. It may situate soldiers within the broader world of Roman society, and in some ways bridge the divide between ‘Roman’ and ‘barbarian’ (...) In a real sense, the ownership of military equipment and the legal right weapons beyond the narrow bound allowed to civilians, defined the soldier in Roman society”<sup>7</sup> all the more that uniforms in the modern sense of the world do not existed. The fact that the soldier was the owner of his weaponry and equipment contributed in a very important manner to the definition of the soldier in Roman society, just because he used tools that were not accessible to everyone. “Soldiers probably spent only a small proportion of their time actually wearing armor and carrying shield and shafted weapons (...). Wearing only tunic, cloak and trousers (depending on

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<sup>3</sup> Michael Speidel, *Being a soldier in the Roman Imperial Army - Expectations and Responses*. p. 176. In Catherine Wolff(ed.) *Le metier de soldat dans le monde romain*. Actes de cinquieme congres de Lyon organise les 23-25 septembre 2010 par l'Universite Jean Moulin Lyon 3.

<sup>4</sup> Ian Haynes, *Introduction: the Roman army as a community* in Goldsworthy-Haynes(ed), *The Roman army as a community*, Jurnal of Roman archaeology, Supplementary series 34, Porthsmouth-Rhode Island, 1999, p. 7.

<sup>5</sup> Polybius Historiae VI, 42 apud Antonio Santosuosso, *Soldiers, citizens and the symbols of war. From classical Greece to republican Rome 500-167 B.C.* Boulder, Colorado, Westview Press Publishing, 1997, p. 152.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 152.

<sup>7</sup> Michael J. Bishop, John C.N. Coulston, *Roman Military Equipment. From the Punic Wars to the Fall of Rome*, London, Oxbow Books, 2006, p. 253.

region and period) the soldier could most obviously advertise his status by carrying a sword suspended from a variety of belt types”<sup>8</sup>. To this belt the wearing of hob-nailed *caligae*, which produced a specific sound, also contributed in emphasizing of the soldier’s social status. Generally it can be observed that Roman soldiers (like their comrades from later periods) used certain pieces of equipment and used a specific jargon just to differentiate themselves from other segments of the society. “Within the Roman version of this military sub-culture the regional differences in equipment detail may have provided a subtle language of unit or army group identification and personal status (not necessarily synonymous with rank).”<sup>9</sup> All these elements, together with the epigraphic testimony were advertised on tombstones through which the soldier proudly reminds us his service for the Senate and the people of Rome.

Triumphal monuments, the tombstones and the literary sources usually described the soldier in a large variety of postures: fearsome warriors dressed in armor and equipped for war or, without armor dressed only with tunic, *cingulum*, all other attributes of his “profession” (e.g. weapons) being optional.

The way in which sculptural representations were chosen reflected on one hand a general trend, but on the other hand, the image of the soldier (as an individual) about himself and about his role in the community. Speidel<sup>10</sup> analyzing these two situations stressed out the fact that the dress of the soldier depended not only on his situation in the armed forces community, but also on his status in civilian society.

In a great majority, Roman soldiers are represented in uniform (*loricati*) and armed with their specific weapons. Of course, it is about the representation of their “profession” of soldiers, and more than that, the representation of an imperial “agent”, and of Rome’s imperial power, so it is about a person who should be respected if not feared.<sup>11</sup> Secondly it is about trying to impress the passer-by (because even tombstones were considered public monuments) concerning the opportunities of the military career and the success inherent to this way of life. Representing the soldier in armor had another aim: to emphasize personal valor and courage, the trust given to the individual by his comrades and commanders, his devotion to the cause of Rome. This kind of thinking stood to basis of representing emperors in armor: it was promoted the image of a strong leader, ready to protect even with sword in hand the security and the prosperity of the Empire and of his subjects. The message was clear, no matter if we are speaking about the emperor or a common soldier: weapons and armor represented the successful military career, who gave the individual courage and responsibility in the service of Rome. As for the identical representation of the emperor and of the common soldier shows “the reciprocal liaison between the soldier and the head of the Empire (...). Both represent a force

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<sup>8</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 253.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 254.

<sup>10</sup> Michael Speidel, *Dressed up for the Occasion. Clothes and Context in the Roman Army*, in *Heer und Herrschaft in Römischen Reich in hohen Kaiserzeit*, Stuttgart, 2009, p. 235.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibidem*.

which desires to be quiet and self-assured (...). The roughness, the risks of military life, its cruelties legalized through the army's function is erased, neutralized, the soldier insistently affirming his allegiance to a structure which opposes barbarian disorder".<sup>12</sup>

From the point of view of military ideology, the completely equipped soldier in armor and armed represented the quintessence of Roman power and the occasions for his usage (beside the battlefield) were quite frequent: trainings, maneuvers (like the *ambulatio*), parades and military shows (organized often to intimidate potential or real adversaries) or the general inspections of weapons organized three times a year (when soldiers got their payment). In case of organization of the parades, the will of the emperor as absolute leader intervened: e.g. emperor Nero ordered the Praetorian Guard to parade fully equipped for battle to the occasion of king Tiridate's coronation ceremony (the aim was to impress the king)<sup>13</sup>, while emperor Vespasian, dressed his soldiers in silk during the parade in the year 71 A.D. as a sign of following times of peace and prosperity.<sup>14</sup>

Generally the body armor and the most lethal weapons were not used in contacts with civilian society and, at least for the imperial age, the presence of soldiers fully equipped for war was seldom and it appeared only during serious political events. Speidel, referring to Apuleius considered that soldiers were so feared and respected especially in provincial society that only the sight of one singular soldier wearing helmet and equipment on the tip of his spear would terrorize the citizens.<sup>15</sup> But usually, soldiers, especially from the urban cohorts, who acted also as a police force normally used non-lethal weapons like *fustis*, *virga*, *hastile* were dressed in tunic, belt (cingulum), or *subarmalis*, a thick clothing initially created for being worn under the armor and sometimes a mantle with a hood (never used in battle).<sup>16</sup> These pieces of clothing of everyday use helped in a great measure in identifying the soldier in community. Of course the most obvious elements were the *balteus* or *cingulum* and the *gladius* which were the expression of a common identity as long as they placed automatically the user in the military community.<sup>17</sup> That is why by depriving the individual from these pieces of equipment and weaponry meant his exclusion from the community of warriors and becoming a „common” civilian. It is understandable why deprivation of cingulum and gladius was done only in case which the soldier(s) proved himself (themselves) coward(s) in front of

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<sup>12</sup> Giardina, *op. cit.*, p. 124.

<sup>13</sup> Speidel, *op. cit.*, p. 240.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 240.

<sup>15</sup> [www.intratext.com/ixt/LAT0533/\\_PD8.HTM](http://www.intratext.com/ixt/LAT0533/_PD8.HTM). Apuleius, Aranyszamár, 10, 1, 2 *Die sequenti meus quidem dominus hortulanus quid egerit nescio, me tamen miles ille, qui propter eximiam impotentiam pulcherrime vapularat, ab illo praesepio nullo equidem contradicente dictum abducit atque a suo contubernio - hoc enim mihi videbatur sarcinis propriis onustum et prorsum exornatum armatumque militariter producit ad viam. Nam et galeam nitore praedicantem et scutum gerebam longius relucens, sed etiam lanceam longissimo hastili conspicuam, quae scilicet non disciplinae.* Accesat 10.06.2014

<sup>16</sup> Speidel *op. cit.*, p. 240.

<sup>17</sup> Haynes, *op. cit.*, p. 10.

the enemy: the most striking example was made by emperor Julian the Apostate who punished a cavalry unit, which deserted from the battlefield, by taking away their belts and swords and by putting them to parade through the camp dressed as women.<sup>18</sup>

The hooded mantle was the piece of clothing which became the equivalent of military service in such a measure that by using the expression “to wear the mantel” or “to be dressed in mantle” meant that the person in cause was ready for battle. Probably that is why public opinion never forgives Vitellius who entered Rome wearing his mantle. On the opposite the people of Rome praised Marcus Aurelius for not allowing his soldiers to wear their mantles while residing in Italy. As for the colors of the tunics, it had no specific significance but, it seems that the red colored ones were especially appreciated by soldiers and used during war (*tunica rossa militaris*). White tunics (*tunica alba*) were worn at special occasions and, it seems that it was standard issue since, as a papyrus from Massada shows, its price was deducted from the soldier’s payment.<sup>19</sup> That is why probably Suetonius mocked Emperor Caligula who ordered his officers to participate to a dinner wearing their armor<sup>20</sup>. It can be presumed that the social norm was that officers should present at dinner (or at other social events) dressed only in tunic and wearing belt and sword even in the conditions of military campaign. Finally the *caliga* was another element of identification its nails producing a specific sound especially on the paved streets of the cities. This piece of clothing was also subjected to the attention of Roman historians and writers: besides the well known Emperor Caligula, Petronius in his Satyricon uses the *caliga* to mock the main character: Encolpius was wearing a sword and with a ferocious grim on his face wanted to disguise in a soldier but he was betrayed by his Greek type slippers.<sup>21</sup>

Fact is that as Imperial age progresses it can be observed that “representations in battle gear disappear, and give place to those in which the soldier is dressed in simple military clothing (tunic and mantle), resembling more the civilian clothing or, sometimes they wore toga which is a clear civilian symbol”.<sup>22</sup> The character of these representations is more peaceful and their aim was to maintain the image of the soldier in other contexts than with the one linked to the “mastery of weapons”. These civilian representations became more and more popular and, by the 3<sup>rd</sup> century A.D. surpassed the *loricati* ones. Speidel considers that aspect must

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<sup>18</sup> Speidel *op. cit.*, p. 244.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 245.

<sup>20</sup> [http://www.thelatinlibrary.com/caligula/Suetonius,C.\\_Caligula,\\_45;\\_Repetita\\_cena\\_renuntiantis\\_coactum\\_agmen\\_sic\\_ut\\_erant\\_loricatos\\_ad\\_discumbendum\\_adhortatus\\_est](http://www.thelatinlibrary.com/caligula/Suetonius,C._Caligula,_45;_Repetita_cena_renuntiantis_coactum_agmen_sic_ut_erant_loricatos_ad_discumbendum_adhortatus_est). Accesat 17.09.2104

<sup>21</sup> <http://www.thelatinlibrary.com/petronius1.html>, C. PETRONII SATIRICON LIBER [LXXXII] *Haec locutus gladio latus cingor, et ne infirmitas militiam perderet, largioribus cibis excito vires. Mox in publicum prosilio furentisque more omnes circumeo porticus. Sed dum attonito vultu efferatoque nihil aliud quam caedem et sanguinem cogito, frequentiusque manum ad capulum, quem devoveram, refero, notavit me miles, sive ille planus fuit sive nocturnus grassator, et: "Quid tu, inquit, commilito, ex qua legione es aut cuius centuria?" Cum constantissime et centurionem et legionem essem ementitus: "Age ergo, inquit ille, in exercitu vestro phaeciasi milites ambulant?"* Accesat 17.09.2104

<sup>22</sup> Giardina, *op. cit.*, p. 125.

be taken “as a sign of the soldiers’ increasing will to be remembered not so much as battle-hardened warriors but rather as fellow citizens, or even, when shown with wife and children, as fathers and family men”.<sup>23</sup> Other historians consider that these images are reflecting the inference between the military and civilians in the Later Empire or, arguably, the loss of the aggressiveness of the army.<sup>24</sup> However elements defining their military membership cannot be forgotten: besides clothing (belt, tunic and mantle), the soldier were represented with a papyrus or waxed tablet in one hand, which revealed not only that he could read and write but, also that he had some serious benefits from these abilities. In the other hand he usually holds the signs of his rank: a lance, a flag, a *fustis* (a long stick used as a police weapon), a *hastile* or a *vitis* (a stick used by an *optio* or a *centurio* to discipline his soldiers)<sup>25</sup>. The combination of writing tablets and sticks showed clearly the individual’s rank: *signifier*, *optio*, *centurio* etc.

Of course, these representations have another side: even if their military function maintains its specificity, these imagery changes underline the soldier’s desire to share with the civilian society “the celebration, the demand, and the use in practice of the same cultural values affirmed by the aristocracy as dominant values”.<sup>26</sup> The papyrus, the waxed tablets or a parchment became cultural objects *par excellence*.

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<sup>23</sup> Speidel, *op.cit.*, p. 237.

<sup>24</sup> Giardina, *op.cit.*, p. 125.

<sup>25</sup> Speidel, *op.cit.*, p. 239.

<sup>26</sup> Giardina *op.cit.*, p. 125.

# LA RECEPTION DU ROI AMAURY I<sup>ER</sup> DE JERUSALEM A LA COUR IMPERIALE DE CONSTANTINOPLE (1171)<sup>1</sup>

Raul-Constantin Tănase\*

## Abstract

*The reception ceremonial of the foreign sovereigns at the imperial court in Constantinople was one of the main diplomatic strategies by which the Greeks claimed, symbolically, the superiority of their culture and civilization and the primary place in the hierarchy of the nations. As a full expression of the Byzantine ideology, the protocol highlights the privileged position of the emperor and of his officials in the terrestrial and cosmic order. The Receptions given by the successor of Constantine the Great were organized according to a strictly ceremonial; consisting in a precise sequence of steps intended to confirm the glory and holiness of the basileus, who was chosen by God himself. The present study aims to analyze one of the most significant episodes in terms of the audiences provided by the Greek ruler in the twelfth century, namely, the reception organized by Manuel I Comnenus during the visit of Amalric I, the king of Jerusalem, at the imperial court in Constantinople in 1171.*

**Keywords:** Amalric I; diplomatic ceremonial; reception; Constantinople; Manuel I Comnenus.

L'époque des croisades représente une étape importante de rencontre culturelle et idéologique entre les byzantines et nations étrangères et la période la plus significative dans l'histoire du conflit entre les deux mondes religieux: chrétien et musulman. L'apogée de la puissance territoriale et militaire de l'Empire byzantin du premier quart de l'onzième siècle a connu dans la seconde moitié de la période un profond bouleversement, pendant lequel ses frontières ont été réduites à la région hellénique, elle-même menacée par les nations environnantes et celles venant de Balkans et d'Anatolie (Petchenègues et Turcs)<sup>2</sup>. Le contexte instable qui a caractérisé les XI<sup>e</sup> et XII<sup>e</sup> siècles a déterminé une réévaluation constante de la politique étrangère de l'empire grec, contraint à développer de nouvelles stratégies diplomatiques pour maintenir les pays voisins dans sa sphère d'influence. Les bonnes relations avec les nations voisines représentaient une garantie pour les intérêts politiques et économiques de Constantinople. Dans ce

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<sup>2</sup> A côté des turcs et des Petchenègues, l'Empire byzantin a dû faire face aux revendications de domination universaliste élevées par les normands de Robert Guiscard. La conquête de la ville de Bari en 1071, un puissant symbole de l'universalité romaine, a entraîné la perte de l'influence byzantine en Italie. Le Byzance est contraint de faire appel à la flotte vénitienne pour répondre à l'assaut de l'impérialisme normand et octroie aux nouveaux alliés des priviléges commerciaux énormes par le chrysobulle de 1082.

contexte, les réceptions offertes par l'empereur grec constituent partie intégrante du processus diplomatique cherchant à préserver et atteindre les objectifs de l'État grec.

La description détaillée des réunions diplomatiques entre les Grecs et les Latins ne bénéficie pas des témoignages importants de la part des chroniqueurs qui en précisent quand même des informations intéressantes<sup>3</sup>. Au moment de sa visite à Constantinople, Guillaume de Tyr (1130-1185)<sup>4</sup> a été un témoin privilégié du cérémonial et du processus diplomatique. Dans sa chronique, qui présente l'histoire des États latins d'Orient jusqu'en 1184, il décrit la réception honorable par laquelle Manuel Comnène a reçu le roi Amaury Ier de Jérusalem en 1171. La description de Guillaume est l'un des récits les plus complexes du protocole diplomatique byzantin dans l'époque des Croisades<sup>5</sup>. Bien que celui-ci ne fût pas un témoin oculaire de cette rencontre, le chroniqueur réalise une présentation très détaillée de l'événement, fondée sur le témoignage du roi et de son expérience à la cour byzantine. Outre qu'il était mieux familiarisé avec les habitudes orientales que ses homologues occidentaux, l'archevêque de Tyr a été, à deux reprises, l'ambassadeur du roi de Jérusalem à la cour du Byzance entre 1168 et 1179-1180. Poursuivant une instruction supérieure, les prélats étaient souvent des ambassadeurs. Inscrits dans le gouvernement, les clercs représentaient de simples fonctionnaires, souvent intégrés dans des ordres sacrés, recevant des récompenses pour les services rendus<sup>6</sup>.

Manuel Comnène, dont la mère était d'origine hongroise et qui avait deux épouses de l'Ouest, a conclu en 1168 une alliance avec les soldats du Christ contre l'Egypte<sup>7</sup>. Le roi Amaury lui a répondu favorablement envoyant Guillaume de Tyr comme ambassadeur à Constantinople pour négocier le traité. La mission a été accomplie avec succès, le Byzance fournissant de l'assistance militaire au siège de Damiette en 1169. Quand même, l'attaque a échoué et, en 1171, Amaury est allé à la ville de Constantine pour

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<sup>3</sup> Marc Carrier, *L'Autre à l'époque des croisades: les Byzantins vus par les chroniqueurs du monde latin (1096-1261)*, Éditions universitaires européennes, 2012, p. 134.

<sup>4</sup> Guillaume de Tyr était l'homme idéal pour faire le contact. Né à Jérusalem en 1130, probablement de parents italiens, celui-ci connaissait le grec et l'arabe. On y ajoute une éducation occidentale, avec l'étude des arts et de la théologie à Paris pendant 16 ans (1145-1161) et le droit civil à Bologne pendant quatre ans (1161-1165). Il a visité la curie papale à deux reprises, en 1169 et 1178, la deuxième visite étant liée au Latran III conseil, sur laquelle il a rédigé une histoire, maintenant perdue. Son ambition était de devenir patriarche de Jérusalem, mais ce siège est devenu vacant lorsque son influence se diminuait à la cour royale. Son histoire finit par une note pessimiste, en 1184, une fois avec sa mort. R.H.C. Davis, "William of Tyre", in Derek Baker (coord.), *Relations between East and West in the Middle Ages*, Edinburgh University Press, 1973, p. 64.

<sup>5</sup> Guillaume de Tyr, *Chronique du Royaume Franc de Jérusalem de 1095 à 1184*, tome second, traduit par Geneviève et René Métais, Paris, 1999, XX, XXI-XXIII, pp. 351-358. Voir Steven Runciman, „The visit of King Amalric I to Constantinople in 1171”, in B.D. Kedar et alii (coord.), *Outremer: Studies in the History of the Crusading Kingdom of Jerusalem*, Jerusalem, Yad Izhak Ben-Zvi Institute, 1982, pp. 153-158.

<sup>6</sup> Donald E. Queller, *The office of ambassador in the Middle Ages*, Princeton-New Jersey, Princeton University Press, 1967, p. 153.

<sup>7</sup> Guillaume de Tyr, *op. cit.*, XX, III, pp. 321-323.

convaincre à nouveau le basileus lui aider<sup>8</sup>. Cet épisode laisse de côté les perceptions générales des chroniqueurs latins qui considèrent les Grecs arrogants et traîtres. Guillaume de Tyr fait appel aux Occidentaux leur demandant de laisser de côté leurs préjugés à l'adresse des successeurs de Constantin et de collaborer avec eux pour la cause chrétienne. Son message est que le royaume de Jérusalem peut être sauvé si les musulmans sont divisés et les Grecs et les Latins s'allient.

Si Amaury<sup>9</sup> était prudent en ce qui concerne la tutelle byzantine, il était sans doute attiré par l'or des Grecs, de telle sorte que Guillaume de Tyr montrait que sa cupidité était plus grande que celle qui aurait été la bonne et honorable pour un roi. Depuis 1164, il avait besoin de soutien pour la politique militaire d'intervention en Egypte. Il voulait, aussi, être libre de ses préoccupations en Syrie et cette mesure impliquait le protectorat byzantin sur l'Antioche, sans laquelle il ne pouvait pas entreprendre une action contre l'Egypte. Manuel voulait encourager cette politique, non seulement pour contrecarrer les ambitions d'Amaury sur la capitale syrienne, mais aussi de créer de nouvelles associations militaires communes qui auraient garder le roi du Jérusalem dans sa sphère d'influence et permettre à l'empire de partager les territoires gagnés<sup>10</sup>.

En 1165, lors de la visite de Bohémond III à Constantinople, Amaury avait envoyé des émissaires à la cour impériale pour négocier une alliance matrimoniale. Après une période de deux ans dont nous ne savons rien, il a épousé une nièce de Manuel, Maria, et a juré tout que son frère Baldwin avait promis auparavant. Amaury a répété probablement les assurances au sujet du statut d'Antioche comme fief impérial. Mais Baldwin avait promis de fournir des troupes quand le basileus en demandait, et bien qu'il ait fait cette promesse comme un allié, la cérémonie de 1158 montre que ce n'était pas une alliance d'égal à égal. Baldwin était assis sur un trône plus court que celle de Manuel et une source arménienne montrent qu'il a reçu des mains du souverain grec des vêtements et de la couronne impériale. Cette formalité démontre que le roi de Jérusalem est considéré comme un allié de l'Empire byzantin, même un vassal. L'alliance matrimoniale entre Manuel et Amaury faisait référence à une opération militaire conjointe contre l'Egypte. Ces plans se sont concrétisés après un échange d'ambassades en 1168, par lesquelles les deux dirigeants se sont engagés à une conquête et une division de l'Egypte, le basileus recevant la côte et le roi l'intérieur de la Ville Sainte<sup>11</sup>.

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<sup>8</sup> R.H.C. Davis, *op. cit.*, p. 69.

<sup>9</sup> Amaury Ier, roi de Jérusalem entre 1163-1174, est décrit comme un homme fort, sobre, intelligent et curieux à apprendre; avide pour l'argent. Celui-ci était le frère de Baudouin III et sous son règne a reçu le titre de comte d'Ascalon et Jaffa. Il est mort lors de la préparation d'une expédition contre l'Alexandrie en alliance avec la Sicile. Jonathan Phillips, *The crusades: 1095-1197*, Pearson Education, 2002, p. 197; Corliss K. Slack, *Historical Dictionary of the Crusades*, Lanham, Maryland and Oxford, The Scarecrow Press, 2003, pp. 21-22; Michel Balard, *Croisades et Orient latin(XI<sup>e</sup>-XIV<sup>e</sup> siècles)*, Paris, Armand Colin, 2001, p. 84.

<sup>10</sup> Paul Magdalino, *The Empire of Manuel I Komnenos (1143-1180)*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1993, p. 73.

<sup>11</sup> Guillaume de Tyr, *op. cit.*, XX, III, pp. 321-323; Paul Magdalino, *op.cit.*, p. 74.

En Juin 1170, une série de forts tremblements de terre ont causé des dommages importants aux habitants du nord de la Syrie. Dans le sud, l'ambitieux Nur ad-Din<sup>12</sup> a commencé à tirer profit de la capture de l'Egypte assiégeant la forteresse Daron et menaçant les frontières du royaume de Jérusalem. Comme la menace musulmane a commencé à augmenter, les contacts diplomatiques entre latins et byzantines se sont amplifiés. L'objectif fondamental du roi Amaury Ier était d'obtenir l'aide militaire à la fois de l'Empire byzantin et des Occidentaux. Le traité de 1168 avec des descendants de Constantin concernait seulement l'invasion de l'Egypte et ne spécifie pas explicitement l'engagement pris par Manuel. Le roi de Jérusalem revendique la suzeraineté sur tous les états francs de l'Orient, même si l'Antioche et Tripoli ne faisaient pas partie de son royaume<sup>13</sup>. En 1171, les délégués du royaume de Jérusalem ont été envoyés simultanément à Constantinople et dans l'Occident.

Guillaume de Tyr rapporte qu'en 1171, Amaury a appelé tous les nobles et a établi les besoins de son royaume. Ses ennemis avaient grandi en taille, puissance et richesse, surtout après la perte de l'Egypte<sup>14</sup>. Le chroniqueur ajoute que la jeune génération de nobles était sans valeur et leurs faiblesses et leurs péchés ont conduit à cette situation. Le roi a demandé à ses hommes comment ils pouvaient améliorer la situation et de commun accord, ils ont décidé d'envoyer des ambassadeurs vers Byzance et l'Occident<sup>15</sup>. La mission vers Constantinople est partie le 10 Mars 1171. Le roi d'Angleterre, Henri II<sup>ème</sup>, a promis de partir en expédition lors des Pâques de 1171. Contrairement à la politique de 1163 à 1165, quand l'intention était seulement s'approcher du roi Louis de France, maintenant il s'agit d'une ouverture vers un éventuel soutien de l'Occident, où le pape, l'empereur Frédéric, les rois d'Espagne, de l'Angleterre, de la France, les ducs et comtes ont montré de l'intérêt pour la demande d'Amaury<sup>16</sup>.

La motivation à rechercher l'appui de l'Ouest est venue de la noblesse. Après la discussion portant sur qui devait prendre part à la mission, Amaury est intervenu et a montré qu'il veut conduire lui-même la délégation dans la capitale impériale. Le roi a consulté ses conseillers intimes, qui,

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<sup>12</sup> Nur al-Din, la figure musulmane la plus guerrière au milieu du XII<sup>e</sup> siècle, était un fanatique musulman pieux, convaincu de la nécessité de la guerre sainte contre les infidèles occidentaux. Cependant, celui-ci ne persécutait pas les chrétiens dans les territoires autochtones qu'il régnait, à condition qu'ils paient leurs impôts. Nur al-Din a conquis Damas en 1154, en éliminant ainsi la dernière enclave musulmane non-soumise à sa puissance, des frontières des territoires croisés. Vladimir Roșulescu, *Cruciadele*, Craiova, Editura Scorilo, 1999, p. 188.

<sup>13</sup> Steven Runciman, *Histoire des croisades*, traduit de l'anglais par Denis-Armand Canal și Guillaume Villeneuve, Paris, Éditions Dagorno, 2000, p. 535.

<sup>14</sup> Guillaume de Tyr, *op.cit.*, XX, XXI, p. 351; Deborah Gerish, "Amalric of Jerusalem (1136-1174)", in Alan V. Murray (coord.), *The Crusades. An Encyclopedia*, vol. I: A-C, ABC-CLIO, 2006, pp. 58-59.

<sup>15</sup> Guillaume de Tyr, *op. cit.*, XX, XXI, p. 351.

<sup>16</sup> Jonathan Phillips, *Defenders of the Holy Land: Relations between the Latin East and the West, 1119-1187*, Oxford Clarendon Press, 1996, p. 209; Guillaume de Tyr, *op. cit.*, XX, XXI, p. 351.

probablement, l'ont accompagné dans son ambassade<sup>17</sup>. Bien que dans son camp il y a un groupe de nobles qui étaient contre la politique de proximité avec les Byzantins, Amaury est le représentant du courant pro-grec, dépassant le soupçon qu'il portait à Manuel. La décision du souverain de la Ville Sainte d'aller à Constantinople a donné lieu à des critiques à Jérusalem. Il est évident que le roi croyait qu'il était le seul à détenir le pouvoir de convaincre le basileus de renouveler l'aide pour la Ville Sainte et sa présence pourrait avoir une influence positive sur l'empereur. La seule chose qui dépasse la compétence d'un envoyé était la prestation d'un serment féodal qui ne pouvait être donnée qu'en personne. Le siège contre l'Egypte a échoué, ce qui faisait encore nécessaire l'alliance du roi de Jérusalem avec le Byzance, surtout que la réponse de l'Occident attardait d'apparaître. En 1169, Amaury était préparé à reconnaître temporairement la suzeraineté d'un chef d'Etat étranger. Tant que l'Occident ne répondait pas à la demande d'aide, il restait la variante de l'alliance avec l'empire grec<sup>18</sup>. Ces conditions pouvaient influencer le souverain de Jérusalem à se reconnaître comme vassal du basileus.

Malgré l'échec de l'expédition de 1169, le roi croyait que la possession de l'Egypte était le meilleur moyen de faire face à l'ennemi, idée partagée aussi par l'empereur byzantin. Amaury a reçu une réponse favorable de Manuel qui s'est engagé à fournir un soutien<sup>19</sup>, conscient que l'équilibre des forces à l'Est était affecté<sup>20</sup>. Tandis que le chef de Jérusalem était à Constantinople, l'évêque d'Acre, William, fut envoyé ambassadeur en Italie, mais les détails de son ambassade en 1171 dans l'Ouest nous restent inconnus<sup>21</sup>. Ainsi, malgré les progrès de la mission diplomatique de l'archevêque Frédéric, l'augmentation du pouvoir musulman a déterminé Amaury à reconsiderer sa position, surtout que l'intervention occidentale attardait de se produire. Entre temps, les liens de famille développés avec le Byzance et la réalité de la coopération militaire, ont démontré en 1169 que le roi percevait que le soutien militaire le plus efficace pouvait être reçu de la part du Constantinople. Le roi de Jérusalem était conscient que pour une expédition contre l'Egypte, une attraction majeure du point de vue politique et économique, il avait besoin de l'appui militaire, économique et diplomatique du basileus. Bien qu'ils prévoient une expédition conjointe contre les Egyptiens, le souverain de la Ville Sainte attaque tôt et il est vaincu, étant contraint à renégocier l'alliance avec Manuel. L'année 1169 connaît une nouvelle action commune des deux alliés, mais l'opération a échoué à cause de son sabotage par Amaury, qui attendait l'aide de l'Occident. Pour réaliser une réconciliation avec le basileus, le roi de Jérusalem se rend à Constantinople en 1171, étant prêt à obéir à l'empereur en échange de l'appui pour continuer les opérations militaires. Différemment

<sup>17</sup> Guillaume de Tyr, *op.cit.*, XX, XXI, p. 351.

<sup>18</sup> Ralph-Johannes Lilie, *Byzantium and the Crusader States, 1096-1204*, Oxford Clarendon Press, 1999, p. 208.

<sup>19</sup> Jonathan Phillips, *Defenders of the Holy Land....*, p. 212.

<sup>20</sup> Guillaume de Tyr, *op. cit.*, XX, III, pp. 321-323; Steven Runciman, *op. cit.*, p. 599.

<sup>21</sup> Jonathan Phillips, *Defenders of the Holy Land....*, p. 213.

à Jean Kinnamos, qui ne consacre que quelques lignes à cette réunion<sup>22</sup>, Guillaume de Tyr présente une description détaillée de cette rencontre diplomatique<sup>23</sup>. Nicetas Choniates ne dit rien au sujet de la visite du souverain de Jérusalem à ville de Constantine.

La demande faite aux souverains de l'Ouest connaît une absence des résultats immédiats. Même si le roi d'Angleterre avait promis de partir en expédition au Pâques de 1171, il fallait passer dix-huit mois pour que ses armées arrivent à destination. Manuel était plus riche que les dirigeants occidentaux et sa proximité spatio-temporelle à Amaury lui permettaient une intervention plus rapide et efficace. En plus, la puissance navale grecque est un autre facteur qui a conduit le roi de Jérusalem à partir en ambassade lui-même, mentionnant que l'opération est d'une importance primordiale et personne ne pouvait assumer une telle responsabilité<sup>24</sup>. En dépit du fait que sa mission était dangereuse et Jérusalem pouvait rester temporairement sans un dirigeant, Amaury était décidé et personne ne pouvait lui déterminer de changer de position. La décision d'aller en mission lui-même démontre la gravité de la situation. L'appui byzantin était essentiel et le roi de Jérusalem a voulu s'assurer qu'il le recevra. Il s'agit d'un événement notable parce que depuis le voyage de Bohémond d'Antioche en France en 1106-1107, aucun des dirigeants latins du Levant n'ont pas quitté leur territoire pour demander de l'aide. Contrairement aux Occidentaux, les Grecs ont démontré en 1171 qu'ils étaient prêts à fournir un soutien et intervenir auprès des habitants du Levant. Le fait qu'Amaury a été contraint à faire appel aux successeurs de Constantin le Grand démontre un conflit de loyautés. Pour les Francs de l'Orient, leurs frères dans d'Europe étaient préférés pour leur offrir du support. Ceci constituait le résultat des liens familiaux, de la tradition des croisades et de l'uniformité doctrinale. En 1169, Frederick de Tyr avait offert les clés de Jérusalem à Louis VII, probablement pour lui donner la position de protecteur de la ville. Cet épisode reflète la conviction que l'Occident, et Louis en particulier, représentait l'allié naturel de l'Orient latin. Puisque le roi français a refusé la proposition, Amaury a tourné son attention vers les Grecs.

Guillaume de Tyr nous présente d'une manière détaillé la réception du roi Amaury par Manuel Comnène en 1171<sup>25</sup>. La pompe et les honneurs dirigés vers le souverain de Jérusalem représentaient une marque de grandeur du décor byzantin aux yeux du chroniqueur. La description du cérémonial constitue un témoignage important au sujet de la rencontre culturelle-idéologique de deux mondes, beaucoup de ses étapes suivant fidèlement les prescriptions proposées par *De ceremoniis*. Parce qu'il était familiarisé avec les coutumes byzantines, Guillaume a été capable de reconnaître l'honneur spécial pour Amaury Ier, quand le protosebastos Jean, le petit-fils du basileus et l'un des nobles les plus illustres du palais, a

<sup>22</sup> Jean Kinnamos, *Chronique*, traduit par J. Rosenblum, Paris, Les Belles-Lettres, 1972, VI, 280, p. 181.

<sup>23</sup> Guillaume de Tyr, *op. cit.*, XX, XXI-XXIII, pp. 351-358.

<sup>24</sup> Jonathan Phillips, *Defenders of the Holy Land....*, p. 211.

<sup>25</sup> Guillaume de Tyr, *op.cit.*, XX, XXI-XXIII, pp. 351-358.

été envoyé à accueillir le roi et lui conduire à Constantinople<sup>26</sup>. L'envoi d'un représentant pour recevoir l'ambassadeur constituait l'une des premières étapes du protocole diplomatique. En arrivant dans la capitale, le roi de Jérusalem a débarqué sur la façade maritime de Bucoleon, qui était normalement réservé au roi<sup>27</sup>. Les merveilles du palais, qu'Amaury et sa suite pourrait admirer lors de l'audience, n'était dépassés que par la salle du trône impérial, les rideaux ou les œuvres admirables exposées aux spectateurs latins<sup>28</sup>. La fonction des rideaux dans le cadre du cérémonial, primordiale pour le déroulement des rituels et le maintien du mystère impérial, génère une interprétation intéressante de la part du chroniqueur: selon Guillaume de Tyr, celles-ci cachaient le chef grec de public, alors que celui-ci s'est respectueusement levé à recevoir le roi d'une manière familière et amicale<sup>29</sup>. Un tel geste était une marque de respect très importante parce que pendant les audiences diplomatiques le basileus était resté assis sur le trône<sup>30</sup>. Les rideaux pouvaient détenir le rôle de dissimuler le contraire, en montrant l'appréciation du roi par l'empereur, en tant que son vassal<sup>31</sup>. Selon le chroniqueur, les rideaux devaient dissimuler le fait que Manuel se levait du trône, qui était un geste peu satisfaisant face aux sujets et une dépréciation de l'idéologie byzantine<sup>32</sup>. D'autant plus, Amaury a eu l'honneur de s'asseoir près de basileus sur un trône splendide, mais plus court. Alors que le baiser de la paix a été changé et les formalités diplomatiques remplies, le souverain de Jérusalem et sa suite ont reçu de nombreux cadeaux et ils ont bénéficié d'une grande hospitalité<sup>33</sup>. Le baiser de paix est l'un des plus anciens rites chrétiens, étant mentionné dans le Nouveau Testament (Rm 16, 16, 1 Co 16:20, 1 Ptr 5, 14). Cette pratique liturgique est clairement mentionnée par le saint Justin le Martyre et le Philosophe, au deuxième siècle. Selon la Tradition apostolique (siècles II-III), un ouvrage attribué à Hippolyte de Rome et aux Constitutions apostoliques (siècle IV), l'évêque embrassait les nouveaux baptisés après qu'ils ont reçu la Sainte Consécration comme un signe de réception au sein de l'Église et, après l'ordination d'un évêque, celui-ci était embrassé par toute la communauté comme un symbole de sa reconnaissance en tant que chef spirituel<sup>34</sup>. Une condition préalable pour l'efficacité de ce geste est sa

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<sup>26</sup> *Ibidem*, XX, XXI, p. 353.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibidem*, XX, XXII, p. 354.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>30</sup> Marc Carrier, *op. cit.*, p. 141.

<sup>31</sup> Steven Runciman, *art. cit.*, pp. 153-158. Jean dit que le roi de Jérusalem Kinamos accepté la suzeraineté byzantine en échange d'une aide militaire donnée contre l'Egypte. Jean Kinnamos, *op.cit.*, VI, 280, p. 181.

<sup>32</sup> Guillaume de Tyr, *op. cit.*, XX, XXII, p. 354

<sup>33</sup> Le baiser de paix était une pratique courante dans le monde chrétien, formule de salut mais une preuve de l'amour et de la bonté. Cela pourrait signifier aussi l'intégration dans l'ordre hiérarchique byzantine. Voir Yannick Carré, *Le baiser sur la bouche au Moyen Âge: rites, symboles, mentalités, à travers les images, XIe-XVe siècles*, Paris, Le Léopard d'Or, 1992, pp. 104, 141, 198.

<sup>34</sup> Diac. Ioan I. ICĂ Jr., *Canonul Ortodoxiei, I, Canonul apostolic al primelor secole*, Sibiu, Editura Deisis, 2008, pp. 574, 739, 807.

sincérité, le rejet de toute ruse et hypocrisie<sup>35</sup>. Signe d'amour et d'appréciation mutuelle, le rituel du baiser de la paix confirmait, au moins en théorie, l'amour et la confiance de basileus pour les dirigeants croisés. Guillaume ne mentionne pas explicitement le rituel de *proskynesis*, dans lequel le roi a été obligé de faire trois prosternations complètes à la terre, en signe de soumission et d'obéissance face au souverain grec. Les latins ont eu accès pendant leur séjour dans les appartements privés de l'empereur et ils ont été invités à de nombreux banquets et festivités dans le grand hippodrome, toujours amplifiées par des spectacles magnifiques et des chansons harmonieuses<sup>36</sup>. Le décor et la discipline des mœurs ont été respectés sur Amaury Ier; le protocole n'avait seulement le rôle de confirmer la gloire impériale, mais aussi l'honneur et le prestige du roi de Jérusalem<sup>37</sup>. Bien que l'arrivée du souverain de Jérusalem ait générée surprise dans l'Empire byzantin, cependant le chef oriental a été reçu d'une manière particulière. Aucun roi de Jérusalem n'avait pas visité auparavant ces terres. Le fait qu'Amaury lui-même a décidé de voyager à Constantinople indique qu'il avait tacitement reconnu la suzeraineté du basileus<sup>38</sup>. Selon Guillaume de Tyr, Manuel s'est rendu compte que la situation pût augmenter sa gloire et son honneur<sup>39</sup>. Le roi a proposé au basileus le renouvellement du traité pour la conquête de l'Egypte, comme l'indique Guillaume de Tyr<sup>40</sup>: « le roi Amaury a parlé soigneusement à l'empereur du but de sa visite, des besoins pressants de son royaume; celui-ci lui a parlé de la gloire éternelle qu'il pourrait atteindre par la conquête de l'Egypte et a expliqué les moyens par lesquels il pourrait atteindre cet objectif. Persuadé de ce discours, le chef grec s'est montré favorable promettant que ces demandes seront satisfaites »<sup>41</sup>. Le souverain de Jérusalem a persuadé Manuel à renouveler leur engagement au sujet de l'appui pour la prise de l'Egypte, en raisonnant que ceci peut être fait facilement parce que Constantinople était plus proche que l'Occident, en étant plus riche et en

<sup>35</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 644, 647.

<sup>36</sup> Guillaume de Tyr, *op. cit.*, XX, XXII-XXIII, pp. 355-356. Guillaume de Tyr est l'un des rares chroniqueurs latins qui mentionne le rôle de la musique dans la cérémonie, qui était une caractéristique fondamentale de la décoration byzantine. Odon de Deuil appréciait la voix d'eunuques dans les cérémonies religieuses. Les Romains étaient fiers de la multitude d'instruments de musique qui devaient créer une atmosphère dramatique et esthétique dans le protocole.

<sup>37</sup> Guillaume de Tyr, *op. cit.*, XX, XXII, p. 354.

<sup>38</sup> Guillaume de Tyr, *op. cit.*, XX, XXI, p. 353; Jonathan Phillips, *Defenders of the Holy Land.....*, p. 211.

<sup>39</sup> Guillaume de Tyr, *op.cit.*, XX, XXI, p. 353. Voir aussi J.L. La Monte, "To what extent was the Byzantine Empire the Suzerain of the Latin Crusading States", in *Byzantium*, No. 7, 1932, pp. 253-264. La Monte argumente que la compréhension différente de la suzeraineté grecque signifie que les Francs ne se considéraient pas vassaux mais ils étaient sous la protection de l'empire. Ce point de vue a été contredit par Lilie qui démontre que Manuel connaissait bien les habitudes occidentales et la façon dont ses actions ont été interprétées par les latins; Lilie conclut que les Grecs étaient souverains de Jérusalem. Ralph J. Lilie, *op.cit.*, pp. 206-209; Steven Runciman, *art. cit.*, pp. 153-158.

<sup>40</sup> Isabelle Augé, *Byzantins, Arméniens & Francs au temps de la croisade*, Paris, Librairie Orientaliste Paul Geuthner S.A., 2007, p. 292.

<sup>41</sup> Guillaume de Tyr, *op. cit.*, XX, XXII, p. 355.

pouvant fournir plus facilement l'aide. Un traité a été établi et scellé, mais ces termes en restent inconnus. Jean Kinamos indique qu'Amaury a accepté de devenir le vassal du basileus<sup>42</sup>. Il semble que le roi reconnaissait vaguement la suzeraineté du basileus sur les chrétiens autochtones; Manuel promettait l'aide navale et financière pour la prochaine expédition en Egypte et qu'il prendra part à l'opération conjointe contre Mleh de l'Arménie. Assurément, il y avait des clauses relatives à l'Église grecque de la capitale syrienne et probablement pour celle du royaume, où le basileus avait déjà fait assumé de repeindre l'église de la Naissance à Bethléem en 1169<sup>43</sup>.

Bien que les sources latines n'indiquent pas ce fait, les dispositions protocolaires accomplies par Manuel nous signalent le fait que, pour quiconque initié en étiquette, la qualité de vassal pour le souverain de la Ville Sainte était évidente<sup>44</sup>. L'organisation du séjour du roi à Constantinople et la suite des faits est révélatrice à cet égard: le chef grec invite les latins à visiter les lieux emblématiques de la ville, en ordonnant de leur faire montrer les appartements impériaux, les lieux inaccessibles pour les profanes, les bâtiments réservés pour la famille du basileus, les églises et les espaces où des gens ordinaires ne pouvaient pas accéder. Aussi, Manuel a montré des reliques et des objets avec lesquels le Sauveur a été torturé<sup>45</sup>: la Sainte-Croix, les clous, la lance, l'éponge, la couronne d'épines, le carénage et les sandales<sup>46</sup>. L'exposition de ces trésors présents dans le palais impérial de l'époque de Constantin soulignait la pérennité de la puissance impériale<sup>47</sup>. Amaury a été étonné par l'exposition de ces richesses du trésor byzantin. L'affichage des saintes reliques devant le roi de Jérusalem, donc régnant sur les Terres Saintes, conférait de l'autorité et de supériorité à l'empereur grec comme leur détenteur. Le résultat de cette visite a augmenté l'influence du basileus dans le royaume de Jérusalem. Pour la première fois depuis 1099 le patriarche grec de la Ville Sainte a pu résider en Palestine pour onze mois dans la période 1177-1178. Manuel apparaît comme le suzerain d'Amaury I<sup>er</sup> et les négociations pour une campagne en Egypte ne se sont concrétisées que sous le règne de son successeur, Baudouin IV<sup>48</sup>.

Kinamos mentionne la visite d'Amaury à Constantinople en 1171. Le chroniqueur affirme que le roi de Jérusalem est allé à Manuel pour lui demander de l'aide recevant tout ce qu'il a demandé en échange d'un serment de loyauté. L'historien ne précise pas en détail les droits et les obligations qui résultent de l'accord<sup>49</sup>. Ce passage a suscité des interprétations différentes dans l'historiographie. En d'autres termes, pressé par la nécessité d'obtenir l'aide que les Occidentaux ne pouvaient pas offrir, et pour contrecarrer la menace de Nur ad-Din, le chef de Jérusalem a

<sup>42</sup> Jean Kinnamos, *op. cit.*, VI, 280, p. 181.

<sup>43</sup> Steven Runciman, *op. cit.*, p. 604.

<sup>44</sup> Steven Runciman, *art. cit.*, p. 158.

<sup>45</sup> Louis VII en 1147 et Amaury en 1171 ont pu contempler dans la chapelle du palais les signes des Passions du Seigneur.

<sup>46</sup> Guillaume de Tyr, *op. cit.*, XX, XXII, p. 356.

<sup>47</sup> Isabelle Augé, *op. cit.*, p. 293.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 294.

<sup>49</sup> Jean Kinnamos, *op. cit.*, VI, 280, p. 181.

reconnu l'autorité de l'empereur byzantin<sup>50</sup>. Guillaume est probablement réticent à présenter cet épisode parce que le but principal de son travail est de convaincre l'Occident que *pulani*<sup>51</sup> étaient dignes de soutien; cependant, à cette époque, les relations avec les adeptes de Constantin sont devenues très hostiles de telle sorte qu'à Guillaume lui semble un peu imprudent d'attirer l'attention sur la soumission d'Amaury au basileus. Les historiens byzantines voient dans cet épisode une reconnaissance de la domination féodale de l'Empire<sup>52</sup>, alors que les historiens des croisades montrent qu'il ne s'agit pas que d'un renouvellement des anciennes alliances. Dans l'Est, la vassalité a été conçue comme une fonction de protection et d'alliance; le prince inférieur acceptait la protection et l'alliance avec l'empire le plus fort tandis que la vassalité au sens latin impliquait un accord féodal, suivant la loi, où le vassal jurait fidélité au seigneur en échange de la réception d'un fief. Manuel avait suffisante expérience pour comprendre les coutumes de monde occidental féodal et leurs significations.

L'influence byzantine sur les États croisés a augmenté après la visite du roi de Jérusalem à Constantinople. Le Byzance devenait la puissance protectrice, même si pas le seigneur des francs en Syrie et en Palestine. Ainsi, en 1169, Manuel a ordonné les travaux de restauration à l'Eglise de la Naissance à Bethléem et à celle du Saint-Sépulcre. Une certaine organisation de l'Eglise grecque semble avoir existé à cette époque en Palestine, même si rien de clair peut être établi quelque en absence des sources<sup>53</sup>.

Guillaume de Tyr représente le chroniqueur le plus prolifique en ce qui concerne la description détaillée de l'épisode d'une réception diplomatique à la cour de l'empereur byzantin à Constantinople. L'historien a retenu une impression généralement favorable au sujet de l'audience impériale qui souligne l'honneur d'Amaury. Par l'accord tacite de devenir le vassal de Manuel, est symbolisé le fait que le roi de Jérusalem est devenu un acteur important sur la scène orientale en dépit de divers problèmes qu'un tel lien de fidélité générera pendant la formation des États latins en Orient. Cependant, Guillaume ne détaille pas certains rituels du protocole qui pouvaient affecter la fierté et la dignité du chef de la Ville Sainte; il n'insiste pas sur le fait qu'une telle procédure était une intégration symbolique dans la hiérarchie des nations et représentait une confirmation de l'expansion universelle de l'Empire byzantin<sup>54</sup>. Une telle alliance avec Byzance a donné au royaume de Jérusalem la légitimité sur plan international, lui étant ainsi reconnu le statut d'Etat chrétien dans la région. Le témoignage de l'archevêque de Tyr, complété avec les informations fournies par l'historien grec Jean Kinnamos, offre les éléments essentiels pour la compréhension de la façon dont le processus diplomatique

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<sup>50</sup> Jonathan Phillips, *The crusades: 1095-1197....*, p. 101.

<sup>51</sup> *Pulani* sont les habitans latins de l'Orient.

<sup>52</sup> Ralph-Johannes Lilie, *op. cit.*, p. 206.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 209.

<sup>54</sup> Marc Carrier, *op. cit.*, p. 145.

byzantines se déroulait à l'époque de croisades, afin d'assurer la stabilité politique et d'accomplir les objectifs de l'Empire de Constantin le Grand.



# **MARIANNE ET LA REGENCE DE TUNIS. QUAND UN ETAT DE DROIT (LA FRANCE) OCCULTE LE DROIT TUNISIEN 1881-1956**

**Hedi Saidi\***

## **Abstract**

*The history of the French protectorate and colonial period in Tunisia is little known by the French. It is true that textbooks deal only very briefly the history and even the Tunisian campaign, very important event (1942-1943), are completely forgotten several educational publishers. This concealment is facilitated by the abundance of books, exhibitions, conferences and forums dedicated to Moroccan history and especially Algeria, which therefore put Tunisia in a shadow. And the image of a peaceful and "positive" French domination in Tunisia took place in the collective consciousness. This is produced and transmitted from generation to generation through literature, film and travellers, and justified by former relationships and "good" relations between the two countries. Our aim is to do overlooked passages of the Franco-Tunisian history without overstated however the misunderstandings and prejudices that often constitute the background emerge.*

**Keywords:** France; Tunisia; Constitution; colonialism.

## **La mémoire ne se divise pas**

La Tunisie connaît une première organisation politique il y a plus de 2800 ans, puisque la première constitution de la Tunisie est celle de Carthage, dont le texte est cité par Aristote dans son ouvrage «*La politique*», en parallèle avec la constitution de Sparte en Grèce.

Au fil du temps, cette constitution permet aux carthaginois de pratiquer la démocratie et de mettre en place un régime un système institutionnel codifié. Ce dernier se caractérise principalement par l'élection de deux députés par an pour le peuple, la constitution d'un sénat de trois cents membres élus à vie, d'une assemblée populaire et de clubs d'activités intellectuelles et professionnelles « Syssites » dont le rôle est de permettre aux opinions et sensibilités de s'exprimer et de peser sur les décisions des organismes élus.

Les historiens sont unanimes à reconnaître que via cette constitution, Carthage a joué un rôle de pionnier de la liberté et de la démocratie dans le monde.

Cette vocation pluricivilisationnelle est à l'origine de ces superpositions d'ordres juridiques multiples.

## **Le pacte fondamental.**

Inspiré des chartes de 1839-1865, il définit les droits fondamentaux des Tunisiens, abolit le statut de dhimmi (protégé) des Juifs, qui deviennent

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des citoyens à part entière. Il autorise le droit de propriété aux résidents européens. Ce pacte préfigure le projet de constitution. Pour que les citoyens soient égaux devant la loi, il faut d'une part une charte constitutionnelle fondée sur la séparation des pouvoirs et d'autre part que la loi soit l'expression de la volonté générale. Ainsi seulement, elle pourra offrir les garanties contre tous les abus du pouvoir: atteinte à la propriété, à toute forme de liberté individuelle, politique, religieuse... Elle permet aux citoyens de contrôler le pouvoir exécutif et d'éviter les décisions relevant du bon vouloir du roi. Le discours sur « la volonté générale » exige du Tunisien qu'il se débarrasse de ses intérêts économiques et sociaux catégoriels, qu'il fasse abstraction de ses intérêts de classe quand il s'occupe de la chose publique. Il doit être un être capable d'exprimer la volonté générale, considérée selon le postulat rousseauiste comme la voix de la raison. Il doit donc se faire neutre, intemporel.

C'est pourquoi, pour ne pas risquer que la volonté générale soit étouffée par des intérêts catégoriels, on interposera un filtre entre le peuple et la loi<sup>1</sup>.

De telles institutions s'inspirent de la Révolution française et de la Déclaration des Droits de l'Homme et du Citoyen du 26 août 1789 qui dit que «*Les hommes naissent et demeurent libres et égaux en droit*», ces droits étant la liberté, la propriété, la sûreté et la résistance à l'oppression. Pour garantir ces droits-là, il faut un ensemble de règles, en sorte une constitution rédigée par les représentants légaux du peuple, afin de mettre la régence sur la route de la modernité et du développement.

## La constitution de 1861

A l'origine d'un mouvement réformateur, le premier ministre le général Khair-Eddine va doter la régence de Tunis d'un corpus de lois comme en France. Cet homme d'Etat avait voulu moderniser le pays en le dotant d'une constitution. Sa pensée se révèle dans l'ouvrage qu'il a publié en 1867 sous le titre « Le plus sûr moyen pour connaître l'état des nations », « *Akwam el massalik fi maarifati ahwal al mamalik* » plus connu sous la traduction « *Des réformes nécessaires aux Etats musulmans* ». On y décèle un choix politique en faveur d'une évolution rationnelle et modérée qui s'inspire de l'exemple européen sans renier les valeurs fondamentales de l'Islam. Khair-Eddine avait comme idéal les principes de la Révolution française. Représentant en Tunisie du courant de pensée réformateur, il se montra très tôt partisan de réformes audacieuses et de la modernisation de l'Etat. Il

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<sup>1</sup> Sebag Paul, *La Tunisie*, Paris, éditions sociales, 1951, 241 pages. Smida Mongi, *Khéreddine, ministre réformateur*, 1873-1877, Tunis, 1970, 427 pages. UNIVERSITE (de la Manouba), *Les relations tuniso-françaises au miroir des élites XIX- XX ème*. Actes du colloque organisé le 2-3 décembre 1994. Textes réunis et préfacés par Noureddine Dougui. Publication de la faculté des lettres. Manouba 1997. Vankrieken Gérard, *Khérédine et la Tunisie, 1850-1881*, Paris, 1976, 300 pages. VIGNON Louis, *La France dans l'Afrique du Nord: Algérie- Tunisie*, Librairie Guillemin et Cie, Paris, 1887, 306 pages. Zmerli Sadok, *Figures tunisiennes. Les précurseurs*, 2<sup>ème</sup> édition, éd. Bous lama 1979, -*Figues tunisiennes*- Tome II, MTE, 1976.

collabora à la rédaction du pacte fondamental de 1857 ainsi qu'à l'élaboration de la constitution de 1861 et fit promouvoir la réforme judiciaire en créant un tribunal mixte compétent pour régler les litiges entre Tunisiens et Européens. Il cherchait, disait-il, « *à réveiller le patriotisme des oulama et des hommes d'état musulmans et les engager à s'entraider dans le choix intelligent des moyens les plus efficaces pour améliorer l'état de la nation islamique, accroître et développer les éléments de sa civilisation, élargir le cercle des sciences et des connaissances, augmenter la richesse publique par le développement de l'agriculture et du commerce et de l'industrie et pour établir avant tout comme base principale, un bon système de gouvernement...* ».

La constitution de 1861 entre en vigueur le 23 avril 1861, elle établit un partage du pouvoir entre le bey et ses ministres et accorde de plus larges prérogatives à un Grand Conseil formé de soixante conseillers. Le pouvoir législatif est partagé entre le bey et une assemblée investie d'une autorité souveraine.

La justice est certes rendue au nom du bey, mais le pouvoir judiciaire devient indépendant selon la conception d'Ibn Khaldoun<sup>2</sup>: « *Al adel assas al omrane* », qui se traduit par « *la justice est le fondement de toute civilisation* ». Le consul de France Charles de Beauval qui avait pris part aux discussions et à la rédaction a encouragé le bey Sadok à aller voir Napoléon III à Alger pour lui monter cette constitution<sup>3</sup>.

Cette constitution qui est une véritable charte des Droits de l'Homme, faisait de la Tunisie une sorte de monarchie constitutionnelle dressée contre l'absolutisme. La constitution tunisienne, comme le pacte fondamental qui l'avait précédé, est du genre des constitutions octroyées. C'est le monarque au pouvoir absolu qui l'octroie à ses sujets, sans prendre la peine de les consulter et sans même qu'ils participent directement ou indirectement à son élaboration. Cela se passe le plus souvent, sous la pression des puissances étrangères et l'influence de sa cour. N'empêche que cette constitution est un progrès considérable même si elle demeure imparfaite aux yeux de beaucoup de spécialistes<sup>4</sup>.

La conséquence de la mise en pratique de cette constitution ? C'est moins de pouvoir pour le bey et plus pour les *mamelouks*, devenus de plus en plus arrogants vis-à-vis d'un peuple accablé par la hausse des impôts et

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<sup>2</sup>Abou Zeid Abd Er-Rahman, dit Ibn Khaldoun, est né à Tunis le 27 mai 1332 au sein d'une famille originaire d'Andalousie. Historien et philosophe, il enseigna dans plusieurs villes du Maghreb, exerçant diverses fonctions politiques auprès des sultans de Tunis et de Fès, puis auprès du souverain de Grenade (Al Andalus). Devant le rejet de ses idées modernes, il s'exila en Egypte, où il fut cadi (juge et notaire). Il mourut au Caire le 19 mars 1406.

<sup>3</sup> In *Manière de voir*, publication du le Monde diplomatique n 168.

<sup>4</sup> Abdessalem Ahmed, *Les historiens tunisiens des XVII<sup>e</sup> et XIX<sup>e</sup> siècles, essai d'histoire culturelle*, librairie Klincksiek, Paris, 1973. Arnoulet François, *La pénétration intellectuelle en Tunisie avant le protectorat*, in la revue africaine, tomme XCVIII, no 438-439, 1<sup>ère</sup> et 2<sup>ème</sup> trimestre 1954, facultés des lettres, Alger 1954. Ayadi Taoufik, *Mouvement réformiste et mouvement populaire à Tunis (1906-1912)*, Université de Tunis, 1986. Bchir Mouldi, *La presse française et l'établissement du Protectorat en Tunisie en 1881*, Thèse de 3<sup>ème</sup> cycle en sciences de l'information. Paris II, 1977, 434 pages. Brunschwig Henri, *Mythes et réalités de l'impérialisme colonial français 1871-1914*, Paris, Colin 1960, 206 pages.

la propagation de l'injustice. Cette situation entraînera quelques années plus tard la révolte populaire de 1864 dirigée par Ali ben Ghdahom, qui donnera au bey le prétexte tant attendu pour la suspendre, reprendre son pouvoir absolu et engager la répression dans toute la régence.

Ce qu'on peut remarquer aussi au sujet de cette constitution, c'est le principe de la territorialité: elle attache des droits au sol (le sol tunisien) et non à la personne. On peut donc parler de citoyenneté non nationalitaire.

- Cette constitution est orientée dans le sens d'une citoyenneté individuelle passive. On ne parle pas des droits politiques, de la gestion publique, des droits inaliénables de l'homme mais d'assurer le Tunisien contre les abus du pouvoir beylical. On remarque donc l'absence des préoccupations politiques.

- Une citoyenneté garantie: garantir les biens, garantir la sécurité de la vie, garantir la propriété...

- Cette absence de droits politiques n'a pas permis le passage d'un droit formel à un droit réel.

- L'absence de relateurs, une élite pour propager et faire connaître un civisme constitutionnel et beylical au moment où la régence en avait le plus besoin.

Mais le 29 avril 1864, le consul de France à Tunis Charles de Beauval; accompagné d'une délégation militaire avec à sa tête le maréchal Bidounalma, demanda officiellement au bey au nom de l'Empereur de France de suspendre la constitution «*e suis venu vous demander au nom de l'empereur suspendre la constitution parce qu'elle a porté préjudice à votre pays et à vous-même...*» lui dit-il. Et ce dernier de lui répondre: «*ainsi la puissance qui nous l'a imposée, nous impose aujourd'hui de la suspendre*»

La France va profiter de la crise institutionnelle et de la mise sous tutelle internationale du budget de la régence pour mettre en place un régime de protectorat en 1881.

### **La promotion du «modèle français»**

En s'inscrivant contre la piraterie, la conquête de la régence de Tunis et le régime du protectorat imposé au bey, se placent dans un colonialisme du deuxième type, celui qui préfigure sa vocation civilisatrice.

D'une manière générale, on constate que le protectorat comporte la reconnaissance partielle d'une singularité qui empêche de la confondre avec la métropole. Dans le régime du protectorat appliqué à la Tunisie, la fiction d'un Etat subsiste. S'appliquant généralement aux pays qui constituaient des unités politiques ayant eu des relations internationales, le protectorat tient compte de ce passé et respecte l'unité politique.

A la différence de la colonisation britannique qui s'appuie essentiellement sur une pénétration commerciale et économique (la Compagnie des Indes orientales est le meilleur exemple), et sur ses réseaux commerciaux, le modèle colonial français s'appuie sur la puissance, l'universalité et la prétendue justesse de ces valeurs, telles que l'égalité et la citoyenneté. Les pères de la IIIème République sont convaincus de l'idée que les gens aspirent à devenir citoyens français, une sorte de récompense pour

eux. Cette conception va rendre difficile le processus de décolonisation puisqu'elle n'est nullement envisagée<sup>5</sup>.

Mus par les idées des Lumières et le prestige de la Révolution de 1789, les Français qui abolissent en 1848 l'esclavage, prétendaient accomplir une mission civilisatrice. Leur résister était considéré comme une preuve de sauvagerie. Au nom de la civilisation et des valeurs de 1789, la violence devient légitime et les indigènes<sup>6</sup> opposés à cette présence sont traités comme délinquants et barbares. Répandre la science et la liberté, telle est la mission des civilisés: «*Partout doivent reculer les antiques puissances de l'ignorance, de la superstition, de la peur, de l'oppression de l'homme par l'homme. Ainsi l'action colonisatrice est -elle fondamentalement définie comme une œuvre d'émancipation: par elle, et à travers elle, se poursuit la lutte, entreprise depuis plus d'un siècle au nom de Lumières, contre l'injustice, l'esclavage, la soumission aux ténèbres.*»<sup>7</sup>

Elle va appliquer cette philosophie en Tunisie qui sera occupée en 1881 suite au traité signé le 12 mai 1881. C'est un projet en dix articles, prévoyant l'occupation d'un certain nombre de points stratégiques dans la régence. En cas du refus du bey, une démonstration navale dans les eaux tunisiennes, appuyée par l'intervention d'une force militaire sur la frontière, devait mener le bey à composer et à céder. Les prétextes pour une intervention militaire ne manquaient pas. En effet, le gouvernement français pouvait ouvrir le dossier des Khroumirs (montagnards berbérophones du Nord et du Nord-Est) qui avaient, en 1878, pillé un navire français sur les côtes non loin de Tabarka, et qui avaient depuis lors, été la cause d'un bon nombre d'incidents frontaliers. Le bey est incapable d'inquiéter ces montagnards et les indemnités promises aux familles des rescapés restèrent sans suite.

Franchir les frontières pour châtier les Khroumirs constitue un prétexte crédible pour entrer dans le pays.

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<sup>5</sup> Cambon Henri, *Paul Cambon ambassadeur de France*, Paris, Plon 1937, 325 pages. Camellieri Carmel, *L'image dans la colonisation de groupes étrangers en relations inégalitaires*, in cahier international de sociologie, PUF, 1975. Canal Albert, *La littérature et la presse d'opinion tunisienne de l'occupation à 1999*, Paris, la renaissance du livre, 1923. Cesaire Aimé, Discours sur le colonialisme, Paris, 1955. Chater Khalifa, *La Régence de Tunis de 1815 à 1857*, Tunis, 1984, 660 pages. Chebbi Moncef, *L'image de l'occident chez les intellectuels tunisiens au XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle*, La maghrébine pour l'impression et la publication du livre, Tunis, 2009, 301 pages. Cherif Mohamed Hedi, *Le fonctionnement du protectorat en Tunisie après Paul Cambon*, DES d'Histoire, Sorbonne 1958. *Expansion européenne et difficultés tunisiennes de 1815 à 1830*, in Annales E.S.C, 1970, pp. 714-745. Claudel Maurice, *Les indigènes tunisiens*, Paris, 1893, 42 pages.

<sup>6</sup> Camau Michel, La notion de démocratie dans la pensée des dirigeants maghrébins, CNRS, Paris, 1971. Le statut d'indigène est antérieur à la III<sup>e</sup> République, puisqu'il entre officiellement dans le droit français en février 1862 au sujet de l'Algérie, jugeant les populations locales comme différentes des « Français de France ». Donc des « nationaux » sans « citoyenneté »; en d'autres termes des « sujets français ». Mais par les réformes de 1865, ceux-ci pouvaient accéder à la citoyenneté française, ce qui fut généralisé pour les Juifs en 1870 par le décret Crémieux. Autant de situations juridiques que la II<sup>e</sup> République va modifier jusqu'à en effacer tout souvenir, avec les réformes ségrégationnistes de 1889.

<sup>7</sup> Discours de Jules Ferry à la Chambre le 28 juillet 1885.

## Pourquoi un régime de protectorat en Tunisie?

Le régime du protectorat est le système de colonisation le mieux adapté à la IIIème République. Dans un régime parlementaire où le pouvoir législatif peut à tout moment retirer sa confiance au gouvernement et provoquer une crise ministérielle, le protectorat, en soustrayant la régence au contrôle parlementaire, limite les effets d'une instabilité politique chronique. Il est assurément permis de se demander si le gouvernement de la République n'a pas, dans la perspective d'une politique d'expansion coloniale, favorisé un système de colonisation qui lui permet de s'abriter derrière la souveraineté fictive, laissée pour la circonstance au bey local, et d'échapper ainsi à la censure parlementaire. Le système du protectorat permet en effet au gouvernement de procéder à l'organisation d'un territoire colonisé sans être paralysé par le contrôle tatillon des Chambres. De plus, la situation démographique de la France, caractérisée par un faible accroissement naturel, cadrait mieux avec le régime du protectorat qui ne nécessitait pas une colonisation de peuplement.

Le terme de protectorat est bien choisi, il implique l'idée de réciprocité d'obligations. Il faut l'envisager contre la perte des droits du protecteur en cas de manquement. Au cas où le pays signataire du protectorat n'est pas dans le strict droit des colonies, il l'est cependant en plusieurs sens (différents) puisque le pouvoir y est partagé. A notre avis, un pays protégé, comme le fut la Tunisie, n'est qu'un « pseudo-Etat » ou un Etat « mi-souverain » qui ne détient le pouvoir exécutif et législatif qu'en principe en fiction. Et même s'il a ces pouvoirs, il ne les a pas seul. Si les décrets tunisiens sont pris au nom du bey, ils sont élaborés, proposés et contrôlés par le pouvoir français en place. Il y a donc association et collaboration dans le protectorat entre les deux pouvoirs, le pouvoir indigène tunisien et le pouvoir français. Il y a toujours dans ces cas, domination: une domination certes très peu sentie parfois, mais toujours déclarée.

En apparence donc, la régence continuait à être dirigée par un prince souverain (le bey) mais le traité du protectorat restreignait considérablement son pouvoir.

Les textes établissant le protectorat français sur la régence étaient pour l'essentiel assez voisins de ceux qui devaient trente années plus tard instituer le protectorat français sur le Maroc. La plupart de juristes admettent en effet que formellement, la Tunisie n'a pas aliéné, en 1881, sa souveraineté interne.

Le traité du Bardo, signé le 12 mai 1881, tout comme plus tard le traité de Fès pour le Maroc<sup>8</sup>, est un acte de droit international, passé entre deux Etats. Et si pour le Maroc les textes de 1912 ne prévoient pas le délai

<sup>8</sup> Le traité du 30 mars 1912 est signé par le sultan Moulay Hafid et M. Regnault, ministre de France à Tanger au nom du gouvernement de la République française et du gouvernement de Sa Majesté chérifienne. DEMEERSMAN (André), Un grand témoin des premières idées modernistes en Tunisie, Revue Ibla-4<sup>ème</sup> trimestre 1956, pp. 349-373. -*La doctrine de Kheireddine en matière de politique intérieure*, Revue ibla-1<sup>er</sup> trimestre 1958, pp 13-29. -*Idéal politique de kheireddine*, Revue Ibla, 3<sup>ème</sup> trimestre 1957, pp. 179-215. Dupuy Aimé, *La Tunisie, les colonies françaises*, collection publiée sous la direction de Georges Hardy, Paris, 1939.

au terme duquel les droits protecteurs expireront ou se transformeront, le traité du Bardo est plus explicite.

Dans son article 2, il proclame en effet que: « *S.A. le bey de Tunis consent à ce que l'autorité militaire française fasse occuper les points qu'elle jugera nécessaires pour le rétablissement de l'ordre et la sécurité de la frontière et du littoral* ». Mais le même article précise ensuite que: « *Cette occupation cessera lorsque les autorités militaires françaises et les Tunisiens auront reconnu d'un commun accord que l'administration locale est en état de garantir le maintien de l'ordre* ». Certes des limitations sévères sont imposées à la souveraineté tunisienne, mais même en ce qui concerne les rapports entre la régence et les Etats étrangers, le bey n'abdique pas sa souveraineté internationale.

Par le décret du 9 juin 1881, complétant le traité du bardo, le bey s'est borné « à conférer au ministre résident de France à Tunis le rôle d'intermédiaire officiel et unique » dans les rapports avec les puissances amies.

Il s'agit d'une simple délégation de pouvoirs, le bey n'a pas davantage renoncé à la faculté d'entretenir une armée même si celle-ci a un rôle symbolique.

La convention de la Marsa, conclue le 8 juin 1883, donne à la puissance protectrice le droit de promulguer les réformes. Il suffit de citer l'article premier qui disait: « *afin de faciliter au gouvernement français l'accomplissement de son protectorat, SA le bey de Tunis s'engage à procéder aux administratives, judiciaires et financières que le gouvernement français jugera utiles* ». Cet article aurait pu servir de prétexte aux autorités françaises pour substituer à un régime de protectorat un régime d'administration directe. Cette deuxième convention contenait le mot « *protectorat* » et autorisait le gouvernement français à mettre son véto à tout acte émanant du bey susceptible de nuire à la bonne administration de la régence.

Pour nombreux juristes, les conventions de 1881 et 1883 étaient, du point de vue juridique, des formules assez souples pour pouvoir fonder ultérieurement un régime d'autonomie interne.

### **Des liens très historiques**

Les relations tuniso - françaises sont très anciennes datant de 1577 sous Henri III qui voulait à cette date établir dans la régence afin d' « *y tenir un ordre politique et de justice un consul pour la nation française* »

Ainsi est appelé le petit groupe de commerçants qui avait l'avantage de loger au consulat même appelé dès lors le *fondouk des Français*, la France devient aussi non seulement protectrice des intérêts des français mais aussi des européens de la régence.

En 1665, un traité qui précise que le « *le consul de France résidant dans la ville de Tunis sera honoré et respecté et aura la prédominance sur tous les autres consuls* ».

En contrepartie paris reconnaissait deux maximes: la Tunisie était indépendante à l'égard de l'empire ottoman et elle n'avait pas de comptes à rendre au dey d'Alger.

Hussein ben Ali, a eu souvent recours aux bons services d'un certain captif français au non de Reynaud et les relations entre la France et la Tunisie s'en ressentent avantageusement. C'est ainsi que le bey en question comble d'honneurs le vicomte d'Andrezel, envoyé gracieux de Louis XV en 1728, et signe avec la France un nouveau traité d'amitié. Le bey Hamouda, accomplissant une tournée à l'intérieur du pays, prend dans son escorte et sous sa protection le savant voyageur Desfontaines, le deuxième français qui, après Peysonnel, avait été autorisé à parcourir la régence. Quelques années plus tôt, en 1776, le prince de Listenac est venu, à la tête d'une escadre, rendre visite à Ali bey. Il est salué de vingt neuf coups de canon, rendus coup sur coup.

La France peut signer alors avec la régence tous les traités particuliers utiles aux deux pays sans y référer au Grand sultan.

En 1846, Paris accueille la première ambassade tunisienne venue en France. La prestigieuse délégation comprend Ahmed Ibn-Abi Dhiaf, secrétaire du bey et kaireddine. Durant la visite, IbnAbi-Dhiaf est l'objet des égards de Guizot qui demande à l'interprète Desgranges de fournir à son hôte toutes les explications qu'il souhaite pour écrire le récit du voyage beylical. Dès cette époque naît et se développe l'idée d'une sorte de protectorat, et les responsables tunisiens s'habituent peu à peu à considérer l'influence de la France prédominante comme quelque chose de normale voire une nécessité.

Le traité signé le 12 mai 1881 entre les deux pays comporte la reconnaissance partielle d'une particularité qui empêche de confondre la Tunisie avec la Métropole. Il y a en effet des degrés de dépendance et le protectorat connaît une dépendance atténuée.

Forme tempérée de la colonisation, le protectorat n'est pas la plus répandue.

Dans ce régime de protectorat pratiqué par la France, la fiction d'un Etat subsiste. S'appliquant généralement aux pays qui constituaient des unités politiques ayant eu des relations internationales, le protectorat tient compte de ce passé et cherche même à le renforcer<sup>9</sup>.

Le régime protectoral instauré en Tunisie est un véritable désaveu de la constitution tunisienne. Tous les droits de l'homme, les droits du citoyen élaborés par cette constitution y sont bafoués. Le Tunisien n'avait pas les droits du citoyen. Au lieu et place de l'égalité, le protectorat a instauré une société à double vitesse séparant la communauté tunisienne de la communauté française. Les lois appliquées aux Européens étaient généralement différentes des lois appliquées aux Tunisiens. Les deux communautés n'étaient pas soumises de façon égale au fisc. Les Tunisiens payaient plus d'impôts. Bien plus cette discrimination existait aussi au

<sup>9</sup> Ganiage Jean, *Les origines du protectorat français en Tunisie 1861-1881*, Paris, PUF, 1959, 775 pages. Goldzeiguer Annie Rey, *Le royaume arabe, la politique algérienne de Napoléon III 1861-1870*, société nationale d'édition et de diffusion, Alger, 1977. Hadria Elie Cohen, *Du protectorat français à l'indépendance tunisienne, souvenir d'un témoin socialiste*, Nice, CMMC, 1976. Julien Charles André, *Histoire de l'Afrique du Nord. Tunisie, Algérie, Maroc*, Paris, Payot, 1964, 367 pages. *Une pensée anticolonialiste*, Paris, Sindbad, 1979, 267 pages. Khairallah Chedly, *Le mouvement évolutionniste tunisien*, Paris, garrot, 1939. Kassab Ahmed, *Histoire de la Tunisie - l'époque contemporaine*, STD, Tunis, 1976, 506 pages.

niveau de l'affectation du budget. Environ 90% du budget provenait de ce qu'on appelait la population indigène. L'essentiel des dépenses était consacré au paiement des fonctionnaires coloniaux et à la construction d'une infrastructure nécessaire correspondant aux besoins de la colonisation.

La discrimination existait aussi dans la fonction publique, l'exemple le plus frappant est celui de Salah ben Salah<sup>10</sup>.

Le système colonial en Tunisie a aussi violé le principe du droit à la propriété garanti par la constitution de 1861. Ainsi une bonne partie des terres collectives (les terres des tribus) a été confisquée au profit du domaine colonial. De même une partie des terres *Hbous* consacrée aux œuvres religieuses et à l'utilité publique a été confisquée au profit de la colonisation.

L'inégalité, la discrimination sont des verrous sociaux. Sans leur éclatement, tout progrès vers la démocratie est exclu, et toute application de la constitution tunisienne dans ce contexte est impensable.

Ainsi dès le début de l'installation française en Tunisie, une liaison et des rapports incestueux et paradoxaux entre la constitution locale et le pouvoir protectoral vont voir le jour. L'absence de la première dévoile le manque de volonté de la République pour éclairer et émanciper ces populations indigènes et pointe l'incompatibilité des deux systèmes. Pour les Tunisiens la question de l'application de la constitution tunisienne est indissociable de celle de leur exclusion dans la gestion de leur pays. Tout progrès de la première signifie le recul de la deuxième.

Mais au lieu de maintenir la constitution tunisienne dans le pays, le système colonial en Tunisie a instauré une inégalité légale, ce qui montre ces limites démocratiques et son incapacité à répondre aux attentes de la population.

La contradiction entre cette constitution locale et ce régime colonial est porteuse de nouveaux rapports conflictuels entre la régence et le protectorat et les hommes politiques tunisiens ont réussi à rendre cette question transparente, il n'est pas donc étonnant de voir que le premier parti politique tunisien a pris le non de parti *destour* (parti constitutionnel). L'appellation constitution (*destour*) est tout un programme<sup>11</sup>.

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<sup>10</sup> Pendant une longue période, les Tunisiens titulaires de diplômes d'ingénieur obtenus en France ne trouvaient pas de postes à leur retour à tel point qu'en 1928, un ingénieur ayant fait l'école des mines de Paris, Salah ben Salah originaire de Moknine (170 kms environ au sud de Tunis), dût immigrer en occident pour trouver du travail.

<sup>11</sup> Ces revendications sont résumées dans un éditorial célèbre du journal *Le Tunisien* sous le titre «*Notre programme*», le 7 février 1907, et s'inspirant nettement des principes révolutionnaires de 1789. Un autre texte-clé de l'histoire du mouvement national, *La Tunisie martyre* parue à Paris en 1920, est également significatif. C'est un ouvrage en langue française attribué à Abdelaziz Thaalibi. Or ce dernier ne pratiquait pas le Français. Le véritable auteur, le principal en tous cas, est un jeune avocat nommé Ahmed Assakka qui vivait à Paris. L'ouvrage a été rédigé à partir de rapports provenant de Tunisie. Sa mouture finale s'inspire, là aussi, des idées révolutionnaires de 1789. Il fustige les abus commis par la France en Tunisie tout en louant le pays des libertés et de l'égalité. Il revendique aussi une constitution pour la Tunisie. Cité par Ali Mahjoubi, In «*Les idées de la révolution française et le mouvement national tunisien*», conférence donnée en juin 1989 à l'UTIT – Paris, lors du bicentenaire de la révolution de 1789.

L'inégalité n'est pas seulement politique<sup>12</sup> et économique, elle s'étend au statut des personnes, à leurs droits civils et non pas seulement politiques. Le régime colonial en Tunisie applique deux lois, deux droits. Les Tunisiens s'y voient appliquer un statut notamment inférieur à celui des Français de Tunisie et sont soumis à un régime administratif plus rigoureux. Ils ne peuvent pas se prévaloir des libertés reconnues par la loi française. C'est le cas du droit syndical, pourtant reconnu en France depuis 1884 mais toléré en Tunisie qu'après la Seconde Guerre mondiale. Ce qui est licite en France est en Tunisie tenu pour un délit justiciable des tribunaux, poursuivi et sanctionné sévèrement par des amendes et/ou d'emprisonnement.

De plus quelques-uns des principes que la France tient depuis le XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle des Lumières pour élément constitutif de son identité et de sa construction, ne sont pas respectés comme par exemple le principe de la séparation des pouvoirs chers à Montesquieu.

De même en ce qui concerne le travail, si la France a aboli le régime de la corvée, elle le maintient sous le nom de travail forcé. Rémunérations et salaires sont en Tunisie, bien inférieurs à leur niveau dans la métropole. Les Tunisiens n'ont pas, par le libre jeu des facteurs économiques, qu'une part réduite du profit tiré de la mise en valeur de leurs propres ressources naturelles.

### **La colonisation en «procès»**

Dans ce contexte colonial, les groupes, différents parce qu'ils sont étrangers par plusieurs faits et facteurs, sont enchaînés par des relations inévitables. La colonisation engendre par conséquent le contact de ces deux communautés, d'où l'apparition chez eux de types sociaux et d'attitudes nouveaux. Le fond sociologique de la question coloniale est que la colonisation entraîne la mise en contact des représentants de la nation française avec une population à majorité paysanne et surtout à dominante tribale et qu'elle est donc une mise en jonction de façon tout à fait contrastée.

Il va de soi que cette situation coloniale concrète va subir des changements à travers le temps et par le truchement de ces acteurs, deux civilisations vont entrer en contact. C'est évidemment une vision utopiste que de s'imaginer les deux cultures comme deux vases à des niveaux différents qu'il suffirait de mettre en assez large communication pour que les niveaux tendent vers l'équilibre. D'où vient cette conception? Peut être d'une attitude humaniste; et ce schéma a souvent servi de base de morale admissible ou non à des entreprises de colonisation. C'est ce que décrit le sociologue Gaston Bouthoul<sup>13</sup>:

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<sup>12</sup> Parler d'inégalité politique est en vérité un euphémisme puisqu'elle implique qu'il y ait deux partenaires alors qu'on ne reconnaît pas à la Tunisie l'existence politique, qu'elle est considérée comme un simple laboratoire d'action et de décision politique, n'ayant donc aucune part aux décisions la concernant qui sont prises en dehors d'elle et en son nom.

<sup>13</sup> *Traité de sociologie*, p. 39.

«Les phénomènes d'interpsychologie qui accompagnent la pénétration plus ou moins profonde de deux populations à des niveaux de civilisations différentes peuvent se formuler plus facilement et mieux se comprendre si l'on veut l'interaction de deux types de personnalités de structure différente. Parler en effet de l'interaction des groupes ou de celle des personnalités qu'on peut considérer comme typiques de chaque groupe, c'est traiter, sous des aspects, avec deux vocabulaires, un même problème. La personnalité n'est pas autre chose que l'ensemble des conceptions, des tendances, des habitudes, organisées et articulées les unes avec les autres qui constituent bien un seul homme, mais qui ne le constituent qu'en tant que membre de sa collectivité. Le véritable sujet que doit étudier la psychologie sociale, c'est l'individu».

### **Une mise à l'écart violente et humiliante**

Dans le système colonial qu'a connu la régence, l'idée de supériorité naturelle donne aux représentants du régime protectoral le droit de diriger, d'administrer et d'assumer les responsabilités pour soit disant le bien des colonisés. Ces indigènes, primitifs et grands enfants, ne peuvent être des responsables, il faut les guider et les orienter. Et longtemps, le colonisateur a véhiculé cette idée d'infériorité du colonisé, le considérant tantôt barbare tantôt sauvage, que la colonisation française doit lui apporter la civilisation qui lui fait défaut dans une «nouvelle croisade civilisatrice»<sup>14</sup>.

Les rapports colon-colonisé dans la régence étaient des rapports de masse. Au nombre des colonisés, la puissance protectrice oppose la force et son souci de la sécurité l'amène à rappeler à haute voix au colonisé que «*le maître, ici, c'est elle.*»

De cette contradiction naissent trois types d'attitudes du Français vis-à-vis du Tunisien: le paternalisme, la méfiance et la violence. Ces trois positions ont toutes un fond en commun: le rejet de l'autre, qui, selon l'expression d'A. Memmi, «résume et symbolise la situation fondamentale qui unit colons et colonisés ».

Quelques extraits de rapports sur la situation coloniale de la régence montrent bien ce sentiment: «*Les indigènes de la campagne devraient nous bénir car nous sommes des libérateurs, nous avons élevé les salaires, nous soignons les malades, nous protégeons les opprimés et nous libérons les esclaves, tout cela sans espérer d'autres récompenses que la satisfaction de notre conscience car la reconnaissance n'existe pas chez un peuple fataliste qui attribue tous les événements bons ou mauvais à la force de la destinée.*»

Autre article paru dans le journal «*Le colon français*», organe officiel des colons en Tunisie le 4 août 1907, où nous trouvons: «*Admettez que nous partions demain? C'en serait fait de la Régence, ce tombeau des civilisations.*»

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<sup>14</sup> Discours à la Chambre de Jules Ferry le 28 juillet 1885. Notice générale sur la Tunisie (1881-1921) - Résidence Générale de la République Française - Toulouse 1922 - 464 pages; Journal Officiel de la République Française - débats parlementaires-chambre 1883; Discussions sur les affaires Tunisiennes (J.O débats parlementaires- chambre, du 6 au 10 novembre 1881); Discussion d'un projet de loi portant sur l'ouverture de crédits pour l'expédition de Tunisie (Ibid. 2 déc. 1881); Rapport au Président de la République sur la situation de la Tunisie (1881- 1890) - Imprimerie Nationale - Paris 1890.

L'article qui dévoile le plus le rejet du colon est paru le 29 septembre 1907. Son auteur affirme: «*Personne plus que moi n'admire les principes de 1789 et cependant, quand on parle de les appliquer aux indigènes, je ne peux m'empêcher de lever les épaules. On les met à toutes les sauces, ces principes... N'est-il pas insensé de vouloir les appliquer tout à coup, sans préparation, aux Arabes, qui sont peut-être, de tous les peuples, le moins fait pour comprendre la liberté, l'égalité et la fraternité?*».

La dramatisation évidente qui accompagne les discours de l'époque relève en réalité d'un comportement idéologique, car elle accompagne, tout en le légitimant, le recours à l'usage de la violence par le colonisateur.

Guy Rocher explique ce besoin idéologique, il écrit à ce propos: «*Lorsqu'ils forment une minorité (ce qui est presque toujours le cas) les colonisateurs, qui imposent leur autorité et leur règle à une majorité d'autochtones, ont besoin d'une idéologie plus ou moins explicite des masses qu'ils dominent. L'idéologie colonialiste lui explique alors pourquoi il faut continuer à dominer en paix.*»

L'infériorité est souvent associée à la race, à la culture et même à la religion. Pour légitimer l'utilisation de la force, les colons font circuler des propos discriminatoires: «*Avec ces gens-là, il n'y a que la force qui compte.*» De tels propos instaurent une situation où les nationaux se retrouvent placés dans une position qui fait d'eux des citoyens de seconde zone. Une forme de supériorité institutionnalisée va s'installer petit à petit vis-à-vis des indigènes.

Cette attitude prend tantôt la forme d'une sorte de ségrégation, tantôt celle d'une exploitation autoritaire mêlée d'une sorte de paternalisme.

On constate alors toute perspective d'évolution, et maintenir la situation coloniale et les priviléges s'appuie sur l'idée que les indigènes n'ont d'autre solution que de se soumettre finalement et d'accepter la réalité. Le refus des réformes réclamées est toujours justifié par la nécessité de garantir la sécurité, celle des biens en particulier.

S'y ajoute une attitude de rejet et de mépris envers les habitants cultivés, considérés comme dangereux car ils peuvent faire évoluer les consciences. Certains exercent en effet une influence déterminante sur des habitants souvent analphabètes, originaires de la même région qu'eux.

De son côté, le colon sûr de la puissance de ses valeurs et la justesse de ces principes cherche à assimiler les colonisés. On multiplie le nombre de fonctionnaires et les rouages administratifs, on plante une allée de platanes ou de peupliers devant sa ferme, bâtit un kiosque à musique, des écoles et bains-douches, comme en France.

Dans la situation de type colonial comme en Tunisie, les relations culturelles sont inévitables: rencontres des langues, des religions et des civilisations, et les rencontres représentent la partie la plus positive et la plus utile de la colonisation. Les relations culturelles ont été plus ou moins fructueuses, variant avec la concentration et le nombre des colons, et les activités économiques pratiquées<sup>15</sup>.

<sup>15</sup> Fitoussi Elie et Benazat Aristide, *L'Etat tunisien et le protectorat français*, Tomme II, librairie A.Rousseau, Paris, 1931. Kherddine, *Des réformes nécessaires aux Etats musulmans*, STD, Tunis, 1972. LIAUZU (Claude), *La presse ouvrière européenne en Tunisie*.

Certains colons ont voulu assimiler la population, idée généreuse mais irréalisable, oubliant les spécificités, les différences entre les deux cultures et les deux religions, l'appartenance tribale et la filiation clanique, les liens du sang qui unissent les habitants. Et l'assimilation trouve vite ses limites. D'autres colons, au contraire, sont plus portés vers une forme de cohabitation, même si cette attitude est parfois intéressée.

Il est certain que cette cohabitation va de pair avec un début d'assimilation: elle se manifeste par l'influence accrue de la langue française avec un changement socioculturel manifeste chez les milieux aisés favorables à cette présence étrangère. Les inégalités socio-économiques entraînent cependant l'apparition de deux vies différentes et séparées et une intolérance réciproque. Le rejet de la part des Européens ou plus exactement des Français aura provoqué un rejet similaire, même chez les Tunisiens modérés.

Comme les deux personnalités sont différentes, leur discrimination l'est également. En effet, l'habitant de la Tunisie ne considère pas que le Français appartienne à une race inférieure, mais il estime en revanche que les Français de Tunisie ne valent pas ceux de la France métropolitaine. Nombreux sont les griefs à formuler contre les colons français: certains traits de son physique, sa couleur blanche et très pâle, son absence d'âme (et donc de pitié, avec l'intolérance qui en découle), son impatience, son besoin de se faire valoir, son paternalisme, sa méfiance et sa violence.

Sous cette domination française et avec l'influence qu'elle exerce sur la vie quotidienne, l'habitant de la Tunisie a pris conscience de son identité religieuse et culturelle, de son appartenance ethnique et de ses liens de sang avec les membres de sa tribu. Il envisage le développement d'une conscience collective afin de sauvegarder ses racines. La discrimination pratiquée par les Tunisiens consistait plus à éviter les rapports avec les colonisateurs qu'à afficher un sentiment de supériorité.

Donc, et malgré une politique officielle «antiraciste», une discrimination notable se développait de part et d'autre. Soumis aux lois psychosociologiques, même les fonctionnaires indigénophiles et humanistes adoptaient parfois des attitudes teintées de racisme, au mépris des doctrines qu'ils affichaient.

La présence des colons ébranla la culture arabe et beaucoup d'établissements scolaires vont être créés dans le but de propager la culture française. Certains éléments de la culture locale tels que la tradition de solidarité tribale connue sous le nom de la «maouna», les croyances anciennes vont disparaître ou vont être ébranlées, mais les habitants

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1881-1939, annuaire de l'Afrique du Nord, 1970, pp. 933-1005. -*Situation coloniale et opinion public; petits blancs et socialistes pendant trente ans de luttes électorales*, in Les cahiers de Tunisie n°87-88, 1974, pp. 42-58. MAHJOUBI (Ali), *Les origines du mouvement national en Tunisie 1904-1934*, Université de Tunis, 1982. Marseille Jacques, *Empire colonial et capitalisme français. Histoire d'u divorce*, Paris, Albin Michel, 1984, 459 pages. Memmi Albert, »Portrait du colon, précédé du portrait du colonisateur», Paris, Payot, 1973. - *L'homme dominé*, Paris, Payot, 1973. Mzali Mohamed Salah, *Les beys de Tunis et le roi des Français*, MTE, Tunis, 1976. Mzali M. Salah et PIGNON (Jean), *Khereddine, homme d'Etat*, M.T.E, Tunis, 1971. Perin Georges, *Discours politiques et notes de voyages*, Paris, 1905, 852 pages. Rouissi Moncef, *Population et société au Maghreb*, Ceres, Tunis, 1973.

résisteront à cette acculturation et aux coups volontaires donnés à leur éducation ainsi qu'à leurs coutumes et traditions.

Cette politique d'assimilation menée parfois de façon trop rapide va créer un déséquilibre culturel entre colons et colonisés et un malaise social alimentant à son tour un sentiment de méfiance.

L'esprit critique et les méthodes scientifiques de l'exploitation agricole prônées par les français de Tunisie, portent un coup décisif à la superstition et aux croyances anciennes. Ils ont apporté et développé en même temps de nouvelles conceptions: celles de la primauté du gain et de l'argent, le matérialisme. Ce dernier sera plus tard la base d'une doctrine athée avec la naissance du parti communiste tunisien.

La volonté de détruire les croyances traditionnelles au nom du matérialisme, des techniques et du progrès aura contribué à susciter une méfiance mêlée de mépris pour la culture occidentale.

Le colonisateur, affichant une conception différente de la vie, est soupçonné de vouloir dépersonnaliser la famille. En réaction, celle-ci se cimente, elle se referme sur elle-même: les oncles, les tantes, les cousins ne se voient pas seulement pendant les fêtes ou les deuils. C'est un groupe indissoluble, lié par le sang et par la chair.

Le «*Roumi*», «*le Françaoui*», le «*Gaouiri*» enlève les terres, s'attribue l'autorité. Il laisse au bey de Tunis un semblant de pouvoir. Alors, le Tunisien, pour se protéger, garde une «*famille-maison*», sa religion et ses rites, pour dépasser le danger de la perte de son identité.

## Conclusion

Comme on l'a démontré, la colonisation française fut un acte de puissance, un acte de communication et de domination.

Elle a mis en relation deux peuples que tout sépare. Différents contacts sont mis en place, contact de la métropole avec une population tribale où un droit national entre souvent en opposition avec un droit local fondé sur les coutumes et la religion, une loi écrite contre culture orale, liberté contre autorité, invention contre tradition. Autant de faits qui sont la cause de heurts dans les relations qui s'établissent entre Français et Tunisiens dans la régence depuis 1881.

La suspension de la constitution par les autorités françaises, puis l'instauration du protectorat et la réduction de la souveraineté tunisienne, ne semble pas affecter le caractère intangible de la constitution selon les spécialistes du droit constitutionnel. La constitution demeure vivante et valable même après sa suspension unilatérale.

C'est en tout cas le résultat de la consultation juridique donnée le 11 juillet 1921 par deux professeurs de droit à la faculté de Paris à des représentants du parti constitutionnel.

L'épopée coloniale en Tunisie au nom des valeurs universalistes et des Droits de l'Homme va permettre à la France de diffuser ces principes et vouloir au non du devoir des races supérieures de civiliser les races inférieures, de conquérir des nouveaux territoires. Et à chaque mouvement de colonisation, on trouve cette quête d'un destin universel capable de promouvoir le modèle français par définition unique, universel et supérieur.

C'est parce que la France postule l'égalité des hommes qu'elle a, plus que l'autre, le droit de coloniser le monde.

Comme vous le voyez, à l'inégalité économique s'ajoute une inégalité culturelle et juridique. C'est la France qui apporte ses valeurs en Tunisie, inculque ses idées et impose ses lois, propage sa culture avec son système d'enseignement. La réciproque n'existe pas, car la France n'emprunte guère aux autres civilisations. La politique coloniale fut donc en contradiction totale avec les principes de la jeune constitution tunisienne. Les hommes politiques tunisiens vont brandir, dans leur lutte contre la présence étrangère en Tunisie et la France coloniale, les valeurs de la France révolutionnaire et sa constitution de 1791.

Paradoxalement, ce sont les héritiers de la IIIème République, défenseurs acharnés de l'état de droit, qui vont empêcher la mise en vigueur de la constitution tunisienne, désavouant ainsi la dimension universelle des principes de 1789. C'est aussi au nom de cette universalité mutilée que le régime du protectorat va être combattu par les sujets tunisiens.

Pendant la période protectorale, la France occupante a toujours affirmé que son droit est laïc alors que celui de la régence découle de la religion, il en est même originaire. Le principe de la séparation des pouvoirs fortement établi par les protecteurs est ignoré chez les protégés. Les textes tunisiens sont jugés imprécis et de tradition orale, ils laissent aux juges la plus grande liberté d'appréciation.

Pour les Français, les préoccupations des Tunisiens ne dépassent point la famille, les cousins, les pâturages, les bêtes et le village. Le sentiment qui domine est la vengeance dans un cycle qui rend le Tunisien esclave de son honneur et de sa quête permanente à la vengeance.

Si le Français se juge libre, responsable de ses actes, le Tunisien au contraire n'admet pas en cas de faute qu'il est coupable, c'est « *la volonté de Dieu* » disait-il à chaque fois. Souvent la faute n'entraîne pas sanction dans la mesure où elle était voulue par Dieu.

La France protectrice prétend depuis la mise en place du régime de protectorat en 1881, imposer son esprit juridique au travers des magistrats français (avocats, tribunaux, lois...). Une volonté qui ne laisse pas de place ni aux lois ni à la constitution tunisiennes.

Voilà ce qui fait la spécificité du fait colonial en Tunisie, sur quelles bases se sont établies, puis consolidées et organisées, en un système cohérent et durable, les relations franco-tunisiennes dans le système protectoral.

Tel est le dispositif qui, pendant soixante quinze ans (1881-1956), a réglé le protectorat en Tunisie.

Un épisode assez bref; trois quarts de siècle, au total, pour la Tunisie, qui ne représente qu'un temps court dans l'histoire de ce pays, proche d'une vie humaine.



# **LE STRATEGIE MILITARI TEDESCHE ALL'ALBA DELLA GRANDE GUERRA**

**Roberto Sciarrone\***

## **Abstract**

*The facts reported in this paper are the results of a study processed in December 1905 about the military policy of the German Empire and the Third Republic of France. The paper aims to analyze the complex events of international politics a few years before the outbreak of the First World War (1914). The assumptions of conflict and strategies concerning the German "enemy" and the contemporary French revanchism about a possible conflict between the French Third Republic and the German Empire.*

**Keywords:** Triple Alliance; German Reich; Austria-Hungary; Revanchisme; Russian Empire; Schlieffen plan; First World War; Troisième République; Otto von Bismarck; Kingdom of Italy.

I fatti riportati presentano i risultati di uno studio prodotto nel dicembre 1905, riguardo alla politica militare dell'Impero tedesco e della Terza repubblica di Francia<sup>1</sup>.

Il saggio intende analizzare le complesse vicende di politica internazionale a pochi anni dallo scoppio della prima guerra mondiale (1914). Le ipotesi di conflitto e le strategie tedesche riguardo al "nemico" francese e il contemporaneo revanscismo,<sup>2</sup> negli scritti di alcuni dei personaggi più influenti dell'epoca e nella sterminata *pamphlettistica* che la stampa europea produsse, riguardo un possibile scontro tra la Terza repubblica francese e l'Impero tedesco. Il "sistema bismarckiano",<sup>3</sup> con il quale il cancelliere tedesco Otto von Bismarck aveva condotto la politica estera della Germania, assicurò un lungo periodo di pace ed equilibrio europeo, rielaborando il vecchio modello di concerto europeo (nato nel 1815 durante il Congresso di Vienna)<sup>4</sup>. Si sviluppò così un sistema di alleanze ristretto a cinque potenze (Germania, Austria - Ungheria, Francia, Italia, Russia e in seguito Inghilterra) teso a garantire lo *status quo* nel continente. In seguito alla guerra russo - turca, il Congresso di Berlino (1878), promosso dall'Austria - Ungheria per modificare il trattato di Pace di Santo Stefano, vide la Germania ricoprire il ruolo di negoziatrice tra le maggiori potenze

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<sup>1</sup> I riferimenti, in nota e nelle citazioni, ai luoghi geografici e alle località sono stati riportati secondo la pronuncia italiana dell'epoca.

<sup>2</sup> Con revanscismo s'intende lo stato d'animo politico diffuso nella Francia della Terza repubblica, teso a rivendicare una pronta rivincita (*revanche*) sulla Germania, rea di aver sottratto all'unità nazionale i territori dell'Alsazia e della Lorena con la *guerra franco-prussiana* del 1870. Motivi nazionalistici e reazionari, attenuatisi poi sul finire del secolo, confluirono nel revanscismo, di cui si rese interprete soprattutto Georges Boulanger, generale e ministro della Guerra nel 1886, maggiore esponente del revanscismo antitedesco. Si veda F. Chabod, *Storia della politica estera italiana dal 1870 al 1896*, Bari, Laterza, 1951.

<sup>3</sup> J. Breuilly, *La formazione dello stato nazionale tedesco*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 2004, pp.56-78.  
<sup>4</sup> Si veda A. J. Taylor, *Bismarck. L'uomo e lo statista*, Roma-Bari, Laterza, 2004.

europee, impedendo la grave crisi fra San Pietroburgo e Vienna<sup>5</sup>. Il Congresso ridimensionò e divise la nascente Bulgaria, satellite della Russia, stabilì l'amministrazione austriaca della Bosnia e confermò l'indipendenza della Romania, della Serbia e del Montenegro. L'Impero tedesco, come detto, aumentò il suo prestigio diplomatico ma incrinò i suoi rapporti con la Russia, nulla affatto soddisfatta dei negoziati. L'Impero ottomano, pur perdendo ingenti territori, limitò i danni rispetto alla Pace di Santo Stefano. Bismarck garantì quindi «il più lungo periodo di pace di cui il vecchio continente avesse goduto dagli albori dell'età moderna»,<sup>6</sup> anche se il teatro della crisi si spostò a est del continente per le crescenti tensioni concernenti la “questione balcanica”<sup>7</sup>.

Tra gli aspetti più duri della politica bismarckiana: l'inconciliabilità delle posizioni tra Austriaci e Russi, che portò poi alla rottura dell'equilibrio creato dal cancelliere<sup>8</sup>. Il sistema delle alleanze che scaturì dalla politica internazionale dell'avveduto cancelliere vide, in ordine cronologico, l'accordo bilaterale della Duplice alleanza, patto militare difensivo firmato nel 1879 a Vienna da Germania e Austria-Ungheria, motivato dal pericolo di un attacco della Russia a uno dei due imperi<sup>9</sup>. Fu il primo accordo permanente concluso in tempo di pace tra due grandi potenze dalla fine dell'*Ancien régime*. Il 18 giugno 1881 con l'Alleanza dei tre imperatori(*Dreikaiserbund*) la Germania di Guglielmo I si legò ad Alessandro III di Russia e Francesco Giuseppe d'Austria-Ungheria. Il patto, di carattere difensivo, nelle intenzioni del cancelliere Bismarck avrebbe dovuto stabilire le sfere d'influenza nei Balcani di Austria-Ungheria e Russia. L'alleanza rimase in vigore fino al 1887. Nel novembre 1881 il primo ministro francese Léon Gambetta iniziò a intavolare trattative con l'Impero russo e la Gran Bretagna. Pochi mesi dopo (febbraio 1882) Bismarck sollecitò il ministro degli Esteri austriaco Gustav Kálnoky a riprendere i negoziati con il Regno d'Italia, evidentemente preoccupato di possibili intendimenti tra Francia e Italia<sup>10</sup>. Nel maggio seguente, quindi, fu firmata la Triplice Alleanza che sarebbe sopravvissuta, con alterne vicende, per oltre trent'anni<sup>11</sup>. Un vero capolavoro diplomatico per il cancelliere Otto von Bismarck. L'accordo prevedeva il soccorso da parte di Germania e Austria-Ungheria all'Italia nel caso fosse stata attaccata dalla Francia e l'assicurazione di neutralità da parte delle altre due nel caso

<sup>5</sup> G. Giordano, *Cilindri e feluche. La politica estera dell'Italia dopo l'Unità*, Roma, Aracne, 2008, pp. 17-155.

<sup>6</sup> A. Giardina, G. Sabbatucci, *Storia contemporanea. L'Ottocento*, Bari, Laterza, 2009, p. 229.

<sup>7</sup> Per *questione balcanica* s'intende il complesso di rivalità e tensioni che, dal XIX secolo e in concomitanza con la crisi dell'Impero ottomano, coinvolse la Penisola Balcanica, comprendente la Bulgaria, la Grecia, parte della Turchia (Tracia Orientale), la Serbia, il Montenegro, l'Albania, la Macedonia, la Bosnia, la Croazia e la Slovenia; a questi Stati la storiografia aggiunge sovente la Romania, che ha condiviso profondamente la storia balcanica.

<sup>8</sup> A. Taylor, *L'Europa delle Grandi Potenze*, Bari, Laterza, 1977, pp. 264-365.

<sup>9</sup> Cfr. A.J. May, *La monarchia asburgica 1867-1914*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 1991.

<sup>10</sup> Cfr. F. Minniti, *Politica militare e politica estera nella Triplice Alleanza. Dietro le trattative del 1882*, in «Memorie storiche e militari», 1983.

<sup>11</sup> Si veda G. Salvemini, *La politica estera italiana dal 1871 al 1915*, Milano, Feltrinelli, 1970 e L. Salvatorelli, *La Triplice Alleanza. Storia diplomatica 1877-1912*, Milano, Istituto per gli Studi di Politica Internazionale, 1939.

una delle potenze firmatarie si fosse trovata a combattere una guerra con una sola potenza<sup>12</sup>. Il teatro continentale iniziò a dividersi in due grandi blocchi, magistralmente manovrati dall'abile regia del cancelliere tedesco. Nuove alleanze porteranno la Terza repubblica francese e la Gran Bretagna a firmare nel 1904 l'*Entente cordiale* che, oltre a risolvere i contrasti coloniali delle due antiche rivali in Africa, rappresentò l'uscita francese dall'isolamento diplomatico causato da Bismarck sin dal 1871. Tre anni dopo anche il Regno Unito e l'Impero russo risolsero i loro contrasti in Asia. Il "Grande Gioco"<sup>13</sup> infatti, aveva contrapposto le due potenze in Medio Oriente e in Asia centrale nel corso del XIX secolo.

Con l'Accordo di San Pietroburgo l'Afghanistan e la Persia meridionale furono assegnati all'Impero britannico mentre la Persia settentrionale fu acquisita dalla corona zarista. All'inizio del Novecento, quindi, le relazioni tra le potenze europee si caratterizzarono dalla contrapposizione di due blocchi: da una parte i due Imperi centrali (Germania e Austria - Ungheria) più Regno d'Italia uniti dalla Triplice; dall'altra la Russia, la Francia e la Gran Bretagna. La tensione tra i due blocchi rifletteva problemi di equilibrio continentale, come detto, e di competizione mondiale tra le potenze imperialistiche<sup>14</sup>.

L'Impero tedesco, saldamente governato dall'imperatore Guglielmo II con il sostegno dell'aristocrazia terriera e militare prussiana, s'impegnò nella competizione imperialistica, in precedenza frenata dall'accordo Bismarck, avviando una massiccia corsa agli armamenti. Sulla scorta delle nuove politiche militari di inizio secolo nacquero numerosi dibattiti politici, la stampa tedesca iniziò a ipotizzare possibili scenari di conflitto con la rivale storica: la Francia.

Lo studio qui esaminato è uno scritto del tenente colonnello dell'esercito tedesco, barone Ottomar von der Osten-Sacken-Rhein, pubblicato a Berlino nel 1905 con il titolo *Deutschlands nächster Krieg* (La prossima guerra della Germania). Lo scopo di questo studio era di far crescere, nella stampa tedesca, la convinzione che la Germania avesse assoluta necessità di aumentare le unità dell'esercito e della marina da guerra per essere in grado, in caso di bisogno, di far fronte con successo

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<sup>12</sup> R. Petrignani, *Neutralità e alleanza: le scelte di politica estera dell'Italia dopo l'Unità*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 1987, pp. 271-305.

<sup>13</sup> Attraverso una lunga analisi storiografica David Fromkin afferma che, probabilmente, il primo a utilizzare l'espressione "il Grande Gioco" sia stato un ufficiale britannico di nome Arthur Conolly. Pur essendosi battuto con coraggio lungo la frontiera himalayana e tra i deserti e le oasi dell'Asia centrale, egli finì col perdere. Un emiro uzbeko lo tenne prigioniero per due mesi in un pozzo. Ciò che restava dell'ufficiale fu estratto dal pozzo e decapitato. L'espressione "il Grande Gioco" fu trovato in un suo quaderno di appunti, e adoperata da John W. Kaye, storico della prima guerra afgana. Il gioco era iniziato ancora prima del 1829, quando il duca di Wellington, allora prima ministro, aprì un dibattito epistolare su come meglio si potesse proteggere l'India da un eventuale attacco russo attraverso l'Afghanistan. Si determinò che il modo migliore fosse il più semplice: proteggere l'Afghanistan dalla Russia. Questa politica è associata in particolar modo al nome di Lord Palmerston. D. Fromkin, *Una pace senza pace*, Milano, Rizzoli, 2002, p. 28.

<sup>14</sup> Si veda M. Mazzetti, *L'esercito italiano nella triplice alleanza. Aspetti della politica estera italiana (1870-1985)*, Napoli, Edizioni Scientifiche Italiane, 1974.

contemporaneamente alla Francia e alla Russia, contando soltanto sulle proprie forze.

La contemporanea formulazione del “piano Schlieffen” indica come l’autore abbia voluto calcolarne i pro e i contro alla luce della realtà politica europea<sup>15</sup>. E’ interessante notare come, negli ultimi anni, la storiografia europea abbia riaperto il dibattito che si riferisce al “piano Schlieffen”. Autori come T. Zuber in *The Schlieffen plan reconsidered*<sup>16</sup> e L.C.F. Turner in *The significance of the Schlieffen plan*<sup>17</sup> hanno portato nuova luce sui piani strategici tedeschi all’alba della prima guerra mondiale. In Italia, lo storico Fortunato Minniti nel saggio *Perché l’Italia non ha avuto un piano Schlieffen*, cercò di stimolare la storiografia continentale comparando i piani strategici italiani e il più noto di quelli tedeschi. Minniti affermava che l’elaborazione e la definizione della strategia operativa nell’Italia liberale non era l’elemento portante della formazione e della funzione dell’istituzione militare, espresso invece dall’ordinamento e dalla mobilitazione. In Italia, il problema maggiore era posto dalle montagne e dalle valli, dalle ristrette e non grandi pianure; lo Stato maggiore non si preparava a combattere contemporaneamente su due fronti, come facevano il tedesco, l’austro-ungarico o il francese<sup>18</sup>. Per questo, a prima vista, nulla di simile, né tecnicamente né politicamente, si ritrovava nella pianificazione italiana dei venti anni che precedettero la grande guerra. Nulla vi era di paragonabile, a un così gigantesco rigido sistema che poneva in sequenza radunata schieramento e impiego delle grandi unità lungo un percorso dato e rispettando tempi prefissati. Von Schlieffen per vincere aveva ipotizzato di rovesciare il fronte dell’offensiva. Il generale Alberto Polliosi decise a modificare il dispositivo in atto sospendendo nel gennaio 1912 la convenzione che da quasi un quarto di secolo rappresentava il cardine dell’alleanza militare con gli Imperi centrali, e secondo la quale la Terza armata (quasi la metà dell’esercito attivo) avrebbe combattuto i francesi in terra tedesca. Alberto Pollio sostituì, con il *placet* di Vittorio Emanuele III, quell’importante contributo alla guerra comune, sia riprendendo la vecchia ipotesi di un’offensiva sul fronte tra le Alpi Marittime e il mare, sia ordinando un nuovo studio di sbarco alla foce del Rodano che già nel 1890 Enrico Cosenz aveva fatto elaborare e messo da parte.

Tra i cinque generali che tra il 1882 (anno dei primi accordi della Triplice) e il 1915 ricoprirono la carica di Capo di Stato Maggiore quello che dopo Cosenz osò di più fu Luigi Cadorna<sup>19</sup>. Egli pensò a un piano offensivo nell’agosto del 1914, mentre insisteva per un’immediata entrata in guerra dell’Italia. Esso si fondava sulla velocità delle operazioni: due armate, raggiunto il Tagliamento un giorno prima della fine della mobilitazione, dall’Isonzo avrebbero puntato sulle conche di Lubiana e Kranj da

<sup>15</sup> Per approfondire F. Minniti, *Perché l’Italia non ha avuto un piano Schlieffen*, in «Società Italiana di Storia Militare», Quaderno 1999, 2003.

<sup>16</sup> Cfr. T. Zuber, *The Schlieffen plan reconsidered*, in «War in History», 1999, n.3.

<sup>17</sup> Cfr. L.C.F. Turner, *The Significance of the Schlieffen Plan*, in «Australian Journal of Politics and History», 1967, n.13.

<sup>18</sup> Cfr. A. Brugioni, *Piani strategici italiani alla vigilia dell’intervento nel primo conflitto mondiale*, in «Memorie storiche militari», 1984.

<sup>19</sup> Cfr. A. Monticone, *La Germania e la neutralità italiana: 1914-1915*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 1971.

raggiungere entro quarantacinque giorni e dopo due sole battaglie. Secondo Minniti quindi i tempi e le fasi di realizzazione, avrebbero potuto far pensare al piano Cadorna come un piccolo “piano Schlieffen”. Sebbene il principio ispiratore fosse simile: si trattava di vincere in tempi brevi, in condizioni politiche simili per via dell’esistenza di alleati cobelligeranti cui affidare una parte del compito<sup>20</sup>. Le conclusioni tratte sono due. La prima: la dichiarata inutilità di determinare ciò che avverrà una volta iniziate le operazioni portava a concludere che se non a quelli del “primo” von Schlieffen i piani italiani assomigliavano molto, nel metodo, a quelli del “secondo” rivelatici da Zuber e di Helmuth von Moltke. La seconda: la reticenza dei capi di Stato Maggiore a produrre un piano che si estendesse, come in Germania, sino ad abbracciare tutti i passaggi della campagna di guerra. Il nocciolo della questione fu l’assetto costituzionale. Nel nostro caso agirono la permanenza della prerogativa reale del comando delle forze armate e l’irrisoluta connessa questione della designazione preventiva del comandante in guerra. I Capi di Stato Maggiore, quindi, non ebbero mai la sicurezza di potersi considerare tale al momento della decisione. Ottomar von der Osten-Sacken-Rhein riteneva con ostentata sicurezza, che il Regno d’Italia non avrebbe tenuto fede alla Triplice, anzi Roma sarebbe passata, con tutta probabilità, al campo avversario<sup>21</sup>. Il barone iniziava il suo studio analizzando la situazione politica internazionale: “Se oggi consideriamo l’orizzonte politico del nostro continente europeo, sembra esclusa qualunque causa di guerra. Indubbiamente i governi delle grandi potenze, tendono con ogni sforzo a evitare tutto ciò che possa disturbare la pace. Ma forse si sarebbe troppo creduli, se si pensasse ch’è soltanto l’amore per la pace, ciò che impone loro una tale condotta.”<sup>22</sup> Secondo l’autore la pace era mantenuta in virtù delle considerazioni circa le possibili conseguenze che un conflitto su scala continentale avrebbe scatenato, ricordando parimenti come il 30 giugno 1870 il primo ministro francese di allora, Émile Ollivier, dichiarava in parlamento che la pace in Europa non era stata mai così sicura e che niente l’avrebbe minacciata. Il 19 luglio, infatti, poche settimane dopo l’affermazione di Ollivier, la Francia dichiarò guerra all’Impero tedesco. Da ciò deduce che «simili sorprese non fossero escluse, quand’anche i governi abbiano il più grande e sincero amore per la pace»<sup>23</sup>. Il tenente colonnello tedesco articolò la sua analisi partendo dal presupposto che non erano più i governi a decidere sulla questione “guerra o pace”, ma gli interessi dei popoli. Le controversie tra gli Stati si manifestavano *in primis* in ambito economico per poi sfociare sui campi di battaglia. Il costante sviluppo degli interessi commerciali dei Paesi europei portò ogni potenza dell’epoca a intraprendere rigide politiche economiche di carattere protezionistico. Il protezionismo affondava le sue radici nelle politiche mercantilistiche attuate

<sup>20</sup> Si veda M. Ruffo, *L’Italia nella Triplice Alleanza: studi sulle operazioni militari alla frontiera N.O. 1913*, in «Studi storico militari», 1995.

<sup>21</sup> Archivio dell’Ufficio Storico dello Stato Maggiore dell’Esercito, G22, b20, fasc.117, *Deutschlands nächster Krieg* “La prossima guerra della Germania”, Stralcio di uno studio del tenente colonnello a disposizione nell’esercito tedesco barone von der Osten-Sacken-Rhein, 1905, p. 1.

<sup>22</sup> Ivi, p. 2.

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

in Europa tra il XVII e il XVIII secolo dai nascenti Stati nazionali, i quali con il loro intervento nell'economia miravano a dare basi più solide all'unità statale e a fare dell'incremento della ricchezza nazionale lo strumento per accrescere la forza dello Stato nei suoi rapporti con l'estero.

Il mercantilismo si basava sulla premessa teorica che la ricchezza di un Paese dipendesse dalla quantità di moneta e metalli preziosi accumulata nelle casse dello Stato e circolante sul territorio nazionale come segno della ricchezza della nazione<sup>24</sup>. Di qui il suggerimento, da parte dei pensatori che ne difendevano le posizioni, di incoraggiare le esportazioni e limitare al massimo le importazioni, di modo che la quantità di moneta pregiata entrata nel Paese fosse nettamente superiore a quella che ne usciva, in particolare le esportazioni dovevano essere incoraggiate mediante facilitazioni e premi, concessi ai produttori e ai commercianti esportatori, mentre le importazioni erano limitate con l'imposizione di pesanti dogane sui prodotti stranieri<sup>25</sup>. Verso la fine dell'Ottocento le politiche protezionistiche ritrovarono il loro antico vigore, grazie al convinto impulso di un gruppo di storici ed economisti tedeschi. Alcuni dei Paesi europei che erano stati coinvolti nelle guerre napoleoniche, soprattutto quelli privi di un impero coloniale e di uno sviluppato sistema industriale, come la Germania e l'Italia, ritenevano conveniente adottare misure protezionistiche per risollevar le sorti di un'economia compromessa dalle conseguenze delle vicende belliche. Nella Germania del cancelliere Otto von Bismarck, in particolar modo, la svolta protezionistica si attuò in un clima intellettuale reso particolarmente favorevole dalla diffusione del "romanticismo economico tedesco" e dalla pubblicazione nel 1800 dell'opera di Johann Gottlieb Fichte, in cui era difesa l'idea di "Stato mercantile chiuso", nella convinzione che il blocco sui traffici con il mondo esterno fosse la condizione unica per mantenere lo Stato isolato dalle oscillazioni provocate dal commercio estero, giacché queste, come sostenuto dal barone von der Osten-Sacken-Rhein, causando attriti tra le nazioni sarebbero sfociate in aperti conflitti<sup>26</sup>.

L'ingresso nel complesso sistema economico mondiale comportava un ruolo più attivo anche in politica estera, e poiché la stessa si basava sulla forza, occorreva una politica mondiale della flotta:

Ciò è una conseguenza finale così semplice, che sembra addirittura impossibile si gridi da noi contro la politica mondiale e la flotta. Come

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<sup>24</sup> Per questo, la prima fase di sviluppo delle dottrine mercantilistiche, coincidente con il periodo del basso Medioevo, prese il nome di "crisoedonismo" o "bullionismo" (dall'inglese *bullion* che significa lingotto). R. Cameron, *Storia economica del mondo dalla preistoria ad oggi*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 1993, pp. 206-212.

<sup>25</sup> Tra i vari pensatori che teorizzavano e incoraggiavano le esportazioni, i francesi Jean Bodin e Antoine de Montchrétien, gli inglesi Josiah Child, Charles Davenant, Thomas Mun, il tedesco Johann Joachim Becher, gli italiani Giovanni Botero, Antonio Serra, Ferdinando Galiani, l'americano Alexander Hamilton. Il Mercantilismo non costituisce un insieme di teorie organiche e coerenti che sia possibile ricondurre a un filone di pensiero unitario, data la prevalente mancanza di sistematicità dei contributi degli studiosi che in quegli anni, nell'ampia circolazione delle loro posizioni interne, cominciarono a enunciare teoricamente alcuni dei principi cui s'ispirava. Per un'analisi dei diversi contributi, P.D. Groenewegen e G. Vaggi, *Il pensiero economico. Dal mercantilismo al monetarismo*, Roma, Carocci, 2006, pp. 50-180.

<sup>26</sup> Cfr. J. G. Fichte, *Lo stato commerciale chiuso*, Padova, Edizioni AR, 2009.

possiamo esercitare il commercio mondiale, cioè il commercio per tutto il mondo, se non siamo in condizione di proteggerlo? Non si dimentichi che i 2/3 della nostra importazione ed esportazione, rappresentanti in complesso un valore annuale di undici miliardi, passano i mari<sup>27</sup>.

Secondo lo studio i concorrenti principali dell'Impero tedesco per la supremazia nei mari erano l'Inghilterra e gli Stati Uniti d'America, senza dimenticare il Giappone che iniziava ad affacciarsi con vigore sui mercati asiatici. Da questi fatti derivò la crescente animosità della Germania nei confronti delle potenze anzidette, accentuata dall'atteggiamento della stampa internazionale che sosteneva possibili scenari di conflitto contro Inghilterra o Stati Uniti:

Che da molte parti si cerchi di esasperarci profondamente con queste potenze, non può meravigliarci; i nemici non ci mancano, poiché costituiamo una potenza in progresso e verso noi gli altri popoli provano istintivamente il sentimento che potremo diventare loro pericolosi. Ma è da aspettarsi veramente una tale guerra? Per ora in vero no<sup>28</sup>.

L'analisi quindi esclude a priori scenari di guerra con le maggiori potenze commerciali dell'epoca.

Inghilterra e Stati Uniti infatti non avrebbero scelto la via delle armi di fronte all'ascesa commerciale dell'Impero tedesco. Qualora gli interessi economici avessero coinciso, la diplomazia internazionale avrebbe certamente fatto il possibile per «rendere desiderabile»<sup>29</sup> l'amicizia di una “Germania forte”, per opporsi ai progressi dell'Impero russo che aspirava al ruolo di potenza egemone. Un altro fattore considerato era rappresentato dalla reciproca rivalità fra l'Inghilterra e gli Stati Uniti, tra cui audacemente l'autore ipotizzava un possibile conflitto. Ad ogni modo tanto l'Impero britannico quanto gli Stati Uniti erano consci della loro potenza navale e del fatto che non avrebbero perso il ruolo di *leadership* nei mari, stante anche la propria posizione geografica, la quale permetteva d'impiegare nella flotta la maggior parte dei loro straordinari mezzi. Di qui la conclusione: «Noi dobbiamo restare soprattutto potenza terrestre»<sup>30</sup>. Il detto dell'imperatore Guglielmo II: «L'avvenire della Germania sta sull'acqua»<sup>31</sup> era quindi da interpretare non come il perseguimento del dominio dei mari ma come la legittima aspirazione a esprimere un ruolo non secondario, poiché l'obiettivo dichiarato era la *leadership* continentale. Da questo pertanto maturò nel colonnello la ferma convinzione che una guerra con Inghilterra e Stati Uniti fosse molto lontana:

E ciò è una fortuna, poiché non essendo noi attualmente in condizione di creare la necessaria flotta per combattere vittoriosamente una tale guerra, ne risulterebbe la perdita delle nostre colonie e dei miliardi naviganti per mare, nonché la rovina del nostro commercio. Noi dovremmo subire simili colpi annientando il nostro benessere nazionale, quasi senza potercene difendere. Perciò l'azione provocatrice di una gran parte del nostro popolo e

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<sup>27</sup> AUSSME, G22, b20, fasc. 117, *cit.*, p. 5.

<sup>28</sup> Ivi, p. 6.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibidem*.

della nostra stampa, come si mostrò in occasione della guerra boera, non può essere abbastanza condannata, minacciando essa di gettare la nostra patria nei più gravi pericoli. E' anche una fortuna che l'Inghilterra abbia bisogno di una Germania potente<sup>32</sup>.

Mentre in Europa individuò i due Paesi "nemici", Francia e Russia, che:

Aspettano soltanto l'occasione per piombarci addosso. Così ogni guerra per mare avrebbe per conseguenza una guerra per terra e la decisione sarebbe cercata in questa. Anche la più grande vittoria navale non potrebbe salvare da rovina la Germania, se essa fosse sconfitta per terra. L'importanza attuale della Germania sta sempre nel continente. Ma che cosa rende nostri nemici la Francia e la Russia?<sup>33</sup>

Con questo interrogativo si chiudeva la prima parte dello studio e si apriva la seconda che analizzava i motivi di contrasto dell'Impero tedesco con la Francia e l'Impero russo. Le ostilità, contro «la nostra patria»,<sup>34</sup> affermava il colonnello, non erano caratterizzate da controversie economiche, per le quali si sarebbe trovata una soluzione, ma esistevano da mille anni tra Germania e Francia. Con la Russia risalivano al 1871, anno di nascita dell'Impero tedesco. Dal 1900 in poi, le relazioni con la Francia migliorarono per via degli enormi sacrifici affrontati dalla repubblica nel sostenere l'alleanza con la Russia. I partiti liberali premevano per rapporti diplomatici più distesi con la Germania, al contrario i legittimisti-clericali, che speravano in un ritorno della monarchia erano considerati dei «nemici implacabili»<sup>35</sup>. La maggioranza del popolo francese era definita repubblicana e quindi contraria a mantenere lo stato di tensione con gli imperi centrali. La prima di queste due conclusioni era ammessa, anche se con forti riserve, da parte della stampa tedesca, mentre sulla seconda manchevole di tangibili riscontri non vi era alcuna certezza:

Ciò ci viene insegnato dalla storia, grande maestra. La Francia è sempre il paese, in cui decidono le minoranze; ciò si rileva quanto Parigi è la Francia. Come la grande rivoluzione del 1789 fu fatta da alcune migliaia di teste esaltate, anche oggi un mucchio di giovinastri parigini aizzati possono provocare per la minima ragione lo scoppio di una guerra<sup>36</sup>.

Si evince una totale mancanza di fiducia nel sistema politico francese. Sulla Russia invece il colonnello non esitò a manifestare la sua interpretazione circa le reali intenzioni di politica estera:

Che la Russia abbia nell'estremo oriente grandi interessi è un fatto indiscutibile; ma la più gran parte della popolazione dell'impero russo sta al di qua di Mosca, da dove fino a Wladiwostock corre sette volte la distanza esistente fino a Varsavia, ossia fino al confine Occidentale dell'impero. Questo fatto indica abbastanza chiaramente ove soprattutto stiano gli interessi della Russia!<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> Ivi, p. 7.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>34</sup> Ivi, p. 8.

<sup>35</sup> Ivi, p. 10.

<sup>36</sup> Ivi, p. 11.

<sup>37</sup> Ivi, p. 12.

Convinzione accresciuta dalla possibilità di poter affrontare, contemporaneamente, due fronti di guerra in Asia e in Europa. L'Impero russo, continuò il colonnello, impiegava contro il Giappone soltanto una parte delle sue forze quindi, sarebbe stato in grado di combattere, simultaneamente, sui teatri di guerra europei<sup>38</sup>. La domanda che scaturiva al termine di questa analisi era quali fossero i vantaggi, per la Russia, d'inviare tre o quattro corpi d'armata dall'Europa in Asia?

Cogli eserciti di milioni di uomini di cui dispongono le grandi potenze europee, 200 o 250 mila uomini di più o di meno contano poco; e la Russia potrebbe anche inviarne altri 200 mila. Che la Russia voglia riserbarsi la possibilità di fare una guerra in Europa risulta chiaramente dal fatto ch'essa finora non ha inviato in Asia che truppe dell'interno e fra esse, ciò ch'è ancora più strano, numerose truppe di riserva, mentre sono formate o completate altre truppe di riserva a rimpiazzo di quelle di 1<sup>a</sup> linea inviate in Asia<sup>39</sup>.

Le future strategie di guerra dell'Impero russo sono espresse in maniera chiara da Ottomar von der Osten-Sacken-Rhein, che ipotizzò migliori condizioni per l'esercito zarista sul fronte Occidentale rispetto quello Orientale, poiché avrebbe potuto spiegare tutte le sue forze. Un altro fattore considerato era la disponibilità, in parte elevata, di risorse economiche per finanziare una guerra. La mancanza di denaro, indicata come un ostacolo, non aveva mai impedito lo scoppio di un conflitto. La Francia aveva ottenuto numerose vittorie, specificò il colonnello, nonostante lo Stato fosse pesantemente indebitato, mentre la città di Mosca contribuì con sette milioni di rubli per finanziare la guerra contro il Giappone. Da ciò, dedusse, si poteva affermare che la Russia sarebbe stata in grado di combattere su entrambi i fronti, anche se, ragionevolmente, avrebbe sicuramente evitato di disperdere le proprie forze su due teatri di guerra. Stabilito ciò il colonnello elaborò nuove considerazioni circa la politica estera dell'Impero russo, che mirava a espandersi oltre il Mar Nero:

Col possesso di Costantinopoli, si è detto, comincerebbe lo sfacelo della Russia. Quest'asserzione potrà essere in un certo qual modo giustificata, in quanto la forza della Russia consiste forse nel fatto che dei suoi 128 milioni di abitanti, novanta milioni appartengono alla stessa razza e la proporzione esistente fra dette cifre subirebbe una notevole alterazione. Ma il possesso di Costantinopoli è necessario per la Russia per avere libera uscita dal mar Nero; e quanto questo desiderio sia immedesimato nel sentimento popolare, è rilevato dal fatto che la tradizione lo fa risalire al testamento di Pietro il Grande. Se questa tradizione ha ragione, l'accennato desiderio è antico quanto la costituzione della Russia a Stato europeo, avendolo reso tale Pietro il Grande. E non potrebbesi immaginare lo altro sviluppo della Russia al pari di quello degli Stati Uniti, dato ch'essa, secondo il giudizio di gente avveduta, tende più di quanto si pensi verso la repubblica ed ha province a diversi gradi di coltura, in parte con interessi affatto diversi!<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> Si veda A. Biagini, *La guerra russo-giapponese*, Roma, Nuova Cultura, 2011.

<sup>39</sup> AUSSME, G22, b20, fasc. 117, cit., p. 13.

<sup>40</sup> Ivi, p. 14.

Un tale sviluppo sembrò quindi più di facile realizzazione rispetto al disfacimento cui sarebbe potuto andare incontro l'Impero russo, poiché la maggioranza dell'etnia russa, si pensava, avrebbe garantito l'unità e la stabilità del Paese. Probabilmente si sarebbe potuto assistere a sporadiche sacche di resistenza nelle aree abitate da forti minoranze etniche, nulla di più. Queste erano solo ipotesi che il colonnello tedesco esprimeva alla luce degli avvenimenti che riguardarono l'area durante gli anni precedenti, come la Pace di Santo Stefano che illuse la Russia di aver raggiunto una posizione di vantaggio, poi diminuita durante il Congresso di Berlino. La causa di ciò fu attribuita in Russia alla Germania, rea di aver modificato sotto l'abile regia di Bismarck la politica europea a suo favore. Sosteneva von der Osten-Sacken-Rhein: «Fu soprattutto l'Inghilterra la causa di averle ridotto il premio della vittoria»<sup>41</sup>. Insomma ciò che auspicava l'Impero russo era un incondizionato appoggio riguardo alla sua politica balcanica da parte della Germania, sostegno che però le fu sempre negato per via del forte legame con l'altro impero centrale: l'Austria-Ungheria. Questa in sintesi l'analisi del colonnello, che aggiungeva:

I russi considerano anche uno sfruttamento economico da parte nostra ciò che invece dipende e dalle diverse condizioni monetarie, le quali si rendono estremamente sensibili col pagamento degli interessi dei miliardi tedeschi impiegati in valori russi, ed anche dalle misure di protezione dei nostri prodotti contro l'invasione di quelli russi nei nostri mercati<sup>42</sup>.

L'autore quindi era fermamente convinto che la Russia avesse sentimenti ostili contro la Germania, forse più odiata della Francia, e per via della sua enorme estensione e dei suoi 128 milioni di abitanti era quindi considerata un avversario estremamente pericoloso: «Capace di calpestare chiunque trovi sulla sua strada»<sup>43</sup>. Queste affermazioni rispecchiavano, del resto, l'interpretazione che la stampa germanica aveva rispetto alla politica estera dell'Impero russo, anche se da più parti ci si domandava se le pessime condizioni interne del Paese avrebbero potuto rappresentare un limite per l'espansione russa. A tal proposito l'autore ricorda: «Quanto erano sconfortanti le condizioni della Francia prima della grande rivoluzione, appena un decennio dopo Napoleone fondava un regno mondiale!»<sup>44</sup> L'amicizia franco-russa preoccupava non poco la stampa tedesca e anche nello studio troviamo continui riferimenti al Trattato di Francoforte che sancì la cessione al neo Impero tedesco dell'Alsazia e della Lorena, e che produsse il sentimento di *revanche* anti-tedesca della politica francese dei successivi quaranta anni<sup>45</sup>. L'ipotetico "duplice" teatro di guerra era ben raffigurato dall'espressione: «Il giorno in cui si udirà il rombo del cannone alla frontiera Occidentale, comincerà anche la danza delle armi alla frontiera Orientale»<sup>46</sup>. L'autore rovesciò poi lo stereotipo della Russia come "paese povero" che per i giornali dell'epoca sembrava un dato acquisito. I fatti

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<sup>41</sup> Ivi, p. 16.

<sup>42</sup> Ivi, p. 18.

<sup>43</sup> Ivi, p. 19.

<sup>44</sup> Ivi, p. 20.

<sup>45</sup> Sul Trattato di Francoforte e sul revanskismo si veda G. Wawro, *The Franco-Prussian War: The German Conquest of France in 1870-1871*, Cambridge University Press, 2003.

<sup>46</sup> AUSSME, G22, b20, fasc. 117, cit., p. 21.

dimostravano una potenza economica di grandi dimensioni che disponeva di mezzi straordinari:

A dimostrazione di ciò si noti che nel 1901 l'esportazione della Russia superò l'importazione di 222 milioni di rubli mentre in Germania e in Francia il valore dell'esportazione è inferiore a quello dell'importazione di 496 milioni di rubli. Ciò, in parte, è stato soltanto per l'aiuto di parecchi miliardi di denaro tedesco: i suoi mezzi si moltiplicarono, le ferrovie furono costruite, sorse imprese industriali<sup>47</sup>.

E terminò:

Un popolo che ha impiegato sette miliardi in valori di cui l'importazione e l'esportazione annuale ammontano dai dieci agli undici miliardi e può spendere annualmente per bibite alcoliche 3 miliardi e per lotterie  $\frac{1}{4}$  di esso, non è un popolo povero. La Germania potrà essere povera e poco favorita dalla natura, ma il popolo è diventato benestante col lavoro ed ora tocca conservare il suo benessere con sacrifici relativamente minimi. E devesi inoltre aggiungere questo, che il tutto procede regolarmente ed abbiamo l'assoluta certezza che i milioni spesi non sono sprecati e che nell'ora giusta frutteranno. Quest'ora, secondo ogni probabilità, è lontana, per quanto i governi possano desiderare di anticiparla<sup>48</sup>.

Il barone spostò quindi l'attenzione sulle finanze francesi, giudicate forti e concorrenziali ma amministrate a volte in maniera sbagliata:

La Francia ha dei mezzi che superano perfino le sue forze. Non si può negare, che cogli illimitati mezzi, dei quali il patriottismo francese non fu avaro, si raggiunsero grandi risultati, anche se milioni su milioni siano stati spesi male e si sia formato un esercito eccellente, nonostante che molte cose da noi non siano giudicate favorevolmente. Altri milioni sono stati impiegati per imprese oltre mare, ed ancora debbono portare i primi frutti, anche se la condizione del debito pubblico è mutata pochissimo sono migliorate le condizioni commerciali, anche se restano ancora pesanti da poter decidere un aumento. E questo diventerebbe necessario, qualora la Francia volesse seguirci sulla strada di un ulteriore rinforzo dell'esercito<sup>49</sup>.

L'autore valutò in modo discreto le finanze pubbliche francesi. Gli investimenti effettuati negli ultimi dieci anni erano per lui soddisfacenti anche se, qualora la Francia avesse deciso di aumentare le spese per migliorare le condizioni del suo esercito avrebbe trovato difficoltà pratiche per via del forte debito pubblico di cui la Germania, parimenti, non era particolarmente afflitta<sup>50</sup>.

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<sup>47</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>50</sup> L'autore riporta in nota l'aumento del debito pubblico francese, in miliardi di lire (tradotto dall'autore): 1875: 23,4; 1880: 24,2; 1885: 28,2; 1890: 30,1; 1891: 30,4; 1903: 30,3. Si noti come in poco meno di tre decenni il debito sia cresciuto di 6,9 miliardi, una quota piuttosto bassa ma comunque importante qualora si fosse dovuto finanziare un ipotetico conflitto bellico, quindi destinare una percentuale di spesa maggiore all'esercito. In una nota successiva l'autore esprime la quota complessiva del traffico commerciale della Francia, riportato in miliardi di lire (dal traduttore): dal 1877 al 1886: 5448,2; dal 1886 al 1891:

Dalle considerazioni di natura economica sin qui riportate emerge la logica pragmatica dell'autore, tesa a sviluppare un'analisi che esprima svariati punti di vista, ma tutti facente parte dell'*unicum* oggetto dello studio: analizzare le forze delle potenze rivali e ipotetici scenari di guerra.

Da ciò l'affermazione: «È necessario che le nostre forze vengano portate fino all'estremo limite»<sup>51</sup>.

La Triplice è posta sotto la lente d'ingrandimento, ma soprattutto la lealtà dell'Italia era messa in dubbio da queste affermazioni, che non lasciano spazio a dubbi circa il pensiero dominante in Germania nel 1905. Il punto di vista dell'autore, chiaramente imbevuto del pensiero imperante della stampa tedesca, risentiva di preconcetti e non tenne conto di una serie di fraintendimenti intercorsi anni prima fra l'Austria-Ungheria e l'Italia. I due Paesi erano divisi dalla questione delle terre italiane irredente soggette all'Impero austro-ungarico, che rievocava continuamente i sentimenti antiaustriaci pubblica italiana, e da numerosi conflitti d'interessi nell'Adriatico oltre a rivalità nelle regioni balcaniche. La questione delle terre irredente si riaccese nel 1903, due anni prima dello studio di Ottomar von der Osten-Sacken-Rhein, in seguito agli scontri avvenuti nel maggio di quell'anno fra studenti italiani e tedeschi a Innsbruck e alle manifestazioni irredentiste svoltesi a Trento e Trieste per la mancata creazione di un'università italiana che riconoscesse l'autonomia culturale degli italiani soggetti all'Impero austro-ungarico. Seguirono numerose manifestazioni in tutta la penisola, tra maggio e giugno 1903, che acuirono la crisi dei rapporti fra l'Italia e l'Austria-Ungheria. Le relazioni diplomatiche rischiarono di peggiorare e causare una rottura irreparabile in seno alla Triplice.

Il primo ministro italiano Giovanni Giolitti accantonò di fatto, la "questione irredentista" non tollerando manifestazioni antiaustriache e limitandosi a chiedere all'Austria-Ungheria, con una diplomazia conciliante, un più equo trattamento per gli italiani a essi soggetti. L'Italia aveva considerato sempre con timore un'espansione austriaca nei Balcani, che avrebbe pregiudicato i suoi progetti di penetrazione commerciale in quelle regioni<sup>52</sup>. Per evitare che l'Austria-Ungheria rafforzasse la sua presenza sull'altra sponda dell'Adriatico, sia Giulio Prinetti sia il suo successore Enrico Morin avevano tentato di far partecipare l'Italia alle discussioni fra Russia e Austria-Ungheria, in seguito ad alcune azioni di guerriglia e di agitazioni in Macedonia. L'intesa austro-russa sui Balcani risaliva al 1897 e si ripresentava a causa della crescente crisi dell'Impero ottomano. Da questa intesa l'Italia era e rimaneva esclusa, nonostante le pressioni di Vittorio Emanuele per impedire che Vienna allargasse la sua influenza verso l'Albania<sup>53</sup>. La politica balcanica dell'Italia prospettava la possibilità di contenere l'espansionismo austriaco e russo nei Balcani attraverso la costituzione di nuovi Stati indipendenti, senza aspirare ufficialmente ad

5368,2; dal 1897 al 1901: 5606,2. Si noti la lieve ma costante crescita evidenziata nello studio da von der Osten-Sacken-Rhein.

<sup>51</sup> AUSSME, G22, b20, fasc. 117, cit., p. 23.

<sup>52</sup> Cfr. A. Tamborra, *L'Europa centro-orientale nei secoli 19.-20.: 1800-1920*, Milano, Vallardi, 1971.

<sup>53</sup> Cfr. A. Biagini, *Momenti di Storia Balcanica (1878-1914)*, Roma, SME, 1981.

alcuna conquista territoriale. Durante le trattative austro-russe l'Italia cercò di ottenere compensi, sulla base degli accordi della Triplice, in caso di espansione austriaca, compensi negati in *primis* dall'Austria-Ungheria e in seguito dalla Russia. Nonostante lo smacco subito, Giolitti e Tittoni riconfermarono la fedeltà dell'Italia alla Triplice, rinnovando il patto nel giugno 1907, la situazione peggiorò nuovamente nel 1908 in seguito alla crisi bosniaca. Le riflessioni di Ottomar von der Osten-Sacken-Rhein denotarono scarsa fiducia riguardo alla fedeltà italiana nei confronti della Triplice, profetizzando il cambio di campo in caso di guerra ben nove anni prima lo scoppio del conflitto mondiale. Con malcelato stupore il barone si domandava le cause che avrebbero determinato, a suo dire, questo ipotetico cambio di rotta da parte dell'Italia vista, tra l'altro, la rivalità con la Francia nel Mediterraneo:

Il popolo italiano, ch'è molto povero, attribuisce alla triplice la causa delle grandi spese militari, inoltre in Italia prevale un vivo odio contro l'Austria, a cui non si può perdonare il passato, odio generale in tutti gli italiani; e poiché l'Austria è nostra alleata, ne risulta che l'Italia si volge a nostra nemica. Ciò per noi è un avvenimento notevole. Quand'anche l'Italia non ci avesse potuto portare un rilevante aiuto in una guerra contro la Francia, in quanto che da 100 a 150mila francesi bastano alla difesa della linea delle Alpi, pure tutto l'esercito austriaco sarebbe stato disponibile contro la Russia, mentre in avvenire una parte di esso dovrà essere impiegato contro l'Italia<sup>54</sup>.

La Triplice diventerà duplice e la duplice Triplice. L'Austria-Ungheria, si affermava, aveva già tratto insegnamento dal volta faccia dell'Italia, toccava adesso alla Germania prendere le necessarie contromisure. Quali erano i rapporti tra la Germania e l'Austria-Ungheria? Questa la domanda successiva dello studio volta a esaminare i punti in comune con l'impero alleato:

La nostra alleanza con l'Austria-Ungheria si basa sulla comunanza degli interessi dei popoli. L'Austria non potrà mai e poi mai ammettere una espansione della Russia nei Balcani; quando la metà transleitana del suo impero sarà accerchiata dalla Russia, allora cadrà sotto di essa e ciò senza pensare che prima sarebbe distrutto tutto il commercio dell'Austria col Levante e con esso una gran parte del benessere del suo popolo; e che dopo anche i zechi si distaccherebbero, così che l'Austria si ridurrebbe a ben poca cosa<sup>55</sup>.

Sin qui le paure di Ottomar von der Osten-Sacken-Rhein descrivono uno scenario possibile vista la fedeltà dell'alleato. Gli interessi comuni dei due popoli erano considerati come la base dell'amicizia dei due imperi e della loro più che salda alleanza. Anche se, non è tralasciata l'ipotesi di un cambio radicale della politica estera austriaca in virtù di mutamenti in politica interna. In questo caso l'Impero tedesco sarebbe rimasto da solo nel fronteggiare le due potenze. Quest'ipotesi è seguita per un eccesso di precauzione, ma rimase la consapevolezza che l'Austria-Ungheria, qualora fosse scoppiato un conflitto di grandi proporzioni, avrebbe impiegato una

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<sup>54</sup> AUSSME, G22, b20, fasc. 117, *cit.*, p. 25.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibidem*.

minima parte delle sue forze contro l'Italia e riversato tutto il potenziale di cui disponeva sul teatro di guerra Orientale e conseguentemente su quello Occidentale, quindi se fosse scoppiato un conflitto non vi sarebbero stati dubbi circa i comuni intenti di Germania e Austria - Ungheria, da una parte, e di Francia, Russia e presumibilmente Italia dall'altra.

Gli altri Stati, si credeva sarebbero rimasti neutrali, anche se per motivi economici e politici si sarebbero avvicinati comunque a uno dei due blocchi. La Turchia, ad esempio, si sarebbe avvicinata all'alleanza degli imperi centrali, bloccata dall'influenza russa nei Balcani. L'apporto della Svezia era considerato inutile, sia per il debole apparato militare sia per la scarsa resistenza che avrebbe potuto opporre alla Danimarca nel caso in cui quest'ultima fosse passata con il blocco franco-russo. Forse il Belgio, s'ipotizzava, se si fosse violata la sua neutralità, avrebbe potuto unirsi agli imperi centrali mentre l'Inghilterra rappresentava la grande incognita. Agli occhi di Londra la maggiore minaccia diretta era rappresentata dal riarmo navale della Germania: un dato di fatto che nel 1904 spinse il governo inglese - nonostante le rivalità coloniali in Africa - a stringere un'*Entente cordiale* con la Francia chiudendo il cerchio dei blocchi contrapposti. I fatti perciò presero una piega differente rispetto le previsioni dell'autore<sup>56</sup>.

L'intesa anglo-francese peraltro non si fondò solo sulla comune paura della Germania ma regolò anche le pendenze tra i due Paesi: Londra s'impegnò a non ostacolare le pretese francesi sul Marocco in cambio del riconoscimento delle proprie posizioni in Egitto, lo Stato del Siam fu conservato come cuscinetto tra l'Indocina francese e la Birmania inglese. Ben presto l'intesa fu messa alla prova allorché la flotta russa impegnata nel suo complesso viaggio dal Baltico all'Estremo Oriente per contrastare il Giappone, affondò alcuni pescherecci inglesi scambiandoli per torpediniere nemiche<sup>57</sup>. Il pericolo di un conflitto tra Russia e Gran Bretagna fu evitato dalla mediazione della Francia, alleata di entrambi i contendenti. Una prova ancor più probante l'intesa anglo-francese la affrontò nel 1905 in occasione della "prima crisi marocchina", quando il *kaiser* Guglielmo II, in crociera nel Mediterraneo, fece scalo in Marocco dichiarando solennemente di far visita a uno Stato sovrano e indipendente<sup>58</sup>. Lo "schiaffo" tedesco alle pretese francesi sul Marocco<sup>59</sup> aprì una grave crisi internazionale, che vide Francia e Gran Bretagna unite nell'evitare qualsiasi insediamento militare della Germania sulle coste mediterranee dell'Africa. Nell'intricato quadro di

<sup>56</sup> Si veda M. Paléologue, *Una svolta decisiva della politica mondiale 194-1906*, Milano, Mondadori, 1934 e E. J. Feuchtwanger, *Democrazia e Impero, l'Inghilterra fra il 1865 e il 1914*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 1989.

<sup>57</sup> Gli inglesi, alleati dei giapponesi, cercarono in tutti i modi di ostacolarne il viaggio impedendo il rifornimento nei propri porti e rallentando il passaggio del canale di Suez. Sfruttarono anche l'incidente sul *DoggerBank* avvenuto nella notte tra il 21 e il 22 ottobre, ottenendo una penale da parte dei russi di 65mila sterline di rimborso per l'affondamento dei pescherecci inglesi della città di Hull scambiati per torpediniere inglesi.

<sup>58</sup> La prima crisi marocchina detta anche Crisi di Tangeri fu causata nel 1905 dall'opposizione della Germania al tentativo della Francia di estendere il dominio sul Marocco. La visita dell'imperatore Guglielmo II a Tangeri aprì la crisi fra le due potenze. Si veda M. Balfour, *Guglielmo II e I suoi tempi*, Milano, Il Saggiatore, 1968.

<sup>59</sup> Lo "schiaffo tedesco" teso alla Francia fu inferto nel momento di massima debolezza dell'alleanza franco-russa per la guerra che lo zar stava perdendo contro il Giappone.

alleanze verificatosi in quegli anni, non possiamo tacere del contemporaneo crollo del “grande malato d’Europa”: l’Impero ottomano<sup>60</sup>. Infatti al consolidamento dei blocchi contrapposti fece riscontro la crisi vertiginosa di uno degli ultimi bastioni del “vecchio mondo”<sup>61</sup>. Sospinto dall’ammirazione per l’Occidente il movimento dei Giovani Turchi riuscì a penetrare nelle fila dell’esercito e a imporre con un’insurrezione nel 1908, la restaurazione della costituzione del 1876 e la convocazione del parlamento<sup>62</sup>. Le difficoltà turche risvegliarono le mire espansionistiche dell’Impero austro-ungarico che ne approfittò immediatamente per annettersi definitivamente la regione balcanica della Bosnia - Erzegovina (1908),<sup>63</sup> infliggendo un duro colpo ai propositi egemonici della Serbia: andò così in fumo la stabilizzazione temporanea sancita dal Congresso di Berlino del 1878, e la regione dei Balcani<sup>64</sup> divenne di nuovo il catalizzatore delle tensioni continentali e in particolare il punto di scontro dei propositi di riscatto dei vecchi imperi russo e austriaco, di cui in seguito vedremo gli sviluppi. Tornando allo studio, l’autore iniziò poi un’analisi sulle fortificazioni francesi evidenziando come dopo la guerra franco-prussiana del 1870-71 la Francia abbia intrapreso con vigore la rinnovazione della sua potenza difensiva attraverso la costruzione sulla frontiera Orientale di una linea quasi ininterrotta di fortezze che, a guisa di «muraglia cinese»,<sup>65</sup> chiudesse pressoché completamente il Paese proteggendolo da ogni possibile invasione da est. Per quanto queste fortificazioni, malgrado diversi miglioramenti apportati in seguito, non corrispondevano più alle esigenze difensive dell’epoca, costituivano fonte di preoccupazione per gli ipotetici sacrifici che si sarebbero dovuti affrontare per espugnarle. Le gravi perdite si sarebbero potute evitare, affermava l’autore, qualora si fosse deciso di attaccare la Francia da nord poiché si credeva di più facile penetrazione la frontiera settentrionale. A nord la Francia, eccettuata la grande fortezza di Lille, possedeva piazzeforti di secondaria importanza, considerate inadatte a respingere un esercito invasore. Tale situazione per la frontiera settentrionale francese era da ascrivere alla neutralità del Belgio, stabilita dai trattati internazionali, ma qualora fosse scoppiato un conflitto di dimensioni continentali il governo belga si sarebbe trovato in difficoltà, sia per la mancanza di mezzi sia per la debolezza del suo esercito. Da qui l’interesse strategico-militare dell’autore per un’ipotetica avanzata da nord passando per il Belgio, che avrebbe quindi aggirato le fortificazioni della frontiera Orientale francese, obbligando l’esercito transalpino ad allontanarsi da esse e scontrarsi in campo aperto con quello tedesco.

Il piano elaborato dal colonnello si prestava a rilevanti considerazioni.

<sup>60</sup> Sulle complesse vicende storiche dell’Impero ottomano si veda G. Motta, *I turchi il Mediterraneo e l’Europa*, Milano, Franco Angeli, 1998 e S. J. Shaw, *L’Impero ottomano*, Torino, Utet, 1980.

<sup>61</sup> Cfr. A. Biagini, *Storia della Turchia contemporanea*, Milano, Bompiani, 2002.

<sup>62</sup> Cfr. A. Biagini, *La rivoluzione dei Giovani Turchi nel carteggio degli addetti militari italiani*, in «Rassegna Storica del Risorgimento», anno LXI, fasc. IV, 1974.

<sup>63</sup> A.J. May, *La monarchia asburgica 1867-1914*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 1991.

<sup>64</sup> Si veda A. Biagini, *Simeon Radev, le nazioni balcaniche e la guerra italo-turca (1911-1912)*, in «Rassegna Storica del Risorgimento», anno LXIV, fasc. II, 1977.

<sup>65</sup> AUSSME, G22, b20, fasc. 117, cit., p. 53.

Anzitutto era tutta da verificare la possibilità che il governo belga lasciasse attraversare il Belgio all'esercito imperiale tedesco, oltretutto Bruxelles che per anni aveva visto il Paese al pari della Sassonia e dell'alta Italia quale campo di battaglia europeo, non avrebbe volontariamente esposto ancora una volta i propri territori a questa triste sorte. Inoltre se l'esercito belga era, come si accennava, una compagine avversaria poco temibile sia per la bontà dei mezzi sia per la forza che avrebbe potuto sprigionare, si sarebbe comunque dovuto lasciare un corpo d'armata e alcune divisioni per monitorarlo vicino ad Anversa, dove l'esercito con tutta probabilità si sarebbe ritirato, e controllare e espugnare le altre fortezze sparse sul territorio. L'ipotesi di avanzare attraverso il Belgio era considerata perciò sfavorevole, a meno di destinare una piccola parte dell'esercito all'incursione non potendo sguarnire l'Alsazia-Lorena. Qualora si fossero verificati questi movimenti di truppe i Francesi di fronte all'armata tedesca della Lorena avrebbero difeso la frontiera, utilizzando un numero minimo di unità poiché protette dalle fortificazioni e si sarebbero rivolte, superiori numericamente, contro l'esercito tedesco in Belgio mettendone a repentaglio l'offensiva. Rimaneva un'ultima questione da valutare: se l'Inghilterra, come si poteva presumere, avesse dichiarato la propria neutralità sarebbe entrata sicuramente in guerra per difendere il territorio belga dall'offensiva tedesca. L'ipotesi di muovere quattro o cinque armate verso l'Alsazia era interpretata come un errore, mentre la Lorena acquista via via grande importanza strategica poiché si credeva che lì sarebbero state convogliate le forze principali degli eserciti nemici. Inoltre era valutato un altro teatro di guerra nel sud della Germania, problema facilmente risolvibile tramite l'utilizzo delle ferrovie, all'epoca già molto sviluppate su tutto il territorio tedesco. L'idea di un'offensiva tedesca porta il ragionamento dell'autore a sviluppare tre casistiche:

Cioè che i francesi c'incontrino: 1° avanti le loro fortificazioni, 2° entro la linea di queste, 3° indietro ad esse. Il primo caso, dopo quello che si è detto, è il più improbabile; esso sarebbe per noi il più favorevole, in quanto ci batteremmo in eguali condizioni<sup>66</sup>.

Sarebbe stato arduo trarre conclusioni sulle conseguenze di questo scontro, per l'autore la maniera migliore di affrontarlo consisteva nell'avanzare in modo compatto e rispettare il principio «Marciare separati e combattere riuniti»,<sup>67</sup> questo il problema maggiore che avrebbe dovuto risolvere il comando in capo e l'amministrazione dell'esercito. Inoltre bisognava considerare, per tempo, l'approvvigionamento dei materiali e del vettovagliamento, definito un ostacolo di: «Straordinarie difficoltà, non prevedibili»<sup>68</sup>. Le migliori strategie militari, dettate dal comando generale rischiavano quindi di arenarsi qualora non si fosse disposto un rapido rifornimento delle truppe, sia di materiali sia di vettovaglie, risolvendo in alcuni casi la non praticabilità delle linee ferroviarie in poco tempo<sup>69</sup>.

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<sup>66</sup> Ivi, p. 58.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>68</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>69</sup> Cfr. A. Biagini, D. Reichel, *Italia e Svizzera durante la Triplice alleanza: politica militare e politica estera*, Roma, SME, 1991.

Il secondo caso è che i francesi ci scontrino entro la linea delle loro fortificazioni. Allora dovremmo contemporaneamente dar battaglia e attaccare alcuni forti, il che implicherebbe un compito ben difficile, richiedente perdite di tempo, mentre i francesi avrebbero campo di trasferire rinforzi da tutte le parti, opponendoci nella difensiva una straordinaria superiorità. Che questo compito possa essere disimpegnato è per lo meno problematico, in tale procedimento esiste grande pericolo, a meno che al nemico faccia difetto l'iniziativa<sup>70</sup>.

Il pericolo più evidente, secondo l'autore, sarebbe senza dubbio stato la superiorità numerica presunta dell'esercito francese e la difficoltà nel ritrovarsi di fronte alle truppe nemiche con alle spalle la linea delle fortificazioni francesi una volta aperta la breccia considerata. Una sconfitta in tale circostanza sarebbe risultata disastrosa. Si paventava quindi lo spiegamento di tutte le forze possibili, per non compromettere sia i successi ottenuti sia il proseguimento del possibile conflitto.

Il colonnello passava quindi in rassegna la conseguenza di una disfatta per la Germania ad opera francese:

Sembra qui necessario di renderci conto delle conseguenze che potrebbe avere un insuccesso del nostro esercito principale; l'importanza di esse dipenderebbe naturalmente dalla entità di una eventuale sconfitta. Non subentrando avvenimenti straordinari, non avremo certamente bisogno neanche per una battaglia perduta di rinunciare alla speranza in un esito felice; appunto allora il nostro esercito potrebbe dimostrare l'alto suo valore intrinseco<sup>71</sup>.

Il cauto ottimismo di von der Osten-Sacken-Rhein si rifletteva nelle osservazioni successive che senza perdere di vista l'obiettivo si producevano in ragionamenti tutti diretti a mantenere un guardingo profilo basso:

Per quanto possa essere giustificata la fiducia riposta nel nostro esercito, fiducia che si rispecchia in queste parole, pure le vicende della guerra essendo incalcolabili, anche il miglior esercito può essere sfortunato, tanto più se si trova nella inferiorità numerica. Non dev'essere quindi perduta di vista la possibilità di una sconfitta; è meglio curar prima che lamentarsi dopo. Se dovessimo subire una sconfitta o perfino una catastrofe col nostro esercito principale di fronte ai francesi, sarebbe una disgrazia irreparabile<sup>72</sup>.

Grandi rinforzi non arriverebbero presumibilmente dal fronte Orientale senza considerare il pesante fardello che la Germania avrebbe dovuto affrontare in caso di una cocente sconfitta. L'autore quindi poneva come imprescindibile il raggiungimento della vittoria finale, per non rischiare di affrontare i tremendi scenari sin qui descritti, puntando concretamente sull'offensiva tedesca e cavalcando il sentimento dell'*establishment* imperiale. La politica di potenza, il riarmo, l'enorme "macchina da guerra" avviata da Alfred von Tirpitz stava conducendo l'Impero verso l'inevitabile epilogo di un conflitto continentale. L'obiettivo da raggiungere si presentava difficile, notevolmente superiore rispetto le

<sup>70</sup> AUSSME, G22, b20, fasc. 117, *cit.*, p. 59.

<sup>71</sup> Ivi, p. 60.

<sup>72</sup> *Ibidem*.

difficoltà affrontate durante la guerra franco-prussiana del 1870<sup>73</sup>. La Francia si pensava avesse difeso Parigi impiegando gran parte delle proprie forze che si sarebbe rivolte a sud. Parigi secondo Osten-Sacken-Rhein era divenuta una fortezza molto più difficile da espugnare:

L'unica possibilità che anche oggidì si ha per la conquista di Parigi è quella di avanzare gradualmente da una parte, conquistare con tenace lotta una dopo l'altra tutte le posizioni eventualmente create ed equipaggiate coi potenti mezzi che la difesa ha disposizione, e così ricacciare il difensore oltre Parigi<sup>74</sup>.

L'autore sapeva benissimo che la sua opinione sarebbe entrata in conflitto rispetto chi propendeva per la presa di Parigi già il 19 settembre 1870:

Non vi è alcun dubbio che Parigi allora avrebbe potuto cadere, non essendo le sue fortificazioni, né armate, né occupate da truppe; ma non possiamo in avvenire contare su tali circostanze fortunate. Se giungeremo un'altra volta avanti Parigi, la troveremo pronta all'attacco. Non avendo riguardo a perdite, sarà possibile assaltare la prima linea del fronte Orientale e settentrionale, ma dietro essa troveremo una seconda e terza linea; inoltre esisteranno posizioni intermedie che dovranno anche essere prese d'assalto. Ciò è più facile dire che fare; noi lasceremmo sul campo, e inutilmente, migliaia e migliaia di uomini. La guerra costa sacrifici; essi non vanno risparmiati, ove sono necessari, quando si fa conto di raggiungere lo scopo; ma questa prospettiva non è garantita assaltando una fortezza costruita ed equipaggiata con tutti i mezzi possibili di difesa ed offesa<sup>75</sup>.

Una volta superata la linea di difesa nemica l'offensiva tedesca avrebbe dovuto scontrarsi e battere l'esercito francese, occupare le fortezze per agevolare le manovre di trasporto dell'ingente materiale occorrente per l'assedio di Parigi e infine, compito più ostico, espugnare la capitale francese. Si analizzano poi in maniera lucida le difficoltà di tale impresa, memore delle difficoltà che incontrò l'esercito prussiano nel 1870 allorché si trovò contrastato dalla leva di massa francese, di cui si disconoscevano i numeri. All'epoca di questo studio però si era informati circa la forza dell'esercito francese e delle nuove fortificazioni che negli anni puntellarono Parigi. Inoltre, fermo restando le difficoltà già elencate, s'ipotizzarono perdite ancora maggiori rispetto quelle che si ebbero nelle battaglie dell'agosto 1870, difficilmente rimpiazzabili, poiché le truppe delle armate tedesche di occupazione si componevano in massima parte di *Landwehr* di 2° bando, il cui impiego era oggettivamente molto limitato<sup>76</sup>.

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<sup>73</sup> Cfr. H. Schulze, *Storia della Germania*, Roma, Donzelli Editore, 2000.

<sup>74</sup> AUSSME, G22, b20, fasc. 117, *cit.*, p. 64.

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

<sup>76</sup> La *Landwehr* (difesa regionale) era una milizia territoriale prussiana istituita nel 1814, con la creazione di un esercito nazionale in seguito alle sconfitte contro Napoleone. Con l'introduzione del servizio militare obbligatorio, la *Landwehr* comprendeva tutti i maschi dai trenta ai quarant'anni al di fuori dell'esercito regolare. Secondo i riformatori questa istituzione doveva dare all'esercito prussiano il carattere di un esercito popolare. Con la riforma del 1860 ogni reggimento dell'esercito regolare aveva collegato un reggimento quadro della *Landwehr*, i cui ufficiali e sottoufficiali provenivano dal reggimento regolare e con il quale formava una brigata. Per approfondire si veda A. Alberti, *La mobilitazione e lo*

Dovendo ipotizzare una guerra su due fronti erachiaro per l'autore che quello Orientale dava ampie garanzie di vittoria grazie all'appoggio dell'Austria-Ungheria che, verosimilmente, avrebbe contenuto l'avanzata russa mentre sul lato opposto preoccupava non poco la penetrazione delle truppe imperiali in territorio francese, dando per scontata la brillante difesa della frontiera tedesca: «Non saremo però neanche abbastanza forti per sconfiggere completamente uno dei nostri avversari, com'è indispensabile. Ne consegue che anche il concetto di "schiacciare i francesi", prima che i russi siano pronti, è completamente falso ed inattuabile; esso si basa su una completa ignoranza delle condizioni di fatto ed appartiene al regno delle illusioni»<sup>77</sup>. Le strategie e i piani militari della Germania e delle potenze europee saranno quindi messi alla prova allo scoppiare della Grande Guerra.

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<sup>77</sup> AUSSME, G22, b20, fasc. 117, cit., p. 66.

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# **STILL VERBA VOLANT: RUMORS DURING WORLD WAR I. REFLECTIONS ON SEVERAL ARCHIVAL DOCUMENTS<sup>1</sup>**

**Corina Teodor\***

## **Abstract**

*In a year when the historians brought into question the issue of World War, I tried in this study to bring attention to a subject ignored by the Romanian historiography. The rumors that can supply the most human reactions, especially when the media were radically different from those we have became a subject of meditation within the Western historiography already for several decades. This research is rather local, for which we used only the archival documents to reveal how rumors fueled fear and dramatic situations during WWI.*

**Keywords:** rumors; Transylvanian; World War I; collective psychology; Marc Bloch; Dionisie Decei.

During the years when the society was concerned by the farther or closer whistling of Mars, the communication of the ones on the line to the left behind the line was not without difficulties or inherent arbitrariness due to the technical means of distance and time. Thus, often any information that orally got to hundreds or even thousands of miles was dependent on how it crossed the real and imaginary border and how it was fed into the path of other details and moods. If the confessions of those who have lively seen the war became the incandescent magma of some literary construction as happened to Cezar Petrescu, who although was never on the front, he congealed from the combatants' admissions the backbone of the novel *Darkness*, instead the archival documents which are the least generous when it comes to record such orally information on those bloody clashes. Appealing to what the testimonies held in the Greek-Catholic Deanery Fund of Mureş offers, we start from the premise that such analysis may surprise if not the whole mechanism of dissemination of rumors, at least the attitude of those who receives them first.

Why a history of rumors? A subject still strange to the historiographical offer enjoyed some interest in the Western historiography. As expected, it has been talked about the role of rumors in the context of those times that could legitimize such messages, i.e. one of the two world wars. Most of the analysts have noted the full core suggestions, which Marc Bloch gave in one of his studies devoted to false news during the war<sup>2</sup>, in the

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<sup>2</sup> Marc Bloch, *Réflexions d'un historien sur les fausses nouvelles de la guerre*, in *Revue de synthèse historique*, t. 33, 1921, reproduced as an autonomous volume in Paris, Ed. Allia, 1999, 56 p.

context of the World War I that had for him the role of a founding experience of his reflections as historian. As demonstrated by the posthumous editors, the French historian had kept his notes during the First World War, as well as reports on military operations, which provided the watermark critical image of the scholar over the years, as well as that of a careful citizen to the actors' castling on the political scene. The war lived with all the intensity of the direct participant became for Marc Bloch "a veritable workshop of thought"<sup>3</sup>, so that its details on false news fed the further research on the collective unconscious, on the mental atmosphere, and for him this became a catalyst in the development of the book devoted to other collective errors *Les Rois Thaumaturges* (1924) (*The Royal Touch: Monarchy and Miracles in France and England* (1990)).

The foundation for such considerations had been prepared a few decades ago, by entering on the arena of scientific of the researches dedicated to individual and collective psychology. It is not without significance that Gustave Le Bon wrote in 1905 that the crowd is intellectually inferior to the isolated individual, but in terms of feelings and acts that these feelings can cause can sometimes be superior to the single individual; it all depends on how it is suggestible.<sup>4</sup>

So, inspired by the Durkheimian psychology and sociology that had innovatively advocated the "collective consciousness", Marc Bloch made from the false news a research object, refusing to send rumors in a marginal land of errors without importance for the historiographic posterity. Examining them, the French historian had the ambition to establish some identitarian coordinates, such as origin, their resources and the level of reception from a society<sup>5</sup> deeply disturbed by the bewildering noise of war. So the rumors became for Marc Bloch an original gateway on the history of mentalities field<sup>6</sup>, but they were not subject to the test of truthfulness, but they were examined for their effects on the morale of the fighters and on the conduct of war. The recommendation made to the historians, to look for the psychologists' laboratories, was in line with what several years later would become a methodological priority in the new background of the *Annales* School. War remained in the memory of Marc Bloch as a fascinating experience of collective psychology and the false news, seen in this gear, with a great suggestive force, troubled the spirits, but they were also the mirror where the collective consciousness has contemplated its own features.<sup>7</sup> They can serve to reduce uncertainty, but they also project a different perspective on the war, publicized by word, expressing what cannot be told otherwise. They consist of a heterogeneous alloy, but mostly they are inherently related to the context that gave them

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<sup>3</sup> Frédéric Gugelot, *Marc Bloch, L'Histoire, la guerre, la résistance*, ed. par Annette Becker et Etienne Bloch, Paris, Gallimard, 2006, in *Archives de sciences sociales des religions* (en ligne), no. 136 (oct.-dec. 2006), p. 115.

<sup>4</sup> Gustave Le Bon, *Psychologie des foules*, Paris, Ed. Félix Alcan, 1905, p. 23.

<sup>5</sup> Emmanuel Taïeb, *Des rumeurs de guerre*, in *Quaderni*, nr. 49, hiver, 2002-2003, p. 6.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 7.

<sup>7</sup> Marc Bloch, *Réflexions d'un historien sur les fausses nouvelles de la guerre*, Paris, Ed. Allia, 1999, p. 45.

life, so it can be an expression of fear, hatred, resentment or strong emotions.<sup>8</sup>

For many Marc Bloch remains a strong voice even many decades after breaking his destiny on the pyre of the Second World War, just by the way his released questions and topics were extended for decades.<sup>9</sup> Based on these initial positive suggestions regarding the role of rumors in investigative historian's stock, especially in recent decades, the historians, psychologists and philologists did not hesitate to bring additional theoretical dowry. The start was given by the American psychologists at the end of the Second World War who have investigated the effects of rumors on troops' moral and on the civilian population.<sup>10</sup> More recently, researchers have tried to propose a typology of rumors, from the emitter, distinguishing rumors coming up, so sending to their formulation within the political and military authorities' environment, and rumors that come down, apparent from popular creation, spontaneous.<sup>11</sup>

It did not lack the not so easy attempt to put together a definition of rumor that is not approved in the circle of those interested in the subject, and especially to be validated regardless of chronological horizon of their genesis. But as expected, the unanimous formulations were a "mirage" in the circle of so many eager for their verdicts. So, summing up the soundest views, we can say that the rumor was seen either as the oldest form of media that can do and undo reputations<sup>12</sup>, or as an official unverified information, which brings news to a person or to a current related event, different from the legend, which relates to the past<sup>13</sup>, either as an impromptu news resulting from a collective discussion, which is a major and also ambiguous development focus area<sup>14</sup>, or as a fundamental orally and collectively message.<sup>15</sup>

Following the investigative topic drafted by Marc Bloch, the analysts agreed the idea that the definition of rumor cannot be made taking into account the dichotomy true/false just because it reaches a deadlock, as long as the distinction is difficult to make when the news had an oral route of communication, so that the dynamic of the rumor is independent by the problem of its authentication.<sup>16</sup>

Recent discussions have raised the collective authorship of the genesis and feeding rumors; even if at the origin of the information that generates

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<sup>8</sup> Éric Thiers, *Marc Bloch, Réflexions d'un historien sur les fausses nouvelles de la guerre*, în *Mil neuf cent*, nr.18, 2000, p. 222.

<sup>9</sup> Bronislaw Geremek, *Marc Bloch, historien et résistant*, în *Annales. Économie. Sociétés. Civilisations*, nr. 5, 1986, p. 1092.

<sup>10</sup> For example Knapp in *A Psychology of Rumor* (1944) and Allport or Postman in *An Analysis of Rumor* (1946-1947). In Jean-Noël Kapferer, *Rumeurs, Le plus vieux média du monde*, Paris, Ed. du Seuil, 1987.

<sup>11</sup> Emmanuel Taïeb, *op.cit.*, pp. 7-8.

<sup>12</sup> Jean-Noël Kapferer, *op.cit.*, p. 10.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 12.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 17.

<sup>15</sup> Tatiana-Ana Fluieraru, *La rumeur comme ressort narratif chez Dostoievski et Kadaré*, în *Limbi, culturi și civilizații europene în contact. Perspective istorice și contemporane*, 2008, p. 212.

<sup>16</sup> Jean-Noël Kapferer, *op.cit.*, pp. 23-24.

the heap of rumors there is one transmitter, it goes to quickly turn into a rumor, collective transmitter totaling fears, stereotypes, hopes and illusions. Especially since the rumor is intended to go as far, in a triumph of word over space.<sup>17</sup>

The parishioners the Greek Catholic Deanery of Mureş were living during the World War I under the agreements of a rural life, while the headquarters of the deanery moved to Band and Tîrgu Mureş had legally entered in the Székely Vicarage of the newly created Hungarian diocese of Hajdudorog. The links between the pastoral and urban areas frequently operated either by the young people who went to the city to study, or by the frequent calling to the political and legal authorities based in the city. Just as for the clerical world, parish and dean, the connection with the realities of the Transylvanian Greek-Catholic bastion, Balázsfalva remained an obvious reality, either by epistolary, or by short trips into the "Little Rome". Letters arrived just a day from Blaj to Band, so the Dean was often meticulously and immediately noting on the back of the metropolitan provisions the response that mirrored ecclesiastical realities from the deanery in his administration.

It was a world with its own troubles, where the fragility of the existence was determining some soldiers to seek parishes to obtain the baptismal certificate to urge a marriage that would probably have been postponed it during times of peace.<sup>18</sup> A project that actually because of the vague information that has on the immediate future and of the contradictory stories when troops will leave to "other places", the young Ioan Roman entrusts him somehow to be solved even to Decei archpriest; who must not just issue the required certificate of baptism, but also to take the opportunity of a marital journey "at this time". The young soldier entrusts his personal fate in the hands of the archpriest, who must decide how it is best for him and his girlfriend, so the response, even negative, was also in the linguistic stock of the Archpriest, asked to assign it to the girl, under the decision of the closing letter "Do anything!"

Other soldiers, following the front line farther from home, decide to leave their property to their parish church; which reflects the will signed by the young Ştefan Lonyan, parishioner of the church in Cluj in front of the Greek Catholic Archpriest of Tîrgu Mureş, Iuliu Nistor, on April 15, 1915, by which his little property, amounting to 709 crowns to be left to the Greek-Catholic Church in Cluj, with the amendment that his and his mother's

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<sup>17</sup> Tatiana-Ana Fluieraru, *op.cit.*, p. 213.

<sup>18</sup> This is what Ioan Roman calls from the Archpriest Decei from the Regiment stationed in Tîrgu Mureş: "Mr. Archpriest, as I know that we are changed and gone to other places, and unknown soldiers, i.e. of the German come here but we don not know the reason as many think why do they do such a thing. But let them do as they please for all when they are burn it is still late. God help that one who wants to do justice between peoples. Moreover, Mr. Archpriest, I would ask one of my beautiful desires: namely, to give me a baptism card, because I want to marry David Simon's girl and I mean Mr. Archpriest this is the only way if you think that paying to the present time. If not, then tell her that you cannot entrust her this job to go after my baptism card that my parents do not want such a thing. I do not know what to do, because I want that everything to be good. Until March 15 do anything, because we cannot later. "National Archives of Romania, Mureş County Department, *Fund of the Greek Catholic Deanery of Tîrgu Mureş*, file 1123, f. 26-28.

name, Sofia, “after my death to be remembered forever in the new church built for that my purpose I desire and want to employ this donation”.<sup>19</sup> A few weeks later the archpriest of Cluj the illustrious Elie Dăianu was sending to Iuliu Nistor a letter confirming that the young’s testamentary desire came to his attention too: “Too much honored in Christ brother for easement I unofficial confirm the receipt of the letter no. 60 to 1915, from April 15, together with all securities specified therein, submitted by řtefan Lonyan and please receive my fraternal thanks to serving our church”.<sup>20</sup>

But in a world that has lost all balance, the rumors disturb the canonical order and feeds the old hostility between the Romanian and Hungarian, especially within the new political context created in the summer of 1916 by Romania entering the war. So the pastor Ioan Florian of Mădăraș considered as an inappropriate conduct the periodic visits to the archpriest, which would bring accusations from authorities in front of the community gathered on this occasion: “For here in Mădăraș there are *large rumors* that we the Romanians have shaken Romania. “So as not say that we keep secret meetings and consultations”<sup>21</sup> (manuscript emphasis).

Within the atmosphere full of uncertainties, where in the summer of 1917 the archpriest Decei asks his parish to give notice if they have heard of a mixture of the Hajdudorog deanery, in terms of church, school, administrative or “any kind” the responses are trenchant, in part equivocal. The pastor of Nirașteu notifies the archpriest at October 13, 1917, that he has not yet found anything on this, “neither pleaded nor directly” but urged the Senate members to turn the church school as “*any rumor* to communicate”<sup>22</sup> (manuscript emphasis). Information within the registry are the details the pastor of Csítszentiván provide the Archpriest Decei covered by the veil of uncertainty “through our chewed villages there is much talk about the possibility to incorporate within the deanery of Hajdudorog, but reliable data we could rely upon does not exist, because when it comes to tell us who urged this everybody denies by fear of unpleasant consequences. “Lacking reliable data, I cannot report anything for sure”.<sup>23</sup> (manuscript emphasis) Therefore, on the one hand, trying to find the rumor roots just in the multiethnic composition of the villages transpires in this letter, on the other hand, the priest’s lucidity who does not hurry to give credence to, as long as there is no confirmation of income in a formal way. We see here in short, the mechanism of rumor generation and propagation, which is a recent information that circulates without validating authority and which is the product of unresolved individual and result of the collective anonymous speech.

Rumors often come on the aisle of those wounded returning home from the war. Parishes in this case are those who fall in this circuit of

<sup>19</sup> *Ibidem*, file 1123, f. 54 The young from Cluj who the vicissitudes of war brought him here, yet hopes to a possible return to the front, which is why he finally wishes that in that case “I reserve the right that my above specified wealth... to become again my property.”

<sup>20</sup> *Ibidem*, file 1128, f. 60. The letter is dated May 3, 1915.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibidem*, file 1146, f. 7. A rumor that the archpriest Decei trusted, that is why he wrote down on verso of the letter on August 31, 1916: “the visit has not been taken”.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibidem*, file 1175, f. 5.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibidem*, file 1175, f. 6.

rumors diffusion, where the chain of oral transmission is doubled by the media, when officially information about the fate of teachers enrolled or other villagers are being communicated. Thus, on January 6, 1916 the vicar of Nirășteu was writing about teacher Emil Drăgan, who joined on 30 July 1914 the 21 Regiment in Cluj, that he went to the front in Galicia, then “*after what I heard today he is a prisoner in Russia*”<sup>24</sup> (manuscript emphasis).

But rumors continue to circulate and nurture the individual and collective consciences after the military operations as well, especially in the context related to the fate of those who still have not returned to their families. The archival documents, the wives’ statements who want to regulate their civil status, while the news received from their enrolled husbands stopped years ago, are often accompanied by testimonies collected from the soldiers at the front who were in their proximity and that could ultimately be evidence, in a process to certify that their long disappearance may finally be synonymous to death. Such cases, however, were examined in a separate study.

If we add a donation made by a young soldier to the church in Ceuaș unfortunately confined only to an oral declaration in front of three witnesses, that Vasile Suciu did in 1915, “as a refugee soldier in Tîrgu Mureș” and who left his house and garden, valued at 15,000 on behalf of the village church pastor confused Augustine Nilca who six years later tried to enter, as representative of the ecclesiastical authority in possession of this benefit.<sup>25</sup> Only that the situation could not have a solution as long as there were no written statements of witnesses, which then to be used to the court that could declare death on the front unless the three “can swear anytime that what they say is always true”.<sup>26</sup> As so often, the historical truth fractures here in the absence of any further details in the archival documents.

The Romanian communities where literacy rates were far from being achieved comparable to those in Western Europe and where the news almost always orally arrived, it is not surprising that rumors have got to grab a world eager to know if they shared the same genetic code, enrolled in a war in which they had placed great hopes, were still on the same stage of life. Rumors anguished those who protested as well, to no avail finally, in the summer of 1912, when the fracture of Mureș deanery was decided by the transition of a parish to the Hungarian diocese of Hajdudorog. The border with this new ecclesiastical entity was only a few kilometers far from their villages, so the piercing rumors could even disturb the admirable logic of the archpriest Decei proven by so many times before. Rumors whose roots are lost in the chaos of times, but that surely eroded the already darkened face of the reality.

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<sup>24</sup> *Ibidem*, file 1147, f. 4.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibidem*, file 1281, f. 9.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibidem*, file 1281, f. 9 v.

# **THE ETHNO-DEMOGRAPHIC DEVELOPMENT OF TÎRGU MUREŞ BETWEEN WORLD WAR I AND WORLD WAR II**

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## **Abstract**

*The Unification of Transylvania with Romania after the First World War created a new situation in Tîrgu Mureş city, as well as in all major Transylvanian cities, where the majority of the population was composed of ethnics who weren't Romanian, such as - Hungarians, Germans, Armenians -, and which has applied throughout the time a constant policy of blocking the Romanians, preventing them from entering these cities with the purpose of preserving the old ethnic character of these.*

*As a consequence, one of the priorities of the Romanian administration from Tîrgu Mureş between the two world wars was to correct this situation, respectively to modify the ethnic structure of the city, on one hand to create a solid base for the Romanian administration and on the other hand to harmonize the ethnic structure of the city with the one of the surrounding territory and to allow the manifestation of the Romanian element on the measure of its natural capacities.*

*This policy was applied especially during the National-Liberal administration, between 1923-1927 and 1933-1937, through several types of measures firstly, in chronological order, through modifying the aspect of the city by removing the monuments representing personalities from the history of Hungary, infamous for Romanian population and Transylvania and their replacement with representative monuments for the history of Romania.*

*In the central area of the city there were built specific Romanian buildings.*

*The Romanian ethnic element was promoted in the public administration - in the Prefecture, City Hall, institutions and public services - in public schools, in cultural institutions. In all these it was mandatory to learn and to use the official language of the Romanian state.*

*The promotion of the Romanian element generated discomfort to the minority inhabitants - who represented the majority in the city - only in the case in which they refused learning and using Romanian language and the cooperation with Romanian authorities, those who adapted having no problem from this point of view.*

*As a matter of fact, if in the public institutions the Romanian element constituted the majority, in the private economic, judicial, political and cultural structures and institutions the minority element - Hungarian and Jewish mainly - had control between the world wars and even decades in the post-war age, within the frame of so-called Hungarian Autonomous Region.*

**Keywords:** Interwar period; Romanian administration; central public space; official language; national interest.

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After the unification of Romania in 1918, Transylvania (including Banat, Crișana and Maramureș) was comprised of 57.3% Romanians and 42.7% minorities - national-level percentages showing 74% and 26% -, all cities being most densely populated by non-Romanians (Hungarians 45,79%, Germans 14,64%, Jews 12,62% and only 25,18% Romanians), due to lack of historical growth for Romanians. During 1900-1923, the Romanian population increased by 80%.<sup>1</sup>

In 1910, Transylvania was inhabited by 152.790 Romanians, most of them living in small towns. All the big cities - of over 100.000 inhabitants - were populated mainly by Hungarians (and Hungarianized Jews) and Germans, the ones controlling the administration, economy, culture, etc., who continued to control even after 1918, when Romanians represented only 12,4% of the population.<sup>2</sup>

Their contribution was in fact even smaller, since, as Romanians, they contributed little to the economy, almost nothing to the Government - the ones being promoted had previously been Hungarianized and assimilated - and their presence in the cultural life of the city was reduced as well. Romanian upper class - clergymen, lawyers, teachers and school inspectors, businessmen, journalists, writers, politicians - served the interests of the Romanian communities almost exclusively. The ones that had relationships with minority citizens however, fueled nationalists' concern due to their Hungarianization. They did not give up the current use of the Hungarian language - in relations with their fellow minority citizens, of course - even after the unification of Transylvania with Romania, which *ipso facto* (by the fact itself), was a surprising defense of the Hungarianism in Romania.<sup>3</sup>

The city of Tîrgu Mureş fit this Transylvanian urban model, with a predominant Hungarian population, and a strongly reduced Romanian component - of approximately 12% - with lack of power over areas such as economics, culture and even topography, the only significant public Romanian presence being two churches - "The Wooden Church" and "The Stone Church" - and the first Romanian school, located in close proximity, all of them situated on the northern outskirts of the city.

The Separatist-Conservative accents of minorities' behavior with a "majority mentality", as well as Romanian authorities' concern to increase the Romanian element in the city - which was 80% stronger in Transylvania between 1910 and 1923<sup>4</sup> - have influenced the Romanian Government efforts that led to a normal development of the area.

Regarding the ethnic composition of Tîrgu Mureş, the census of 1910 reveals the existence of 25.517 people, of which officially 22.790 Hungarians (along with 2.775 Jews, well integrated in the Hungarian cultural environment), 606 Germans, 1.717 Romanians, specifying that the orthodox and Greek-Catholic (believers of both rites were Romanians) altogether were

<sup>1</sup> Iuliu Maniu, „Problema minorităților”, in Iordan Chimet, *Dreptul la memorie*, Cluj-Napoca, Editura Dacia, 1992, vol. II, pp. 321-322.

<sup>2</sup> Irina Livezeanu, *Cultură și naționalism în România Mare 1918-1939*, București, Editura Humanitas, 1998, p. 183.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 184-185

<sup>4</sup> Iuliu Maniu, *op. cit.*, pp. 321-322.

2.983, probably representing the real number of Romanian residents in the city.<sup>5</sup>

The real situation of the city population development in the early years of the Romanian Government can be illustrated by observing the settlement right into practice in the city, during 1919-1923. The right was guaranteed by the City Council to a number of 305 Jews (Hungarianized); 249 Hungarians; 32 Romanians; 28 Germans, 92 others.<sup>6</sup> It follows that, during those years, the local government policy, which stayed Hungarian, except for the upper class -prefect and mayor- was to maintain or enhance administratively the Hungarian ethnicity of the city.

After approximately a decade, according to the 1930 census, the total population of the city was 38.517 (with an increase of the population of 13,000 inhabitants, compared to the 1910 census), of which 22.387 Hungarians; 9.795 Romanians; 4.828 Jews; 632 Germans; 400 Gypsies; 181 Russians; 70 Bulgarians; 55 Ruthenian-Ukrainians; 36 Czech; Slovaks; 26 Armenians; 18 Serbs; Croatians; Slovenians; 9 polish; 5 Turks; 3 Albanians; 2 Greeks; 70 others (compared to 132.719 Romanians; 123.317 Hungarians; 11.283 Germans; 9.959 Jews etc. in Mureş County).<sup>7</sup>

In 1935, according to the Mayor Emil Dandea's statement, the Romanian population in Tîrgu Mureş reached 30%, in which case the Hungarian population, who used to hold the absolute majority until then, now only, hold a relative majority.<sup>8</sup>

Population development in Tîrgu Mureş interwar 1918-1934 <sup>9</sup>						
Year	Total	Romanians	Hungarians	Jews	Germans	Others
<b>1910</b>	25.155	2.983	18.789	2.775	608	-
<b>1920</b>	31.000	4.000		27.000		
<b>1923</b>	35.000	7.500	22.500	3.500	620	880
<b>1930</b>	38.517	9.795	22.387	4.828	1.500	
<b>1934</b>	39.000	10.000	22.500		6.500	

The Hungarian minority has maintained, at least through its elites, a reluctant attitude towards the new authorities in the years following 1918. It tried to resist any form of adjustment to the new realities, counting on a favorable decision for Hungary at Trianon, or on the resumption of political control by the Hungarian authorities, including military force - for example, the Hungarian army offensives in 1919, probably expected to be supported through subversive/undermining internal actions - I personally took notice, from the testimony of a local of Sângorgiul de Pădure village in 1996 about

<sup>5</sup> Emil Dandea, *Darea de seamă despre starea generală a orașului municipal Tg.-Mureş în 1923*, Tîrgu Mureş, 1924, p. 9.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 12.

<sup>7</sup> *Recensământul din 1930 (The Census of 1930)*, vol. V, pp. 239, 242.

<sup>8</sup> Emil Dandea, *Darea de seamă despre starea generală a orașului municipal Tg.-Mureş în 1935*, Tîrgu Mureş, 1936, p. 10.

<sup>9</sup> Virgil Pană, *Minoritari și majoritari în Transilvania interbelică*, Tîrgu Mureş, Editura Tipomur (Tipomur Publishing House), 2005, p. 84, Emil Dandea, *Darea de seamă despre starea generală a orașului municipal Tg.-Mureş în 1923*, p. 10; *Ibidem*, 1935, p. 49; *Recensământul din 1930*, vol. V, pp. 239, 242.

a uprising that took place in 1919, in the area by the hungarianized Szeklers against the Romanian authorities, in which the local nobleman took part, followed by his refuge in Hungary after the defeat of the movement - most likely due to his economic force, but also as a result of a deficiency in Romanian specialists used by the Romanian state to enforce its authority.

Even though the Trianon Peace Treaty of 1920 established Transylvania's affiliation to Romania, ethnic minorities, especially the Hungarian minority, intended to keep their authority where they hold the absolute majority. Their goal seemed achievable, provided that there were still not enough well-trained and capable Romanian officials to replace the old aggregate, and the ones from the Old Kingdom of Romania had the severe disability of not knowing the minority language, which would largely obstruct communication with most officials and would generate their suspicion towards their fellow Romanian inhabitants who knew Hungarian. On their end, minority officials failed to learn the official language and to take an oath for the Romanian State, trying to obstruct Romanians' access in institutions.

The decisions made during the peace treaties in 1919-1920, which seemed to have established a stable world order for the foreseeable future, led to a tinting in the minority population's behavior, most visibly manifested in switching from a reserved attitude of superiority to a gradual accommodation to the new political realities, part of the Hungarian, Jew and German youth attending Romanian schools and a new form of activism being developed, Hungarian and German minorities, and later the Jews, creating their own political forces - The Hungarian Party in 1922, the German party in 1921 and the Jewish Party in 1931.

In this context, the declared intention of liberal mayor Mr. Emil Dandea, in both his warrants (1922-1926 and 1933-1937) was to use all legal means for a demographic development "adequate for the state's interests and for the reality that Tîrgu Mureş is surrounded by a Romanian population".<sup>10</sup>

We understand, from the mayor's declared intentions stated above, that the restructuring of the ethnic composition of the city - and Transylvanian cities in general - was the political objective of the utmost importance for the Romanian State, both of restorative purpose - the resistance of Hungarian, German, Armenian etc. communities from the controlled villages being notoriously well known towards other ethnic groups' settlement on their territory-, and of strengthening the Romanian element in the cities as a stronger ground for the Romanian authority, as well as creating better circumstances for the Romanian nation's development, targeting the economy and all the other aspects of urban life.

This type of policy is not unique, as it has applied to numerous states since the 19th century to the present, with definitive clues that no ethnic community, regardless of its nature and stated political principles, has the slightest intention to give up its advantage.

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<sup>10</sup> Emil Dandea, *Darea de seamă despre starea generală a orașului municipal Tg.-Mureş în 1923*, p. 12.

It needs to be mentioned that this objective was not through going. The Romanian administration, like any other, has been concerned with improving the existential conditions of the city as well as administrative and authority acts under all aspects, for the residences' convenience, obviously in accordance with the applicable law in effect.

Under that legislation, the minority ethnic officials - the ones who desired, of course - even in leadership positions, had the chance to extend their years of work, as a result of Romanian authorities' tolerance towards those, in public functions, who did not have the slightest willingness to learn the state's official language at a reasonable level, in certain instances still happening in Tîrgu Mureş in the mid 1930s.

Obviously, the Romanian government has made its presence felt firsthand through external aspects, easily noticeable.

In that sense, throughout the interwar period regulations regarding street names have been issued.

Through Government ordinance no. 71 from/issued May 15, 1920, The General Secretariat of Transylvania ordered: "...let the streets be assigned Romanian names: historical, of the Royal Family and great people of this country from the past, and of those who built Great Romania".

Paragraph 22 of art. 104 of Local Government Organization Act 1929 passed this issue on to the jurisdiction of local councils, offering them freedom in assigning bilingual or trilingual street names, meaning they could use a language other than Romanian in the official inscriptions, but the subsequent injunctions were restrictive, entailing the use of Romanian language only, prohibiting the use of previously held names.

As a consequence of the regulatory documents regarding this issue, most streets in Tîrgu Mureş, especially the main roads and the ones located in the central area, have been named after members of the royal family, politicians and generals, Romanian intellectuals and artists.<sup>11</sup>

Architectonically speaking, following the urban explosion at the beginning of the 20th century, exemplified by representative, public and private structures, mainly Secession style during interwar, between the establishment of the Romanian government and the Vienna Dictate in august 30, 1940, to be precise, the urban landscape was enriched by:

- "Avram Iancu" community center of Romanian disciples (Img. 1), Neo-Romanian style, current headquarter of the Territorial Labor Inspectorate, built during 1924-1935.<sup>12</sup>
- At the northern end of the city's central market - "Rose Square", former "King Ferdinand", no.1 -, the Orthodox Church currently called "the Great Cathedral" (Img. 2), was built between 1925-1934, Neo-Byzantine architectural style, having been the largest orthodox church in the country at that time.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Pál-Antal, Sándor, *Indicatorul străzilor, pasajelor și pietelor din Tg.-Mureş*, Tîrgu Mureş, Editura Mentor, 1997, p. 190.

<sup>12</sup> Ioan Eugen Man, *Târgu-Mureş, istorie urbană perioada interbelică*, Tîrgu Mureş, Editura Nico), 2010, p. 149.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 162-179.

- At the opposite end of the central square, the Greek Catholic Church was built, now called “The Small Cathedral” - orthodox (Img. 3), built during 1927-1936, Neoclassical style.<sup>14</sup>
- The Synagogue and the Israelite Orthodox School, built on Braila Street, traditional Mosaic style, both unfinished.<sup>15</sup>
- The Jewish House of Culture, Secession style, its construction approved in 1926, finished in 1929, situated in 4 Corso Passage (currently 4 Poligrafiei Street).<sup>16</sup>
- The new State Hospital (now Municipal Hospital), started in 1928 and finished in 1937, situated on 1 Gh. Marinescu Street.<sup>17</sup>
- The Sanatorium on 29 Koteles Samuel Street, now Obstetrics and Gynecology Clinic II, started in 1928.<sup>18</sup>
- Unitarian Church on 13 Bolyai Street, Neo-Gothic style, built between 1929-1931.<sup>19</sup>
- The New Prefectural Building, the current City Hall (Img 4), was built in the late 1930s, Neo-Romanian style. It was renovated between 1940-1944, under the Hungarian Government, when the style of the construction was changed back to the initial plan after 1990.<sup>20</sup>

It may be concluded that the municipal operation has been developed through 3 main branches:

- Public buildings - State Hospital, the new Prefecture, adding the airport terminal -, revamping the Water Plant and developing the water distribution system, building the second water park (“summer bay”), improving the sports ground etc.
- Community buildings - The Synagogue and the Israelite Orthodox School, The Jewish House of Culture, the Unitarian Church, situated/located in central yet less visible area of the public space.
- Buildings that combined the public and community interest with the Romanian authorities’ policy, especially during the national-liberal government, of significant facilitation for the Romanian element in the central area of the city - The Orthodox Church, The Greek Catholic Church, one at each end of the Central Square, the new Prefecture, the Community Center of Romanian disciples.

They come as an attempt to overcome the outer nature of the Romanian community in Tîrgu Mureş and place it in the foreground.

The placement of public monuments is part of the urban area as well.

On one hand, in the early years of the Romanian government, the monuments representing Kossuth Lajos, Josef Bem (statue granted to Poland in 1928) and Petofi Sandor have been removed, as they were

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<sup>14</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 179-194.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 217.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 159.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 154-155.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 155.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 217.

<sup>20</sup> Ioan Eugen Man, *op. cit.*, pp. 119-143.

correlated with the revolution in Hungary and Transylvania in 1848-1849, infamous for the Romanian community.

On the other hand, their place was taken by other monuments, representing Romanian historical symbols and individuals: The Monument of Latinity (Img. 5), placed in front of the City Hall in 1923, The Monument of the Unknown Soldier (Img. 6), The Equestrian Statue of Avram Iancu (Img 7), placed in The Rose Square in 1930, replaced today by the Romanian Soldier statue, Alexandru Papiu-Ilarian's bust (Img. 8), Romanian revolutionary in 1848, lawyer and historian, placed in front of the Boys' State High School of the same name in 1930.<sup>21</sup> Other monuments that need to be mentioned are the ones built in memory of Vasile Pop and Constantin Romanu-Vivu in Nazna and Sangeorgiul de Mureş villages, martyred by the Hungarian authorities in 1848, as well as the marble plaque from 1936 that commemorates the great poet Mihai Eminescu crossing Tîrgu Mureş.

Regarding the relations between the Romanian State and the local government of Tîrgu Mureş, considering that, like anywhere in Transylvania, the officials represented an overwhelming minority at the beginning of the new Romanian Administration, the national-liberal mayor Emil Dandea handled the situation.

When he took over, at the end of 1922, he understood that the use of the Romanian language at City Hall could only happen with a translator. All meetings were held in Hungarian, just as all documents were written in the same language. In 1923, considered the first year of true Romanian government, all heads of departments were non-Romanians.

This issue was brought up in a meeting of the Administrative Committee on March 7, 1924, as an effort to satisfy the national governmental interest by Mayor Emil Dandea.

1923 marked an important step forward regarding the implementation of the Romanian Government in Tîrgu Mureş, by removing those officials who did not speak Romanian.

Overlooking errors found in the Romanian language exam papers, introduced in 1924 - or the severe absence of alternatives regarding the old experienced minority officials - led to a number of minority officials who did not know the official language to still hold their positions in 1934, some of them given an early retirement, while others fired for this reason, arising in protest taken all the way to international courts.

Regarding the public officials of Tîrgu Mureş interwar, we have the following data:

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<sup>21</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 456-464

Public Officials in Tg.-Mureș interwar <sup>22</sup>					
Years	Officials total	Of which			
		Romanians		Minorities	
		Nr.	%	Nr.	%
1925	165	84	50,91	81	49,09
1937	145	105	72,41	40	27,59

According to the administrative law in 1925, minorities were represented, in those institutions established as a result of elections, by 20% if they received at least 20% of the valid votes. According to 1929 law, each list was given a number of warrants proportionate to the number of votes (for minorities, provided they received the 20%).

The number of minority councilors in Transylvania had an increase for the minority after the administrative law of 1929, as it can be seen in the table below<sup>23</sup>:

Counselors	Before 1929	After 1929
Hungarians	200	341
Germans	115	122
Jews	64	99

Since the mid-1920s, two divergent developments took place.

On one hand, Mayor Emil Dandea, during his first term from 1923-1927, proceeded to replace 145 people from City Hall whose ethnic backgrounds had not been mentioned but, using logic, they must have been non-Romanian speakers, very likely Hungarians, with 115 highly qualified Romanians, more skilled than the previous ones, and than the regulations in force.<sup>24</sup> The change was based on Hungarian disciplinary laws - generally, prewar Hungarian laws have been applied for years in Transylvania -, maintained for a while, with minimal changes, by the Romanian authorities. The process continued, by removing those who did not know Romanian. The counteraction consisted of a number of actions, like the one in 1934, when the Hungarian Party forbade the oath of the Hungarian vice-president and 4 members who had been appointed in the Interim Committee.<sup>25</sup>

At the higher level of bureaucracy in other public institutions in Tîrgu Mureş, a substantial implementation of Romanian ethnic fundamentalism took place, that has come to take over the boards of the Financial Administration, Hygiene Council, Labor Inspectorate, city enterprises, courts, Prosecutor, Army, Police, and Constabulary. The minorities in those institutions, almost exclusively Hungarians, have been required to learn the

<sup>22</sup> Emil Dandea, *Darea de seamă despre starea generală a orașului municipal Tg.-Mureş în 1924*, p. 154.

<sup>23</sup> Virgil Pană, *op. cit.*, p. 103.

<sup>24</sup> Emil Dandea, *Darea de seamă despre starea generală a orașului municipal Tg.-Mureş în 1923*, p. 26.

<sup>25</sup> Idem, *Darea de seamă despre starea generală a orașului municipal Tg.-Mureş în 1924*, p. 45.

basic fundamentals of the Romanian language, tested periodically through exams<sup>26</sup>:

Report showing the officials' exam results in Mures county and Tîrgu Mureş interwar					
Institution	Year	Applicants		Absents	Retired
		Accepted	Rejected		
<b>Mures County Prefecture</b>	1924	30	10	-	8
	1934	86	-	-	-
	1937	96	1	-	-
<b>Total</b>		212	11	-	8
<b>Tg.-Mureş City Hall</b>	1924	65	14	13	-
	1934	48	26	5	-
	1937	27	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>		<b>140</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>18</b>	-

The Administrative Commission of the city, during a hearing on March 7<sup>th</sup>, 1924 decided that the officials who did not know Romanian could not be drastically punished, but instead forced into early retirement and given their pensions.<sup>27</sup>

Prior to exams, there had been established Romanian language schools. Exams started on October 22, 1924. Out of 94 enrolled candidates, 14 were rejected, 13 were dropouts after having declared that they did not know the official language, and the rest were accepted.<sup>28</sup>

According to these results, whereas the Mureş County Prefecture, where the staff consisted of Romanian officials, did not encounter any problems regarding the official language, at City Hall, where a significant number of employees were non-Romanians kept since the Austro-Hungarian administration, there is a strong reluctance in learning the official language.

On the other hand, private institutions and organizations - Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Chamber of Agriculture, industrial and commercial employers' and professional organizations, professional organizations of private lawyers and notaries, significant parts of the City Council, during the late 1920s and early 1930s - as well as virtually all economic activity were still led by the Hungarian and Hungarianized Jew minorities, not only after World War I but also after World War II. Obviously, the language used in these institutions and organizations was Hungarian.

The policy to promote the Romanians into public administration in Tîrgu Mureş during interwar - as Romanian officials were being trained - was a simple method, if they were appointed those positions. After the massive changes started in 1923, ethnic minority officials were being replaced by Romanian officials, as they were leaving the system.<sup>29</sup>

<sup>26</sup> Emil Dandea, *Darea de seamă despre starea generală a orașului municipal Tg.-Mureş în 1924*, p. 55.

<sup>27</sup> Arhivele Naționale, Serviciul Județean Mureş (A.N.S.J.M.), Fond Primăria Tîrgu Mureş - Comisia Administrativă a orașului municipal Tîrgu Mureş, Registrul nr. 423, fila 5.

<sup>28</sup> Emil Dandea, *Darea de seamă despre starea generală a orașului municipal Tg.-Mureş în 1923*, p. 55.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 27; Idem, *Darea de seamă despre starea generală a orașului municipal Tg.-Mureş în 1924*, p. 54; Idem, *Darea de seamă despre starea generală a orașului municipal Tg.-Mureş în 1925*, Tîrgu Mureş, 1926, p. 72.

A significant change in the ethnic structure took place in 1928, when the National Peasant Party took over in Romania and the Hungarian Party in Tîrgu Mureş, with a new mayor - Mr. Bernády György.

In this context, the non-Romanian councilors had the majority, making for the possibility that Mr. Bernády György's old promise of re-Hungarianization of local administration would be fulfilled.

The reverse of the situation occurred once the National Liberal Party regained leadership, in 1933.<sup>30</sup>

According to Emil Dandea's statements, the last officials who did not know Romanian, 34 people, were either dismissed or forced into retirement in 1934.

During Carol II's royal dictatorship in early 1938, the Romanianization process peaked.

In Tîrgu Mureş, as well as throughout Transylvania, interwar, the economy - industry, trade, commerce, banks - was predominantly controlled by Hungarian and Jew minorities. This fact was entirely proven by the records from the registry of Mureş Commerce between 1900-1950, when an overwhelming majority of the associates, shareholders and industrial and commercial enterprise management members were Hungarians and Hungarianized Jews.

During the interwar years, there were 250 registered social companies, having Jews as the predominant force: 32 production firms, 21 of which were ruled by Jews (with over 50% of the management and / or shareholders) and 6 controlled by non-Jews, 117 commercial firms, 82 Jewish and 35 with another majority than Jewish, 37 production and commerce firms, 30 controlled by Jews, the rest by a non-Jew majority, 7 production firms, 2 of Jewish majority and 5 of another majority, 36 service firms, 13 ruled by Jews, the rest by another majority, 6 commerce and service firms, 5 of which had a Jew majority. In the banking system, 4 out of 15 banks were Jewish, the rest having members of other ethnicity, only 2 with Romanian funds.<sup>31</sup>

The occupational structure in Tîrgu Mureş in 1923, consisted of 1.235 qualified industrialists, 48 Romanians, 359 industrialists with permits (unknown difference), of which 25 Romanians, 98 great industrialists, with 7 Romanians (in city plants/factories), 842 merchants, of which 15 Romanians, 859 involved in other activities, of which 21 Romanians.<sup>32</sup>

Of the 32 existing professional associations and unions, the following were managed by Romanians: The Romanian Craftsmen Union, Industrial Association of Tailors, Administrative Civil Association, Medical Association, Teachers Association, Chartered Accountants Body, the other 26 being led by Hungarians and Jews.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> Emil Dandea, *Darea de seamă despre starea generală a orașului municipal Tg.-Mureş în 1934/1935*, p. 61.

<sup>31</sup> A.N.S.J.M., Fond Tribunalul Mureş, Registrele nr. 8, 9, 10 Firme Sociale. See also „Marisia - Studii și materiale”, XXIX, Tîrgu Mureş, 2009, pp. 113-130.

<sup>32</sup> Emil Dandea, *Darea de seamă despre starea generală a orașului municipal Tg.-Mureş în 1923*, p. 21.

<sup>33</sup> Idem, *Darea de seamă despre starea generală a orașului municipal Tg.-Mureş în 1925*, pp. 60-64.

Patents and licenses issued between 1913-1923 in Tîrgu Mureş <sup>34</sup>							
No. crt.	Types of activities	Year					
		1913	1918	1919	1920	1921	1923
<b>1</b>	<b>Qualified industrialists - total</b>	82	94	192	135	160	139
	<b>Romanians</b>	1	1	7	8	16	23
<b>2</b>	<b>Permits-related industries - total</b>	44	58	50	50	37	70
	<b>Romanians</b>	1	1	3	2	3	2
<b>3</b>	<b>Large industry - total</b>	-	1	1	13	8	4
	<b>Romanians</b>	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>4</b>	<b>Commerce - total</b>	70	56	102	105	90	95
	<b>Romanians</b>	2	1	2	1	3	2
<b>5</b>	<b>Others - total</b>	21	148	148	221	165	207
	<b>Romanians</b>	1	2	10	21	13	17
							9

In 1924 - first year of true Romanian administration, according to mayor Emil Dandea -, the situation was changed: the industries with patents met with a slight rebound regarding the number of Romanian entrepreneurs, and their presence was negligible when it came to the "large industry", but there was a significant increase when it came to the Permits-related industry, Commerce and other occupations.<sup>35</sup>

In 1925 the ethnic ratio was still favorable for the minorities. While there were 801 contracts for Hungarian, Jewish, German and other apprentices, Romanians only had 148. Journeymen work rights were assigned to 444 Hungarians, Jews, Germans and others, but limited at 148 for Romanians.<sup>36</sup> During the interwar years, there were improvements to the ethnic ratio, favorable for Romanians.

As for individual firms, overall, the proportion of Jewish firms was approximately 50%.<sup>37</sup>

In 1931, the ethnic structure of employers and workers in Tîrgu Mureş had the following composition:

<sup>34</sup> Ibidem, p. 22

<sup>35</sup> Emil Dandea, *Darea de seamă despre starea generală a orașului municipal Tg.-Mureş în 1923*, p. 47.

<sup>36</sup> Idem, *Darea de seamă despre starea generală a orașului municipal Tg.-Mureş în 1925*, p. 76.

<sup>37</sup> A.N.D.J.M., Fond Camera de Comerç și Industrie (C.C.I.) Tîrgu Mureş, Registrul Firmelor Individuale, Inventar nr. 42, Vol. I-Nr. 409, Vol. II-Nr. 410, Vol. III-411, Vol. IV-Nr. 412, Vol. V-Nr. 413, Vol. VI-Nr. 414, Vol. VII-Nr. 415, Vol. VIII-Nr. 416, Vol. IX-Nr. 417, Vol. X-Nr. 418, Vol. XI-Nr. 418, Vol. XII-nr. 419, Vol. XIII-Nr. 420, Vol. XIV-Nr. 421, Vol. XV-Nr. 422.

Employers' and workers' nationalities structure in Mures county in 1931 <sup>38</sup>										
<b>Category</b>	<b>Romanians</b>		<b>Hungarians</b>		<b>Germans</b>		<b>Jews</b>		<b>Others</b>	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
<b>Craftsmen-owners</b>	1148	21,77	2898	54,95	394	7,47	689	13,06	145	2,75
<b>Journeymen</b>	369	18,64	1259	63,58	136	6,87	142	7,17	74	3,74
<b>Apprentices</b>	219	21,20	655	63,40	56	5,61	94	9,10	7	0,68

While the issues regarding artisans, journeymen, apprentices were finding a natural balance, the composition and leadership of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry were facing a different situation.

Its Steering Committee included, in 1925, 3 Romanian members and 4 minority members, so that in 1928 there were 2 Romanians and 6 Hungarians and Jews, Romanians always representing a minority.

In 1927 - considering that there were too many foreigners and minorities in the Romanian industry, according to Romanian authorities -, the Romanian State emphasized the urge to increase the number of Romanians in the industry, which proved detrimental to the minorities and foreigners, with the exception of those qualified, yet not even they were completely safe.

The workforce Romanization policy was motivated by the Romanian authorities, as a result of the "surprisingly large share of minority citizens" in industry and commerce, and of the fact that "...public and media influenced the start of a two-front action, namely the removal of foreign elements, followed by a decrease in the minority percentage from industry and commerce", using limitations and two laws for the protection of the native element.

Foreigners who "swarmed around the country" in search of unqualified work were sent back to where they came from (=place of origin), with the exception of those qualified who could not have been replaced by locals without jeopardizing the normal operation of local businesses.

Reaching the goal of increasing the Romanian element in the industry meant applying the Law of 1936 for professional training and occupational use, the Secondary Commercial Education Act and Secondary Industrial Education Act.

The professional education of Romanians has been pursued, using the proliferation of professional schools, the establishment of scholarships to study abroad, close supervision and censorship of publishing releases.

By Stamp Act 1927, foreign workers were forced to pay 200 lei per person fee, officials 400 lei and owners 1.000 lei.

In 1932, the amounts that owners had to pay increased to 500 lei for every indispensable foreigner, and in 1938 the same owners had to pay 1.000 lei for one unqualified foreign worker, 2.000 lei for a qualified one, 5.000 lei for an inferior member of the technical and administrative staff and 10.000 for a superior one.

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<sup>38</sup> Virgil Pană, *op. cit.*, p. 224.

Regarding the situation in Transylvania and Banat, the Romanianization policy was seen as the repairing of a historical inequity that Austro-Hungary Romanians had faced.

As a result of the mentioned measures, the growth achieved by the Romanian element as opposed to minorities in 1927 represented 77,06%.<sup>39</sup>

During the interwar years, the main focus during the Romanian administration occurred in Mureş justice.

On one hand, the judicial branch - prosecutors, judges - was Romanianized in high proportion.

There was a crack within this professional category, on one hand due to the naming of judges born in the Old Kingdom of Romania in top positions, better paid yet with no knowledge of the Hungarian language, which led to frustration, maybe even suspicion, and prevented good communication with the minorities, as well as with their local co-workers, who spoke Hungarian. On the other hand, the local magistrates considered themselves to be disadvantaged and aggrieved compared to their Old Kingdom counterparts.

The other focus is represented by the evolution of the body of lawyers, which has kept its Hungarian and Jew majority, this difference is emphasized by the larger number of ethnic minority trainees.

The magistrates in Tg.-Mureş						
Tg.-Mureş Courthouse	Years	Total	Of which			
			Romanians		Minorities	
			No.	%	No.	%
	1923	27	17	62,96	10	37,04
	1936	36	31	86,11	5	13,89

The personnel of Tg.-Mureş Appellate Court consisted of 75.86% Romanians and 22.14% minorities.<sup>40</sup>

Lawyers in Mureş County in 1936						
Mureş Bar	Total lawyers	Of which				
		Permanent		Trainees		
		Romanians	Minorities	Romanians	Minorities	
	130	35	77	7	11	

It can be easily noticed, while the number of civil servants in the judicial branch has increased significantly the proportions regarding liberal professions unfolded in a private regimen have been different, the presence of Jewish and Hungarian minorities being maintained, its consolidation being intended.

<sup>39</sup> *Enciclopedia României*, Bucureşti, 1938, vol. III, pp. 78-79, 229.

<sup>40</sup> Virgil Pană, *op. cit.*, pp. 155-156.

A similar situation existed within the health field as well.

The structure of the Hygiene Council, in regards to appointed members, revealed a Romanian majority.<sup>41</sup> Doctors in hospitals and private practice were mostly minorities. All 12 Romanian doctors had status of state officials. The same status was held by 17 Hungarians and Jews. Aside from them, there were 18 with private practices. There were 11 pharmacies in the city, one of which was Romanian property. A single midwife was Romanian, out of 25.<sup>42</sup>

The situation has developed, and after more than 10 years, in 1934/1935, there were 70 doctors, of which 24 Romanians, 20 Hungarians, 23 Jews and Germans.

Regarding the educational system in Mureş County, 46 Hungarian schools and 76 Romanian denominational schools had been preserved since the Hungarian administration before 1918, without the existence of Romanian schools maintained by the state.

During 1924-1925 there were 206 primary schools, 121 of them Romanian - 18 with Hungarian branches - 12 Hungarian and 18 Romanian schools supported by the state, 149 Hungarian and 6 German denominational schools. Of the 21.373 children, 11.650 were Hungarians (54.51%), 8.503 Romanians (39.78%), 873 Germans (4.1%), 870 Jews (4.1%). 422 Jews took courses in Romanian secondary and middle schools.

In contrast, during 1930-1931 there were 215 state primary schools, of which: 56 Romanian - with 26 Hungarian branches - and 159 denominational schools for the minorities, to be exact 27 Roman-Catholic schools, 106 Reform (Calvinist) schools, 13 Unitarian schools, 11 Evangelical, 2 Mosaic.<sup>43</sup>

A Romanian system of schools was created in 1919 and more intensely in 1923-1924 school year, consisting of "Al. Papiu Ilarian" State Boys High School, "Unirea" State Girls High School, "Mihai Viteazul" Military High School - transferred to Alba Iulia in 1940 - and The Regular School, adding Boys' School of Commerce and a similar one for girls, School of Arts and Crafts, where most students were Romanian.

According to Mayor Emil Dandea, students' distribution by schools and nationalities in 1925 was as follows<sup>44</sup>:

School	School students in Tg.-Mureş in 1925				
	Hungarians	Romanians	Jews	Germans	Others
<b>Boys State High School „Alexandru Papiu-Ilarian”</b>	104	419	44	-	4
<b>Military High</b>	-	608	-	-	-

<sup>41</sup> Emil Dandea, *Darea de seamă despre starea generală a orașului municipal Tg.-Mureş în 1923*, p. 55.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 14.

<sup>43</sup> Emil Dandea, *Darea de seamă despre starea generală a orașului municipal Tg.-Mureş în 1924*, pp. 36-38; Idem, *Darea de seamă despre starea generală a orașului municipal Tg.-Mureş în 1934*, p. 126.

<sup>44</sup> Idem, *Darea de seamă despre starea generală a orașului municipal Tg.-Mureş în 1925*, p. 48.

<b>School</b>					
<b>Girls State High School „Unirea”</b>	39	289	46	-	-
<b>Reform College</b>	375	-	26	-	-
<b>Roman-Catholic High School</b>	232	-	14	-	-
<b>Girls Reform Middle School</b>	203	-	-	-	-
<b>Girls Roman-Catholic Middle school</b>	140	-	-	-	-
<b>Regular School</b>	2	297	-	-	-
<b>Boys Commercial High School</b>	13	132	26	1	-
<b>Girls Commercial High School</b>	25	41	4	2	4
<b>School of Arts and Crafts</b>	10	147	1	-	-
<b>Music Conservatory</b>	164	98	122	4	-
<b>School of Industrial Apprentices</b>	921	171	124	1	-
<b>School of Commercial Apprentices</b>	54	5	15	1	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>2.282</b>	<b>2.204</b>	<b>422</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Primary Schools</b>	2.441	410	719	39	8
<b>Kindergartens</b>	221	58	78	3	3
<b>French Institute</b>	8	16	-	66	-

There needs to be added a number of 25 teachers from “Al. Papiu-Ilarian” High School, 28 from “Mihai Viteazul” Military High School, and 23 from “Unirea” High School, with their family members.

Romanian students from the middle schools that were built starting with 1919 contributed to the growth of the Romanian population in the city, as they were entitled to live in the city without needing the residential status.<sup>45</sup> “Avram Iancu” Hostel was built afterwards, adding a number of 200 apprentices to the population.

As most of these students were residing in rural areas, the more precise proportional data of the children’s ethnicities was more accurately shown by the number of children in primary schools and kindergartens, because they were Tîrgu Mureş natives.

A slight difference can be noticed between these two levels of education, the percentage of Hungarian children being higher in primary schools than in kindergartens. The difference is most probably due to the gradual increase in the percentage of Romanian natives in Tîrgu Mureş.

In 1919, the first Romanian Boys High School from the middle and upper side of Mureş River was founded, named after Alexandru Papiu Ilarian, Romanian revolutionary in 1848, later historian and politician.

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<sup>45</sup> Emil Dandea, *Darea de seamă despre starea generală a orașului municipal Tg.-Mureş în 1923*, p. 12.

In the early years, teachers were being recruited from Romanian confessional schools from Beius, Brasov and Nasaud (Transylvanian cities), Hungarian schools, Hungarian teachers that took the oath in front of the Romanian State and passed the Romanian exam (3 out of 49), teachers from the Old Romanian Kingdom, graduates of Universities of Cluj and Iasi<sup>46</sup>, a German Opera conductor, a member of the French mission, that came to Romania following the French convention.

“Unirea” High School had a similar progression.<sup>47</sup>

Students of „Al. Papiu Ilarian” High School/ „Unirea” High School during 1919-1935 <sup>48</sup>							
Year	Lower/Inferior Course	Upper/Superior Course	Total	Nationality			
				Romania n	Hungaria n	Jewish	Other
1919 / 1920	210/45	28/-	238/45	235/45	2/-	-/-	1/-
1923 / 1924	337/174	106/19	443/193	391/159	10/9	42/25	-/-
1928 / 1929	230/256	199/81	429/337	337/154	10/27	79/53	3/4
1934 / 1935	-/	-/	589/463	383/273	62/73	122/124	16/6

The case of “Al. Papiu Ilarian” High School is emblematic for the educational policy of The Romanian State in the service of the Romanian nation.

While all students were Romanians during the first years of the Romanian administration, a lot of them coming from other locales, once it became clear that the new political situation was not temporary, the number of minority students increased - considering that the education had to be paid in part by the students - especially the Jewish students who attended Hungarian schools, up until 1918, partially during the interwar period too.

A different situation, symptomatic for Tg.-Mureş in 1923, can be noticed regarding the ethnic structure of the Conservatory of Music students. Out of 378 students, 215 were Hungarian, 101 were Jews and 62, representing 16%, were Romanians. Apparently this progression was what authorities wanted, as the number of Romanian students increased to 98 out of 388, in 1925, 78 of 268 in 1930/1931, and to 97 Romanian students

<sup>46</sup> Anuarul Liceului de Băieți „Alexandru Papiu Ilarian” 1919-1920, Tîrgu Mureş, Tipografia Ardealul, 1930, p. 125.

<sup>47</sup> Arhiva Colegiului Național „Unirea”, Tg.-Mureş, Matricolele nr. 1, 4, 20, 21, 40, 41, 42, 43.

<sup>48</sup> Anuarul Liceului de Băieți „Alexandru Papiu Ilarian” 1919-1920, p. 150, „Liceul Al. Papiu Ilarian la 75 de ani”, Tîrgu Mureş, 1994, p. 26. The Statistical differences from the present study are due exclusively to the analysed resources. In the case of „Al. Papiu-Ilarian” High-school, the correct data is the one from the school's yearbook.

out of 192 a decade later, in 1935/1936, and to 112 Romanian students out of 186 in the upcoming year.<sup>49</sup>

<b>Conservatory of Music students in Tg.-Mureş during 1923-1937</b>					
<b>Number of students</b>	<b>Year</b>				
	<b>1923/1924</b>	<b>1927/1928</b>	<b>1930/1931</b>	<b>1933/1934</b>	<b>1936/1937</b>
<b>Total</b>	378	411	268	223	186
<b>Romanians</b>	62	106	78	54	112

Regarding the progression of the official state language in Tîrgu Mureş schools, the School Inspectorate reports offer significant pieces of information submitted to the Administrative Commission between 1923-1924 (Others have not been kept)

In its report of March 7, 1924, the School Inspectorate brought to attention that learning Romanian in minority schools was made possible, 12 hours per week, in subjects like Romanian literature, geography, history, Homeland Constitution. Romanian teachers have been hired where there was a deficiency.

The progress made in the knowledge of Romanian language was considered satisfactory, with the exception of Girls and Boys Roman-Catholic and Reform schools, the best progress being noticed at No.2 Jewish School - on Mihai Eminescu Str., currently the building of the County Military Center, where 257 students learned. The Jewish students' progress, in every subject, was reemphasized in the Inspectorate report of May 17, 1924.

On the other hand, the Inspectorate report of September 19, 1924 only shows the existence of Romanian branches at 2 of 5 primary schools, as only 7-8 students showed up and requested entry. As for kindergartens, the report stated that "The 2 kindergartens have been populated with non-Romanian children, following retention, when they were almost empty".<sup>50</sup>

Besides all activities mentioned regarding the encouraging of the Romanian element in Tîrgu Mureş, a less common one is referred to in 1934. The (re)Romanization of Székler Romanians was envisaged, their number noted at approximately 500.<sup>51</sup> In 1935, the issue came to the attention of city management. We do not know the possible unfolding and consequences, if any, regarding this issue, as no reference is found in the existing documents.

Romanian authorities acted on several fronts with respect to the cultural situation, especially focused on the two National-Liberal Governments yet again.

In 1924, The History Museum was founded, at Aurel Filimon's initiative - beside the older Székler Industrial Museum - with the

<sup>49</sup> Emil Dandea, *Darea de seamă despre starea generală a orașului municipal Tg.-Mureş în 1923*, p. 15; Idem, *Darea de seamă despre starea generală a orașului municipal Tg.-Mureş în 1925*, p. 48; Idem, *Darea de seamă despre starea generală a orașului municipal Tg.-Mureş în 1936*, p. 37.

<sup>50</sup> A.N.S.J.M., Fond Primăria Tg.-Mureş-Comisia Administrativă a orașului municipal Tîrgu Mureş, Registrul nr. 423, filele 9, 30, 63, 69-71, 78.

<sup>51</sup> Emil Dandea, *Darea de seamă despre starea generală a orașului municipal Tg.-Mureş în 1935*, p. 27.

ethnography, archeology and history departments. The Archaeological excavations performed at Moresti, Cristesti, Idicel, Capușul de Campie and Craciunesti in the following years revealed Roman remains, and those from Sovata and Deda, Dacian remains, which were useful for proving the roman origin, Romanian antiquity and continuity in this area, information that could be used in a long historical dispute regarding ancestry in Transylvania, which would produce historical arguments for political control over the province. These remains, and others, illustrating the historical development in this area, were presented to the public at the exhibition organized on Octavian Floca's initiative at the Palace of Culture.

The leadership of the Museum was exercised by the Historical Society, composed of Romanians in 1935, with the exception of Mr. Jeremias Istvan: President Petre Stoina, Vice-president Isaia Cimpoca, cashier Alexandru Cantor, legal expert Ioan Nestor, censors Matei Pompei and Aurel Ciupă, members Nicolae Bozian, Constantin Romanescu, Ioan Cicoveanu and Laurean Maior.<sup>52</sup>

In 1934, the Romanian drama department was established within the Conservatory, around which the Romanian theatrical movement developed. The "Municipal Theater" Committee was composed of Romanians, with the exception of Mr. Jeremias Istvan: Constantin Loghin, Iosif Muntean, Maximilian Costin and Gheorghe Chirvasuta, Gheorghe Tarnoveanu, Ioan Motas and Aurel Ciupă. In addition to theatrical work, the Municipal Theater Committee was also in charge of the choir led by C. Alexandrescu.

In 1936 the program for completing the fine art gallery of the city was set in motion through the acquisition of the Romanian artwork of Teodorescu-Sion, Gheorghe Petrascu, Alexandru Steriadi, Dumitru Ghiață, L. Grigorescu, Marius Bunescu.

Efforts were made by the authorities to increase the number of books using the languages spoken in Tîrgu Mureș as well as foreign languages, especially French, to diversify the topics, and to increase the number of books written in Romanian. Whilst in 1928, 85% of readers were Hungarian, by 1934, 50% were Romanian<sup>53</sup>.

Romanian professional, social and cultural organizations were adding to their presence, permanently growing.

The interwar period, 1918 (particularly 1923)-1940 proved to be insufficient for implementing the ethnic composition of Tîrgu Mureș balancing policy in accordance with the ethnic structure of the county population, and for fixing the historical handicap imposed by privileged nations on Romanian ethnicity.

Horthy government eradicated with extreme brutality Romanian progression in Tîrgu Mureș: besides the Hungarianization of street names, the public and businesses display, the removal of Romanian symbols, the expulsion of hundreds of Romanian ethnics occurred, especially those

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<sup>52</sup> Emil Dandea, *Darea de seamă despre starea generală a orașului municipal Tg.-Mureș în 1923*, p. 43; Idem, *Darea de seamă despre starea generală a orașului municipal Tg.-Mureș în 1935*, p. 76.

<sup>53</sup> Idem, *Darea de seamă despre starea generală a orașului municipal Tg.-Mureș în 1934*, p. 74.

belonging to the intellectual elite, the displacing of hundreds, of the most diverse socio-professional conditions, primarily military personnel - "Mihai Viteazul" Military High School was transferred to Alba Iulia - forced Hungarianization of all Romanian names, physical and psychological bullying of Romanian communities, bringing qualified personnel from Hungary that did not know any Romanian, which replaced to an extent and upset even the Hungarian locals. Many Romanians were fired simply because they were Romanians.

The establishment, during 1952-1968, of the Hungarian Autonomous Region, of soviet initiative during the totalitarian regime, delayed for another two decades the establishment of a genuine Romanian administration in Tîrgu Mureş, and the true beginning of its ethnic and demographic natural development.

## **Annexes**



Fig. 1 Căminul de ucenici Avram Iancu



Fig. 2 Proiectul Bisericii Ortodoxe din Piaţa Regele Ferdinand

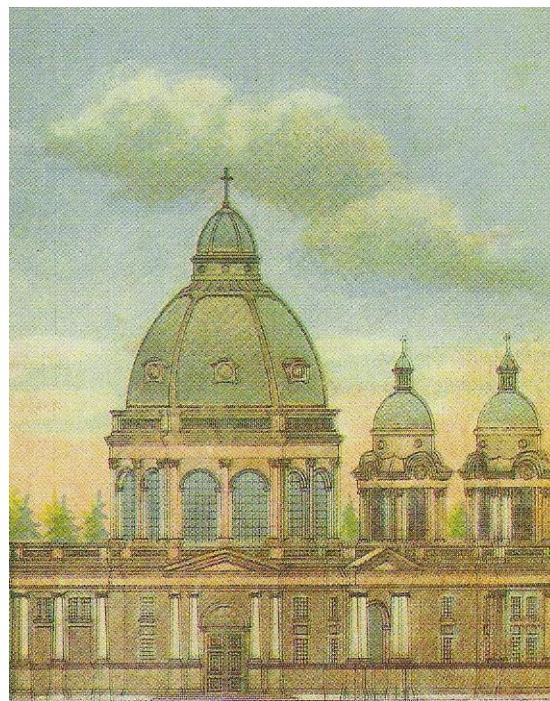


Fig. 3 Proiectul Bisericii greco-catolice din Piaţa Regele Ferdinand



Fig. 4 Proiectul clădirii Prefecturii Mureş

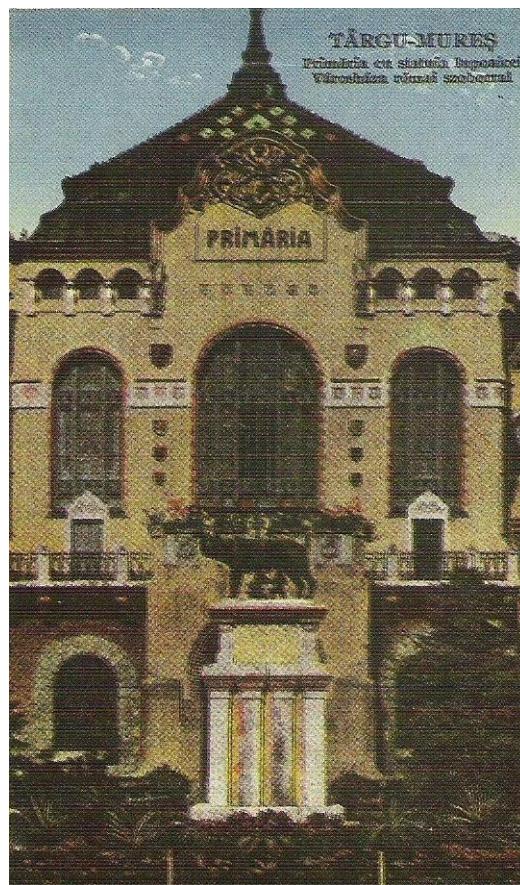


Fig. 5 Statuia Lupa Capitolina



Fig. 6 Statuia Ostaşului Necunoscut



Fig. 7 Statuia lui Avram Iancu



Fig. 8 Bustul lui Alexandru Papiu-Ilarian

**LE GROUPE DES QUATRE  
DANS LE MUSÉE D'ART DE TÎRGU MUREŞ  
(NICOLAE TONITZA ET OSCAR HAN)<sup>1</sup>**

**Cora Fodor\***

***Abstract***

*Many of the Interbellum artists tried, generally for brief periods of time and without having defining aesthetic platforms, to affiliate with various existent movements. Often the main binder were friendship, geographic vicinity and a mutual system of ideas, concepts and perception. Such is the case of Grupul celor patru (The Group of Four) established at the end of 1925 and having its first exhibit in 1926; its core was the genuine friendship between Oscar Han and Ștefan Dimitrescu, who in turn was Tonitza's friend since their adolescence. Later on they were joined by Francisc Șirato, with whom Han declared of having „a lively connection in thought and feeling, as well as endless discussions about art, which practically made us almost inseparable”. And yet this friendship would not have coagulated had they not shared similar ideals and perception of things, an exceptional constructive communication, certain mutual reasoning, each of their positive critical spirit, the thorough artistic education and the wish to avoid compromise. The reasons stated above were able to efficiently replace a programmatic manifesto, ensuring the group's coherence. One thing is certain: even when these artists were bond by strong friendship or common studies, their artistic personality remained unmistakable.*

**Keywords:** Art Museum of Târgu Mureş; The Group of Four; Ștefan Dimitrescu; Francisc Șirato; Nicolae Tonitza; Oscar Han.

Une personnalité de grande complexité des manifestations artistiques de l'entre deux guerres: peintre - coloriste raffiné, peintre d'églises, commentateur intuitif et très acide du phénomène plastique<sup>2</sup>, journaliste et professeur, Nicolae Tonitza suit une direction d'expression différente à celle de son camarade d'école et bon ami, Ștefan Dimitrescu. Et cela, même s'ils se sont formés dans le même milieu de Iassy et même si les deux présentent « le raffinement sain... de l'artiste de bonne race ». Par la tension émotionnelle dégagée de sa création, Tonitza est le successeur direct du lyrisme chromatique de Luchian, et par l'intermédiaire de celui-ci, implicitement, des conquêtes formelles et picturales de Grigorescu. Si Dimitrescu a gagné sa « réputation d'un dessinateur sans pareil chez nous... »<sup>3</sup>, Tonitza est un coloriste par excellence chez qui, « la forme se

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<sup>1</sup> Le présent travail appartenant à ma thèse de doctorat et constitue la seconde partie de l'étude « Le Groupe des Quatre dans le Musée d'Art de Tîrgu Mureş ».

<sup>2</sup> Petre Oprea, *Critici de artă în presa bucureșteană a anilor 1931-1937*, Bucureşti, Editura Tehnică Agricolă, 1997, pp. 79-84.

<sup>3</sup> N. Tonitza, *Scrieri despre artă*, Préface de Tudor Arghezi. Recueil de textes, à notes et à préface de Raoul Şorban, Bucureşti, Editura Tineretului, 1962, p. 148.

traduit toujours par la couleur », étant un « éminent harmoniste »<sup>4</sup> d'une sereine sensorialité. Cette maîtrise des accords chromatiques se reflète aussi dans sa méticulosité d'organiser la palette de peintre<sup>5</sup>.

De Bârlad, où il passe son enfance, Tonitza continue ses études à L'École des Beaux Arts de Iassy, dans la classe du professeur Gheorghe Popovici. Celui-ci, à côté de Emanoil Bardasare et de C. D. Stahi, était un peintre académiste, étroitement lié aux vieux et rigides préceptes, d'ailleurs, du bon métier. Même correctes, il leur manquait totalement de la vie réelle, de la pulsation de l'existence de l'époque. Ignorant et même dédaignant l'existence environnante comme sujet de travail, la considérant trop prosaïque, ces professeurs refusaient tout élan juvénile de leurs élèves, leur imposant strictement leur propre savoir comme étant le plus correct. L'atmosphère close présente dans l'Académie détermine chez le jeune Tonitza, impétueux et aisé dans ses attitude et technique, de nombreuses poussées d'insoumission, y compris son abandon. Le mépris envers l'académisme et envers ses promoteurs est ouvertement déclaré dans l'une de ses notes: « L'Académisme- étape parasitaire- est justement l'abandon de la nature; c'est à dire l'observation directe de la vie »<sup>6</sup>.

Son horizon s'ouvre une fois arrivé à München, en 1907, où, outre les nombreux restes de l'académisme, apparaissent les fermentes des transformations et on affirme les expérimentations de la jeune génération dans la diversité des manifestations de l'art moderne. Il y étudie à l'Académie Royale avec le professeur Hugo Freiheuer von Haberman (1849-1929), s'appréciant et se sympathisant réciproquement. La technique minutieuse, les études sérieuses de dessin qui maintenant sont prioritaires, au détriment de la couleur, mèneront à la maturation de son style.

L'année suivante, 1908, il est présent pour une première fois, dans une exposition collective, où on lui remarque les travaux de critique. Parallèlement, il participe aussi à la vie artistique roumaine, avec des caricatures à caractère social- militant, publiées dans la revue *Furnica* (*Fourmi*)<sup>7</sup> et avec des chroniques d'art dans des revues de spécialité. Son caractère rebelle se met en évidence aussi du fait que des raisons plus on moins fondées, il ne va achever les études universitaires ni à l'Académie bavaroise, quittée en 1909. A la fin de cette année-ci, après une féconde escapade italienne, il arrive à Paris. Le contact avec le style graphique français plus libre, les études dans le Cabinet d'estampes et non seulement: Daumier (1808-1879), Henri de Toulouse- Lautrec (1864-1901), Jean Louis Forain (1852-1931), avec les ouvrages *dal vivo* de Louvre (desquelles il va faire de nombreux croquis et des interprétations, en exerçant sa main et en

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<sup>4</sup> Francisc Șirato, *Încercări critice*, Préface et anthologie de Petre Oprea, București, Editura Meridiane, 1967, p. 128.

<sup>5</sup> N. Tonitza, *op. cit.*, pp. 58-74.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 84.

<sup>7</sup> Revue humoristique créée en 1904, dirigée par George Ranetti et N. D. Țăranu, qui réunissait dans ses pages de différents récits satiriques, épigrammes, blagues et caricatures ou d'autres illustrations. Iulia Marin, *Umorul din presa românească, « vindecarea melancoliei: citirea revistei Furnica*, [http://www.historia.ro/exclusiv\\_web/general/articol/umorul-presa-romaneasca-vindecarea-melancoliei-citirea-revistei-furnica](http://www.historia.ro/exclusiv_web/general/articol/umorul-presa-romaneasca-vindecarea-melancoliei-citirea-revistei-furnica) (link consulté le 03.03.2013).

développant son style, avec l'impressionnisme avec lequel il coquette pour peu de temps, avec la lecture des livres d'art et d'esthétique, avec les revues et les journaux d'actualité satirique, avec les galeries et les expositions de peinture, le tout ensemble lui va ciseler la manière. L'expérience novatrice occidentale posera l'empreinte sur sa création ultérieure. Cézanne (1839-1906), Degas (1834-1917), Toulouse-Lautrec (1864-1901), Francisque Poulbot (1879-1946), etc., et les plus anciens coloristes Tiziano (1488-1576), Veronese (1528-1588) et Correggio (1489-1534). Après quatre années de vie à son aise mais constructive, de définir sa personnalité artistique, dans l'été de 1911 il revient dans le pays où il achève les études et obtient son diplôme. Ultérieurement, il peint des églises, il participe à des expositions, il collabore aux différents revues et journaux avec des reportages, chroniques artistiques et théâtrales, interviews et notes, étant en 1921 l'un des fondateurs du « Syndicat des beaux arts » et l'adepte du mouvement d'orientation socialiste, chose reflétée dans la graphique militante aussi.

La participation active à la guerre, étant prisonnier dans un camp de Bulgarie, le marque profondément, ce qui se reflète dans de nombreux dessins et peintures ayant comme sujet des prisonniers, des blessés, des orphelins, des déserteurs ou des femmes au cimetière. Il est, d'ailleurs, l'un des plus prolifiques artistes roumains qui ont abordé si intensément ce sujet.

En 1918, l'année de la création, il se rallie, lui- aussi, au groupe l'Art Roumain. Ultérieurement il va s'établir à Bucarest.

Exposant ensemble, plusieurs fois sur la même cimaise, Tonitza s'approche à Şirato et à Ștefan Dimitrescu, étant liés dans des pensées, des idées et des préoccupations communes, les trois ayant aussi un puissant côté critique et didactique. Cette communion amicale et spirituelle, à laquelle va se rallier aussi Oscar Han pour les mêmes raisons, se concrétisera dans le « Groupe des Quatre ».

Mais avant que le groupe se coagule, pour des raisons matérielles, Tonitza a passé un ainsi dit « auto exile »<sup>8</sup> à Vălenii de Munte du printemps de 1921 jusqu'en automne de l'année 1924. C'est l'une des plus fécondes périodes de sa création qui se cisèle, se parachève en forme et couleur et aboutit à sa totale profondeur. Le résultat se fait visible à l'exposition de l'hiver de l'année 1925, ouverte dans le cadre du *Salonul Sindicatului Artelor Frumoase* (*Salon du Syndicat des beaux arts*). La grande partie de ses ouvrages contenait des sujets intimistes, des portraits de ses enfants et de diverses hypostases domestiques de sa femme; chose surprenante, pas beaucoup de paysages<sup>9</sup>.

A l'exposition de 1925 a été présent aussi l'ouvrage de la collection de Târgu Mureş, à titre mentionné par l'artiste au verso, *Pagliacci (Cloun)*<sup>10</sup>

<sup>8</sup> Valentin Ciucă, *Pe urmele lui Nicolae Tonitza*, Bucureşti, Editura Sport-Turism, 1984, pp. 100-118.

<sup>9</sup> K. H. Zambaccian, *Pagini despre artă*, Recueil de textes et préface de Marin Mihalache, Bucureşti, Editura Meridiane, 1965, p. 113.

<sup>10</sup> Nicolae Tonitza, *Pagliacci*, huile sur carton, 70x70,3 cm, signé à gauche en bas Tonitza, non daté [1924]. L'ouvrage a participé à l'Exposition *N. Tonitza*, janvier 1925, cat. no. 31; à l'Exposition *Nicolae Tonitza*, Musée d'Art de R.P.R., janvier- mars 1968, cat. no. 56, à l'Exposition de peinture et graphique *N. Tonitza*, Musée d'Art de R.S.R., mai- juillet 1979,

(Fig. 1). Il fait partie d'une série de plusieurs pièces dédiées à ce sujet des saltimbanques<sup>11</sup> et implicitement du portrait à nuance sociale<sup>12</sup>.

Le sujet à échos symboliste-expressionnistes<sup>13</sup>, est incitant par son ambivalence: amusant, pour les uns, à profonds sens tragiques pour les autres, y compris pour l'artiste même, par la découverte de l'être humain tragique guetté par les graves dangers de la solitude. C'est la vérité cachée derrière la posture dissimulée. Les portraits de ses clowns sont plutôt un prétexte pour le message et moins des portraits proprement-dits, en se plaçant sur les auspices de l'expressionnisme tant comme signification qu'approche. Ils sont le masque qui cache la rude réalité.

En substrat, les portraits des saltimbanques expriment le drame de l'existence humaine dans sa dualité tragi-comique mais en même temps c'est un prétexte d'autoanalyse, l'artiste se retrouvant moralement dans l'angoisse de leur condition précaire. Selon l'un de ses biographes, Raoul Şorban, cet ouvrage- le premier de ses essais définis dans un triptyque en 1925- « semble être une explosion improvisée- une directe et brutale confession »<sup>14</sup> , par l'impétuosité d'exprimer l'émotion fougueuse. Le dramatisme de l'image est soutenu aussi par l'emploi de certaines couleurs saturées, dans d'expressives dominantes de rouge, jaune et vert, répandues sur de larges surfaces vibrantes. La touche alerte, è résonances expressionnistes est mise rapidement, fouettant les surfaces bien précisées par la ligne noire, des réminiscences du spécialiste en graphique qu'il avait longtemps été.

On construit sur le fond du rouge ardent un accord complémentaire qui augmente l'effet, le corps souple du saltimbanque. La perspective des plans est annulée, il n'y ayant pas de passages. Ils se superposent ainsi que le demi-cercle du manège domine le personnage telle un nimbe, on dirait qu'il suggère le fait que la vie est une immense scène où se déroulent rapidement les actes qui accablent l'actant. Le tout atteint l'apogée avec la figure impressionnante de celui-ci. Sans être individualisé, laissant la liberté à chacun de s'en identifier, elle est marquée par la bouche entrouverte, puissamment dessinée en rouge ardent, laissant libérer le cri muet de l'impuissance devant le dramatisme du destin. La vie tourmentée n'est pas refléchie par la contorsion du corps mais par les traits saillants du visage, à lignes physionomiques légèrement exagérées, mettant l'accent sur

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cat. no. 43, reproduit dans le catalogue Oscar Walter Cisek, Exposition Tonitza, janvier 1925, dans le catalogue de l'Exposition N. N. Tonitza..., janvier- mars 1968, p. 67; dans Raoul Şorban, *Tonitza*, Bucarest, 1973, p. 25, cat. no. 19; dans Corneliu Baba, *Tonitza*, Bucarest, 1965, p. 142, cat. no. 60; dans Vasile Drăguț, Vasile Florea, Dan Grigorescu, Marin Mihalache, *op. cit.*, p. 195. L'ouvrage a fait partie de la Collection de l'av. Grigore Suceveanu.

<sup>11</sup> Raoul Şorban, *Nicolae Tonitza*, Bucureşti, Editura Meridiane, 1965, pp. 42-51.

<sup>12</sup> A cette catégorie des portraits à caractère social appartiennent aussi les ouvrages *Orbii [Aveugles]*, *Saltimbancii [Saltimbanques]*, *Demobilizații [Démobilisés]*, *Bocitoarele [Pleureuses]*, etc. Ce sujet, fréquemment utilisé dans ses ouvrages prématûres mais puissamment prolongé dans sa troisième décennie de sa création, dérive tant de l'empreinte laissée par la guerre que du sentiment de la solidarité avec une classe des gens marginalisés, avec lesquels il s'identifie beaucoup de fois.

<sup>13</sup> Amelia Pavel, *Expresionismul și premisele sale*, Bucureşti, Editura Meridiane, 1978, p. 87.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 42.

l'expressivité. Les yeux cernés, les paupières closes, les sourcils réunis dans un long effort, le cou tendu et le menton accentué, ce sont des éléments qui amplifient le drame d'un personnage sur le pas de s'écrouler. Comme une ironique et subtile représentation de la métaphore de la mort victorieuse, se tient majestueuse la collierette blanche, apprêtée, doublant le cercle de la scène, serrant doucement le gosier tendu. Tonitza concentre le tumulte de sa propre vie dans la figure pathétique du pantin, laissant comprendre que « La commedia è finita ! »



Fig. 1. Nicolae Tonitza, *Pagliacci*, huile sur carton, 70x70,3 cm, signé à gauche en bas Tonitza, non daté [1924]

Peu à peu, il se détache de cette orientation grave et protestataire qui, au début, a dominé sa création lorsqu'il se sentait tout comme Luchian, une partie du monde des « gens défavorisés », et se solidarisant à eux<sup>15</sup>. Ensuite, il va découvrir la couleur de la souche de Luchian et ses infinies possibilités. Sur le plan de la galerie des sujets, il va marcher pour la plupart des fois vers les portraits ingénus des enfants à cette expression spécifique qui définit son style qui ne peut pas être confondu. Pour le portrait, et au cadre de ce thème, l'univers de l'enfance, il a trouvé une représentation à valeur de symbole, lui donnant de nombreuses expressions et versions. Ayant un début précoce, très fécond pendant son séjour à Vălenii de Munte, il va reprendre ce sujet du portrait de l'innocence jusque vers la fin de sa vie, le passant par de différentes étapes de maturation de l'enfant. Au début, ses propres enfants lui servaient comme modèles Catrina, Petru et Irina (Mica), leur faisant de nombreuses ébauches et croquis, pour un désiré mais pas réalisé « album de famille ». Plus tard, à base de ces études et travaux avant coureurs, il réussit à aboutir à une synthèse profondément personnelle du

<sup>15</sup> Ioana Vlasiu, « Tonitza și întâmplările artei românești », dans *Tonitza la Balcic*, București, Editura Artimos, 2002, p.10.

thème<sup>16</sup>, sans individualiser, mais traitant le sujet de manière générique, dans le portrait de l'Adolescence. Tonitza s'impose dans la conscience du public par cette typologie de la figure ingénue, aux grands yeux diffus, et suggestifs, comme la réflexion de la pureté d'âme.

Au printemps de l'année suivante à l'exposition de la toile *Pagliacci*, a lieu la première exposition du « Groupe des Quatre » où, sur le panneau de Tonitza apparaît aussi l'ouvrage *Fata ciobanului*<sup>17</sup> (*Fille du berger*) (Fig. 2), trouvé maintenant dans la collection de Tîrgu Mureş. Il se joignait à d'autres œuvres restées célèbres, comme *Fata pădurarului* (*Fille du forestier*) et *Katiuşa lipoveanca* (*Katiuşa de Lipova*) (Musée de K. H. Zambaccian-Bucarest). Derrière ces noms « romanesques » (selon l'expression de Barbu Brezianu) il y avait beaucoup de fois, les visages de ses jeunes filles. Même si moins intense en suggestion, n'étant pas un portrait proprement dit sinon un personnage dans le paysage, ce dernier ouvrage porte l'emblème de son style, visible tant dans la figure de l'enfant que sur la manière d'approche de l'arrière-plan à la végétation élégamment dessinée. Le personnage, beaucoup proche du spectateur, apparaît assis sur l'herbe hachurée, dans une expression anatomique sommaire, même rudimentaire, des mains et des pieds. Mais l'accent tombe sur les éléments décoratifs des vêtements populaires, mis en relief par la combinaison de noir et rouge, en alternance sur l'habit rayé. Le blanc de la blouse à manches bouffantes augmente l'ingénuité du visage qu'il marque seulement par une tache rouge de petite bouche innocente.

Ses yeux, sans avoir la rondeur habituelle, sont eux aussi indéfinis en détail sinon suggérés par deux fentes noires, intenses. Par de discrètes taches couleur brun rougeâtre, le pommettes et le nez mignon complètent le reste du visage encadré par les cheveux blonds. Le petit chapeau noir complète l'habit.

En arrière - plan, on aperçoit sur le fond gris- bleuâtre à rôle d'écran l'atmosphère des troncs d'arbres comme des ombres brunes, des filiformes apparitions verticales, rythmées par le vert du feuillage vaguement contourné. Il n'importe pas la description réaliste, sinon le sentiment dégagé: de l'innocente poésie naïve.

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<sup>16</sup> Barbu Brezianu, *Tonitza*, Bucureşti, Editura Academiei, 1967, pp.105-110.

<sup>17</sup> Nicolae Tonitza, *Fata ciobanului* (*Fille de berger*), huile sur carton, 40x49,6 cm, signé en bas, droit Tonitza, non daté [1924-1925]. L'ouvrage a participé à l'Exposition *Groupe des Quatre*, Cartea Românească (Livre Roumain), 7-21 mars 1926 et peut être identifié dans l'image d'un mur à ouvrages de l'exposition. Il est placé le quatrième à droite, sur la ligne haute. La photo est reproduite dans l'Exposition *N. N. Tonitza*, Musée d'Art de R.P.R., Bucarest, janvier- mars 1964. Catalogue de Georgeta Peleanu, Ştefan Dîtescu et Stela Ionescu, p.23. L'ouvrage a fait partie de la Collection du Professeur Nicolae Bărăscu.



Fig. 2. Nicolae Tonitza, *Fata ciobanului* (*Fille de berger*), huile sur carton, 40x49,6 cm, signé en bas, droit Tonitza, non daté [1924-1925]

Dans la même large catégorie de représentation de l'enfance, mais plus restreinte, dans celle des têtes d'enfants, s'inscrit l'un des plus représentatifs portraits de son art, qui réunit toutes les qualités d'exécution et de technique, de subtilité de couleur harmonique et spécialement, de profonde expressivité. Il s'agit de l'un des portraits de la cadette de l'artiste, Irina, qui se trouve dans la collection du Musée d'Art de Târgu Mureş sous le nom *Portret de fată* (*Portrait de jeune fille*)<sup>18</sup> (Fig. 3).

Tonitza renonce aux tendances décoratives- scénographiques de l'arrière plan, qu'il avait largement utilisées dans des représentations de genre et sur le fond rougeaud, modulé seulement par l'application légèrement vibrée de la touche, il trace le contour, en ligne souple, le portrait délicat de la jeune fille. C'est ici qu'il concentre toute l'émotion intérieure propre, la transposant dans l'image de l'enfant. Ce n'est pas seulement de l'innocence curieuse du regard surprise dans les yeux très correctement construits dans les orbites profondes, mais aussi une vague ombre de tristesse aux coins des lèvres orientées vers le bas et aux paupières peu laissées, ombragées par un cerne élégiaque.

Une caractéristique de la reproduction du regard c'est l'application d'un point foncé, éclatant, sur l'iris à peine d'un ton plus claire, mais pas en mélangeant les tons<sup>19</sup>. L'ovale distingué du visage, au front hautement voûté, laisse libre l'architecture de la chevelure. Le volume de la dense carnation est construit sur presque imperceptibles accords d'ocre chaud, qui font vibrer l'épiderme, et les pommettes sont atteintes par de subtiles manches de porphyre, et il culmine avec le carmin des lèvres.

<sup>18</sup> Nicolae Tonitza, *Portret de fată* (*Portrait de jeune fille*), huile sur toile, 42x36,5 cm, signé en haut, à gauche Tonitza, non daté [1926-1927]. L'ouvrage est reproduit dans l'Exposition *N. N. Tonitza*, Musée d'Art de R.P.R. Bucarest, janvier- mars 1964. Catalogue de Georgeta Peleanu, Ştefan Dițescu et Stela Ionescu dans le chapitre *d'Autres ouvrages de peinture qui ne figurent pas dans l'exposition*, cat. no. 20, mais il est faussement reproduit dans le cat. no. 123 où on mentionne son appartenance au Musée Régional d'Art de Ploieşti.

<sup>19</sup> Barbu Brezianu, *op. cit.*, p. 107.

La ligne fluide dessine des rondeurs agréables des formes. L'harmonie chromatique dérive aussi de l'écoulement naturelle des nuances chaudes de l'arrière plan sur les cheveux bruns et ensuite, dans un bain de lumière sur le visage et le buste rayonnants, en se donnant de l'expression l'un à l'autre. La couleur balance de manière voulue, à de différentes intensités, sur les tonalités du rouge et de l'ocre. Ainsi, on s'accomplit tellement naturelle l'image de la fragilité et la mélancolie de l'adolescence dans une idéale combinaison de contours et de couleurs.

Ce portrait tellement raffiné apparaît comme une éloquente matérialisation de ses principes théoriques, rigoureusement respectés dans tant d'ouvrages et organisés selon ses préceptes sur la peinture: « Pour l'étude du portrait et du nu, une palette *plus réduite* sera un outil pratique considérable; premièrement, on doit s'habituer seuls dans un monde de combinaisons qui gisent dans les quelques couleurs- et ensuite on doit établir les accords, serrés et subtiles, que les palettes trop riches ne nous le permettent, car elles nous captivent vers la polychromie »<sup>20</sup>.

En se rapportant à ces portraits, Barbu Brezianu leur trouve un correspondant dans le monde littéraire, disant qu'ils définiraient un style « qui fait de Nicolae Tonitza le plus sensible poète de la candeur de l'enfance et de la nostalgie de la jeunesse- un équivalent dans l'art plastique de son bon confrère Ionel Teodoreanu »<sup>21</sup>.

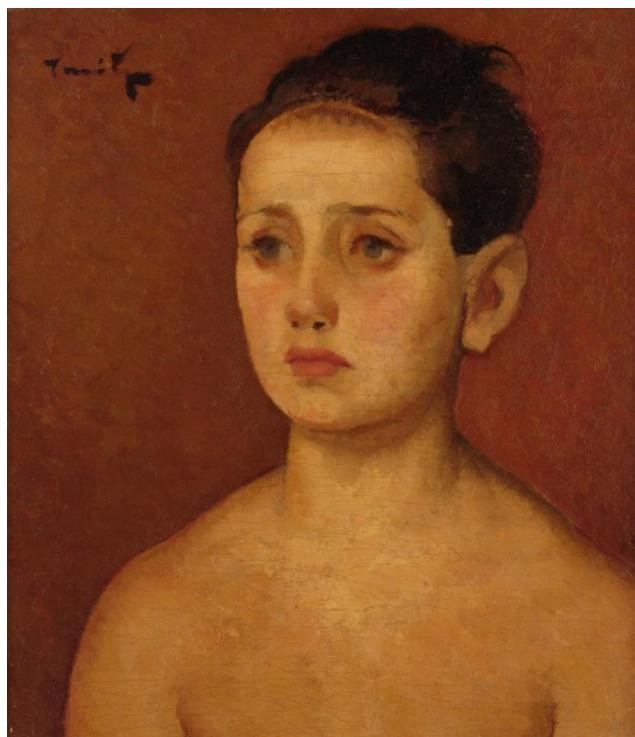


Fig. 3. Nicolae Tonitza, *Portret de fată* (*Portrait de jeune fille*), huile sur toile, 42x36,5 cm, signé en haut, à gauche Tonitza, non daté [1926-1927]

<sup>20</sup> N. Tonitza, *op. cit.*, p. 74.

<sup>21</sup> Barbu Brezianu, *op. cit.*, p. 110.

De son dévouement pour les enfants, « de mes longues incursions faites comme peintre dans le monde de merveilleux des enfants »<sup>22</sup> et de ses convictions dans les pures expressions et dans la sensibilité des petits êtres humains et aussi de son désir de guider ceux qui ont du talent, il crée pendant les 1926-1929, le premier concours des dessins de ceux-ci, doté d'un prix annuel assez consistant. On n'exclut pas que les centaines de dessins reçus ne lui aient influencé en quelque sorte la création de ces temps-là.

Continuant la recherche dans le même registre des portraits d'enfants et d'adolescents, on constate le fait que Tonitza, du fait des nécessités d'ordre financier, par les commandes qu'il se voit obligé d'honorer, a du faire de certaines concessions, pas au bon métier sinon à ses propres principes qui dirigeaient son travail artistique, à être à la fois, « détective et chirurgien »<sup>23</sup>. Ces expérimentations hors du milieu de famille, hors de ceux de son âme, prouvent d'être privés de consistance, de vie, en leur manquant précisément la sensibilité et l'implication affective de l'artiste. Ils sont une reproduction correcte, mais mécanique de la réalité, sans interpréter le sujet, puissamment édulcorés, pour stimuler le goût douteux de certains de ses commanditaires.

Un tel exemple est *Muzea pamphletarului*<sup>24</sup> (*Muse du pamphlétaire*) (Fig. 4) qui représente la petite Viorela Ţeicaru. C'était la fille du publiciste Pamfil Ţeicaru<sup>25</sup>, le directeur de la gazette *Curentul*<sup>26</sup> (*Le Courant*), à laquelle Tonitza a collaboré avec des chroniques pendant une longue période<sup>27</sup>. Le détachement et le total manque d'affect manifestés par l'auteur concernant cet ouvrage peuvent être interprétés pas seulement par la vide expression du personnage, mais par la prisme du fait qu'il a réalisé deux exemplaires assez pareils, le second se trouvant dans le patrimoine du Musée Tării Crișurilor de Oradea. La différence consiste dans la mention au coin gauche, en haut, sur la verticale, du titre de l'ouvrage, en caractères à la japonaise, détail qui disparaît dans l'ouvrage trouvé dans la collection de Tîrgu Mureş. L'affinité pour les choses japonaises se retrouve dans plusieurs de ses ouvrages, plus ou moins directement compris dans le cas-ci, dans la manière qu'il réalise les yeux en amande de la jeune fille, légèrement obliques, en gardant pourtant leur anatomie. A la différence de beaucoup de ses portraits d'enfants, celui-ci est plat, vidé de vie et d'expression. Réalisé en plan

<sup>22</sup> N. Tonitza, *op. cit.*, p. 113.

<sup>23</sup> N. N. Tonitza, "Exposition Costin Petrescu", dans *Avîntul*, 1920, *apud* Barbu Brezianu, *op. cit.*, p. 110.

<sup>24</sup> Nicolae Tonitza, *Muzea pamphletarului* (*Muse du pamphlétaire*), huile sur carton, 85,5x68,5 cm, signé à droite en haut et daté N. N. Tonitza 1931. L'ouvrage a participé au Salon Officiel de 1931, reproduit dans le catalogue de cette exposition à cat. no. 231 et à l'Exposition de peinture et de graphique Nicolae Tonitza, Musée d'Art de R.S. de Roumanie, mai-juillet 1979, reproduite à cat. no. 178.

<sup>25</sup> Pamfil Ţeicaru (1894-1980), a été le directeur et le rédacteur en chef du journal *Curentul* (*Courant*) pendant les 1927-1944, à une riche activité journalistique tant dans le pays qu'à l'étranger, où il s'y établit après la II- e guerre mondiale. [http://ro.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pamfil\\_%C8%98eicaru](http://ro.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pamfil_%C8%98eicaru) (link consulté le 02.04.2013).

<sup>26</sup> Le Courant a été l'un des combatifs journaux pendant les deux- guerres mondiales.<http://ro.wikipedia.org/wiki/Curentul> (link consulté le 04.04.2013).

<sup>27</sup> Barbu Brezianu, *op. cit.*, p. 110.

frontal, comme dans une photo fade, d'appareil, au grand ruban jaune dans les cheveux coquettement coiffés, les vêtements élégamment assortis, tenant sous son bras dans une position artificielle, le chat rigide, les yeux largement ouverts, ayant l'air d'empaillé (ou peut-être d'un jouet des richards), la petite fille appartient aux enfants dont Tonitza disait « des enfants en riches habits, des enfants nourris abondamment et raffinement, des enfants parfaitement sains, mais dans l'âme desquels, prématûrément chagrinée, foisonnaient des afflictions étouffées et poussaient des épouvantables agonies »<sup>28</sup>. Le titre choisi par l'artiste est lui aussi en quelque sorte ironique.



Fig. 4. Nicolae Tonitza, *Muze pamfletarului* (*Muse du pamphlétaire*), huile sur carton, 85,5x68,5 cm, signé à droite en haut et daté N. N. Tonitza 1931

Dans la sphère des ouvrages réalisés sous l'influence de la manière extrême-orientale, en ce cas-ci explicite, premièrement par le thème, mais aussi par l'annulation des plans de perspective, comme dans les estampes japonaises, s'inscrit la création *Japoneza*<sup>29</sup> (*Japonaise*) (Fig. 5). Elle appartient à des tendances accentuées de Tonitza de peindre dans la régie

<sup>28</sup> N. Tonitza, *op. cit.*, p. 113.

<sup>29</sup> Nicolae Tonitza, *Japoneza* (*Japonaise*), huile sur carton, 68x49,3 cm, signé au centre gauche Tonitza, non daté [1926-1927]. L'ouvrage a participé à l'Exposition du *Groupe des Quatre*, 1928, cat. no. 100 et à l'Exposition de peinture et de graphique Nicolae Tonitza, Musée d'Art de R.S. de Roumanie, mai- juillet 1979, cat. no. 121. L'ouvrage peut être identifié dans l'image d'un mur à travaux de l'exposition *Groupe des Quatre* qui a eu lieu à Bucarest en 1928. Parmi les travaux, on peut identifier aussi la *Japoneza* (*Japonaise*), placée la première à gauche en bas de la rangée. La photo est reproduite dans l'Exposition N. N. Tonitza..., p. 21.

artistique- scénographique sous l'empire des éléments décoratifs très exubérants, qu'il applique surtout dans la zone de l'arrière-plan.

Cette fois-ci, stimulant au maximum le chromatisme, les éléments décoratifs puissamment vibrés par les décosations végétales à belles feuilles, comme des arabesques fugitives, font de la concurrence au kimono du personnage.

Sur la surface verte, des verticales d'un noir profond alternent avec des points d'orange électrisant.

De la même manière elles sont combinées dans la partie inférieure du habit, mais dans une autre disposition des formes du tissu imprimé. Le noyau de maxime intensité chromatique est fixé sur l'éventail jaune- citron qui emprunte des reflets orange, comme une tache de couleur centrale en dialogue dans le registre supérieur avec le noir du chignon. L'artiste obtient ainsi une irruption de couleurs, tempérées par la maîtrise de les doser et de les combiner dans des proportions harmonieuses. La ligne sinuuse s'insinue enveloppant la couleur et décrivant d'élégantes courbes et contre courbes. Elle glisse sur la figure orientale, lui allongeant les traits, sur la soie du kimono, découvant ses mains graciles amincissant de manière voulu- exagérée les doigts et descend doucement vers les pans complétant ainsi l'anatomie longiligne et gracile du personnage. Ensuite, surexcitée, elle hachure vivement le réseau quadrillé de la base calmée par la courbe ample qui traverse le décor en diagonale. D'autres fois, aigue comme une lame, on taille de courtes fentes, synthétiques suggestions des détails physionomiques. Les éléments secondaires des vêtements et des accessoires, sans définir le portrait, aident à l'évocation et à l'induction du coloris local de cette ethnie<sup>30</sup>. L'ensemble qui en résulte est l'un consonnant, plein de sensualité et de vague mystère, qui cherche à suggérer une certaine typologie et du spécifique.

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<sup>30</sup> Petru Comarnescu, *N. N. Tonitza*, Bucureşti, 1962, p. 254.

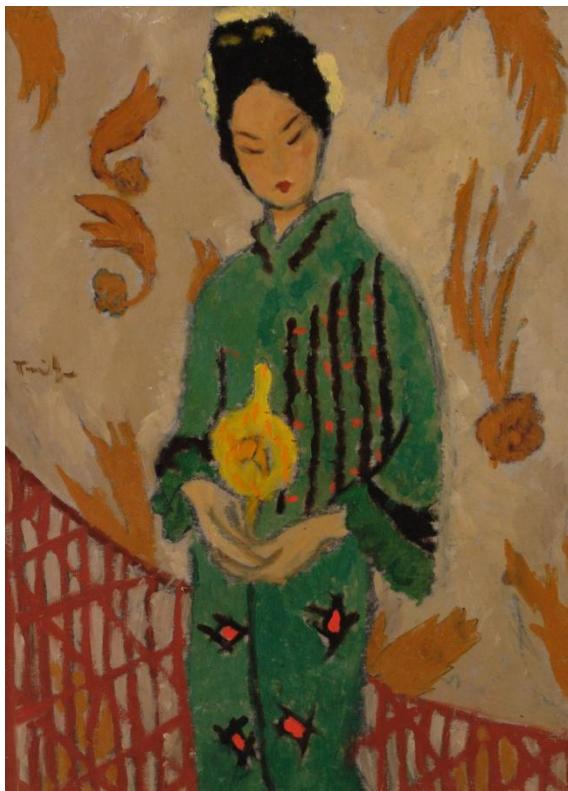


Fig. 5. Nicolae Tonitza, *Japoneza (Japonaise)*, huile sur carton, 68x49,3 cm, signé au centre gauche Tonitza, non daté [1926-1927]

Si au parcours de sa création, l'artiste a coqué seulement avec les tendances orientales, introduisant quelque part de différents éléments, après 1935, Tonitza passe à une visible manière, ainsi dite « étape japonisante » quand il diminue beaucoup la palette chromatique réduite presque à la monochromie et où il excelle dans les éléments décoratifs<sup>31</sup>.

Revenant aux portraits, relevant d'une autre étape, de maturité de l'être humain, on constate le fait que la majorité se constitue dans des femmes, et qu'on en joint le nu- sujet très aimé par l'artiste. Pour la plupart des fois, celle qui lui a servi comme modèle, a été toujours de sa proximité familiale, celle qui a accepté tous ces caprices de son caractère volcanique, c'est à dire sa femme, Ecaterina Tonitza. Elle apparaît dans beaucoup d'hypostases, affichant de différents sentiments d'âme, beaucoup de fois à allure pensive, puissamment introvertie, jamais fidèlement portraiturée mais à l'expression interprétée suite à de longues études et d'exercices<sup>32</sup>. Ayant en vue les détails, mais sans aucun indice certain, il est possible que *Portretul de femeie*<sup>33</sup> (*Portrait de femme*) (Fig. 6), de la collection de Tîrgu Mureş ait

<sup>31</sup> Barbu Brezianu, *op. cit.*, p. 159.

<sup>32</sup> Petru Comarnescu, *op. cit.*, p. 192.

<sup>33</sup> Nicolae Tonitza, *Portret de femeie (Portrait de femme)*, huile sur toile, 60x50 cm, signé à droite en haut Tonitza, non daté [1921-1925]. L'ouvrage a participé à l'Exposition Nicolae N. Tonitza, Musée d'Art de R.P.R., Bucarest, 1963, cat no. B15. Il a fait partie de la collection du Dr. Eugen Banu. Dans sa monographie dédiée à l'artiste, Barbu Brezianu, *op. cit.*, p.171, mentionne un *Portret de femeie (Portrait de femme)* comme étant présent à l'exposition *N. Tonitza* des 14 janvier- 3 février 1921, Salon « Arte », avec le cat. no. 57 et qui pourrait être celui de la collection de Tîrgu Mureş.

toujours eu comme modèle sa femme. Le portrait apparaît comme une interprétation d'une subtile féminité qui était tellement caractéristique à Tonitza. Même, si peut-être, il ne s'éloigne beaucoup de l'étape d'une étude, l'ensemble dégage un puissant sentiment de tristesse, réalisant ainsi son but de transmettre une émotion intense. La tête légèrement inclinée, en syntonie avec les paupières closes comme dans un geste de résignation et d'intimité, les cernes de la fatigue, soulignés par deux taches rougeâtres, le tout suggère la résignation, la réconciliation du personnage avec le destin, même s'il n'est avéré injuste. La ligne ferme du contour, dessine nettement le buste de la jeune femme sur le fond légèrement vibrant, pigmenté à traces délicates de rose, de verdâtre, d'ocre et de gris coloriés. Signe d'une période précédant l'intérêt pour les éléments décoratifs exubérants de plus tard, cette harmonie tempérée de l'arrière-plan contribue à la mise en évidence du portrait.

Les couleurs un peu plus intenses mais toujours sobres, se retrouvent dans les habits du personnage: du brun- rougeâtre, du vert, du rose à des touches éparses de rose.

Conformément aux préceptes de couleur antérieurement mentionnés, qui identifient nettement le style de l'auteur, la carnation du visage est exprimée par des taches d'ocre, qui arrondissent le volume, se prolongeant ensuite sur la verticale chromatique, dans le registre inférieur. Les taches foncées embrassent et, augmentent la luminosité et la grâce du visage intérieurisé- éloquente définition de la mélancolie mais aussi de la sensualité.

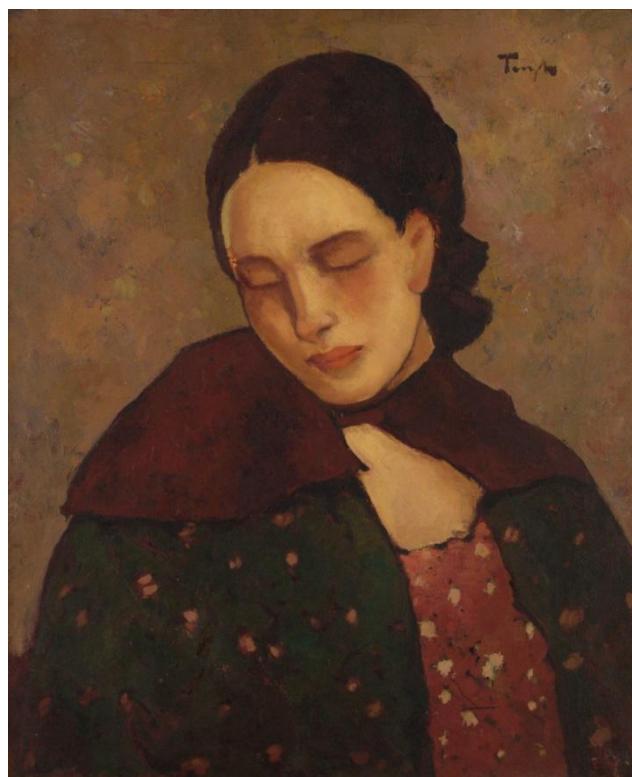


Fig. 6. Nicolae Tonitza, *Portret de femeie* (*Portrait de femme*), huile sur toile, 60x50 cm, signé à droite en haut Tonitza, non daté [1921-1925]

Plutôt embauché, mais sur la même ligne des courbes harmonieuses et de la figure expressive, on y ajoute l'ouvrage *Portret de Țigancă*<sup>34</sup> (*Portrait de gitane*) (Fig. 7) dans la tentative de définir une autre typologie ethnique. Pourtant, sauf la couleur créole de la peau et le titre de l'ouvrage, il n'y a aucune particularité qui définit le spécifique de cette ethnité. Il semble être une autre hypostase de sa femme, enveloppée de tendres accords de rose, profilée sur un arrière-plan naturel à taches de verdâtre et de jaune pâle. La position du corps est particulière, décrivant du coin gauche en haut une diagonale descendante contrecarrée par la ligne de la main gauche, en sens opposé. L'ouvrage est dans le stade de taches de couleurs indéfinies en détail.



Fig. 7. Nicolae Tonitza, *Portret de Țigancă* (*Portrait de gitane*), huile sur toile, 65x55,2 cm, signé à droite en haut Tonitza, non daté [1928-1929]

Tel relevé le parcours de la création de Tonitza, et dans son cadre, les ouvrages mis en discussion, le portrait constitue un chapitre essentiel, traité dès sa période de formation, de ses études à München, évoluant jusqu'à la fin de sa vie, dans les termes de l'expressionnisme du symbolisme ou du décorativisme, dans une puissante note personnelle, que l'on ne peut confondre. Mais, pour souligner la descendance et son admiration déclarée de et pour le « géant créateur de rêves roumains dans la couleur »<sup>35</sup>, tel qu'il appelait Luchian, il ne le pouvait pas faire d'une autre manière qu'à

<sup>34</sup> Nicolae Tonitza, *Portret de Țigancă* (*Portrait de gitane*), huile sur toile, 65x55,2 cm, signé à droite en haut Tonitza, non daté [1928-1929]. Dans sa monographie dédiée à l'artiste, Barbu Brezianu, *op. cit.*, p. 177, mentionne un ouvrage à titre *Țigancă* (*Gitane*), présent à l'exposition *Groupe des Quatre* des 3-30 mars 1929, cat. no. 86, et qui pourrait être celui de la collection de Tîrgu Mureș.

<sup>35</sup> Nicolae Tonitza *apud* Petru Comarnescu, *N. N. Tonitza*, București, Editura Tineretului, 1962, p. 227.

l'intermède des toiles à fleurs. Les fleurs palpitent en accord avec celles de Luchian, lui augmentant l'appétit pour ce sujet pendant la période de final de sa vie. L'exposition de 1938<sup>36</sup> en abonde! 26 de ses 35 pièces sont dédiées aux fleurs. Un peu plus précoce, mais toujours des années '30 appartient aussi la toile *Flori galbene*<sup>37</sup> (*Fleurs jaunes*) (Fig. 8), lorsqu'il n'était pas arrivé à la routine.

La pâte onctueuse est tendue légèrement dans des touches généreuses, créant un ensemble très naturel qui émane de la lumière et de l'optimisme du jaune solaire. Par le découpage utilisé, il devient évident le fait que l'accent tombe sur la fraîcheur des fleurs, presque annulant le pot en argile où elles sont réunies. Le sujet augmenté domine, réduisant l'espace de « respiro » qui l'entoure et l'approchant beaucoup au spectateur. Son optimisme est souligné aussi par la diagonale descendante qui se déploie vers le coin droit, en haut. Le vert cru des tiges portent de loquaces dialogues chromatiques avec le rouge brique de l'arrière-plan, accompagnés par le jaune fortifiant des pétales. Bien que l'ocre du registre inférieur puisse péricliter la stabilité de la composition par la légèreté de la nuance, le brun rougeâtre de l'arrière-plan, pèse comme un lourd rideau, mettant les choses sur la bonne voie. C'est l'occasion d'un autre exercice décoratif mais d'où il manque la ligne noire, restrictive, amplifiant l'exubérance de l'ensemble et démontant les capacités vibrantes de coloriste de Tonitza. Ses fleurs exhalent de l'arôme, de la couleur et beaucoup d'émotion !



Fig. 8. Nicolae Tonitza, *Flori galbene* (*Fleurs jaunes*), huile sur toile, 40x50 cm, signé à gauche, en haut Tonitza, non daté [1930-1931]

En 1933, après la mort de son bon ami Ștefan Dimitrescu, Tonitza rentre à Iassy et y reprend l'emploi resté vacant, à la chaire de peinture de l'Académie de Beaux Arts y devenant même recteur. Pendant l'été de la

<sup>36</sup> Apud Barbu Brezianu, *op. cit.*, p. 181.

<sup>37</sup> Nicolae Tonitza, *Flori galbene* (*Fleurs jaunes*), huile sur toile, 40x50 cm, signé à gauche, en haut Tonitza, non daté [1930-1931].

même année, il découvre la « pluie de lumière » de Balcic. L'atmosphère du bord de la mer tracée de quelques lignes, les paysages aux maisons blanches, petites et blotties, les personnages exotiques, pleins de grâce, le tout, lui ouvre l'envie d'aborder de nouveaux thèmes. Sa palette se raffine beaucoup (même de manière exagérée vers le final aboutissant au maniérisme), effleurant de pâles irisations d'ocre, de gris et de rose.

Les ouvrages auxquels on a fait référence sont caractéristiques pour une bonne partie des grandes étapes de création de l'artiste. Leur place se définit dans l'ensemble formé des sculptures devenues classiques de Oscar Han, à côté des toiles de Stefan Dimitrescu, sévèrement construites et celles d'un transparent coloris fluide appartenant à Francisc Șirato.

### Oscar Han (1891-1976)

Le sculpteur Oscar Han est celui qui complète la quadrature du *Grupul celor Patru* (*Groupe des Quatre*), étant pareil à ses amis, outre l'artiste et le professeur, un très acide critique d'art. Ancien élève de Paciurea, mais sans suivre le style de son maître et sans arriver à ses synthèses, Oscar Han reste, en quelque sorte, dans la sphère de la tradition classique. En même temps, il a été l'admirateur et le disciple de Antoine Bourdelle en tant que l'adepte abordant le statuaire comme art, l'espace tel promu par le sculpteur français<sup>38</sup>. Il lui dédie aussi une étude écrite. Restant toujours dans la sphère des influences, il n'a pas été étranger au modelage de Rodin, même il l'a aimé. Mais peu à peu il parachève son propre style, encadré dans de graves tonalités sobres, dans des plans bien articulés, même monumentales, parfois rigides, tant dans le portrait que dans les ouvrages de forum public, caractérisés par une note réaliste.

Né à Bucarest, l'artiste suivit les cours de l'École des Beaux Arts de cette ville, dans la classe du professeur Dimitrie Paciurea, pour la sculpture et de Frederic Storck pour le dessin. La ligne imposée par celui-ci et la modulation tourmentée d'origine impressionniste-rodinienne se fait remarquer dans les ouvrages inspirés et réalisés par et pendant la première guerre mondiale, faisant partie des artistes auprès du Grand Quartier Général de l'Armée. Ils seront ensuite présentés à l'exposition de l'École de Beaux Arts de Iassy, ouverte par le Grand État Majeur. Le drame de ces temps-là difficiles a été contenu dans les statuettes pleines de sincère émotion, annonçant déjà les grandes réalisations postérieures.

Au début, il participe régulièrement aux Salons Officiels et aux expositions de la *Tinerimea Artistică* (*Jeunesse Artistique*). Après la guerre, il se joint à l'association nouvellement créée à Iassy- *Arta română* (*l'Art roumain*), solidarisant avec son credo dans un art nouveau, libre, manqué de préjugés et de fausses expressions, en consonance avec les réactions et les sentiments sincères provoqués par la conflagration.

Le démembrément de *l'Art roumain* en 1924, où on exposait en groupe mais ayant plutôt des idéaux communs d'un art sans concessions et la confiance de l'un dans l'autre dans la bonne intelligence, mèneront à la constitution du *Grupul celor Patru* (*Groupe des Quatre*). Sans programmes

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<sup>38</sup> Marin Mihalache, *Oscar Han*, București, Editura Meridiane, p. 5.

esthétiques ou des règles rigides, à personnalités distinctes et très puissantes, tous les quatre se retrouvaient sur le terrain commun de l'art tel mentionnant l'un de ses membres, Şirato: « on y avait toute la liberté de vérifier nos vérités ou nos erreurs »<sup>39</sup>. Oscar Han a pris la charge des démarches de coaguler le groupe, dont les manifestations annuelles ont été reçues très bien par le public mais aussi par la critique du temps-là.

Après la première exposition commune en 1926, dans la salle « Ileana », Oscar Han participe au Salon Officiel avec quelques ouvrages en bronze, parmi lesquels *Sărutul* (*Baiser*) et *Întâiul sărut* (*Premier baiser*). La variante précédant en gypse celle-ci se trouve dans le patrimoine du Musée d'Art de Tîrgu Mureş, à titre *Sărut*<sup>40</sup> (*Baiser*) (Fig. 9) Le thème du baiser est présent chez beaucoup d'artistes, au cours de l'histoire de l'art, par mi, lesquels, Brâncuşi et Rodin- dont le style était beaucoup apprécié, même assimilé par Oscar Han. Il y a trois manières très différentes de l'aborder, depuis le classique jusqu'à la stylisation. Han aussi essaie de l'approprier avec beaucoup de talent mais il n'arrive pas aux synthèses des deux artistes, de vrais génies de l'art, l'un ayant ses racines de Michelangelo et le second atteignant l'essence et élevant l'art populaire, mineur, au rang d'art majeur, dans la pureté propre de l'expression. *Sărutul* (*Baiser*) (Musée Rodin de Paris) est un éloge mené au couple primordial par le geste direct, relâché, sans inhibitions, et par la clarté du sentiment d'attraction suggéré. Rodin reprend l'idéal classique de beauté, d'origine grecque, qu'il applique à l'ensemble dans une composition particulièrement harmonieuse, rappelant Michelangelo (dans l'expression de la carnation et des proportion) et Bernini (comme traitement de l'ensemble compositionnel- par exemple *Apollo et Daphne*- Galerie Borghese, Rome).

Mais Brâncuşi arrive à se séparer totalement de la tradition classique (l'Antiquité ou les préceptes de Benvenuto Cellini (1500-1571) présentés dans son traité de sculpture). Brâncuşi passe d'un réalisme descriptif, manifeste, à l'essentialité, refermant dans son Baiser schématisé, mais pas du tout stérile, exactement la quintessence: le geste pur de l'amour chaste entre deux êtres. Rien de charnel ou sexuel, rien de mécanique, mais en même temps très vif comme message du sentiment humain. Tandis que Rodin réalise une démonstration de solide maîtrise des éléments de la synthèse de la sculpture classique, par stylisation et réduction, Brâncuşi réalise une vraie philosophie de la sculpture, ou bien approprié, une sculpture de la philosophie.

Dans ce contexte, tel que déjà souligné, Han est plus proche à Rodin et à sa manière d'expression, contrastant par conséquence à la manière d'essence de Brâncuşi.

Le style de Han est beaucoup influencé par la manière classique de la représentation, canoniquement parlant, s'avérant être très rigoureux et sobre, manqué parfois de flexibilité. Beaucoup de fois, la préoccupation de Han est axée sur la transposition sous forme matérielle de certaines valences du portrait physique et moral de ses personnages. L'accent tombe

<sup>39</sup> Apud Marin Mihalache, *op. cit.*, p. 18.

<sup>40</sup> Oscar Han, *Sărut* (*Baiser*), gypse, 31x19x11 cm, signé à gauche en bas O. Han, no daté [1925-1926].

sur une rhétorique du geste et en même temps, sur la massivité des volumes, sur la concrétisation impérative du matériel dans des ensembles facilement à reconnaître et aisément perceptibles.

Comparant les deux créations à même thème (celle de Rodin et celle de Han), à une première vue, on laisse voir l'impression de la ressemblance, les deux se caractérisant par de notes accentuées de classicisme, par une scénographie complexe et par des détails anatomiques à puissante force de suggestion. Pourtant, la différence consiste dans l'ampleur du sentiment que les deux sculptures transmettent, vie dérivée de l'attention pour le finissage et du jeu subtile de la suggestion des détails que l'artiste français maîtrise et les spécule favorablement beaucoup mieux que Han. *Le Baiser* de Rodin est plein de vie et de volupté contrairement à celui de Oscar Han, très bien exécuté comme gestes et anatomie, démontrant la maîtrise de la matière, mais moins expressif et manqué de vie, plus inerte.

La seconde variante, *Întâiul sărut* (*Premier baiser*), de dimensions réduites, est beaucoup plus simplifiée comme gestes, mais gardant la pouvoir de suggestion du message, proposant de la hiératique dans le traitement de l'ensemble. Par cet ouvrage, on arrive à une épuration des détails dans le sens de la stylisation ce que- gardant les proportions esthétiques- situerait Han, sur l'échelle de la modernité, entre les deux grands artistes universaux mentionnés.

Les personnages agenouillés comme en dévotion, le geste d'intimité, des têtes baissées, le traitement en bloc du matériel comme étant un seul corps, le tout concerté, donnent de l'unité à l'ensemble et porte une prière à l'amour. Par le rattachement des corps, sans mener plus loin le geste d'essentialisation, tel que Brâncuși avait réussi, se rapproche comme intention non finalisée, à celui-ci. D'ailleurs, le geste n'est pas finalisé sinon plutôt on suggère la timidité et la grâce qui précède l'attraction du baiser proprement-dit. Rien de sensuel ou de voluptueux, seulement de l'ingénue.

Dans la réalisation anatomique, l'accent ne tombe pas sur la musculature comme dans la variante de *Sărutul* (*Baiser*), dans le cas dont on parle les deux personnages sont traités presque identiquement, tout comme un corps gracile, pubère. La main du personnage masculin se prolonge en quelque sorte par celle de la femme qui tient la paume tordue artificiellement, tout comme recevant la bénédiction divine. Cette variante en gypse de *Întâiul sărut* (*Premier baiser*) met en valeur, par la pureté du blanc du matériau, la candeur de l'amour innocent et le geste de l'agenouillement représente la métaphore de la prière.

La tension visible du désir et de l'attraction charnelle mûre est totalement éliminée, elle vit seulement latente, et la dominante masculine présente dans *Sărut* (*Baiser*) garde rien qu'un geste timide, pas du tout hésitant, de communion au nom de l'amour.



Fig. 9. Oscar Han, *Sărut* (*Baiser*), gypse, 31x19x11 cm, signé à gauche en bas O. Han, no daté [1925-1926]

La période des années '30 a été pour l'artiste la plus féconde, de l'accomplissement artistique professionnel et personnel, étant actif dans des expositions, à la chaire (comme professeur suppléant en 1927 et puis comme professeur titulaire à la place de Dimitrie Paciurea, après la mort de celui-ci en 1933), dans la presse (des chroniques d'art plastique et des articles polémiques, spécialement dans les numéros de la publication *Curentul* (*Le Courant*) et pas seulement), dans le parlement (comme député libéral de Mureş dans la législation de 1934-1937)<sup>41</sup> et dans de différents associations et organisations.

Vers la fin de sa vie il arrive à un recul concernant sa création, répétant de mode maniériste, certaines formules, figures et thèmes artistiques antérieures.

Malgré tous ces dérapages finals, on ne peut pas nier la valeur de l'artiste qui reste comme l'un des représentants remarquables de la sculpture roumaine de la période d'entre deux guerres et d'après la guerre.

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<sup>41</sup> Oscar Han, [http://ro.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oscar\\_Han](http://ro.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oscar_Han) (link consulté le 25.04.2013).



# THE JEWS IN TÎRGU MUREŞ. GHETTOIZATION AND HOLOCAUST<sup>1</sup>

Cornel Sigmirean\*

## Abstract

The Jews from Tîrgu Mureş played an important role in the creation of the culture and civilization during the modern and contemporary history of the town. Applying the Final Solution in 1944, the ghettoization and the deportation in the death camp from Auschwitz-Birkenau resulted in the killing of more than 5000 Jews, victims of the anti-Semitic hatred and of the Nazi politics of extermination.

**Keywords:** Jews; Tîrgu Mureş; ghettoization; deportation; Holocaust

According to the census organized by the Hungarian authorities, 5639 Jews lived in Tîrgu Mureş in 1941.<sup>2</sup> Only four years later, in 1945, there were 1500-1700 Jews in Mureş County, while in Tîrgu Mureş<sup>3</sup> there were over 1000 Jews, which means that over 5000 Jews lost their life in extermination camps or in forced labor camps. At the end of the war, Tîrgu Mureş, a town that, like many other cities in Central Europe, owed Jews a lot in terms of culture and civilization, could count only partially on the contribution of the Jewish population. As the historian Ladislau Gyémánat wrote about the consequences of the Holocaust, the Jews "bearing traumas that couldn't be healed, did never succeed, despite all the post-war efforts, to rebuild the scale and brightness of the Transylvanian Jewish life lost forever."<sup>4</sup>

From a documentary point of view, the first certain evidences about the Jews' presence in Tîrgu Mureş date from the 16<sup>th</sup> century. In 1526, after the battle from Mohács, Ali, Buda's Pasha, weighted in the matter of Jacob, a Jew, with the Transylvanian authorities: "*The son of the Jew from Buda, Jacob sold to Trombitás János, from Mures, cattle worth of 1300 florins, in exchange for which Trombitás should have given him 100 brass quintals, over three months. In the meantime, Trombitás left Mures, but gave his house and vineyard to the Jew.*"<sup>5</sup> Another document, dating from 1634, mentions a certain Elia, a Jew from Cluj, who bought wax from Transylvania's Prince

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<sup>2</sup> Sebestyén Mihály, *Nyúlgát az idő ellen*, Tîrgu Mureş, Editura Mentor, 2000, p. 350.

<sup>3</sup> A marosvásárhely zsidóság története, Perri (Friedmann ) Jiccák, Tel Aviv, 1977, p. 208; Radu Bălaş, Kocsis Francisko, *370 de zile de teroare*, Tîrgu Mureş, Edited by the Foundation CRONOS, 2003, p. 85.

<sup>4</sup> Ladislau Gyemant, *Ebreii din Transilvania*, Cluj-Napoca, Institutul Cultural Român. Centrul de Studii Transilvane, 2004, p. 127.

<sup>5</sup> Apud Szabó Csilla, *Holocaustul evreiesc din timpul celui de al doilea război mondial. Cazul orașului Tîrgu Mureş*, p 3. (work in manuscript); See also *Monumenta Hungarie Judaica*, Budapest, 1959, Tom.V/I. Registra Nr. 440, 218.

and transported it to Tîrgu Mureş, where he had been living and where he meant to sell it.<sup>6</sup> In time, especially due to the emigration of Polish Ashkenazi Jews, Jewish communities were formed in almost all towns and villages in Mureş County. The most important community was in Nazna, a village 5 km from Tîrgu Mureş. In 1747, the Jews in Nazna had a wooden synagogue, enlarged in 1785 with Eisik Franfl's financial help.<sup>7</sup> However, in 1789, at the mayor's order backed by non-Jewish traders and by the representatives of the Reformed Church, the synagogue was closed. Nevertheless, at the 1853 census, 24 Jewish families were living in Nazna and in the villages Foi and Sîncrai; this meant around 130-160 Jews, as a Jewish family had 6-8 members. In 1833, in Tîrgu Mureş there were 16 Jews, but the 1900 census recorded 1658 Jews, and a total population of 19,522.<sup>8</sup> In 1930, there were 5193 Jews, representing 15% of the town's population.

The first prayer house was built in Tîrgu Mureş in 1830; the great Synagogue on Aurel Filimon Street was built at the end of the century, in 1900.<sup>9</sup> The synagogue was built by the former Jewish community of the "Status-Quo", being designed by the Viennese architect Jakab Gartner. The interior brings to mind the interior of a Roman-Catholic church, "*at the crossroads between the Romanesque, Gothic and the Baroque.*"<sup>10</sup> The Great Temple in Tîrgu Mureş, one of the most important architectural accomplishments in Transylvania, has 522 seats, 314 on the ground floor, for men, and 328 seats at the balcony, for women. At the entrance, a marble monument with a memorial plaque recalls the drama of the deportation: "*The number of saints (martyrs) in our city is of 5943 and the wall stone screams in pain and the entire Jewish people cries for the extermination of our parents and of our loved ones, who were sacrificed and burnt in Auschwitz in 6704 (1944)*". In the inter-war period, the construction of the Synagogue on Galați Street begun but, unfortunately, it was never finished, due to the start of the war. Since the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, there were two communities in Tîrgu Mureş, one of the Status-Quo and another one, Orthodox.<sup>11</sup>

It cannot be contested that between the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the beginning of the Second World War, the Jews had a major role in the development of the culture and civilization in Tîrgu Mureş. Many factories, such as the city's beer factory, owned by Burger Albert, risen to the peerage by the Emperor Franz Josef, the biggest lumber and furniture factory in Transylvania, "Mesztics și Fii" ("Meszticz and Sons"), the Furniture Factory "Reti&Szekely" and others were owned by Jews. The city's architecture bears the mark of some Jewish artists. The Restaurant "Cocoșul de Aur" (The Golden Rooster) was the home of the Burger family; Harghita Hotel belonged

<sup>6</sup> Idem, Tom. X. Nr. 159, p. 167.

<sup>7</sup> Szabó Csilla, *op. cit.* p. 5.

<sup>8</sup> Fodor János, *Primarul Bernády*, Tîrgu Mureş, 2014, p. 4

<sup>9</sup> Traian Popa, *Monografia orașului Tîrgu Mureş*, Târgu-Mureş, Editura „CORVIN”, 1932, p. 247.

<sup>10</sup> *Tîrgu Mureş oraș al artelor*, Edited by Alina-Aurora Aldea, Ileana Sandu, Kocsis Francisco, Tîrgu Mureş, p. 26

<sup>11</sup> *Magyar Zsidó Lexikon*, Ujvari Péter, Budapest, 1929, 577.

to the librarian and editor Révész Béla. The Palace of Culture, one of the most beautiful Secession constructions, was the work of the Jewish architects Komor Marcel and Jakab Dezső from Budapest, the same architects that designed the Synagogue in Subotita.<sup>12</sup> Roth Miksa, a painter on glass from Budapest, made the stained glass from the Palace, whereas the furniture in the Mirrors Hall came from Braun Mór's interior decorations business in Budapest. Many of the furniture in the Palace of Culture and the entire furniture in the City Hall were made by "Mesztics și Fii" ("Meszticz and Sons") Furniture Factory.

A series of writers and poets came from Tîrgu Mureş' Jewish community: Berner Mór, Révésy Imre, Hegyi Ilona Salamon Ernő, Osvát Kálmán and others.

Regarding the political life of Tîrgu Mureş, part of the Jews were members of the Jewish Party. In 1931, Tîrgu Mureş had candidates from the Jewish Party in the elections for the Lower House: dr. Ludovic Lövenstein, dr. Heinrich Lázár, dr Mihail Mendel, Iuliu Fodor, Dezideriu Diamanstein and Maurtiu Rothman. They had 1549 votes from a total of 47884, meaning 3.23% from all the votes.<sup>13</sup> At the elections from 1933, Ludovic Lövenstein, Bela Senesieb, Dr. Dezideriu Engelberg, Dr. Iosif Schwarty, Albert Hirsch and Coloman Wolster all ran, getting 872 votes, that is, 2.03% from all the votes.<sup>14</sup> In 1933, in the last free elections in inter-war Romania, the Jewish Party ran with Dr. Ludovic Lövenstein, Onas Goldschag, Dr. Engelberg Dezideriu, Adolf Jakob, A. Moise Kiselman and Andrei Rosenfeld, getting 1094 votes, meaning 2.57 % from all the votes.<sup>15</sup> There were also Jews who were members in Romanian or Hungarian political parties.

The life of Jews in Tîrgu Mureş as they knew it, as well as that of the entire Jewish community in Europe was over at the beginning of the war. The inter-war period had its share of anti-Semitic manifestations, including in Romania. Calmed by the Peace Conference in Paris, anti-Semitism returned to Romania in the 30s, with schizoid forms as state policy during the Goga's and Giugurtu's governments, and especially during the national-legionary dictatorship in September 1940-January 1941.<sup>16</sup> Anti-Jewish measures reached their peak during Antonescu's regime. Anti-Semitic laws caused property expropriations, exclusion from the rights generally accepted for other citizens, the introduction of a statute of ghetto for certain categories of intellectuals and artists, pogroms and the deportation in Transnistria of hundreds of thousands of Jews, all conceived by Antonescu's regime in order to solve "the Jewish problem."<sup>17</sup> This was, at the same time,

<sup>12</sup> *Palatul Culturii din Târgu Mureş 1908-1913*, texts authors Keserű Katalin, Oniga Erika, Várallyay Réka, Târgu Mureş, 2013, p. 18.n

<sup>13</sup> Traian Bosoancă, Ilarie Gh. Opriş, *Alegerile parlamentare din judeţul Mureş 1919-1939*, Tîrgu Mureş, Editura Ardealul, 2004, pp. 112-113.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibidem*, p.150.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibidem*, pp.172-173.

<sup>16</sup> See Jean Ancel, *Contribuții la istoria României. Problema evreiască 1933-1944*, vol. I-IV, Bucureşti, Editura Hasefer, 2001, 2003.

<sup>17</sup> Lya Benjamin, „Statutul juridic al evreilor din România (1940-1944)”, in *Buletinul Centrului, Muzeului și Arhivei Iсторice a Еvreilor din România*, editorial Board: Dumitru Hincu, Harry Kuller, Eugen Preda, Bucureşti, 1998, pp. 40-67; See also Jean Ancel, *Preludiul la asasinat. Progromul de la Iași*, Iași, Editura Polirom, 2005; Carol Iancu, *Shoah în*

the reflex of an anti-Semitic culture promoted by intellectuals like Nichifor Crainic, Nae Ionescu, Petre Țuțea, Traian Brăileanu, Vasile Băncila, Radu Gyr, Haig Acterian, Alexandru Marcu, Mircea Eliade, Constantin Noica, Emil Cioran and others, of the debates in many cultural newspapers and magazines from the inter-war period, regarding national identity, a synonym of Romanians' identity crisis and frustrations caused by the accelerated process of modernity.<sup>18</sup>

In Hungary, almost all the governments in the inter-war period showed an anti-Semitic policy, fueled partly by the experience of the Bolshevik revolution led by Bela Kun.<sup>19</sup> After the revolution, the Jews distanced themselves from the Bolshevik regime, but the Hungarians still remembered that 18 from the 24 commissioners of the revolution were Jews. On 22 September 1920 the Parliament adopted the law proposed by Teleki Pal's government limiting the admission of Jewish students in universities to 6%.<sup>20</sup> Anti-Jewish laws followed in 1938, limiting the proportion of Jews admitted for liberal professions and public functions to 20%, and in 1939, racial criteria were linked to being a Jew. In August 1941, "the third anti-Semitic law" was issued, according to which all individuals who had at least two Jewish grandparents were considered Jewish. Mixed marriages were forbidden, including extramarital relations between Jews and non-Jews.<sup>21</sup> According to Raoul Hilberg, the Holocaust historian, Hungarian legislation was even fiercer than Nuremberg laws.<sup>22</sup> According to this law, 58.320 non-Jews were considered Jews. A new Prime Minister, Kallai Miklós, who started his office on 10 March 1942, and was seen as more moderate, issued a bill regarding the confiscation of Jews' possessions. A month later, he made public his intention to deport east of the Dniester the Jews that had taken refuge in Hungary. Berlin had asked the government in Budapest to solve the entire Jewish problem. The hope was that Hungary's example would encourage Romania, and, in turn, that Romania would be a good example for Bulgaria.<sup>23</sup> On 19 March 1944, Hungary was occupied by the German army, which led to the formation of a new government, on 22 March, led by Sztójai Döme. Operation "Margareta", as the occupation plan had been called also had the purpose of solving the Jewish problem. "On 4 April 1944 – painfully wrote Mosche Carmilly-Weinberger – *the genocide that cannot be put into words began, generated by blind hatred.*"<sup>24</sup> The details of the crime were set by Andor Jaroos, Ladislau Endre and Ladislau Baky,

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România. Evreii în timpul regimului Antonescu (1940-1944), Iași, Editura Polirom, 2001; Radu Ioanid, *Evreii sub regimul Antonescu*, București, Editura Hasefer, 1998; Idem, *Holocaust în România: distrugerea evreilor și romilor sub regimul Antonescu. 1940-1944*, București, Editura Hasefer, 2006; Elena Chirită, *Holocaust. Destine la răscruce*, București, Editura Universitară, 2013.

<sup>18</sup> Lucian Boia, *Capcanele istoriei. Elita intelectuală românească între anii 1930-1950*, Iași, Editura Polirom, 2011, pp. 48-94.

<sup>19</sup> Radu Bălaș, K. Francikso, *op. cit.*, p. 28.

<sup>20</sup> Paul Lendvai, *Ungurii*, București, Editura Humanitas, 2001, p. 395.

<sup>21</sup> Ladislau Gyémánt, *op. cit.*, p. 123.

<sup>22</sup> Paul Lendvai, *op. cit.*, p. 397.

<sup>23</sup> Radu Bălaș, Kocsis Francisko, *op. cit.*, p. 34.

<sup>24</sup> Moshe Carmilly-Weinberger, *Istoria evreilor din Transilvania (1623-1944)*, București, Editura Enciclopedică, 1994, p. 179.

together with Adolf Eichmann. The responsibility of the “Jewish problem” went to Edmund Winkelmann, high SS officer, police chief and Himmler’s representative in Hungary. According to Randolph Braham, once the Germans came to Hungary, 107 orders were issued, aimed at the extermination of Jews, all issued, as Veesenmayer reported, “with an unusual rapidity for the conditions here.”<sup>25</sup> The Decree-Law no. 1600/1944 of the Hungarian Royal Ministry Council, regarding the announcement and the seizing of Jewish property, was adopted on 14 April and published on 16 April 1944. Art. 1 of the Decree-Law ordered that all Jews residing in the country were obligated to declare the properties in their possession to the competent authorities, by 30 April 1944.<sup>26</sup> The decision regarded the confiscations of Jewish properties. The Decree-Law no. 1240/1944 of the Hungarian Royal Ministry Council regarded the establishment of a distinctive sign for the Jews.<sup>27</sup> The Decree no. 1980/1944 M.E. of the Hungarian Royal Ministry Council referred to the protection of Hungarian spiritual life by Jewish authors’ literary works.<sup>28</sup> This was a blow for the very Hungarian culture and nation. As the Hungarian historian György Ránki wrote: “nowhere in Eastern Europe did the Jews identify themselves with a nation as much as they had in Hungary.”<sup>29</sup>

All the measures adopted by the Sztójai’s government were bearable up to the decision to deport and exterminate Jews by applying “the final solution”.

Northern Transylvania, joined to Hungary by the Vienna Award of 30 August 1940, was among the first targets of the extermination policy. The final decision was applied first in the provinces. The first victim was the Jewish population in Transcarpathian Ukraine, where the ghettoization took place between 16 and 19 April 1944. In Tîrgu Mureş, Adolf Eichmann’s men arrived at the beginning of April, and headquartered in the nowadays “Plaza” Hotel. A series of measures were taken that humiliated the Jews: they were eliminated from the local administration, from their positions as public servants, and the Jewish lawyers, physicians, journalists, and artists were forbidden the right to practice.<sup>30</sup> On 6 April, the Jews were forbidden to use public transportation, in order to prevent their taking refuge. On 16 April, it was decided to seize all Jewish assets, and on 21 April all Jewish stores were closed. Despite all the threats, including that of capital punishment, 100 non-Jews trying to hide Jewish assets were arrested.<sup>31</sup> On 28 April, Endre László, secretary of state, came to Tîrgu Mureş and had a meeting with local officials at the Prefecture. According to declarations of town mayor, Májai Ferencz, given in the “Ghetto Trial”, Endre László suggested the containment of Jews in the Brick Factory. He visited the space, which

<sup>25</sup> Paul Lendvai, *op. cit.*, p. 432.

<sup>26</sup> V. T. Ciubăncan, M. I. Ganea, I. V. Ranca, *Drumul Holocaustului. Calvarul evreilor din nord-vestul Transilvaniei sub ocupația Ungariei 5 IX 1940-25 X 1944*, Cluj-Napoca, Editura Ciubăncan, 1995, p. 33.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 34.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 35.

<sup>29</sup> Paul Lenvai, *op. cit.*, p. 433.

<sup>30</sup> Radu Bălaş, Kocsis Francisko, *op. cit.*, p. 79.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 81

could contain no more than 600 Jews according to the mayor. He was told that “*it would be no sanatorium.*”<sup>32</sup> He still inquired about another location in town that could admit Jews. The building of the Agricultural High School was proposed. As it was then under construction and had no windows, doors or stairs for the upper floors, the space was declared unfit. It was thus decided that the town ghetto would be the Brick Factory. He had transformed another brick factory into a ghetto before coming to Tîrgu Mureş, in Kosice. What did the Brick Factory in Tîrgu Mureş look like? From the descriptions of those surviving the Holocaust, we quote that of Gardos Aurel Aladár: “*On a plot of about 20,000 square meters, fenced with old boards and partly broken, there was a house in the middle, with the roof mostly broken, without floors, paved with cement, covered in moisture, mud and dirt. In the middle of this building, inside, the ovens lay like catacombs.*

*Jews had to live in this building, through whose roof rain was coming in, and in the best case in those catacombs. The first order was for everybody to enter the building. But it was seen that roughly 2000 people got in there. The rest had to live outside, in improvised tents made from clothes, through which cold moisture infiltrated.*<sup>33</sup>

The ghettoization started on 3 May. The local newspaper “Székely Szó” announced on 4 May the start of the operations for collecting the Jews, as a punishment for “their centennial sins.”<sup>34</sup> Iosif Pop, the Greek-Catholic archpriest of Tîrgu Mureş wrote in his *Memoirs* about the tragedy of taking Jews from their homes and their ghettoization: “*One morning when I was getting back from Bărdeşti and turned from the Mures Bridge to the rectory, I noticed on Goga (Călăraşi) Street elderly women and men, children, with some hacks in front of their homes, crying [...] As most of the men had been taken behind the front for forced labor, they got their families out of their homes, mercilessly, allowing them only what they could carry. Great grief! They were taken in a yard at the brick factory near Corunca, where they were kept for some time, day, night, under the sun, the rain, and then they were loaded in military carts and taken to Obor, where there were some sheds, so some of them took shelter. Then they loaded them in trucks, so crowded that they couldn't even sit down, let alone sleep. How savage were the soldiers escorting them with the poor elderly and helpless children.*<sup>35</sup> 3,500 men were reported to have been transported in the ghetto on 6 May. In a few days, around 5,000 people were collected, besides the Jews brought from other towns and villages in the county, thus reaching 7,500 people. Amongst them, the pupils of the primary school led by Eugen Moskovits and those of the secondary school led by Iosif Stern, over 160 pupils<sup>36</sup>. A marble plaque in a classroom of the former Jewish school, later School no. 4, and, more recently Europa Gymnasium on Horea Street reminds the names of the students deported and killed at Auschwitz.

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<sup>32</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 105.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 96.

<sup>34</sup> *Apud Szabó Csilla, cited work.* p. 50.

<sup>35</sup> Iosif Pop, *Credință și apostolat. Memorii*, Preface by Archpriest Liviu Sabău, metropolitan canonical, Edition curated and Afterword by Dimitrie Poptămaș and Melinte Șerban, Tîrgu Mureş, Fundația Culturală „Vasile Netea”, 2004, p. 114.

<sup>36</sup> Ladislau Gyémánt, *op. cit.*, p. 125.

Soon enough, the space at the Brick factory proved to be insufficient. Then, on 8 or 10 May it was decided that 1200-1300 Jews would be moved to the town's cattle fair, in Obor.<sup>37</sup> In the ghetto, people lived nightmarish days. We have the testimonials of 10 survivors, collected in the book of the journalists Radu Bălaş and Kocsis Francisko, *370 de zile de teroare* (370 Days of Terror): Eliszabeta (Dicker) Asztalos, Nicolae Bermann, Samuel Csernovitz, Eva (Moskovits) Deutsch, Susana (Riegelhaupt) Diamantstein, Ladislau Grün, Leopold Kárpelesz, Marta (Grün) Marmor, Sara (Löbl) Minor, Juliana (Mestitz) Scheiner. In her book about the Holocaust, Szabó Csilla got the testimonials of three survivors: Juliana Scheiner, Andrei Mesztitz and Ladislau Grün (from Reghin). Despite being 2-3 years distant, the testimonials recall the same dramatic moments of the days spent in the ghetto, the ordeal transportation to Auschwitz and the Final Solution. We will use the partial testimonials of the 10 people to recreate the atmosphere of the ghetto of Tîrgu Mureş.

Juliana (Mesztitz) Scheiner starts her story with the inter-war period: *Before the war, Tîrgu Mureş was a very clean town, very nice and cheerful. I lived well with my family, my father, my mother, and my two brothers. I had a quiet nice life and a beautiful childhood. The house we lived in was on Gheorghe Doja Street, the house that hosts today the Dermatology Hospital. We had a large yard where all the children nearby would come and it was always very lively [...] On 3 May 1944 we had our luggage ready, and we were watching through the window as the people, torn from their usual life, were passing by, some by carriage, some by foot, carrying their luggage and crying... The problem of the Jews in Tîrgu Mureş was solved in only one day... We were not treated as people, but as beings they could handle as they wanted... A day before leaving we had to pack and our luggage were checked to make sure we hadn't packed an extra handkerchief. Women were thoroughly checked to make sure they hadn't hidden anything inside their bodies. It was very demeaning, but the female nurse who did the control was my friend's acquaintance and so we weren't controlled. They humiliated us again and again but we still couldn't believe worse things could happen. We had never taken seriously Hitler's doctrines.*<sup>38</sup> Juliana Mesztitz (Scheiner) was Heinrich Mesztitz's daughter, the owner of the furniture factory mentioned before. She studied in the best schools, she spoke 7-8 foreign languages, she played the piano; she had a beauty shop, as she was a beautician. Like her, many Jews didn't believe that Hitler's anti-Semitic policies could mean their physical elimination. In *Mein Kampf*, Hitler attributed to Jews all the misfortunes that befell Germans after the First World War, making them responsible for Germany's defeat.<sup>39</sup> The publication of the book *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, manufactured by Piotr Ivanovici Rachnovsky between 1897 and 1898 only increased the hatred. It was one of Hitler's favorite books, alluding to the existence of

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<sup>37</sup> Radu Bălaş, Kocsis Francisko, *op. cit.*, p. 97.

<sup>38</sup> Szabó Csilla, *op. cit.*, p. 90.

<sup>39</sup> Josy Eisenberg, *O istorie a evreilor*, Bucureşti, Editura Humanitas, 2006, p. 334.

world Jewish plot.<sup>40</sup> Hitler's policy after he came to power in 1933 knew two stages. The first period, 1933-1939, had as a goal the Jews' emigration from Germany. After the Anschluss and the occupation of Sudetenland, encouraged by the lack of reaction of the great powers, Hitler expelled from Germany 15,000 Polish Jews, and on 10 November 1938 initiated "Kristallnacht", when 100 Jews were killed and 35,000 were taken to concentration camps, 100 synagogues and 7500 Jewish stores were burned. A great Jewish exodus followed, about two thirds of all the Jews in Germany and Austria left by the beginning of the war.<sup>41</sup> The idea that all the Jews should be taken to Africa appeared in that period, in a region as far away from Europe as possible. During the second stage, between 1941 and 1945, Germany used the Final Solution in order to solve the Jewish problem.

Samuel Csernovits, survivor of the Holocaust, describes the moment he taken from his home: *The morning of 3 May, around 6.00, we heard a loud knock on the door and a voice shouted: "We are the Hungarian Gendarmerie, wake up, we have to evacuate. We leave for the brick factory"! They told us we weren't allowed to take anything with us, except for a package of 20 kg of clothes and food, but we were so poor we didn't have so much. So I, my father, my mother, and my younger sister were lined up and left for the ghetto, together with hundreds of other people that we "gathered" on the way. My brothers were already in forced labor camps, and my elder sister was in Budapest (she had been hidden and escaped deportation). It was a sunny, warm day, contrasting with what was happening. When we got there, the covered places (the former burners of the factory) had already been taken, so we stayed under the open sky. Whenever it rained, we would get soaked, because our "roof" was a bed sheet supported by four sticks. We weren't assaulted in the ghetto, but many were beaten. The rich were forced to leave all their jewelry and money at the entrance, but many didn't do it, so the gendarmes mistreated them to get everything from them."*<sup>42</sup> Susana Diamantstein recalls about the mistreating of the wealthy: *"they were taken in a separate room and tortured to make them tell where they had hidden their assets. Moreover, almost all the women had their vaginas checked to see if they hadn't hidden any jewelry there."*<sup>43</sup> Juliana (Mestitz) Scheiner's memories are similar: *"Here (in the ghetto) many have been beaten by the gendarmes to make them tell where they had hidden their fortunes, but we escaped beating, probably because they realized we had nothing left."*<sup>44</sup> The assets left at home were subjected to looting, including by people who inventoried confiscated goods. At the "Ghetto Trial", Gardos Aurel Aladár, former leader of the Jewish Community in Romania, describes the situation created because of the haste Jews had been taken away: *"The local authorities were very zealous, so in most cases, the teams didn't even give Jews permission to carry any luggage, and they came empty-handed, some even naked, as they were taken from their beds. I have later talked to the*

<sup>40</sup> Leonidas Donskis, *Forme ale urii. Imaginația bântuită a filosofiei și literaturii moderne*, Tîrgoviște, Editura Cetatea de Scaun, 2013, p. 80.

<sup>41</sup> Jean Sévillia, *Incorectitudinea istorică*, București, Editura Humanitas, 2012, p. 156.

<sup>42</sup> Radu Bălaș, Kocsis Francisko, *op. cit.*, p. 153.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibidem*, *op. cit.*, p. 167.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 207.

*Jews and I found out how the teams treated them. They demeaned them, but they didn't beat them.*"<sup>45</sup> Once the Jews were taken away, their assets were inventoried and their houses were sealed. Researching the Financial Administration and Town Hall Entry Registry, Gardos Aurel Aladár found that there were almost 5,000 applications from Tîrgu Mureş town citizens demanding goods seized from the Jewish population.<sup>46</sup> With minor exceptions, like the two bishops, Iuliu Hossu, Greek-Catholic, and Márton Áron, Roman-Catholic, the Lutheran pastor Andor Áron, the Romanian and Hungarian intellectuals Aurel Socol, Mihai Marina, Emil Hațeganu, Mihai Gurgu, Iosif Tóth, Szabó T. Attila, dr Dezideriu Miskolczi and some others, the Christian population in Tîrgu Mureş, just like that in other towns, didn't oppose neither the ghettoization, nor the deportation in extermination camps.

On 27 May, the deportation began. The Jews found out that they would leave for the train station. Nicolae Berman recalls that "*On a beautiful spring day, they lined us up in the factory yard, a Hungarian officer came and told us: "I give my word as a soldier that you will not be taken outside the country and that you will be carried in a place where you can work with your families". They took us to the train station and there they put us in some stockcars, forming a very long train. We didn't have much food, and my father didn't eat anything, leaving the food to me and my sister. We were very crowded, sitting on each other's toes, and we used a bucket in a corner of the truck for our necessities. You could see despair on everyone's faces, they barely spoke, there was a general sadness, completed by the cries of the sufferings.*"<sup>47</sup> The sad journey in the "death train" ended in Auschwitz; some people died before reaching there: "*After four days and five nights – recalls Samuel Csernovitz - we reached the final destination. It was dark and through a crack in the truck I saw a lighted board that read "Auschwitz". We continue the train ride, very slowly, for about one km, until we reached Birkenau. I saw there, in the distance, four constructions similar to chimneys, with flames reaching skyward. Simon Vuks, an illegalist, a scholar, was sitting next to me and I asked him what those constructions were. "Some crematoria where they burn garbage", he answered me, without suspecting that, in reality, they burnt deported Jews there. I believe it was around 6 in the morning when some men dressed in striped clothes, like convicts, opened the shutters and shouted at us to get out of the truck, while they were hitting us from time to time with some twigs. Then somebody from my truck asked these men who they were. "We are Jews from Poland and we have been here for five years. We are beating you because you are fools. You knew you were brought here to die and instead of rebelling, instead of saving us and dying in the fight against Nazis, you'd rather do nothing and come here, to die like fools!", answered some of the people in striped clothes. It was in vain to explain, they had no idea what had happened, about ghettos and camps, they didn't believe us.*"<sup>48</sup> They found out from the Polish Jews that it was

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<sup>45</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 93.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>47</sup> Radu Bălaş, Kocsis Francisko, *op. cit.*, p. 154.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 154.

good to declare they were healthy, "Alles gesundt", which meant "Everybody is healthy". Everybody was triaged by Dr. Joseph Mengele. The children, the elderly, over 55 years, and the sick were sent to the gas chambers and the healthy, the young people were sent to work. The German officers made a simple hand gesture: to the left, to the gas chambers, or to the right, for work. "*My mother wasn't old - testifies Julianna Mestitz - she was 54 and had a few white hairs, but she had thyroid problems, which Mengele saw and sent her to the left. I watched her walking in the distance with a friend, with a 7 year old boy and that was the last time I saw her.*"<sup>49</sup> The following day she asked a Polish Jewish girl when they would see their relatives again. She answered her: "*Do you really believe you will ever see them again? Can't you see those flames? They are burning your lot now! You could really see flames outside and you could well hear the noises from machines and guns, but we couldn't believe it, it seemed unbelievable. Everything was a nightmare.*"<sup>50</sup>

On 15 September 1941, during a time when Germany seemed to defeat the entire world, the gassing system was used for the first time, experimentally in the Polish town Oswiecim (Auschwitz in German).<sup>51</sup> In 1942, the enterprise *I. A. Toff und Söhne* built the first two crematoria, and they later built two other, more modern ones. For three years, until 2 September 1944, when Berlin ordered the crematoria to shut down, around 5 million people were brought to Auschwitz, mostly Jews. Only a few tens of thousands lived, amongst whom very few Jews. Many died by gassing with hydrogen cyanide or Zyklon, a highly toxic product, the lethal dose for a human being of one milligram per kilogram. The Jews from Hungary, including those from Northern Transylvania were sent directly from the ramps at Auschwitz in gas chambers. To cope with the new arrivals, the number of death commandos serving gas chambers was increased from 240 to 840.<sup>52</sup> Tens of thousands Jews were victims of the experiments performed by German doctors: X-ray sterilization, mass artificial insemination, cancerous tissue transplants in the uterus, sterilization and castration of men, subcutaneous oil injections, unjustified amputation of limbs, medical experiments on twins, Dr. Mengel's "specialization" the injection with typhus viruses of two groups, Jews Ashkenazi and Sephardic Jews, to see which were more resistant, and other experiments, the most absurd, and hateful.<sup>53</sup> Many died of hunger, disease, physical exhaustion, beating, the cold and other situations one can hardly imagine, and others died during their transportation to the extermination camps or were shot. According to Raoul Hilberg, an American historian who published in 1961 a study on the victims of the Holocaust, 5.1 million Jews died in Europe between 1941 and 1945: 3 millions in camps, 1.3 shot and 800,000 as victims of disease,

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<sup>49</sup> Szabó Csilla, *op. cit.*, p. 91.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 91.

<sup>51</sup> Max Weinreich, *Universitățile lui Hitler. Contribuția intelectualilor la crimele Germaniei împotriva evreilor*, Iași, Editura Polirom, 2000, p. 183.

<sup>52</sup> Hannah Arendt, *Eichmann la Ierusalim. Un raport asupra banalității răului*, București, Editura ALL, 1997, p. 218.

<sup>53</sup> See for more details Leon Poliakov, Josef Wulf, *Das Dritte Reich und die juden*, Arani, Verlags-GMBM. Berlin-Grunewald, 1953.

famine, and ghetto repression.<sup>54</sup> Other sources talk about 5.5 million, or up to about 6 million victims.

By applying Adolf Eichmann's plan, 131,633 Jews were deported from Northern Transylvania.<sup>55</sup> 7,549 Jews were deported from Mureş County, out of which only 1,500 Jews came back home, to find their homes looted, destroyed, abandoned and empty<sup>56</sup>. Ill, traumatized, many died after being released from the camps.<sup>57</sup> The Holocaust was the absolute form of hatred. “*Two millennia of anti-Semitic hatred of all kinds – shows Paul Johnson – heathen, Christian, and secular, superstitious and famous, popular and scholarly, were blended by Hitler in an overwhelming implacable force, released by his extraordinary will and energy over the helpless body of the European Jews.*”<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>54</sup> Apud Jean Sévilia, *op. cit.*, p. 159.

<sup>55</sup> Ladilau Gyémánt, *op. cit.*, p. 126.

<sup>56</sup> Mosche Carmilly-Weinberger, *op. cit.*, p. 181.

<sup>57</sup> A Marosvásárhely zsidóság története, Perrri (Fredmann) JiccaÁK, Tel- Aviv, 1977, p. 299.

<sup>58</sup> Paul Johnson, *O istorie a evreilor*, Bucureşti, Hasefer, 2005, p. 41.



# **COMPARATIVE APPROACH OF COLLECTIVIZATION PROCESS IN ROMANIA AND HUNGARY**

**Andrei Claudiu Dipșe\***

## **Abstract**

*Collectivization as a process and system is a specific phenomenon of all communist regimes established after 1945 in eastern and central Europe following the soviet model of laws and practices. Hungary and Roumania offers two parallel models particularly interesting, in terms of imposing the same stalinist model, but the difficulties and social realities of each state led to different outcomes. If in Roumania was possible to impose a similar stalinist model (like in USSR or Albania), in Hungary this fact wasn't sustainable. After a forced attempt of imposing a stalinist model, the hungarian economy had a strong rebound who constrained the political authorities to try a neo-stalinist model with many liberal measures. All in all, this article succeed to bring forward political decisions, stages of collectivization and the methods used by hungarian and roumanian governments to build the rural socialist society.*

**Keywords:** communism; collectivization in Hungary; collectivization in Roumania; communist agriculture.

Collectivization process has represented a typical phenomenon in every state of the socialist block, started shortly after the establishment of the communist regimes in central and eastern Europe. The ideological and practical roots of this process are being found in the stalinist model of collectivization started by the soviet authorities from 1920 in the entire Soviet Union. Comparatively speaking, the repressive means and political implementation in laws of this process assume that collectivization in both Hungary and Roumania reflects a synchronic development, with some consistent differences, of a stalinist model in Roumania and a neo-stalinist version in Hungary. The basic idea of agricultural collectivization express expropriation of rural private property by nationalization of lands, and forced association of peasants in agricultural cooperatives. In background, collectivization has an ideological basis – eradication of capitalist elements in agriculture – the landlord (known in different ways as – “chiabur”, “culac”, “the exploiter”) and “restore the lands to the people”. Practically this economic and political measure meant physical and mental destruction of the rural world by enslavement of hardworking peasants.

## **Why collectivization is needed?**

The answer to this question is very wide and directly depends on author's position concerning the regime. In general, the communists supported several political and doctrinal arguments<sup>1</sup> that motivated this

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\* Colegiul Tehnic “Transilvania” Baia Mare

<sup>1</sup> Final Report of the Presidential Commission for the Study of the Communist Dictatorship in Roumania, Bucureşti, 2006, electronic edition, p. 426 (from this point to be referred as – Tismăneanu Report).

process. For economic reasons, collectivization was needed because the divided rural properties cannot be profitable and effective in a modern and mechanical agriculture. From this point of view, the communist state was the only one capable to centralize and schedule the entire agriculture by nationalizing the lands and invest in agricultural machinery. Also, the mass exploitation of agricultural resources was at the time, the only possibility left to sustain the urbanization process and mass development of industrial sectors. From a political point of view, it was inconceivable losing control of peasantry<sup>2</sup> (a majority social class in post-war Roumania), and not including it in a system controlled by political factors. In other words, the communist system could not take the risk to leave outside the surveillance a social sector that owns all means of subsistence - agricultural products - because they could sabotage the socialist establishment anytime.

### **Political Decision – Stages of collectivization**

In Roumania and Hungary, the collectivization process proved to be a long tortuous road, with implementation obstacles in both zones and a huge volume of „work of persuasion”. This process was initiated shortly after political takeover with socioeconomic reforms which have been supervised by Moscow. Collectivization followed the soviet pattern and peasantry was very restless because in all Eastern and Central European regions have appeared rumors about horrors of collectivization from Russia and Ukraine. So, the communists implemented several agricultural reforms adopting interwar period democratic models.<sup>3</sup>

In both states, before the collectivization was started, from 1945 the communist have taken sets of incremental measures to reduce the large landlords properties<sup>4</sup>, problem that haven't been solved during the interwar period and have lead to great discontent among smallholders. Thus, radical reforms have been promoted to reduce the land inequality, especially in Hungary where the situation was critical. While in Roumania have been redistributed only 10%, in Hungary we note the biggest rate of redistribution from all Europe, where over 35% of all agricultural surface (about 93.000 km<sup>2</sup>) was taken from landlords and divided to lower class peasants.<sup>5</sup>

Roumanian legal basis of lands division comes in the context of promoting practical measures for the majority of peasantry and gain

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<sup>2</sup> Liana Petrescu, *Instaurarea comunismului între rezistență și represiune (The communist establishment between opponency and suppression)*, București, Editura Fundația Academia Civică, 1995, p. 54.

<sup>3</sup> Immediately after WWI most of the eastern european states adopted agricultural reforms in the '20. For example, Roumania had a radical agricultural reform in 1923, that inspired communist propaganda.

<sup>4</sup> Roumanian Law No. 187/1945 (published in the Official Journal of Roumania No.68/23 March 1945) the private property was limited to 50h, and in Hungary at 57h (for further information see: Dan Catanus, Octavian Roske, *Colectivizarea agriculturii în România. Dimensiunea politică (The agricultural collectivization in Roumania. Political Dimension)*, vol I, 1949-1953, București, Editura Institutul National pentru Studiul Totalitarismului, 2000, p. 8.

<sup>5</sup> Nigel Swain, *Hungary: The Rise and Fall of Feasible Socialism*, London, New Left Books, 1992, p. 35.

electoral support, because the ideological propaganda of class-struggle has not given any results. The peasantry was preoccupied for daily living (after droughts from 1945-1946 was a critical food crisis) not marxism-leninism philosophy.

In Hungary most of the redistribution lands have been confiscated from the Catholic church (law 9/1946), which has been radically expropriated. In Roumania, shortly after political takeover, the communists knew that a mass confiscation can be dangerous and could lead to riots. So, they started gradually by nationalizing lands of vocational schools, health units, royal family properties, and lands of the Greek Catholic church (Roumanian Worker's Party - RWP - Resolution 21-23 February 1948). After this prior sequences, following the industrialization model (which – as a process and implementation – was conducted very fast), political decision factors also wanted an effective and fast collectivization that had disastrous results, so they restarted the process in successive waves.

An important similarity is the fact that in both Roumania and Hungary, the collectivization process was implemented in two main stages (each with subsequent stages). So, in Roumania were two waves: 1. 1949-1953 and 2. 1953-1962<sup>6</sup>. In Hungary, the economic, political and social factors offsets this interval, so the waves were between 1. 1948-1956 and 1960-1963.<sup>7</sup>

### **First wave of collectivization:**

#### A. Hungary 1948-1956

In July 1948, the recent communist government, formed by the MDP (Magyar Dolgozók Pártja – Hungarian Working People's Party), started an extensive campaign of land nationalization directed against the *nagygazdák* (the hungarian “kulaks”), by imposing maximal quotas on land ownership, which led to a massive expropriation of 60% the agricultural land, the biggest part being redirected towards the new cooperative system.<sup>8</sup> Matyas Rakosi firmly believed in his ability to implement a viable model of the stalinist collectivization. The results did not match his expectations: by the year 1950 only a quarter of the peasants were involved in the cooperatives, though a massive part of the population has left the agricultural areas.<sup>9</sup> At the same time, imposing obligatory quotas of agricultural products on the providers led to a substantial devaluation of the products. The subsidies (during the 1949-1954 “five-year plan”, which promised over 11 million forint help for agricultural providers), came in the form of specific measures which barely summed half of the promised amount, at the end of 1953. Therefore we see a reevaluation of the collectivization policy, with the coming to power of Imre Nagy, who will introduce the *New Course (for the hungarian*

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<sup>6</sup> Tismaneanu Report, p. 431.

<sup>7</sup> The Hungarian Report, *Encouraging Collective Farmers Marketing Initiatives (COFAMI)*, Institute of Political Sciences, Hungarian Academy of Sciences, 12(2008/1), pp. 10-11.

<sup>8</sup> Nigel Swain, *op. cit.*, p. 42.

<sup>9</sup> Ivan T. Berend, *The Hungarian Economic Reforms 1953-1988*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1990, p. 2.

economy) in 1954, investing more than a quarter of the funds for development into the mechanization of the agriculture. Rákosi, returning to power in 1955 publicly denounced the "right wing deviants" and tried again to forcefully impose the soviet model of collectivization. The latter failure of these policies led to the abandonment of collectivization and to the search for new strategies.<sup>10</sup>

### B. Romania 1949-1953

In Romania, the first wave starts with the meeting of the Central Committee of the RWP held between 3 and 5 of march 1949 opening the *battle against the landlords* by the means of collectivization, in the struggle to *limit the bourgeois exploitation*. Gheorghe Gheorghiu Dej's intent, to impose a stalinist system led to a vigorous campaign of socialist transformation in the agriculture, with measures like: confiscation of land (expropriation from peasants who owned more than 50 hectares)<sup>11</sup> and buildings, later transformed the CAPs and GACs (the types of cooperatives established in socialist Romania), displacements and house arrests (instituted by HCM no. 344/15 from March 1951), extortions of donations<sup>12</sup>, etc. In this period the results were rather indecisive, because of the contradictory guidelines, moments of hesitation over the implementation of a stalinist collectivization, and last but not the least, due to the internal struggles in PMR, resulting in the recognition of Dej as the unquestionable leader (after the elimination in 1952 of the group led by Ana Pauker ).

### **Second wave of collectivization**

#### A. Hungary 1956-1963

After the revolutionary events of 1956, Hungary was shaken from the ground, and it was very clear that a communism reorientation was needed towards liberalization of the regime. In 1957, the new representatives of the MDP will launch so-called „agrarian theses” in order to open a way to a progressive collectivization, in which the process becomes gradually by a soft liberalization of all agricultural activities. In order to encourage adhesion at the cooperativization system, the government will allow a higher independence of farmers by leaving every cooperative to buy his own agricultural machinery. This measure reduced the strong dependence of farmers from the agricultural machinery offered by state deposits. On top of this, after 1961 most machinery state deposits will be abolished and transformed in repair shops, measure that help the agricultural process to be continuously.

In fact, which are the economic results of these agrarian thesis? The government has given several small rights that reflected a larger

<sup>10</sup> Talis Tisenkopfs, et all, in *Rebuilding and Failing Collectivity: Specific Challenges for Collective Farmers Marketing Initiatives in post-socialist countries*, in Int. Jnl. of Soc. of Agr. & Food, Vol. 18, No. 1, pp. 70–88.

<sup>11</sup> Decree No. 83/2 March 1949 for completing Law No. 187/1945.

<sup>12</sup> Tismaneanu Report, pp. 428-430.

independence of associated farmers in cooperatives by the simple fact that they have become owners of the production machines.<sup>13</sup> A direct consequence of this liberalization measure was the number of associated farmers in cooperatives which has increased between 1959-1963 by over 93%. This shows that the collectivization process was revived, and from 1960 the results start to appear.<sup>14</sup> Also, farmers had the right to own so-called „household plots” which, even where independent, the regime considered as integrated parts of the national system of collectivization. This paradox consecrated an utopian model unique in central and eastern Europe in the context of any sign of capitalism or economical independence was seen as a deviation from the soviet model. Interesting is the fact that Hungary succeeded to propose in the second part, a mixt model of collectivization based on the idea of state centralism with a short independence of every member. Hungary will understand that this kind of capitalist tendencies represents an immediate necessity to agricultural realities and not necessarily a deviation from socialism.

Even after 1968 the socialist sector remained dominant, the authorities will continue to promote tolerance policies to protect household plots. This fact created a subsystem of small ownership specialized in livestock, which has been a perfect balance for the state economy, based on massive land cultivation.

## B. Romania 1953-1962

After elimination of the “right wing deviant group” (ro. “*deviaționisti de dreapta*”) led by Ana Pauker, in 1952 Gheorghiu Dej will initiate a powerful campaign against the landlords. But Dej’s radical perspective was stopped by the sudden death of I. Stalin and the beginning of relaxation period after Nikita Hrusciov was elected leader of the CPSU. As we know, between 1953 and 1956 the communist block is characterized by geopolitical instability because Hrusciov condemned stalinist abuses and opened a less radical vision on communism. The death of Stalin in 1953 and the hungarian revolution from 1956 represented two important points that stopped for a moment all radical measures in the socialist block by the fear for retaliation. In Roumania this fact reflected a stagnation period for the collectivization process, without registering any significant changes.

From 1956 the geopolitical situation becomes stable (as a direct consequence of the hungarian revolution suppression), Dej readopt a stalinist vision of collectivization by starting in force this process. Thus, in the next years will follow a draconian and punitive period of collectivization. Galați region will be the „encouraging experiment” where the communist authorities conducted sample collectivizations, followed by a complete collectivization of Constanța and entire Dobrogea region, in a record time and outstanding results.<sup>15</sup> Subsequently the Party oriented collectivization

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<sup>13</sup> Ivan T. Berend, *op. cit.*, p. 102.

<sup>14</sup> Talis Tisenkopfs, et all, *op. cit.*, p. 73.

<sup>15</sup> Tismăneanu Report, p. 432.

process into multiethnic areas (considered unstable and easier to collectivize), as Maramureș, Banat, Oltenia, etc.

Following this model, after 1957 all agricultural regions will be collectivized by force. Although Dej setted that this process to be completed until 1965, the communist government succeeded to *collectivize 96% of the arable surface of the entire country and 93,4% of the agricultural surface by 1962*<sup>16</sup>. The success of collectivization was celebrated by Dej and his office in a extraordinary plenary in 23-25 April 1962 and also in a special meeting of the MAN (Grand National Assembly) in 27-39 of the same month in Bucharest.

### **Opponency and Suppression**

In Romania, the process of imposing the stalinist model was extremely brutal, taking into account the fact that in the first years of collectivization alarming tranches were imposed. In 1949, for example, the peasants were left without the necessary seed for next agricultural year. Collecting the tranches was a difficult process and authorities were supposed to go to every single home in order to fulfill the requirements of the headquarters. Moreover, in the same year peasant riots were taken place in almost all country, suppressed by the suppressive system. It is certain that for the first period of collectivization the suppression was moderate. This fact is supported by the statistical figures indicating that between 1948 and 1950, „Securitate” arrested approximatively 10.000 peasants. Suppression would rise to alarming levels in 1952 when, practically, arrests double. Over 20.000 peasants are arrested, and until 1953 the total number of arrested peasants would 80.000.<sup>17</sup> These peasants will represent the majority of the resistance system, being considered *counter-revolutionary*, being arrested mainly for the following „crimes”: country treason and espionage, omission of denunciation and favoring of criminals, theft from the common treasury etc.

In Hungary, after failing to impose collectivization for the first period of the regime, suppression never reached the levels in Romania for two main reasons: First, in Romania along with URSS and Albania was imposed the most radical collectivization campaign in which dominated the stalinist model of suppression and „persuasion work”, whereas in Hungary, the dominating system can be described as mixt (comprising elements characteristic to small private property). Second, romanian peasants displayed greater opponency against the suppressive system compared to their hungarian counterparts, which especially after 1956, would give up the opponency and progressively integrate in the cooperativization system. Indeed, they were discouraged after their suppressed riot in 1956, but also because the agrarian tenets that were used to persuade them to adhere to

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<sup>16</sup> Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej, *Raport cu privire la încheierea colectivizării și reorganizarea conducerii agriculturii, prezentat la sesiunea extraordinară a Marii Adunări Naționale, 27 aprilie 1962* (Report concerning the end of collectivization and reorganization of leadership, presented at the extraordinary session of Grand National Assembly, 27 April, 1962), București, Editura Politica, 1962, p. 5.

<sup>17</sup> Tismăneanu Report, p. 437.

the collectivization system. Nonetheless, after 1958, in Hungary would be implemented the retirement program for the members of the cooperativization structures which encouraged the peasants to remain part of the system and to refrain themselves from doing as their predecessors (until 1958), which mostly reoriented toward industry branch, where they had advantages and retirement was guaranteed.

### **“Persuasion work”**

Undoubtedly, “persuasion work”, in both countries was characterised by terror, physical force and psychological factors such as obedience. Before the entire process, we identify an ideological campaign that had the purpose to stir up an open conflict between small peasants and landlords under the pretense that rich landlords behaved in a exploiting, burgoise manner. In the traditional communities of the rural environment, the peasant was preoccupied with proximal necessities of the every day life and less with overcoming the “exploit of man over man”. Moreover, this ideologic process had an opposed outcome because the all peasants became solidary with each other; this happend because the landlords relied on small peasants.

If the attempt to turn the peasants against landlords did not resulted in a desirable outcome, the regime attempted to use the successes of collectivization from the „experiment regions” as a forceful argument for the necessity of building an agricultural socialization. For this purpose, through propaganda, the “regions of experiment” served as “proof” for the fact that a recently collectivized community became abruptly from what once was a poor community the most prosperous region in the country.<sup>18</sup>

In the pre-campaign of collectivization, non-agressive means proved futile. The next step was altering the Penal Code so as the „Securitate” and other institutions of the state to act uncoerced in order to suppress the *counter-revolutionary* movement. The main measures that were applied were convictions to punishments involving liberty deprivation, inquests, appropriation of goods and establishments, relocations to new “working places”, deportations. At least in Romania, deportations constituted a core factor used by the persuasion policies. In this vein, “Campia Baraganului” was labeled “Romanian Syberia”.

In both cases, without alternative and being coerced, the peasants would progresively intergrate into the cooperativization system proposed by the regime. The main purpose of collectivization was the creation of an agricultural industry so as to support a rigorous socialist development of hard industry. Fundamentally, there existed an ideological motivation for collectivization. Without collectivization, the system would lose the control over the majority of the population that possesed vital resources that maked possible country’s survival. In conclusion, the peasants had to be, in a way

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<sup>18</sup> In Romania has been publicized by the communist propaganda the case of Constanța region (for further information see Constantin Iordachi, *Taranimea și puterea. Procesul de colectivizare a agriculturii în România 1949-1962 (The peasantry and power. The collectivization process in Romania, 1949-1962)*, Iași, Editura Polirom, 2005, pp. 177-209.

or another, integrated in the communist system and collectivization represented the most plausible option, tested and “successfully” implemented by Stalin in Soviet Union during the interbellum period.

### The effects of the collectivization process

The collectivization process was par excellence anachronic. This characteristic reflects the utopia of the system. Collectivization shaked the foundation the world and life of the village in the communist regime. This is the case because peasants were accustomed to private property and with the reforms implemented immediatly after the first world war in the vast majority of central and estern Europe states. The destruction of the “peasant universe” through this process involved great human loss, trauma and, very important, the bankruptcy of an agriculture in the process of restoration after the first world war that under no circumstances was prepared to face the precipitous reforms that the implementation of the system required.

The main scope of collectivization was the reduction the agricultural lags between eastern and western Europe. Unfortunately, for the most part, collectivization had a negative impact, delaying economic progress and reducing the productiveness of the economy doubled by the expoitaition and famishment of the population. The conversion of peasant population from a social category without economic productiveness into a category being part of the *huge socialist construction* proved to be a detrimental economic policy with respect to international economic relationships. In Roumania, the ineffciency of the socialist system is markedly evident in late 80's when the total number of animals grown outsitde the system ( about 15%), represented about 50% of the total animals. This fact proved once more the inefficiency and the lack of strategy of the program implemented through C.A.P's.<sup>19</sup> Moreover, collectivization destroyed the majority of external commerce connections with westen Europe through imposing economic monopoly over the agricultural products. The failure of agricultural economy based on cooperativization could be noticed only after the fall of the regime. For instance, in 1989 Hungary exported only 15% of their intern economic products, but after liberalization measures appoved in 1990, the percentage doubles and exceeds 33%.<sup>20</sup>

The fact that in Hungary maintaining small proprieties aided singnificantly the process of *small privatization*, is certain. Looking at the figures, the small privatization had a tremendous success, with a privatization rate of 86%.<sup>21</sup> In Romania, where was kept only the state branch, the process of reposessing was a diffcult one that required a privatization in vawes that equally applies for big companies and lands.

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<sup>19</sup> Tismăneanu Report, p. 440.

<sup>20</sup> Ivan T, Berend, *From the Soviet Bloc to the European Union; The Economic and Social Transformation of Central and Eastern Europe since 1973*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2009, p. 54.

<sup>21</sup> Jeszef Hegedus; Tocsis, Ivan, *Towards New Models of Housing System*, in Gyorgy Enyedi (ed.), *Social Change and Urban Restructuring in Central Europe*, Budapest, Editura Akademiai Kiado, 1998, p. 166.

Ultimately, collectivization meant the dissolution of the social category through an attempt to make this category come under another in a experiment of a socialist agriculture that was ineffective for every communist country, mirroring the agricultural outcomes from the western countries. Due to the means and amleness of the phenomenon, collectivization represents a good example (especially in Romania, Soviet Union or Albania where the phenomenon was very pervasive and brutal manifested) of destruction of a social category based on ideology.

From a social vantage point, collectivization negatively impacted other social categories aside from those already mentioned. Ethnic groups like sarbi, germans, priests and/or servants of the church were affected under the umbrella of building a socialist agriculture. The unjust income consisting in a lesser payment for larger work volume combined the deficiencies of the corporate state have led not only to the bankruptcy of the landlords (the foundation of rural economy) but of that of the mere peasant that lived in poverty. The cooperativist sector accentuated social class differences due to lesser payment. Anyway, an industrial worker received a salary that was greater compared to what a cooperativized peasant received (or had to receive), leading to a progressive poverty, with very few exceptions, of all social category.

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# STATE-LED ISLAMIZATION: THE TURKISH-ISLAMIC SYNTHESIS

Iulia Alexandra Oprea\*

## Abstract

After a decade of social disorder and political polarization ended with the military intervention of September 12 1980, Islam was regarded as a unifying tool and introduced in the political agenda of the Kemalist establishment. The Turkish society was re-Islamized from above and Kemalism was reinterpreted in the light of the so-called Turkish-Islamic synthesis promoted by the Aydinlar Ocağı (Intellectuals' Hearth) a nationalist society, according to which Turkish culture and identity is a mixture of Islamic and Turkish values. Although one of the reasons for the coup d'état was to prevent reactionary Islam, paradoxically Islam became part of the state ideology, paving the way for further Islamization and politicization of religion.

**Keywords:** Political Islam; Turkishness; Aydinlar Ocağı (Intellectuals' Hearth); September 12 1980; Turkish-Islamic synthesis.

Although Kemalism made a dramatic shift towards Turkey's secularization, by excluding religion from the public sphere<sup>1</sup> and undertaking an extensive project of secularization at symbolic, institutional and functional level<sup>2</sup>, Islam was never abandoned and continued to be an integrated part of the Turkish identity. Furthermore, Islam was nationalized, subjected to strict state-control<sup>3</sup> and modernized in order to become compatible with Kemalism.<sup>4</sup> The purpose was to replace the religious identification of the citizens with the national identification, which subordinated and in the same time co-opted the "modernized" and "Kemalized" Islam.

The Turkish national identity was constructed by the Kemalist elite, and as Ayşe Kadioğlu shows it did not answer to the question "Who are the Turks?" but rather to "Who and/or how are going the Turks to be?"<sup>5</sup> However the question "Who are the Turks?" did not fade away, being echoed and answered by the Turkish realities. Since its very beginning the Turkish

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<sup>1</sup> Soner Cagaptay, *Islam, Secularism, and Nationalism in Modern Turkey. Who is a Turk?*, Routledge, London, 2006, p. 14.

<sup>2</sup> Talip Kucukcan, *State, Islam, and Religious Liberty in Modern Turkey: Reconfiguration of Religion in the Public Sphere*, in "BYU Law Review", 2003, no. 2, pp. 487-488, available at <http://digitalcommons.law.byu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=2156&context=lawreview> (last visit: October 20, 2014).

<sup>3</sup> Turhan Feyzioğlu, "Türk İnkılabının Temel Taşı: laiklik," in Ethem Ruhi Fıglalı, *Atatürkçü Düşüncesinde Din ve Laiklik*, ATAM, Ankara, 1999, pp. 137-198 cited in M. Hakan Yavuz, *Secularism and Muslim Democracy in Turkey*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2009, p. 37.

<sup>4</sup> Bernard Lewis, *The Emergence of Modern Turkey*, Oxford University Press, London, 1968, p. 414.

<sup>5</sup> Ayşe Kadioğlu, "The Paradox of Turkish Nationalism and the Construction of Official identity", in Sylvia Kedourie, *Turkey: Identity, Democracy, Politics*, London, Frank Cass, 1998, p. 177.

Republic faced many identity-based protests, such as the Sheikh Said rebellion of 1925 which aimed to re-establish the caliphate<sup>6</sup>, the Mt. Ararat (1930) or Dersim (1937-1938) Kurdish revolts.<sup>7</sup>

The state-centric, top-down Kemalist modernization exerted a great influence in the urban areas, but it did not succeed in penetrating the rural communities which represented 80% of the population<sup>8</sup> and remained rooted in their Islamic identity. The political elite was aware of the power of Islam in mobilizing the masses and played the religious card since the 1950s, as “religious vote” was “simply too large to ignore”.<sup>9</sup>

Starting with the 1960s and especially in the 1970s the state failed to control all the foundations and private schools which provided religious education while Marxist ideas gained in popularity in Turkey<sup>10</sup> especially among young people. Society was deeply divided, while the homogenous ethnic national identity was unable to unite the dispersed masses. In this context, a right-wing organization, *Aydınlar Ocağı* (Intellectuals’ Hearths) established in May 14 1970<sup>11</sup> by a group of professors, bureaucrats and politicians<sup>12</sup>, successor of the *Aydınlar Kulübü* (Intellectuals’ Club) of 1962<sup>13</sup>, formulated the so-called Turkish-Islamic synthesis as a response to the identity crisis Turkey was facing.

The name of the organization, *aydın*, is the Turkish word used to refer to intellectuals in the Republican era. The actual meaning of *aydın* is “enlightened” and it was assigned to the Kemalist elites in order to show their commitment to the ideas of the Enlightenment and to Westernization,

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<sup>6</sup> Adriana Tămășan, *Identitate și alteritate la kurzi în secolele XIX, XX*, Editura MEGA, Cluj-Napoca, 2009, p. 55.

<sup>7</sup> Robert Olson, *The Kurdish Rebellions of Sheikh Said (1925), Mt. Ararat (1930), and Dersim (1937-8): Their Impact on the Development of the Turkish Air Force and on Kurdish and Turkish Nationalism*, in “Die Welt des Islams”, 2000, vol. 40, no.1, available at <http://www.jstor.org/discover/10.2307/1571104?uid=3738920&uid=2&uid=4&sid=21104943752767> (last visit: October 21, 2014).

<sup>8</sup> Fethi Keles, *Modernization as State-led Social Transformation: Reflections on the Turkish Case*, in „Journal of Development and Social Transformation”, p. 8, available at <http://www.maxwell.syr.edu/uploadedFiles/moynihan/dst/keles.pdf?n=4211> (last visit: 28 October, 2014).

<sup>9</sup> Ian O. Lesser, *Ethnic and Religious Strains in Turkey: Internal and External Implications*, Documenti IAI (Istituto Affari Internazionali)-CO1801 P-8009, RAND, Washington D.C., 1997, p. 5.

<sup>10</sup> Dov Waxman, *Islam and Turkish National Identity. A Reappraisal*, in “The Turkish Yearbook”, 2000, vol. XXX, p. 19, available at <http://dergiler.ankara.edu.tr/dergiler/44/670/8527.pdf> (last visit: 30 October, 2014).

<sup>11</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 18.

<sup>12</sup> UmutUzer, “The Genealogy of Turkish Nationalism”, in Ayşe Kadioğlu, E. FuatKeyman, *Symbiotic Antagonisms. Competing Nationalisms in Turkey*, The University of Utah Press, Salt Lake City, 2011, p. 124.

<sup>13</sup> \*\*\*, *Aydınlar Ocağı'nın Rolü*, in “Milliyet”, June 14, 1987, p. 12, available at <http://gazetearsivi.milliyet.com.tr/Ara.aspx?&ilkTar=01.06.1978&sonTar=01.06.1991&ekYayin=&drpSayfaNo=&araKelime=Aydınlaroca%c4%9fi&gelismisKelimeAynen=&gelismisKelimeHerhangi=&gelismisKelimeYakin=&gelismisKelimeHaric=&Siralama=RANK DESC&SayfaAdet=20&isAdv=true> (last visit: October 29, 2014).

replacing the term *münevver* used by the Ottomans.<sup>14</sup> In spite of calling themselves *Aydınlar*, the members of the Hearth distanced themselves from the West, calling upon a national and Islamic solution for Turkey. Moreover, prof. Süleyman Yalçın, chair of the nationalist society, underlined that although the society's name includes the word intellectuals, "It is true that the Intellectuals' Hearth does not have pure academic and scientific concerns. The Hearth has not been founded just to carry out an ideological exercise. On the contrary, it emerged by being loyal to the core values [of the Turkish nation], to find a solution to the problems of the Turkish people."<sup>15</sup>

The ideological father of Turkish-Islamic synthesis was İbrahim Kafesoğlu, former chair of the Intellectuals' Hearth. He presented the idea of the synthesis, for the first time in May 1972 in a conference. The Turkish-Islamic synthesis was inspired by the ideas of the "romantic Turkism" or pan-Turkism<sup>16</sup> and asserted that Turkish culture is a mixture of pre-Islamic Turkish values and Islamic beliefs<sup>17</sup>, by highlighting the importance of religion in Turkish identity.

Kafesoğlu claimed that pre-Islamic and Islamic history is linear in contrast with the idea propagated by the Turkish History Thesis, which clearly separated the pre-Ottoman and Ottoman past, by glorifying the former<sup>18</sup>. He tried to demonstrate that the pre-Islamic religion of the Turks and Islam were both based on the same principles; belief in one omnipresent god, creator of the world, existence of a Turkish law (*töre*) similar to *Sharia* (Islamic law) and the lack of a hierarchical structure of the clergy.<sup>19</sup> Therefore, the conversion of Turks to Islam was almost a natural step.

Furthermore, the pre-Islamic Turkish society had the same pillars as the contemporary Turkish society, the family and the military being the most important institutions.<sup>20</sup> Morality, respect for family values, patriotism, obedience to the state authority<sup>21</sup> are distinctive cultural marks of both Islamic and pre-Islamic Turks.

Kafesoğlu's professor, Osman Turan, another ideologist of the Turkish-Islamic synthesis, asserted that both pre-Islamic Turks and Ottomans aimed to establish *Nizâm-i Âlem*, the world order. He promoted the same approach to history as Kafesoğlu, whom he even accused later for plagiarism. In spite of the similarities in the works of the two intellectuals,

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<sup>14</sup> Sena Karasipahi, *Muslims in Modern Turkey. Kemalism, Modernism and the Revolt of the Islamic Intellectuals*, I.B. Tauris, London, 2009, p. 49.

<sup>15</sup> BanuEligür, *The Mobilization of Political Islam in Turkey*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2010, p. 96.

<sup>16</sup> Tanıl Bora, Kemal Can, *Devlet, Ocak, Dergâh, 12 Eylül'den 1990'lara Ülkücü Hareket*, İletişim Yayınları, 1991, p. 170.

<sup>17</sup> William Hale, *Identities and Politics in Turkey*, Paper prepared for the „International Affairs Laboratory“ (IAIR9822), Turkey Group, Istituto Affari Internazionali, Rome, June 1998, p. 3.

<sup>18</sup> Tamer Balci, *From Nationalization of Islam to Privatization of Nationalism: Islam and Turkish National Identity*, in „History Studies“, 2009, vol. 1, no. 1, p. 97, available at [http://www.historystudies.net/Makaleler/1463291287\\_5-Tamer%20BALCI.pdf](http://www.historystudies.net/Makaleler/1463291287_5-Tamer%20BALCI.pdf) (last visit: October 15, 2014).

<sup>19</sup> Umut Uzer, *op. cit.*, p. 125.

<sup>20</sup> Banu Eligür, *op. cit.*, p. 97.

<sup>21</sup> William Hale, *op. cit.*, p. 3.

there was a slight difference between their views; while Turan claimed that only some of the pre-Islamic Turkish tribes were monotheists, Kafesoğlu believed that all Turks worshiped the same god, namely *gök-tanrı*, the sky god. *Gök-tanrı dini*, or the religion of sky god was according to Kafesoğlu the national religion of the Turks, the ideologist arguing that Turkish nationalism was the first in the world. Furthermore, he claimed that the origins of secularism can be found in the practices of the Turkish tribes and Turks were the first to establish a state in history.<sup>22</sup>

Due to its rich cultural heritage the Turks were able to establish two great empires: the Seljuk and the Ottoman empire. According to the Hearth, the downfall of the Ottoman empire was possible because of the Ottoman ruling class started to imitate the West and due to the decline of religious values in society.<sup>23</sup> The West was demonized and blamed for the empire's failure, although initially the members of the Hearth had adopted a slightly pro-Western stance inspired by Ziya Gökalp's cultural nationalism<sup>24</sup> and even Kafesoğlu believed that Western-inspired democracy is "the safest way to take humanity into salvation".<sup>25</sup>

Soon, the Hearth's pro-Western approach was abandoned in favour of Peyami Safa's East-West synthesis, which criticized the Turkish Revolution.<sup>26</sup> Westernization was discredited and excluded from the *Aydınlar Ocağı*'s ideology and humanism was considered the enemy of the Turkish nation as it promoted laicism and cosmopolitanism, ideas opposed to Turkish nationalism and Muslim identity. The Hearth identified five types of enemies: the atheists including materialists and communists, the enemies of the society or "dividers" referring to Kurdish separatists most of whom were leftist, the non-Muslims and Alevis, the responsible for the Ottoman empire's collapse and the "forward and governing intellectuals".<sup>27</sup>

The West and the Western ideas were regarded as the primary source of identity crisis and instability in Turkey, while conspiracy theories gained ground within the Hearth. S.Ahmed Arvasi, another intellectual liked to the *Aydınlar Ocağı* wrote in his book *Türk-İslam Ülküsü* (The Ideal of Turkish-Islam) that both the "red imperialism" and the "kapitalist imperialism" aim to destroy the Turkish nation by turning people against each other and provoking internal disorder. In order to achieve these purposes they alienated people from their religious and national values and conquered their souls and hearts with the fake ideals of equality and freedom.<sup>28</sup>

Being attached to the right-wing, the Hearth was vehemently opposed to the left-wing supporters. Communism was virtually found guilty for every

<sup>22</sup> Tamer Balci, *op. cit.*, pp. 98-99.

<sup>23</sup> Banu Eligür, *op. cit.*, p. 97.

<sup>24</sup> Üner Daglyer, *Ziya Gökalp on Modernity and Islam: the Origins of an Uneasy Union in Contemporary Turkey*, in "Comparative Civilizations Review", Fall 2007, no. 57, p. 58, available at

<https://journals.lib.byu.edu/spc/index.php/CCR/article/viewFile/13052/12913> (Last visit: October 7, 2014).

<sup>25</sup> Tamer Balci, *op. cit.*, p. 99.

<sup>26</sup> Banu Eligür, *op. cit.*, p. 97.

<sup>27</sup> Hugh Poulton, *Top Hat, Grey Wolf and Crescent. Turkish Nationalism and the Turkish Republic*, New York University Press, New York. 1997, pp. 179-180.

<sup>28</sup> S. Ahmed Arvasi, *Türk-İslam Ülküsü*, Burak Yayınevi, İstanbul, 1994, pp. 5-8.

problem of the Turkish nation and used as a justification or argument when facing sensitive issues. An example in this regard is the Intellectual Hearths' open forum entitled "Terrorism and Armenian Terrorism" held on 25 April 1981. The main idea of the panel was that terrorism originated in the Marxist-Leninist system. Moreover, communism was to blame for the Treaty of Sèvres, which resulted in the territorial partition of the Ottoman empire, and for all the anarchic movements and assassinations in Turkey. As for the Armenian question the Hearth resorted to conspiracy theories. Prof. dr. Fahir Armaoğlu declared that the murder of the Armenians was linked to the international communist movement while prof. dr. Gögünç added that the whole population of Armenians was only 1,4 million before the First World War, and still, according to the Western circles around 2 millions of Armenians were slaughtered.<sup>29</sup>

*Aydınlar Ocağı* was indeed one of the most active and influential intellectual society in the 1970s and 1980s and organized many conferences and events in order to disseminate its ideas, shared by the right-wing political parties. The Hearth tried to unite at least at ideological level the Turkish right-wing against the left. In the 1970s the organization had close relations with the National Front Governments of Süleyman Demirel and especially with Alparslan Türkeş's MHP (National Action Party). Türkeş's party was initially called the pan-Turkist Republican Peasants Nation Party, having the symbol of the grey wolf, but during the congress of 1969 the name of the party was changed into the National Action Party and a new, Islamic symbol was adopted, three crescents on red background. These changes together with the new motto of the party "we are as Turk as Tanrı Mountain and as Muslim as Hira Mountain" showed the commitment of the party to Islam.<sup>30</sup>

The Hearth and the right-wing political parties close to the organization believed that Islam was the answer for the problems of the society, as it was one of the most important elements of the Turkish culture. And still, despite of its Islamist character, Necmettin Erbakan's National Salvation Party (MSP) was not on the same line with the Hearth because of their different perspective on the role of Islam; while Erbakan and other Islamists shared an Islamic worldview and regarded Turkey as part of the *Ummah* (community of Muslims), for the Hearth Islam was an element of the Turkish nation<sup>31</sup>, nationalism being their stronghold. Moreover, Islam was regarded as the "starting point of the Turkish culture."<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> \*\*\*, *Ermeni Terörünün Komunizm Hareketi ile Bağlı Olduğu Öne Sürüldü*, in "Milliyet", April 26, 1981, p. 3 available at <http://gazetearsivi.milliyet.com.tr/Ara.aspx?&ilkTar=01.01.1980&sonTar=01.01.1982&ekYayin=&drpSayfaNo=&araKelime=aydinlaoca%c4%9fi&gelismisKelimeAynen=&gelismisKelimeHerhangi=&gelismisKelimeYakin=&gelismisKelimeHaric=&Siralama=tarih asc&SayfaAdet=50&isAdv=true> (last visit: October 30, 2014).

<sup>30</sup> Tamer Balci, *op.cit.*, pp. 100-101.

<sup>31</sup> Hugh Poulton, *op. cit.*, p. 180.

<sup>32</sup> Bozkurt Güvenç, *Türk Kimliği: Kültür Tarihinin Kaynakları*, Remzi Kitabevi, İstanbul, 1997 cited in Banu Eligür, *op. cit.*, p. 97.

This idea has been maintained until nowadays and is reflected in the book of Oğuz Çetinoğlu entitled *Türkler Nasıl ve Niçin Müslüman Oldu?* (How and Why did the Turks became Muslims?). The author argues that the reason behind the Turks' conversion to Islam was the desire to save their souls. According to Oğuz Çetinoğlu, Turks became important players on the stage of history only after and due to their conversion to Islam. Unlike other Central-Asian communities (i.e. the Hunnish people), Turks were not assimilated because they preserved their individuality and culture in the mosques, adding that "There is nothing more influential on human communities than religion".<sup>33</sup>

Consequently, the propagators of the Turkish-Islamic synthesis tried to reinvent history in the light of the new conservative nationalism, just like the historians of the Turkish History Thesis had done before on behalf of Kemalist nationalism. In this regard both Turkish-Islamic synthesis and Turkish History Thesis can be placed in the framework of the Turkish Romantic nationalism.

The ideas of the *Aydınlar Ocağı* were born in the right place at the right time. If it were not for the social unrest and political polarization of the 1970s, the Turkish-Islamic synthesis would have probably been less popular, or at least it wouldn't have succeeded in becoming the official ideology of the state a decade later. The confrontation of the right-wing ultranationalist or the so-called *ülkücü* (idealist) and the radical left-wing groups brought Turkey on the brink of civil war. The state failed to control the domestic situation. Given that the fragmentation reached almost every level of the society, even the police being divided between the right (POL-BİR) and left (POL-DER) the Martial law declared in 1978 was ineffective.<sup>34</sup> Three extremist organizations, the Grey Wolves indirectly connected to the MHP, the left-wing Kurdish separatist PKK (Kurdistan Workers' Party) and the Armenian Secret Army for the Liberation of Armenia spread terror home and abroad.<sup>35</sup> According to Andrew Mango the conflict between the left-wing and the right-wing extremists resulted in around 5.000 deaths.<sup>36</sup>

The confrontations had a religious dimension as well. The Sunni-Muslim *ülkücü*-s carried out pogroms against the leftist Alevis<sup>37</sup> from Kahramanmaraş (South-Eastern Turkey) in December 1978 killing more than a hundred Alevis. Two years later, the Islamists led by Erbakan's party organized a rally in Konya in support of the Palestinians (Saving Jerusalem) which turned fast into an anti-secular demonstration, the participants calling for *Sharia* in Turkey and chanting slogans like "Sharia will come, brutality will end," "Sovereignty belongs to Allah," "The Constitution is the Quran," "Secularism is atheism," "Government with Allah's rules," "We are

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<sup>33</sup> Oğuz Çetinoğlu, *Türkler Nasıl ve Niçin Müslüman Oldu?*, in Mehmet Sadi Polat, *Kitabiyat, "Aydınlar Ocağı"*, April 10, 2013, available at <http://aydinlarocagi.org/2013/04/turkler-nasil-ve-nicin-musliman-oldu/#.VE9fD1e7Y-o> (last visit: October 25, 2014).

<sup>34</sup> Banu Eligür, *op. cit.*, pp. 85-86.

<sup>35</sup> Erick J. Zürcher, *Turkey. A Modern History*, I.B. Tauris, London, 2004, pp. 263-277.

<sup>36</sup> Andrew Mango, *Turkey and the War on Terror. For Forty Years We Fought Alone*, Routledge, London, p. 31.

<sup>37</sup> Alevism is a heterodox Muslim Shia religious minority, the largest religious minority of Turkey.

ready for jihad,” “We want [an] unlimited, classless Islamic state,” and “Sharia or death.”<sup>38</sup>

The radicalization of Turkey’s political Islam was a real treat to Turkey, Islamists being encouraged by the success of the Iranian Islamic Revolution of 1979. The ruling elite of the time was aware of this danger. At a seminary organized in Ankara by the Intellectual Hearths Süleyman Demirel declared: “We will manage to remain standing just like we resisted until now. We have to learn from the collapse of Afghanistan, Iran and Somalia.” He also added that “Turkey is in crisis.”<sup>39</sup>

This situation led the army to intervention. On September 12, 1980 the National Security seized control and declared martial law. The *coup d'état* was followed by thousands political arrests and executions targeting not only the left but also some members of the right-wing ultranationalists. The parliament, political parties and trade unions were dissolved.<sup>40</sup> According to Cemal Karacas 1.7 million people were registered as suspects of whom 650,000 were arrested, 517 people were sentenced to death of which 49 sentences were carried out, 30,000 political activists were forced into exile while 388,000 persons were banned from leaving Turkey. Moreover, 14,000 Turks had their citizenships revoked.<sup>41</sup>

On October 12 Kenan Evren, the Chief of General Staff, received a letter from Vehbi Koç, one of the most influential businessmen of Turkey and founder of the famous Koç Group, calling for an Islam-friendly Kemalism in order to prevent radicalization and dangerous interpretations of religion: “There is no nation without religion. Religious affairs should be managed in a way that prevents the political parties to abuse them [religious affairs].”<sup>42</sup>

The army adopted the Turkish-Islamic synthesis as official ideology of the state in order to counter social and political polarization and to unite the nation under the Islamic umbrella.<sup>43</sup> Islam was, therefore, seen as a factor of social cohesion. The Heath played an important role in the making of the Constitution of 1982, almost 80% of its content being proposed by them. In the same year mandatory religious courses were introduced in kindergarten,

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<sup>38</sup> Banu Eligür, *op. cit.*, p. 97.

<sup>39</sup> \*\*\* „Demirel: „Millet ve Devleti çıkmaza girdi”, in „Milliyet”, May 1, 1979, p. 14, available at <http://gazetearsivi.milliyet.com.tr/Ara.aspx?&ilkTar=01.01.1979&sonTar=01.01.1991&ekYayin=&drpSayfaNo=&araKelime=aydinlaroca%c4%9fi&gelismisKelimeAynen=&gelismisKelimeHerhangi=&gelismisKelimeYakin=&gelismisKelimeHaric=&Siralama=tarih asc&SayfaAdet=50&isAdv=true> (last visit: October 31, 2014).

<sup>40</sup> Jenny B. White, “Islam and Politics in Contemporary Turkey”, in Reşat Kasaba, *The Cambridge History of Turkey*, Vol. 4: *Turkey in the Modern World*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2008, p. 363.

<sup>41</sup> Cemal Karacas, *Turkey: Islam and Laicism Between the Interests of State, Politics and Society*, Peace Research Institute Frankfurt (PRIF) Reports, No. 78, p. 18, available at <http://www.hskf.de/downloads/prif78.pdf> (last visit: October 28, 2014).

<sup>42</sup> Tanıl Bora, Murat Gültekingil, *Modern Türkiye'de Siyasi Düşünce-İslamcılık*, İletişim, İstanbul, 2005, p. 637.

<sup>43</sup> Ela Ogru, “Changing Boundaries of Identity and Political Islam in Turkey”, in SayedKhatab, Muhammad Bakashmar, Ela Ogru, *Radicalisation Crossing Borders: New Directions in Islamist and Jihadist Political, Intellectual and Theological Thought and Practice: Conference Proceedings*, Monash University School of Political & Social Inquir-Global Terrorism Centre, 2009, p. 99.

primary, secondary and high schools and in the army.<sup>44</sup> In General Evren's opinion, state controlled religious education was important in order to undermine the influence of radical interpretations: "Families should not give religious education to children. This would be improper since it may be taught incorrectly, incompletely, or through the family's own point of view... I ask you... not to send your children to illegal Koran schools... religion will be taught to our children by the state in state schools."<sup>45</sup>

The Hearth did not refrain from expressing their anti-Kemalist views. They blamed the republican education system for creating ignorant, rebellious, anarchist and confused young people, who forgot their origins, morals and praised the Western materialistic ideologies like Marxism, Darwinism, pragmatism and humanism. They considered that the state needed to restore the morality level of the society and regarded Islam as the perfect tool. The members of the Hearth believed that "science without religion causes a disaster"<sup>46</sup>, a disaster of proportions like the social and political crisis of the 1970s. So, education and science had to be "Islamized" in order to be compatible with the national values and to prevent the dissemination and formation of dangerous opinions.

As showed above the synthesis aimed to unite, to homogenize the nation. Consequently it tried to "Turkify" Kurds and to "Sunnify" Alevis. Diyanet, the Directorate of Religious Affairs, played an important role in this process. The religious authority had the mission to contribute to national solidarity and integration and organized in this purpose, anti-PKK conferences in the Kurdish region to inform people about the "godless" character of the leftist separatists. Sunni Islam proved to be, therefore, useful not just a "Sunnifying" but also a "Turkifying" process of the citizens.

Turkey was subjected to Islamization from above, given that its primary supporter was the state, no wonder that Islamization reached such a high level. Only in four years, between 1983 and 1987, around 15,000 new mosques were built, the number of the state-run Koran classes grew from 2,160 to 4,890 and the number of theological colleges rose from eight to 22.<sup>47</sup> Moreover, the number of *Imam-hatip* (preacher) schools and of its graduates, who were allowed to enter university, increased and Muslim brotherhoods continued their activity under the military rule. School books, radio and television programmes were "flooded" by religious contents, and Turkey experienced an unprecedented growth of religious publications. All these evolutions were possible due to the support of the governments of Evren and Turgut Özal.<sup>48</sup>

However, Islamization was encouraged only up to a point; in 1982 the army banned the headscarf from higher education institutions. Although the measure aimed to control and limit the degree of Islamization of the society,

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<sup>44</sup> Banu Eligür, *op. cit.*, pp. 101-104.

<sup>45</sup> Yıldız Atasoy, *Turkey, Islamists and Democracy. Transition and Globalization in a Muslim State*, I.B. Tauris, London, 2005, p. 155.

<sup>46</sup> Banu Eligür, *op. cit.*, p. 106.

<sup>47</sup> Cemal Karakas, *op. cit.*, pp. 17-19.

<sup>48</sup> Erick J. Zürcher, *op. cit.*, p. 289.

it caused the opposite result. The headscarf became a political symbol and its banning led to protests.<sup>49</sup>

Adopted as an ideology to overcome polarization and religious radicalization, the Turkish-Islamic synthesis with its nationalist and Islamic stance did not succeed to unite the nation nor to control the Islamic movements. Even though the 1980s remained in history as the starting point of economic liberalization and emergence of the civil society under the rule of Turgut Özal<sup>50</sup>, the positive developments were overshadowed by the state-PKK bloody war.<sup>51</sup> Kurdish separatism could not be silenced by an ethnic nationalist and Islamic ideology. The Turkish-Islamic synthesis failed to control political Islam as well while “partial” Islamization opened the door to Islamists and further Islamization of the society.

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<sup>49</sup> Gulce Tarhan, *Roots of the Headscarf Debate: Laicism and Secularism in France and Turkey*, in “Journal of Political Inquiry”, 2011, no. 4, p. 23, available at <http://www.jpinyu.com/uploads/2/5/7/5/25757258/roots-of-the-headscarf-debate-laicism-and-secularism-in-france-and-turkey.pdf> (last visit: October 20, 2014).

<sup>50</sup> Metin Heper, *Islam, Conservatism, and Democracy in Turkey: Comparing Turgut Özal and Recep Tayyip Erdoğan*, in „Insight Turkey”, 2013, pp. 145-146, available at [http://file.insightturkey.com/Files/Pdf/15\\_2\\_2013\\_heper.pdf](http://file.insightturkey.com/Files/Pdf/15_2_2013_heper.pdf) (October 12, 2014).

<sup>51</sup> Joost Jongerden, Ahmet Hamdi Akkaya, *The Kurdistan Workers Party and a New Left in Turkey: Analysis of the Revolutionary Movement in Turkey through the PKK’s Memorial Text on Haki Karer*, in „European Journal of Turkish Studies”, 2012, no. 14, available at <http://ejts.revues.org/4613> (last visit: October 31, 2014).



## **Reviews**

Ovidiu Tentea, *Ex Oriente ad Danubium. The Syrian units on the Danube frontier of the Roman Empire*, Cluj-Napoca, Mega Publishing House, 2012, 234 pp.

*Ex Oriente ad Danubium. The Syrian units on the Danube frontier of the Roman Empire*, is a reviewed version of the author's doctoral thesis entitled "*The syro-arabian units on the Danube frontier of the Roman Empire*", structured in five chapters. The selection of the theme and of the geographic area is due - as the author stresses out in the Introduction - to the fact that "connections between the west and east of the Empire always incited scholars, leading to ample debates of the <Oriental phenomenon>" and "selected the Danubian provinces primarily for surpassing the determinism resulted from a research limited to the province of Dacia (...) another reason underlying in our choice, closely connected to the first was the intention to propose another view on the subject that would go beyond the framework already provided by analogies. To these considerations, the lack of strategic reasons behind the displacement of such troops played an important part in choosing such topic". Also in the "Introduction" the issues of "Geographical background" and "Historical context" are approached. Concerning the first issue, the author underlines "the striking discrepancy between intra Carpathian Dacia and lower Dacia, upper Moesia and lower Moesia respectively what one calls the western provinces and those located by the limit of the eastern provinces". This aspect had two main effects: the high level of risk for navigation in the "Cazanele" area which "was rather a fracture than a connection" and, secondarily, the sensitiveness of the Morava and Danube interflow because of the presence of the Amber Road and the opportunity of easy access of German populations. As for the "Historical context" is important to understand that the conquest of Dacian kingdom was insufficient for the pacification of the area, fact felt during the 177-118 A.D crisis and during Lucius Verus's Parthian campaign. The decrease of trade and the need of recruits and population are just a few aspects for the necessity of establishing new auxiliary units. The introductory chapter has also a brief but well documented "Past studies" part and of course a "Study structure".

The second chapter "The background: the Roman near east" is a short presentation of the territories from where the auxiliary units were recruited. Therefore is presented the history of: 1) Roman Syria - from the 1<sup>st</sup> century B.C., the intervention of Pompey, Marc Antony, and Augustus. 2) Commagene: a kingdom in North-Western Syria conquered in 72 A.D. 3) the territories of Itureans, situated in the Mount Lebanon region. 4) Osrhoene: with its capital at Edessa, located in Taurus Mountains, a kingdom which "enjoyed" the "protection" of the Roman Empire since 114 A.D. 5) Canatha, 6) Emesa, 7) Antiochia 8) Palmyra the "Caravan city" with a long and troubled history between its powerful neighbors: the Romans and the Parthians. 9) Arabia - a province founded by Trajan, under whose reign (and Hadrian's also) a "special attention was granted to the construction of roads

and port facilities making possible the transport between the Red Sea and the Nile".

With the 3<sup>rd</sup> chapter "The Syrian units deployed to the Danube frontier" the reader reaches the "core" of the book. All deployed Syrian – more precisely 22 - units are presented: *alae*, *cohors*, *numeri*, *cohortes equitatae*, and "*vexillationes equitum ex Syria*", with their unit history, founders, commanders, stationing posts, epigraphic and archaeological evidence and (if possible) with prosopography.

"Deities chosen for worship", is the subject of the 4<sup>th</sup> chapter. In the introductory part is stressed out the fact "the penetration of eastern cults (...) as well as their diffusion during the Principate has been explained mainly by either the displacement of the units from the Levant area or through the mediation of populations coming from the mentioned region". Among all units (22) in the recorded area there are "10 units with inscriptions dedicated to various deities". Usually the mentioned deities "suffer" from syncretism like: Jupiter Dolichenus, Heliogabal, Mars Gradivus, Liber Pater etc.

The 5<sup>th</sup> chapter is dedicated to "Fighting style and military equipment", a chapter whose aim is to "make a short overview of weapon finds, respectively of the main elements with reference to the Syrian archer's fighting style". The bow and arrows were not specific Roman weapons, so there were introduced as tactical necessities. *Sagittarii* units became regular during the Principate, and were recruited from regions in which bow making and handling was a tradition: Levant, Numidia, Thrace, Crete, and, the great majority, from Syria or Arabia. After these introductory considerations, the author presents largely the bow and arrow types used by these oriental auxiliaries. A review on the published weaponry items discovered on the territory of Roman Dacia follows.

Passing through the "Conclusion", the book presents a number of important Annexes, without the work would have no impact. Annex A presents a repertory of inscriptions of all units in alphabetical order. Annex B has a subject the repertory of stamps, also for each unit, while Annex C presents the military diplomas from Moesia, Dacia and Pannonia. An impressive bibliography and a series of maps and stamp reproduction make the book a complete monographic work.

Precisely, due to the subject, well documented and easy to read, *Ex Oriente ad Danubium. The Syrian units on the Danube frontier of the Roman Empire*, offers a remarkable lecture as well as for specialist and "laics" interested in ancient military history.

Fábián István

*Fascinația trecutului. Omagiu istoricului SIMION RETEGAN la împlinirea vârstei de 75 de ani*, coord. Daniela Deteșan, Mirela Popa-Andrei, Mádly Loránd, Editura Mega, Editura Argonaut, Cluj-Napoca, 2014, 612 pp.

In this year, 2014 a number of volumes were published. Volumes dedicated to different Romanian historians that had the chance for a celebration. In Iasi were honored the Academic Al. Zub<sup>1</sup> and Ioan Caproșu<sup>2</sup>, in Cluj Simion Retegan<sup>3</sup>, Gelu Neamtu<sup>4</sup> and Dimitrie Suciu<sup>5</sup> (all celebrated their respective 75th anniversary), in Blaj, at his 65th anniversary, Ioan Mitrofan<sup>6</sup> was celebrated. In Târgu Mureș was commemorated the historian Grigore Ploeșteanu (1943-2006) and the volume<sup>7</sup> was dedicated to his memory at the 70th anniversary since his birth.

The present volume, *The Fascination of the Past. Homage to the Historian Simion Retegan at his 75th Anniversary*, was opened by a friendly "word". A "word" like a precious flower that showed appreciation, respect and friendship for the illustrious historian Dr. Simion Retegan.

As it is known this remarkable researcher manifested special care for what is known as the importance of the historical document. This "detail" of his activity was unanimously acknowledged and was acknowledged by Dimitrie Suciu, his coworker in research and who opened the volume with warm words of appreciation. One is really amazed when read the bibliography of Simion Retegan activity, arranged on years of apparition by Mihaela Bedecean. This man had time to live his own life?

The co-coordinators of the volume signed the *Forward* of the volume. A volume that is a humble homage to those who respect and love Simion Retegan.

The volume is divided into seven sections, each with themes well defined. Each researcher dealt with a major theme. We can not mention here all of them but, selectively, we will present those contributions.

The first part is dedicated to a very present subject: *Historiography and auxiliary science*. From the articles on this subject and signed by

<sup>1</sup> Clio – în oglindiri de sine. Academicianului Al. Zub, coord. Gh. Cliveti, Iași, Editura Universității „Al. I. Cuza”, 2014, 844 pp.

<sup>2</sup> Retrospecții medievale. In honorem Professoris Emeriti Ioan Caproșu, coord. Victor Spinei, Laurențiu Răduan și Arcadie M. Bodale, Iași, Editura Universității „Al. I. Cuza”, 2014, 653 pp.

<sup>3</sup> Fascinația trecutului. Omagiu istoricului Simion Retegan la împlinirea vârstei de 75 de ani, coord. Daniela Deteșan, Mirela Popa-Andrei, Mádly Loránd.

<sup>4</sup> Biografii pașoptiste (4). Omagiu istoricului Gelu Neamțu, la împlinirea vârstei de 75 de ani, coord. Ela Cosma, Cluj-Napoca, Editura Argonaut Publishing, Symphologic Publishing, Gatineau (Canada), 2014, 496 pp.

<sup>5</sup> Diversitate culturală, realități politice și multiconfesionalism în Transilvania și Banat (Sec. XVIII-XX). Cercetătorului științific gr. I dr. Dumitru Suciu la împlinirea vârstei de 70 de ani, coord. Varga Attila, Iosif Marin Balog, Cluj-Napoca, Editura Argonaut, 2014, 609 pp.

<sup>6</sup> Omagiu părintelui profesor Ioan Mitrofan la 65 de ani de viață și 35 de ani de preoție, coord. William Bleiziffer, Cluj-Napoca, Presa Universitară Clujeană, 2014, 481 p. și Credință și viață. Părintelui Prof. Ioan Mitrofan la 65 de ani de viață și 35 de ani de preoție, coord. William Bleiziffer, Tg. Lăpuș, Ed. Galaxia Gutenberg, 2014, 114 pp.

<sup>7</sup> In memoriam Grigore Ploeșteanu. Studii și evocări, coord. Vasile Dobrescu, Cornel Sigmirean, Corina Teodor, București, Editura Academiei, 2014, 571 pp.

Nicolae Edroiu, Mirela Carabineanu, Ela Cosma and Livia Ardelean, all of them remarkable contributions, we emphasize Ela Cosma's article on German (gothic) paleography. Ela Cosma treated the subject with her well known care for detail and using a rich bibliography. The study would be of real use for those who dare to get instructed in the three types of old gothic writings; textualis, notula and bastarda. The same approach, focused on the importance of the historical document and the ways to preserve it, is present in Liviu Ardelean study.

The second section is entitled: *The political life and the national movement* and contains articles signed by Nicolae Bocșan and Stelian Mândruț, Vlad Popovici, Doru Radosav and Paula Virag, each article with its own contribution. The article "Ideas and projects of federalization promoted by the Romanians from Transylvania in the XIXth century", article signed by Nicolae Bocșan and Stelian Mândruț, we see that the idea of federalization was abandoned and replaced by the idea of uniting all Romanians in one political entity and more than that, the partisans of the federalization themselves became promoters of the national unity. Vlad Popovici used very important documents as well. Paula Virag used the work of a Romano Catholic pries, "Historia Domnus", and in this way she entered in use an important source of information regarding the events in the villages of Satmary County in the years of the union with Romania (old kingdom).

The third part is entitled *Historical demography and family history*. The subject was dealt with by Kolumban Zsuzsanna, Luminita Dumănescu, Daniela Deteșan, Ioan Bolovan, Sorina Paula Bolovan and Constantin Băjenaru. All of them made admirable presentations and treated the subject exhaustively. Some presented the concubinage at the end of the XIXth century, some presented cases of establishing paternity and divorce, and one presented the process of emigration from Fagaras to the USA before WW I (Constantin Băjenaru). Ioan and Sorina Paula Bolovan presented, like the well informed researchers of the social phenomena, the epistolary dialogue and the Romanian family problems during WW I. With great accuracy was presented the problems of the spouses whose husbands were in the army during WW I. Those spouses were confronted with tremendous problems and difficulties. The authors considered and they are right that the war resulted in changes, attitudes and feelings that were absent in conditions of peace.

The IVth part of the book is entitled *Church and Society*. It is a vast subject and the section contains numerous articles dedicated to the traditional denominations and, out of the ordinary, to a neoprotestant denomination. We are in debt to a number of people who are dedicated researchers and who succeeded to present details about the church, who was the beacon of a past whose consequences are alive even today. Articles on this subject were signed by Greta-Monica Miron, Ana Victoria Sima, Mihaela Bedecean, Ana-Maria Nenițoiu, Lucian Turcu, Maria Rițiu, Ioan Cârja, Ciprian Rigman and George Colcer. The articles presented local situations with the exception of Mihaela Bedecean who wrote about the very learned canonics of Lugoj up to 1918. In truth there were some very remarkable scholars like the Bishops Dr. Alexandru Dobra, even Ioan Olteanu, Victor Mihályi, Dr. Demetrius Radu, Dr. Vasile Hossu, Dr. Valeriu

Traian Frențiu, Archpriest Ioan Boroș, Deans Teodor Aron, Ștefan Moldovan and the canonics Mihail Nagy, Gavril Pop and Andrei P. Liviu. Ioan Cârja presented and debated the relation between “Catholicism and modernity, a few considerations” (title of his article). The article started from the retirement of Pope Benedict XVI and as such had the chance, which it do not miss, to debate the relation between Church and modern world as well as the relevance of the religious values and the contemporary men.

The Vth part of the volume is entitled *School, Education, Development*. The articles signed by Vasile Lechințan, Marius Câmpeanu, Oana Habor, Vasile Tutula, Mirela Popa-Andrei and Vasile Orga, debated the innumerable problems of the Romanian schooling system and some of these problems preserved their actuality even today. Using unpublished documents preserved in the Cluj section of the National Archives, Vasile Lechințan, on the information of four catalogues, reconstructed the Romanian participation in the schools of the Franciscan monks. He also offered, in alphabetical order the names of those students (all from Călugăreni, Mures County) for the years 1775, 1779, 1781 and 1819. Marius Câmpean presented the evolution of the schools from villages in Maramureș, using a rich chunk of documents from archives. The document is considered the only basis for real historical research. The same conclusion is shared by Mirela Popa-Andrei as well.

The VIth part of the volume is under the title *Administrative and Economic evolution* and the section included the articles signed by Klara Guseth, Loránd Mádly, Viorel Rus, Elena Alupoae, Adrian Onofreiu, Vasile Dobrescu and Maria Dan, Cornelia-Nicoleta Vlașin and Marius Bârlianu. The articles included in this section of the volume are based on archival documents as well. In the article dedicated to the history of the city Baia Mare in the XVIIIth century, Klara Guseth used the protocols of the Baia Mare' city hall and on the contemporary registers of evidence. The use of those documents helped the author to project a credible image of the epoch. Based on unpublished and interesting documents Loránd Mádly presented an exhaustive image about the robbers in the Austro-Hungarian Empire and its police force. The retired teacher Vasile Rus used an unpublished land register from the village Rebra of the border regiment from Nasaud. Adrian Onofreiu, in his article, based on unpublished documents presented aspects about landownership in Nasaud area. In their article Vasile Dobrescu and Maria Dan used the documents of the “Muresiana” Bank from Reghin. Using archival documents Cornelia-Nicoleta Vlașin studied the evolution of the Nasaud border funds.

The VIIth part of the volume, *Identity and Alternity* is the last segment of this rich volume. Each segment being important. Important conclusions are present in this part of the volume as well. Sorin Mitu said that the Transylvanian Saxons are the best of the Germans; Ioan Cristinel Roman-Negoi and Anca Elisabeta Tatay presented the evolution of the “good Emperor” myth. Aura Comănescu-Pintea closed the volume with a subject actual, the coexistence of Jews and Christians.

The volume represent a great intellectual commitment and, after the example gave by the researcher Simion Retegan to whom is dedicated, is a great contribution to the enrichment of Romanian historiography. We are

in total accord and join the statement of the volumes coordinators, expressing gratitude to this noble scholar and helper of all, "the personality, hard work and steadfastness of the researcher Simion Reteagian inspired the work of generations of historians in their scientific studies. His dedications to the historical document, the basis of any historical research, represent a source of inspiration and an example for many young historians". We join the authors in wishing Many Years ahead to him.

Gheorghe Naghi

Mihai A Panu, *Filiere și mecanisme de propagandă nazistă în Banat. 1933-1945*, Cluj-Napoca, Editura Mega, 2014, 302 pp.

The fall of the communist regimes allowed the historians to reconsider the 20th century experiences, extremism and totalitarian regimes, through a normalization of the historical research taking place in the recent years. The phenomenon has become increasingly evident in the research of both Communism and Nazism, ideologies which limited individual and collective freedom, and envisioned the identification of all the citizens of a country with a great and unique national destiny, in spite of the social, ethnic or religious differences among people.

Consequently, the research of such subjects as the one proposed by Mihai Adrian Panu's book *Filiere și mecanisme de propagandă nazistă în Banat 1933-1945* (Nazi propaganda channels and mechanisms in the Banat. 1933-1945), represents inspired initiatives, able to decipher the totalitarian regimes' features, both right wing, Fascism, Nazism, and left wing, Communism. In fact, as the author of the book shows, both Nazism and Communism proposed a totalitarian control over the society, under the government of unique parties.

As a theoretical premise, starting from the idea that the 20th century was a century of ideologies, Mihai Adrian Panu has analyzed the origin and evolution of radical trends in European political culture, their promotion through the political propaganda founded on the knowledge of the human being, psychological and sociological mechanisms, automatisms, frustrations and national aspirations, and of the resentments accumulated during the First World War. In the author's conclusion, the propaganda is the most powerful instrument at the disposal of the totalitarian regimes in order to corrupt the society.

Reconstructed from the perspective of the Nazi propaganda's ideological and political impact among the Swabians from the Banat, the research of the historian Mihai Adrian Panu reveals the region's peculiarities from ethnic, cultural and historical points of view. The Banat has represented for a long time an ethnic co-habitation example, but since 1918 it has undergone obvious slippages. First, through the manner of reconfiguring interwar Romania's political system and then as a consequence of the influence Nazi Germany exerted among the German ethnic groups. It is a subject that, as shown in the author's bibliographic essay, was avoided by our historiography or it was mostly treated in the post-war interpretative canon, namely the absolute accountability of

Germany and the Germans, without explaining the substratum of certain ethnic or social groups' adherence to the right wing ideology and its way of expression.

The ideological dimension of national-socialism, analyzed in the second chapter of the book, surprises the essential aspects which determined a great part of the Germans' rallying to the Nazi project, the frequent crises in the German society, the humiliations lived by the Germans after the First World War through the imposition of the Versailles system, the population's profound dissatisfaction and the people's hopes in miraculous solutions. All of these represented reasons of discontent, so well speculated by the Nazi propaganda, with which almost all social categories identified themselves, frustrations accumulated by a nation that considered itself superior, Arian, and a source of a significant part of the world's culture and civilization. These are aspects which Mihai Adrian Panu succeeded to radiograph, obviously not for justifying the Nazi policies, but for rebuilding a phenomenon that has often been presented through a superficial reading of history.

In the same context, the author proposes an ethno-confessional, cultural and political radiography of the interwar Banat, by presenting the German ethnic group's peculiarities and its availabilities towards a series of ideological provocations, either related to the community and the Communist left wing or to the Nazi extreme right. Indubitably, to a certain degree, the fact that the Swabians were Catholic believers and, consequently, they were much more reserved towards the religions of modernity, secularism and the influence of national-socialism, nonetheless, they were finally seduced by the solidarities suggested by ethnicity. Naturally, frustrations and failures had been present in the political life of interwar Romania and the entire Eastern Europe too.

In the first place, I consider that the author has correctly remarked the fact that Nazism was an active phenomenon more than an ideational one, since the adherents were offered a different social and political perspective and a superior condition in society.

Germany has built after 1933 an entire strategy of mastering its own people and the world, for the creation of the third Reich and of the Eastern hinterland, through the conquest of the Slaves, which included the Gestapo, the propaganda, history, sociology, psychology, cinematographic art and education. It was simply an attack of the German secret services and Nazi propaganda, which have gradually created pro-Nazi political structures among the Swabians. Unfortunately, the Romanians have also contributed to this process, mainly those subsidized by the German State as students in Germany. To this one can add Germany's economic ascendancy over Romania, the Funk Plan and the attitude of a timorous country, externally hesitating, vulnerable towards Nazi Germany's policies of building a new European order, "scientifically" argued through the foundation of specialized institutes for the investigation of the political, economic and social conditions in Europe. The author's analyses of the "Funk Plan" are particularly relevant in this respect.

Additionally, the author discusses the attempts of implying the Catholic Church in the propaganda and the part played in the Nazi Germany's

démarche by Bishop Pacha. The philosopher Karl Jaspers observed after the war that numerous German intellectuals, after having collaborated in a first stage with the national-socialist regime for social or symbolic advantages, would later distance themselves, considering themselves as its victims after the fall of the regime. This was also Augustin Pacha's case, accused nevertheless after the war of collaboration with the Nazi regime, even though he tried to save through compromises the autonomy of the church faced with the claims of subordinating it to the German Ethnic Group of Romania. He would be a victim of the communist regime that accused him of espionage in favor of the Vatican.

In a different register, Mihai Adrian Panu analyses the impact of the Nazi ideology among the Swabians, the way their political organizations created after 1918 radicalized in what the political revendications were concerned, entering the Nazi propaganda's system of interconnected vessels through the press, organizations, etc.

Hitlerism was assumed especially by the youth, captivated by the idea of adventure, heroic deed, military and sports exercises, or by the new saints and knights, in their determination to contest any canon. Nonetheless, as the author highlights, the Romanian society was in its turn vulnerable, both on the internal level, through the rise of the fascist trends in the political life of the fascist parties, and by the country's incapacity of responding to the Nazi Germany's propaganda and offensive on the level of the international relations.

Finally, a great part of the German ethnic group of the Banat adhered to Hitler's policies, at least in the period of great successes, all of them being captivated by the project of the Germans' unity all over the world.

Adrian Mihai Panu's book thus represents a research that is able to highlight the metamorphoses of a society or a community and the dramas engendered by this conversion. It also explains the way Hitler was effective in attaining his aims, profiting by the political men's errors of judgment, succeeding in gathering around him and his doctrine elaborated in *Mein Kampf*, all the discontents and incertitudes of an indeterminate world in full crisis of modernity, in order to direct them for his own interest and that of the National-Socialist Party.

Through the manner of analyzing the propaganda mechanisms and interpreting Europe's general political context and the Romanian society's political and cultural realities, the author succeeded in offering a balanced reconstruction, far from certain researches that suggest a collective accountability of the German community.

Historian Mihai Adrian Panu's book represents a research perfectly integrated into a historiographic démarche, but also to a reconstitution specific to the political sciences, through the analyses proposed in relation with the concepts that define the totalitarian regimes and through the examination of the political determinant factors in society, the political cleavages, militants and propaganda. The author has achieved a research of amplitude, based on large inedited information, approached in a modern manner, of actuality, supported by a rich specialized literature in the field of history, philosophy, sociology, political sciences, and by important archive documents and articles in the press of the time.

In conclusion, it is a valuable book, which we recommend to those who wish to know the history of the 20th century, a century of wars and extremes.

Cornel Sigmirean

Jacques Ellul, *Propaganda. The Formation of Men's Attitudes*, New York, ed. Vintage Books, 1973 (first edition in 1965), 320 pp.

Propaganda, sometimes with negative connotations, sometimes positive, is apparently, more present in our lives than we realize. Historians, over time, have tried to create a "timeline" of propaganda or to periodize it. Sociologists and psychologists, on the other hand, have tried through various studies to confirm or refute the scientific propaganda effects, especially in a modern, democratic society.

Propaganda accompanies us everywhere, be it political propaganda and its modernized version, known as public relations. As the authors of the book which we further analyze, Jacques Ellul, stated: *propaganda is not always just lies; it can be half truths or information taken out of context*.

Although it appeared for the first time in 1965, the book still seems timeless and original and it is considered a basic tool for those who study the theme of propaganda and not only. Interests of the author on philosophy, sociology, law and theology converge in his works, leaving a strong mark on the volume, which can only complete the examination of the phenomenon of how propaganda really works.

The author analyzes the propaganda from many points of view, discussing the propaganda in relation to the individual, with the masses of people, or the truth and the propagandist. It also invites the reader to identify the types of propaganda, such as, propaganda of agitation and propaganda of integration, considering that although they have different ways of action they serve the same goal. For example, the propaganda of agitation may cause people to move from a state of inactivity to a state of total rebellion, while propaganda of integration can make them conform to a predetermined pattern.

To include as much information, Ellul discusses the relationship between education and propaganda. Even if the idea that an educated man cannot be "fooled", often education is nothing but a kind of pre-propaganda. Education, sometimes, gives the information but the receiver does not pass it through his own filter, accepting the views that already exist and that of course can serve different interests. The best example of this is the education of the party, which appears as indoctrination rather than education, found in educational institutions in the totalitarian states.

This volume provides interesting details about the relationship between propaganda and sociology but also the psychological and socio-political effects of propaganda. The author examines the limits of propaganda, efficiency and inefficiency of it. The efficiency depends on various factors and those who run propaganda should consider them important: initial attitude of the people, sociological factors, the timeline of propaganda etc.

The author's interest can be found even in the necessity of existing propaganda in a democratic state. Man, says Ellul, does not need to deny the existence of propaganda, even if we talk about democratic society. On the contrary, we must be aware of this phenomenon and consider it important. Although some find it hard to believe that in democracy propaganda may still have significant effects, people will always be vulnerable and easily manipulated, especially when propaganda creates pseudo-needs and pseudo-desires, as Gustave Le Bon stated in "*The Crowd: A Study of the Popular Mind*". Of course, those who argue that propaganda is entirely an attribute of totalitarian states come with arguments such as lack of monopoly in a democratic state, where, for example, exist a free and varied press and nobody forces anyone to read something. Indeed, the argument is appropriate, but we should keep in mind, continues the author that the democratic state will support only certain information from the media and those pieces of information will be credible to the public.

I believe that such a work should not miss from the bibliography of those wishing to understand the phenomenon of manipulation of the masses, or from the bibliography of those who are researchers in fields like human science.

Hațegan Corina

Alaa Al Aswany, *On the State of Egypt – What Caused the Revolution*, Cannogate Books Ltd., 2011, 192 pp.

"*The Egyptian revolution took the worlds by surprise and forced western interests to review the superficial and mistaken political analysis of Egypt that has long been current*" (the author).

The *Introduction* of the collection of articles *On the State of Egypt - What Caused the Revolution*, signed by Alaa Al Aswany since 2005, was written immediately after the beginning of the Egyptian Revolution in 2011. Part of a larger phenomenon called Arab Spring, the Egyptian Revolution, was predictable, says the author, although there were not clear voices to name it loudly, before 2011. The signs of a sick political system, however, were reported (also) by the author in a series of critical articles. It should be noted at the outset that Alaa Aswany is well known to Romanians for three volumes of prose: *Blocul Iakubian* (2002; Polirom, 2008), *Chicago* (2007; Polirom, 2010), *Aș fi vrut să fiu egiptean* (2004; Polirom, 2012).

Alaa Al Aswany has no political, nor sociological studies. He is a graduate of Medicine, but he wrote prose and articles for Egyptian newspapers, quoted by other major foreign publications. He is considered one of the most important opinion-formers in Egypt. Keen observer, critic of modern customs of the Egyptians and especially critical to the Mubarak regime, Alaa Al Aswany is putting together in his volume *On the State of Egypt – What Caused the Revolution*, several articles on corruption, about the lies of an totalitarian state. The articles are not grouped in chronological order, but in three parts, according to three themes: *The Presidency and the*

*Succession, The People and Social Justice, Free Speech and State Repression*, preceded by an *Introduction*.

The volume is not written as an analysis or scientific study, but the articles are showing a frame of Egyptian society, at the outbreak of the revolution. These are, often, just some stories of life of ordinary people, but these stories are creating a portrait of a political, economic and social system in collapse. It is also appreciated that Aswany wrote all those critical opinions to Mubarak regime, although it is known that the regime has violently suppressed, like all totalitarian regimes in fact, the voice of the people - "vox populi".

In the center of the collection of texts stands a representative phrase: Tahrir Square. It's the place where the social movements took place in 2011 and in the years that followed: starting with the fall of the Mubarak regime, the assertion of political Islam, the claims for democracy, the removal of Morsi's governance, the becoming of the army as the legal representative of the will of the people. Also, the *Introduction* is entitled *On Tahrir Square*. The initial question was: why revolution not broke earlier, knowing the fact that Mubarak ruled for 30 years through rigged elections, the corruption reached unprecedented levels in the history of Egypt, and half of the population was living below the poverty line, with only 2 USD per day? Three factors are identified by author: "*the long repression had given Egyptian such a legacy of cowardice and submission that they would not rise up*"; "*the Egyptians were distracted by the need to make a living and were seeking individual solutions to the crisis*"; "*many preferred to escape geographically (they moved to the oil states in the Gulf) and historically (they traveled in time and lived in their imagination like in the Golden Age of Islam)*" - that means they became salafi. The book, as the author says, offers some possible answers to a question that has ridden around the world in 2011: Why the Revolution became inevitable?

The first part of the volume, entitled "*The Presidency and the Succession*", contains 15 articles written by the end of 2009 and in 2010 and refers to the way the president at the time, Hosni Mubarak, was preparing his son to take over the government. The first sign that the Egyptians did not wanted that Gamal Mubarak to "inherit" the leadership, as it was a land in the possession of his family, and as such the first sign that Mubarak actions were challenged, was the concentration of opposition leaders to the same goal: stopping Gamal's political ascent. Aswany is not critical only to the Mubarak family: he also shows that an entire political class is more servile and therefore lacks dignity, a class who demonstrates there is even "*The Art of Pleasing the President*".

In this first part of the volume, the author presents the main opposition figures such as ElBaradei, a researcher recognized and world wide respected, including for his criticism to Mubarak regime. It is interesting that several articles of this part end with the same sentence, constantly repeated, as a single conclusion: *Democracy is the solution*.

The second part of the volume, *The People and Social Justice*, is dedicated to passing from the government to the governed. Is the part to which the author is most interested: Egyptians' responses to government actions. No less than 21 articles, written between 2005 and 2010, are

grouped in this chapter. In a critical article to the Mubarak regime who complied strictly US orders, and also to the United States administration which sustained, as the author says, the most horrific regimes in the Arab world, came out the idea that young students in Cairo have joined movements such as "Kefaya" (*Enough*), because they are aware and have heard about human rights, justice, freedom. Aswany is, however, critical, to his fellow citizens: he is denouncing sexual assaults on women and try to find an explanation for this phenomenon, present also in the first days of the Revolution. Those who are committing such crimes are young people from the poorest classes, without minimum living conditions, no jobs or hope that they will ever found a family, people who are frequently arrested and abused by police, and who do not care if they'll live or die. The phenomenon draw attention to another, equally serious for a Muslim country: the faith, the respect for religious precepts are superficial. Referring to the religion, Aswany treats also the Coptic problems: Coptic clergy has claimed the support to Mubarak regime, while most Egyptians were ignoring the voting. Not because it would be agreed with the decisions and actions of the regime, but because the Christians were afraid of the main opposition force, the Muslim Brotherhood. It is a rift between religions and Aswany argues that Egyptians are firstly Egyptians, that there is an Egyptian nationalism - emerged as a response to foreign occupation - and only then the references to religions are important. Criticism was intended also to the attitude of Egyptians, a non-action attitude, toward the problems of other Arab states, such as the Palestinian issue.

In the last part of the volume, *Free Speech and State Repression*, Aswany presents the abusive methods of intimidation, used by Egyptian police and state security. A simple altercation between a worker and its high class neighbors earned him a false accusation of drug possession and his arrest, then torture and death in prison. It is the fate of the poors. Torture was not an accident, but a „state policy”, Aswany says. Torture was applied also to those who, for example, went to the airport to greet ElBaradei. Seemingly trivial gestures could be considered attacks against the regime, so the state security has punished the Egyptians.

For all this, Aswany saw the solutions: moral reformation of the society and also the reform of political system. And obviously, the volume ends with the established formula: *Democracy is the solution*.

Ana-Maria Gajdo

Radu Gabriel Safta, Călin Felezeu, *Turcia contemporană între moștenirea kemalistă și Uniunea Europeană*, Cluj Napoca, CA Publishing, 2011, 243 pp.

The recent regional and international developments, as well as the domestic situation of Turkey, considering the Gezi Park anti-governmental revolts (2013), the first direct presidential elections of the country resulted in the victory of the AKP leader and former prime minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan (August 2014) and the uprising against the government's decision not to help the Kurds from the Syrian border city

Kobani assaulted by ISIS (October 2014), brought Turkey in the spotlight of the international and Romanian public opinion.

While we cannot deny the fact that there are many studies related to Turkish politics written by Western and Turkish historians and political scientists, there is a lack of academic works written in or even translated into Romanian, although Turkey is one of Romania's major trading partners and our country is a supporter of Turkey's EU accession. Therefore, Romanians' knowledge about Turkey is limited to the news headlines having little or no understanding of the Turkish historical and political background. In this context, Radu Gabriel Safta's, former Consul General of Romania in Turkey, and Prof. Dr. Călin Felezeu's, historian and former Deputy Director of the Romanian Cultural Institute of Istanbul, work on Turkey's domestic and foreign policy evolutions is a breath of fresh air and welcomed initiative.

*Turcia contemporană între moștenirea kemalistă și Uniunea Europeană* (Contemporary Turkey between the Kemalist heritage and the European Union) is a comprehensive guide to modern Turkey's history, analyzing the competing ideologies promoted by the Turkish political elites, the country's geopolitics and role in the regional arena and world politics. Even though the book lays great stress on foreign policy, domestic political trends and developments are not ignored but accurately explained in order to provide an overall picture.

As suggested by the title, Turkey has reached a political crossroads: one of the roads leads to the preservation of the country's Kemalist heritage, according to which Turkey should return to its inward-oriented politics, ethnocentric identity, limit its foreign policy to defence and reject all the elements which pose a threat to its national unity (e.g. the Kurds), while the other path brings Turkey closer to Europe, by further deepening the democratic reforms and building a more open, liberal and tolerant society. The authors argue that Turkey's foreign policy is not defined by its geostrategic constraints, but by the ideologies that define the country's identity. Accordingly, if Turks see themselves as successors of Atatürk, they will follow an isolationist path in terms of foreign policy, if they choose to define themselves in the light of Pan-Turkism they will seek to build closer ties with the Central Asian Turkic republics, if they view themselves as Ottomans they will develop an active policy towards the Balkans, the Caucasus and the Middle East, and, in case Islam is their most important identity trait they will assume a leading role in the Muslim world. Given that the last two options relate more or less to the same geographical area and isolation is out of question, the authors identify three possible geostrategic scenarios for Turkey: asserting its European identity and following the EU's way, promoting closer relations with the Turkic republics from Central Asia or focusing on the Islamic countries.

The book is structured in seven chapters, including the Bibliography. The introductory chapter provides an insight into Turkey's history with an emphasis on foreign policy and briefly analyses the past and present ideologies: Pan-Turkism, Ottomanism and Pan-Islamism. The following chapter consists in the theoretical framework of the study, explaining the main methods and approaches to geopolitics and arguing that the field of contemporary geopolitics is not limited anymore to power, space and nation-

state, but includes identity issues, culture, technology and leaders. The third part of the book focuses on the post-September 12, 1980 *coup d'état* period, called by the authors "security regime" because of the increasing role of the military in politics and the restriction of civil rights for the sake of national security. The section examines the role and functioning of the Turkish political institutions, including the army, the MGK (National Security Council), the political parties and parliament, in the last decades of the Twentieth Century. Another issue discussed is the relationship of the EU with Turkey taking into account the situation of the Turkish immigrants, most of whom came to the Europe after Turkey and EU states had signed the labour recruitment agreements. The authors underline the paradox of the EU's attitude towards Turks; on the one hand Turkish labour force is welcomed to Europe while on the other hand the EU continues to reject Turkey's political integration.

The fourth chapter analyses the current economic, political and social situation of Turkey under the rule of AKP. An important contribution of this part is the radiography of the Turkish secularism. The authors highlight the incomplete secularization of the Turkish Republic, showing that only a day after the abolition of the Caliphate, Diyanet, the Presidency of Religious Affairs, was created with the purpose to manage any aspect related to faith, and Sufi orders and religious communities (although banned) continued their activity. Religion was not separated from the state but subjected to strict state control. Moreover, according to Radu Gabriel Safta and Călin Felezeu Turkish politics and society is not divided between Islamists and Secularists as it is commonly believed, but between the conservative elites and the democratic reformers. Therefore, on the one side we have the defenders of the Kemalist order, the CHP party, businessmen (Koc, Dogan, Sabanci), the army and senior civil servants, while on the other side AKP party and the so-called Anatolian Tigers, or the conservative businessmen emerged from the privatization process of the 80s. The relationship between the two factions is marked by mutual criticism and confrontation: while the Kemalist establishment is accused of being authoritarian, illiberal, anti-European and of implementing democracy only partially, the so-called Islamists are blamed for having a hidden agenda which aims to transform Turkey into a theocracy. Although the ideological dividing line suggested by the authors has become increasingly blurred in the light of the recent developments, as the Kemalist establishment proposed a conservative candidate for the presidential elections (Ekmeleddin İhsanoğlu, former Secretary-General of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation)<sup>8</sup> and the AKP seems to become more authoritarian, Turkish politics and society is still divided between the same actors.

The fifth chapter examines the evolution of the Turkish foreign policy, the country's relations with the US, EU, neighboring states, Balkans, Middle Eastern countries and Romania. If during the Cold War Turkey was on the same page with the US with a few exceptions (see the Turkish invasion of

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<sup>8</sup> Mustafa Akyol, Ekmeleddin İhsanoğlu: A very good choice, in „Hürriyet Daily News”, June 18, 2014, available at <http://www.hurriyedailynews.com/ekmeleddin-ihsanoglu-a-very-good-choice.aspx?PageID=238&NID=67922&NewsCatID=411>.

Cyprus in 1974), in the Twenty-First Century the Turkish Republic has become more and more independent in terms of foreign policy. The allies disagreed on several foreign policy issues: the American invasion of Iraq in 2003, the recognition of the Armenian genocide, the Cyprus question, the relations with Iran, the peace process in the Middle East and the issues regarding energy. As for Turkey's relations with the EU, the authors show that the Turkish public support for the EU accession has dropped significantly due to the multiple delays the country has faced. However, most of the Turkish citizens believe that the EU prescribed modernization, democratization and liberalization is more important than membership. Turkey continues its Europeanization process and rejects the idea of a privileged partnership proposed by EU officials. The study concludes that Turkish history and politics has reached a crucial point. The country needs political stability and stability can be achieved only through more democracy.

As the authors stated "Once center of the Orient, Turkey has become the edge of Europe." (p. 11) Turkey's center of gravity was shifted closer to Europe, and, therefore, evolutions on the Turkish scene weighs heavily in the European and regional politics. Gabriel Safta and Călin Felezeu succeed to answer in a clear and accessible style the most burning questions related to Turkish politics. In spite of the tumultuous domestic and international evolutions and changes that has shaken the country since 2011, when the book was published, the issues discussed are highly topical at the moment. The analysis provides the reader with valuable information, which shed light on the background and possible outcomes of the present situation. Moreover, the book has a particular importance for the field of political sciences and international relations in Romania, compensating for the insufficiency of studies regarding contemporary Turkish politics and history available to the Romanian public.

Iulia-Alexandra Oprea