

TRANSYLVANIA AS A DEPENDENT PROVINCE OF THE EMPIRE. SOCIOLOGICAL ASPECTS OF THE MITTELEUROPEAN PARADIGM

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ABSTRACT

Mittleuropa is one of those ideas that, from a historical point of view, produced more harm than good in Transylvania. Even if in the dualistic period the region represented a very important stake for Hungary in particular, but also for Austria, this did not offer any compensation to the majority of inhabitants. Although representing the statistical majority, the Romanians became a tolerated population that found itself in situations in which the very idea of human dignity was being mocked. Here, a paradox lies: even though this was the historical reality, an unnatural tendency to promote false advantages of Transylvania as part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire can be easily identified. The article's objective is to explain and demonstrate that the Mittleuropa paradigm influence and temptation expanded and managed to conquer the Transylvanian elites, with economic, political and demographic consequences. This situation can be understood with the help of the modern world system theory (I. Wallerstein), as an exploitation of the periphery by the semi-periphery (Austro-Hungarian Empire). However, the Hungarians had a constant initiative to take advantage of this relationship of subordination and tried to change the ethnic rapport in the region due to the fact that the Hungarians were a minority in Transylvania, all "in the name of the Emperor". This context allowed Hungary to manifest itself geopolitically in the Carpathian area through exploitation.

Keywords: Mitteleurope, Trianon, Transylvania, Geopolitics of the Carpathian Basin, Modern world system, propaganda

INTRODUCTION

The present paper aims to briefly analyze the context in which Transylvania was a dependent/underdeveloped territory during the Austro-Hungarian dualism, and to question whether this socio-economic status was improved after the Great Union of 1918. This historical period was chosen to outline an overview of the geopolitical projects that Hungary propagated in Transylvania. We will use sociological concepts such as the *modern world system* (I. Wallerstein) and the *Carpathian basin geopolitics* (R. Şorban) to highlight the fact that, in the dualist

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period, Transylvania represented nothing else than another peripheral area of exploitation (economic, political and demographic), into the framework of the Mitteleuropa pan-idea. In this sense, the present-day geopolitical phenomenon of the Carpathian basin seems to be a development of the old Mitteleuropa pan-idea. We shall see that the logic of economics is ideologically shaped by the pan-idea.

The relevance of the current article is one of national importance because it brings to light aspects that confront the tendency to report to the dualist period in Transylvania as to a flourishing one, which underlines two possible directions: either those who promote this idea are people of good faith, which by simple and superficial analogies, can accept this as valid, or they represent elements strategically placed to spread the Hungarian ideological propaganda that militates for the recapture of the “unjustly” lost territory through the Treaty of Trianon.

THE NATIONAL STATE AND PLANNING

Historically, the Romanian nation was divided in terms of territoriality, due to unfavorable geopolitical reasons. But, in the same time, this represented a main and important pillar for consolidating the national consciousness and will for emancipation. From an economic standpoint, the national state was considered to be the only one that could ensure a harmonious and balanced growth in order to eliminate attempts at speculation or those aimed at an “irrational” development of the state, more precisely to the detriment of those who make it up⁵⁵.

Thus, the national thinking and ideal bring alongside the idea of economic protectionism of the state in relation to what Wallerstein developed as the thesis of the modern world system. In short, in relation to this world system, focused on extracting surplus value, the nation-state is the only geopolitical actor without which the harmonious development of the national economy cannot be ensured.

PAN-IDEAS AND SUBSTITUTION EMPIRES

Before describing the modern world system, we consider it necessary to highlight the theoretical context that made possible the emergence of the modern world system, and of the pan-ideas. It can be said that a pan-idea represents the attitude towards a certain space, dressed in the form of a “great spatial idea”⁵⁶. Any pan-idea conquers, first of all, the space of thought of the intellectual segment found on a given territory. Later on, it becomes the main pivot of that particular pan-idea and also its motor force, that consists in the conversion or even spiritual perversion of the other.

⁵⁵ Radu Baltasiu, *Introducere în Sociologie*, Craiova, Editura Beladi, 2007, p. 315.

⁵⁶ K. Haushofer, *De la Geopolitique*, Paris, Fayard, 1986, p. 534.

A main general objective of a pan-idea is to symbolically withdraw the territorial border, thus preparing further geopolitical and geocultural changes. This starts by overlapping a “feeling of space” that is identified in a particular area, an “area of glorious old memories”, the pan-idea manifesting itself as a spatial representation of a “nostalgic area”⁵⁷. Moreover, it is a framework for aggregating symbolic relations between an ethnic group or a population (or more) and a space or territory of apparently “legitimate” expansion⁵⁸.

Nicolae Iorga was one of the intellectuals who identified the origin and ideal-type of manifestation of such pan-ideas in the Romanian space. He defined this phenomenon with the name of “empires of substitution” or imitation, because the pan-ideas that intersect in the Romanian space want nothing more than to achieve a level of power the Roman Empire once had (under its two expressions: ancient Rome and Byzantium). On the Romanian territory, several pan-ideas could be identified, such as: pan-Slavicism, pan-Germanism, pan-Catholicism, pan-Hellenism, pan-Hungarianism, etc⁵⁹.

MITTELEUROPE

In our case, the pan-idea of interest is the Mitteleuropean one, an idea that, like any other geocultural entity, is “an assumed reality”⁶⁰. However, adopting such an idea is not a popular action, but rather “a cultural, a very organized” assumption⁶¹, practically projected on a territory and adopted by the local or national elites.

According to Shils' theory, peoples have “a map or a picture of the world” that is always in dispute. These maps “intervene in people's cognitive acts”, which is why Shils called them “cognitive maps”⁶². Such maps are instruments used by the elites, be they “politicians, statesmen, aristocracies, virtual elites, chancelleries, strategies, logistics services, diplomacy, etc.”⁶³.

From this perspective, Mitteleuropa, as a geopolitical representation, can be considered “a panideological map”⁶⁴ but beyond the “library” filled with “atlases, diplomatic encyclopedias, and stocks of emotionally charged representations”⁶⁵, it

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

⁶⁰ Ilie Bădescu, Ioan Mihăilescu, *Geopolitica, Integrare, Globalizare*, București, Editura Mica Valahie, 2004, p. 251.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*

⁶² Edward Shils, *Tradition*, Chicago, The University of Chicago Press, 1981, p. 326. Cf. Gould, P. White, *Mental Maps*, Harmondsworth, Penguin Books, 1974, p. 326.

⁶³ *Ibid.*

⁶⁴ Ilie Bădescu, Ioan Mihăilescu, *op. cit.*, p. 251.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

is hidden a “projective geography”⁶⁶ and not necessarily a physical one⁶⁷. It is the emotional component that helps the nostalgic unfolding of the imperial feeling⁶⁸. As such, the Mitteleuropean pan-idea is actually a mix of collective representations and emotions ranging from the cultural superiority of the Austro-Hungarian Empire to the overwhelming Trianon nostalgia (the breaking of the Empire in nation-states, mostly the downfall of the “Great Hungary”).

SUBVERSIVE MITHS

The great Hungary

The paradigm according to which “Greater Hungary” has existed for 1000 years is one of the subversive myths that still circulate in the Transylvanian space and take hold of those social strata, despite the fact that they defy historic facts. This idea is a gross falsification of history, because after the battle of Mohacs in 1526, when Hungary was defeated by the Ottoman Empire, the direct consequence of the events was the transformation of Hungary into a Turkish pashalik⁶⁹ until 1699 the Treaty of Karlowitz, when Hungary became part of the Habsburg Empire⁷⁰. Here, one must note that all these changes during this timeframe did not concern the autonomy status of Transylvania, recognized by the Ottoman Empire, as Wallachia and Moldova were. The moment when Transylvania lost its status of Grand Principality (obtained in 1765 by order of Empress Maria Theresa) was 1868, when it was integrated into the Hungarian part of the Empire right until 1918/1920 (when it returned to Greater Romania by the decision stipulated in the Trianon Treaty⁷¹).

MITTELEUROPE ONCE AGAIN

The emotional component associated with the background development of the Mitteleuropean pan-idea has two simultaneous characteristics: it is both

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

⁶⁹ Viorela Gherasim, „Trezii-vă! Transilvania nu a făcut niciodată parte din Ungaria Mare. A fost o vreme sub ocupația Imperiului Austro-Ungar”, 2018, in *Ziar Harghita*, Available at: <https://ziarharghita.ro/trezii-va-transilvania-nu-a-facut-niciodata-parte-din-ungaria-mare-a-fost-o-vreme-sub-ocupatia-imperiului-austro-ungar>, Accessed on 10 March 2021.

⁷⁰ Miron Manega, „Precursorii lui Mihai Viteazu, în "proiectul" Unirii: Petru Rares, Giovanni Batista Castaldo si Sigismund Bathory”, in *Revista „CERTITUDINEA”*, nr. 4/2008, Available at: www.certitudinea.ro/articole/presa/view/precursorii-lui-mihai-viteazu-in-proiectul-unirii-petru-ares-giovanni-batista-castaldo-si-sigismund-bathory, Accessed on 10 March 2021.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*

aggressive and seductive, so that “its intrinsic aggression is not perceived at first sight”⁷². The combination of the two generates subversion. Post and sub-imperialist myths of evocation are therefore subversive myths⁷³. As its effect is widespread, it can be said that the Mitteleurope paradigm is a “geopolitical subversion”⁷⁴ because it has all the characteristics of these myths: “it is a post historical, sub-imperialist myth, of nostalgic evocation, aggressive and seductive, that is, subversive”⁷⁵.

This can explain why Romanian intellectuals of national orientation became a prey in the face of this temptation, as it happened with the ones from Transylvania or Banat, who were in the proximity of the Mitteleuropean geopolitics manifestation space. Not only were they caught in this vicious circle, but through the actions and manifestations of these cosmopolite intellectuals, they contributed to the shift of the “gravitational center” from Bucharest to Vienna or Budapest⁷⁶.

THE MODERN WORLD SYSTEM

The theory was developed by Immanuel Wallerstein and refers to another type of “world system”, very different from the way the classical empire used to work. The two types had the same economic purpose: the extraction of surplus from the ruled territories. However, the main difference between them lies in the surplus appropriation mechanism: the empire used the tribute mechanism, while the modern world system based upon the market⁷⁷. Another difference is that the new “system” formed firstly an economic entity and not a political one⁷⁸. Moreover, the system is “global” not because it encompasses the whole world, but this new unity is greater than any other legally defined political unit and the connection of its parts is of an economic nature⁷⁹. The novelty with which this new structure is imposed consists in the functional specialization⁸⁰ of its component areas⁸¹, more exactly:

1. The core – located in North-West Europe, comprised of urban-industrial economies with a strong bourgeoisie
2. The semi-periphery – located in Central Europe, based on an economy constructed around self-employed landowners, tithe and exploited labor in a lease system

⁷² Ilie Bădescu, Ioan Mihăilescu, *op. cit.*, p. 244.

⁷³ *Ibid.*

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷⁷ Ilie Bădescu, *Sincronism european și cultură critică românească*, București, Editura Științifică și Enciclopedică, 2002, p. 238.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 203.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 82.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*

3. The periphery – located in Eastern Europe and Latin America, characterized by an agrarian economic system, based on cereal crops (monocultures) and with labor in the various forms of slavery (on plantations or in the mining industries)

A first specific feature is the size of the economic flow, unequally divided between the three areas⁸². The persistence of this type of system is possible by maintaining the differences (between the three areas)⁸³, which also generates a systemic process of underdevelopment. Specifically, the periphery is the most affected area due to its function of suburbanization⁸⁴ within the international division of labor, in the sense that it is meant to supply the central area with raw materials, extractive materials and all that is necessary for the industry and the cities in the center. In addition to the delivery of raw materials, this process is one that forces the periphery to remain in the same “state” of development, because it is highly dependent on the system’s core. Moreover, it is hooked on the suburban style of life created⁸⁵, based on passive imitation, obedience, individuals with volatile characters, etc.

Here, we can conclude that the essence of the “periphery” is the process of suburbanization, a state which, in addition to its specialization in secondary production, assures subordination to the core’s needs, which further leads to a state of generalized dependence⁸⁶. In short, the periphery suffers a process of “development of underdevelopment”⁸⁷.

GEOPOLITICS OF THE CARPATIC BASIN

The geopolitics of the Carpathian Basin refers not only to [1] the place where the Hungarian geopolitics manifests itself [Romania], but also to [2] the process that assures the Hungarian ethnic reproduction⁸⁸. This phenomenon is based on the preconception and erroneous belief of the Hungarian elites that “Hungarianness carries in itself a hereditary message”, namely “to have a decisive and leading role in the Carpatho-Danube basin”⁸⁹. This motivational voice is transformed into the ambition to update the Hungarian border until it reaches the maximum known expansion during the period of Austro-Hungarian dualism. The vision underlying

⁸² *Ibid.*

⁸³ *Ibid.*

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*

⁸⁷ Ilie Bădescu, *Tratat de geopolitică*, București, Editura Mica Valahie, 2011, p. 171.

⁸⁸ Radu Baltasiu, Gabriel Săpunaru, Ovidiana Bulumac, *Slăbirea comunității românești din Harghita-Covasna*, București, Editura Etnologică, 2013, p. 14.

⁸⁹ Raoul Șorban, *Fantasma Imperiului Ungar și Casa Europei*, București, Editura Globus, 1990, p. 19.

this energetic manifestation consists in imagining a “multinational, polyglot state, in which the conqueror, in a numerical minority, arrogates his right to lead and exploit in his own interest peoples of another nationality, of another language”⁹⁰, this being the central point of the Hungarian ideology.

The situation can be considered dramatic from several perspectives, but the most important is the one that provides the overview of the instrument and means that the Hungarians used to achieve their goal: the assimilation or annihilation of other “nationalities” that “stand in the way” of achieving the ideal⁹¹.

“[In this way, an ideology of] denationalization, assimilation, or forced and rapid annihilation was created [and] together with the idea of the political nation, it became not only a fighting argument for domination, but it’s very expression”⁹².

Things started to show an aggressive trend when the Hungarian Diet stated that the:

“Peoples living ... are considered equal nationalities before the law, ... on the basis of individual freedom and freedom of association ... only if those claims are reconciled with the country's policy”⁹³.

However, the policy was in fact advocating for the creation of a “living space” necessary for the fulfillment of the “humanitarian” mission of the Hungarian people⁹⁴. In other words, in Transylvania the Hungarian ideology reserved the social privileges *only to the individuals of Hungarian ethnicity*, in order to fulfill the “mission” of the Hungarian nation⁹⁵ on account of the exploitation, assimilation or even annihilation of other nations. The paradox is that it has managed to create a fetish towards the Hungarian nation that has reached the point of supporting its members whether or not they are right, while being against the development of modern nation-states⁹⁶. On the scale of history, this meant the transformation of Hungary into a political nation⁹⁷, whose instrument of manifestation was to generate a certain sense of identity to all those who adhered to it and to create a system based on the principle of equality “of all, whatever their ethnic origin, with the precondition to adhere, by assimilation, to Hungarian nationality”⁹⁸.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 18.

⁹² “Ideologia deznaționalizării, a asimilării, ori a anihilării forțate și rapide alături de idea “națiunii politice” a devenit nu numai un argument de luptă al dominației, ci însăși expresia sa”, *Ibid.*

⁹³ “toate popoarele locuitoare [în Ungaria] ... sunt a se considera de naționalități egale înaintea dreptului ... pe temeiul libertății individuale și a libertății de asociere... numai dacă acele pretențiuni se împacă cu politica țării”, *Ibid.*, pp. 20–21.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 40.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*

⁹⁸ “s-a urmărit crearea unui echilibru înăuntrul unui sistem acceptabil pentru toți, cât și proclamării egalității tuturor, oricare ar fi originea lor etnică, cu condiția preliminară de a adera, prin asimilare la naționalitatea ungară”, *Ibid.*, pp. 40–41.

One of the lesser-known things is the fact that in Transylvania, as a consequence of the Romanian demographic majority, despite the assimilation policies, the Romanian language was the language used in the dialogues between individuals of different ethnicities, being available to everyone⁹⁹. Despite this, the forced Magyarization process gained momentum during the time of Prime Minister Kálmán Tisza, also known as the “nationalities crusher”¹⁰⁰, and culminating in Count Albert Apponyi's 1907 education laws¹⁰¹.

The education laws implemented by Apponyi established the obligation to study in Hungarian in schools, and this measure was extended to denominational and communal schools, which had the right to provide training in a minority language. The law also permitted the (Hungarian) state to suppress any Romanian school for the simple reason that this was claimed by higher state interests. The application of Apponyi's laws represented a severe blow to the spiritual development of the Romanians in Transylvania, so that five years after its entry into force, 320 Romanian schools out of the 2,795 existing at that time were closed. The number of closed schools grew to 600 by 1915¹⁰².

In addition to these measures, the direct consequence of the discrepant Hungarian privileges was the negative discrimination of other nationalities through the functioning of the industrial economy, culture, trade with the help of human resources recruited from the Hungarian or Magyarized population, succeeding in imposing a privileged situation¹⁰³.

Another heavy blow to the Romanian people on the territory of Transylvania consisted of the religious restrictions that were imposed, by raising the level of “national religion”¹⁰⁴ of the Roman Catholic and Protestant churches, which generated subsequent effects in areas such as culture, education, recreational activities and last but not least, in terms of the mystery of the wedding¹⁰⁵. The ironic paradox of Hungarian ideology is that while aggressive assimilation efforts and tactics were made against other nationalities, Hungarian elites constantly challenged the nationalities' ability to reach the level of „Hungarian perfection”¹⁰⁶.

⁹⁹ “Oricând se întâlnește doi inși (transilvăneni — n.a) de neam diferit, neputându-se înțelege în propria lor limbă, graiul românesc le este la îndemână spre a servi de tálmaci. Faci o călătorie, mergi la un târg — toată lumea știe românește («Man mache eine Reise, man gebe sich auf einen Jahrmakt, Walachisch kann Jedermann...») Limba română (spre deosebire de germana ori maghiara n.a.) o înveți aproape fără să vrei, din contactul zilnic de pe stradă.”, *Ibid.*, p. 35.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 37.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, p. 38.

¹⁰² Alin Ion, „Legea educației Apponyi, care a dus la închiderea a sute de școli românești din Transilvania. Toate școlile să fie prevăzute cu emblema ungară”, 2018, in *Adevărul*, Available at: (https://adevarul.ro/locale/targu-jiu/legea-educatiei-apponyi-dus-inchiderea-sute-scoli-romanesti-transilvania-toate-scoalele-prevazute-emblema-ungara-1_5af406ffdf52022f75cd9794/index.html), Accessed on 10 March 2021.

¹⁰³ Raoul Șorban, *op. cit.*, p. 42.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 41.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 42.

THE TRIANON MOMENT AND SUBSEQUENT MANIFESTATIONS

From Hungarian space

The reality of losing the war was a hard-to-accept truth for the Hungarian elites who were forced to relinquish long lasting positions and privileges obtained through state policies. The ferocity and stubbornness of the Hungarian elites, despite the international treaty regulating the new reality, of not accepting the new reality emerge even from the reaction and actions of the regent of Hungary between March 1, 1920 – October 15, 1944¹⁰⁷ is well known. For instance, Miklós Horthy, during this period, did nothing but fight for the revision and amendment of the Trianon Peace Treaty using:

“all means of public education, agitation and propaganda, internal and external, both throughout the apparatus. as well as through various patriotic associations militating against the stipulations contained in the Treaty of Trianon, seeking to justify the need to revise them”¹⁰⁸.

Another figure who had major implications in shaping this direction of the Hungarian geopolitical was Count Pal Teleky. After becoming prime minister (July 20, 1920), it was obvious which were his intentions:

“during the first term as prime minister, the image of his policy was characterized by firm intention to revise the Peace Treaty and to reject categorically theoretically and practically the «liberalism» as well as the intention [to refuse] the adoption of Christian ideology”¹⁰⁹.

ASPECTS INSIDE THE TRANSYLVANIAN AREA

There is a significant difference between the way the Hungarian elites see themselves (“noble” and “aristocratic”) and the manner in which they relate to “the rest”, meaning the peasantry, both of Hungarian and Romanian ethnic origin, with an inner advantage on the first category. Thus, the Hungarian elites created a hierarchical system with administrative, socio-cultural, economic and political repercussions: the upper class (the Hungarian elites) was the most privileged one, followed by the Hungarian peasantry, and, on the lowest position in the hierarchy, the Romanian peasantry. The realization of this system generated the development

¹⁰⁷ Britannica editors, “Miklós Horthy”, 1998, Available at: www.britannica.com/biography/Miklos-NagybanyaiHorthy, Accessed on 10 March 2021.

¹⁰⁸ “Folosind toate mijloacele educației publice, a agitației și a propagandei, interne și externe, atât întregul aparat de stat, ca și diversele asociații patriotice, au declanșat o ofensivă împotriva stipulațiilor cuprinse în Tratatul de la Trianon, căutând să motiveze și necesitatea revizuirii lor”, Raoul Șorban, *op. cit.*, p. 47–48.

¹⁰⁹ “În timpul întâiului mandat de prim-ministru, imaginea politicii sale era caracterizată de intenția fermă de a revizui Tratatul de pace, de a refuza categoric teoretic și practic, «liberalismul», ca și de intenția adoptării ideologiei creștine.”, *Ibid.*, p. 49.

of the upper layer at the expense of the other categories, the exploitation being exercised on both categories, but especially on the Romanian peasantry.

One of the most important tensions that were propagated by the Hungarian elite, succeeding through perseverance and regular rhythm (publicly known as “the policy of small steps”), was the unquestionable axiom that declared the supremacy of the Hungarian people over all others, especially the Romanians, that give them the supreme argument for controlling the power. In other words, the nobility of the Hungarians should be considered not only a law of nature, but also the expression of God’s will¹¹⁰.

This collective psychosis at the level of the Hungarian elites created the emotional context of the collective inadaptation to the post-Trianon European order. In political terms, this collective inadaptation took the form of *revisionism*: the systematic approach to deny and recover the ‘territorial losses’ after the Paris Treaty. The sudden change in the political reality could not be managed by the Hungarian elites because the “direction” of manifestation and action was coordinated not locally, but directly from Budapest. In 1937, top 18 Hungarian intellectuals from Transylvania wrote:

“[This] unexpected loss of the war struck as if in the back of my head. This blanket, which were sacredly believed that its situation was unshakable. The only support, the power of the state, has disappeared from under his feet”¹¹¹.

Thus, losing their political and economic leverage, they were left with only the ideological instrument known as *passive resistance*¹¹², which remains valid to this day. For instance, just a couple of months ago, the Hungarian prime minister stated:

“Hungary, which has just regained its self-esteem, has just freed itself from the shackles of the hundred years after Trianon, has just regained the taste and path of its former greatness, and has just got rid of the miserable clothes of pessimism and humiliation”¹¹³.

The refusal to accept the newly instated Trianon realities also translated into a boycott of the former administration that did not want to work under the Romanian state, and chose to be part of the mass emigration of Hungarian officials. According to the data from the National Institute of Statistics, as a direct consequence of the establishment of the Romanian administration, out of

¹¹⁰ Metamorphosis Transylvaniae. Orszagreszunk atalkulasa, 1918–1936 apud. Anton Golopenția, *Opere complete*, Vol. I, Sociologie, Editura Enciclopedică, 2002, p. 331.

¹¹¹ “Pierderea neașteptată a războiului a lovit parcă în moalele capului. Pătura aceasta, care era încredințată cu sfințenie că situația ei e de nestrămutat. I-a pierit de sub picioare singurul reazăm, puterea de stat.”, *Ibid.*, p. 332.

¹¹² *Ibid.*

¹¹³ Iuliu Vlădescu, „MTI: Orbán: maghiarii sunt campionii supraviețuirii pe scena istoriei europene”, 2020, in *Evz*, Available at: <https://evz.ro/mti-orban-maghiarii-sunt-campionii-supravietuirii-pe-scena-istoriei-europene.html>, Accessed on 10 March 2021.

approximately 100,000 families that formed the administrative apparatus of Transylvania, in the period 1918–1924 approximately 197,000 people were “repatriated” to Hungary¹¹⁴.

The concept of passive resistance was created by the Hungarian elites in the cities, and they tried to impose it among the villages that revolved around those urban areas. However, the carried-out exploitation of the peasantry led to the rebellion of the latter, both Hungarians and Romanians, against the new tactics of passive resistance imposed by the city. It could be said that the “adhesion of the Hungarian village” took place rather than of the cities because the village found the practical way faster than the bourgeoisie¹¹⁵.

After the Great Assembly in Alba Iulia, the information spread very quickly according to which the estates would be divided, so that each family would have enough land for a decent living. In this direction, the reaction of the Hungarian peasant was natural: to react together with the Romanian peasants against the Hungarian landowners. This moment represented the deviation of the Szekler and Hungarian villages from the path of passive resistance designated by the city leaders¹¹⁶. Thus, the moment of December 5, 1920, when the Hungarian landowners organized in Cluj a protest rally against the agrarian reform¹¹⁷, was the one that gave birth to open solidarity between peasants, regardless of ethnicity. This solidarity derived from the understanding the humanity of the spirit specific to Transylvania, a fact that came to the surface every time the Hungarian administration was being exaggerated or insulted the dignity of the peasants. These excesses have always been sanctioned by both Romanians and Hungarians, regardless of the ethnicity of the person concerned¹¹⁸.

After the Great Union, the remaining Hungarian political stratum in Romania manifested a passive attitude in political terms for one reason only:

“... it was completely caught up in the struggle not for the nation, but for the integrity of wealth. As soon as they reorganized their wealth, they began to take an active part in guiding Transylvania's minority policy”¹¹⁹.

In other words, the Hungarian political activity on the Romanian territory after Trianon did not aim at anything other than the restoration of the Hungarian “nobility”¹²⁰, following even the guiding ideas of the pre-war Hungarian propaganda:

¹¹⁴ Anton Golopenția, *op. cit.*, p. 332.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 332–333.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 333.

¹¹⁹ “... era prinsă cu totul în lupta dusă, nu pentru neam, ci pentru integritatea averii. De îndată ce și-au reorganizat averea, au început să ia parte active în îndrumarea politicii minoritare a Ardealului.”, *Ibid.*, pp. 333–334.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 334.

“by offering deputy seats to directors and then buying independent newspapers, the Hungarian magnates' party managed to deal decisive blows to its opponents. The guiding ideas of the publicist counter-elite, made up mainly of freelancers and publicists, all come from the pre-war Hungarian opposition program”¹²¹.

From an economic point of view, after the Great Union, Transylvania experienced an upward trend. To know the state of affairs in Transylvania, before the Great Union, we quote below a representative quote:

“... life course, quiet, timid, lacking in initiatives. Colony, both spiritually and economically. Provincial newspapers and provincial people. The culture, centralized in Budapest, was in very modest manifestations. With the change of mastery, all of a sudden, they changed. Not only because of the change of mastery. The pace of urban development had intensified even before the Union. The premises of autonomous spiritual creations have appeared. But in the whole of old Hungary, on the periphery, their use would have been very slow”¹²².

Thus, the myth according to Transylvania was prosperous during the Austro-Hungarian dualism can be easily dismantled only if we look at Simion Mehedinți's analysis on the rapid development of Transylvania under *the supervision of the Romanian state*¹²³:

1. The number and capital of autonomous companies in Transylvania are growing impressively¹²⁴

Year	Number of societies	Social capital
1919	231	190.446.000
1923	468	1.571.077.000
1936	554	4.383.985.000
1937	568	4.449.062.000

2. Cereal production also increased significantly (corn alone, for example, increased from 8.1 quintals per hectare in 1921 to 16.0 quintals per hectare in 1938) and total production increased from 17.922.000 quintal to 34.377.000 quintals¹²⁵.

¹²¹ “Oferind locuri de deputat directorilor și mai apoi cumpărând ziarle independente, partidul maghiar al magnaților a izbutit să dea lovituri decisive adversarilor săi.”, *Ibid.*, p. 335.

¹²² “Cursul vieții molcom, timorat, lipsit de initiative. Colonie, atât din punct de vedere spiritual cât și din punct de vedere economic. Gazetișoare provinciale și oameni provinciali. Cultura, centralizată la Budapesta, mijea în manifestări foarte modeste. Cu schimbarea stăpânirii toate s-au prefăcut, dintr-o dată. Nu numai din pricina schimbării de stăpânire. Ritmul evoluției urbane se accentuase încă înainte de Unire. Au apărut premisele unor creații spiritual autonome. Însă, în întregul vechii Ungarii, la periferie, s-ar fi ajuns foarte încet la folosirea lor.”, *Ibid.*, p. 337.

¹²³ Simion Mehedinți, *L'orientation économique de la Transylvanie*, in *Revue de Transylvanie*, 1940, p. 221.

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 222.

3. The import-export economic relations have experienced a development through the orientation towards the East¹²⁶.

1938	Romanian principalities and provinces of Turkey	Hungary and the provinces of Austria
Export	2.995.091	89.144
Import	4.157.055	172.408

This flourishing was based on the fact that Transylvania had a large market in the Principalities beyond the Carpathians: Moldova and Muntenia. Simion Mehedinți is also the one who demonstrated the fact that *before* and after the Great Union, Transylvania's economic circuits headed south and east, that is, towards the Romanian countries and not towards Hungary¹²⁷.

In this sense, we are not mistaken if we conclude that the economic renaissance of Transylvania, after acquiring its historical place within the Romanian nation, is the clearest proof that the province found geographically in the middle of the country forms an organic unit with the rest of the Romanian State¹²⁸.

With this change of the dominant objective, the Romanian nation found itself alongside allogeneic populations, which occupied for a long time many privileged positions. A negative tension accumulated over time, but the Romanian people in Transylvania had the ability to turn it into a constructive tension, specifically in a tension that would stimulate and guide Romanians to enter and remain in trade, industry and the free professions, and chose to ignore the revenge type of attitude towards the others¹²⁹.

CONCLUSIONS

To demystify the idea that in the dualistic period Transylvania was more economically advantageous than embedded in a Romanian state was the main aim of this paper, and the utilized instruments that proved the affirmation were the geopolitical analysis of the Mitteleuropa pan-idea and the world-system referential.

Another important aspect referred to was the geopolitical ability of the Romanian culture to transform negative pressures into positive tensions that brought growth to all citizens, regardless of their ethnic origin, and the framework of such an enterprise was the Great Romania. The Romanian national unitary state was nothing else but the very reason of being for the entire Romanian people, regardless of the temporal geographical divisions, and this aspect should not be diminished, regardless of the recorded harshness of times.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 223

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*

¹²⁹ Anton Golopenția, *op. cit.*, p. 340.

Another direction that the material aimed was to suggest the reader some directions for action suited for the Transylvanian space. Because this issue has been analyzed and debated for a long time, we consider it to be a gesture of recognition of the work submitted for the national uprising of the Romanians, the rendering of the ideas elaborated by Anton Golopenția¹³⁰:

1. A long-term public campaign should be carried out to clarify the great masses of Hungarians in Romania on the situation created by the flourishing of the Romania state.
2. To proceed today, as if the Hungarians were a compact and hostile group, in its entirety, to the whole of Romania, means to put water on the mill of magnates and freelancers, who lead the Hungarian party and have every interest in persisting a tension between the Romanian state and the Hungarian community in Romania. Our policy today on Hungarians must be *differentiated*:
“Of understanding and closeness with the leaders and the blankets that have been inserted in the whole of Romania”¹³¹.
“Of tenacious repression of those who are unjustly claiming to be the representatives of the entire Hungarian nation in Romania, and seek to perpetuate, among the Hungarians in Romania, the latent uprising of the first years after the war”¹³².
3. Unlike allogeneic groups, the Romanians who are also responsible for preserving the Romanian state must know how to act not only in the perspective of the Romanian nation, but also in the perspective of the Romanian state. However, it will remain, as we seen before, a state with foreign populations. Less than we have now, but still with “minorities”. To act only in the perspective of the nation, to give the inevitable competition the aspect of struggle means not to take care of the coherence necessary for the Romanian state in the attempts that may arise. Not even the most formidable strengthening of the Romanian nation can ever completely remove the need for a good understanding with the foreign people living among us.
4. Competition for economic positions is driven by individuals and groups. The limitation of these competitions to the intensity compatible with the interests of the Romanian state is today's duty of the state leadership.

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¹³⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 339–341.

¹³¹ “De înțelegere și apropiere cu conducătorii și cu păturile ce s-au inserat în România întregită.”, *Ibid.*, p. 339.

¹³² “De tenace reprimare a celor care, pretinzându-se pe nedrept reprezentanții întregii ungurimi din România, caută să permanentizeze, la ungurii din România răscularea latentă din anii dintâi de după război.”, *Ibid.*

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