

VASILE STOICA, “THE SORROWS OF ARDEAL”. READING NOTES

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ABSTRACT

The history of Ardeal (Transylvania) is still today a subject treated by both Romanian and Hungarian historians. Ardeal, one of the three Romanian provinces together with Moldova and Wallachia, has been a place where the history of the region has represented a continuous interaction between three forces: the Romanians, the Hungarians, and the Habsburg Dynasty. The idea is the work of Vasile Stoica (1889–1959), one of the most prominent Romanian diplomats of the interwar period, who died in the communist prison of Jilava. The interdependence of these three forces generated a historical series of sufferings and injustices for the Romanians of Transylvania, which the Romanian diplomat summarised and ordered chronologically in his work “The sorrows of Ardeal”. On their side were the Romanians of Moldova and Wallachia by virtue of their acts of solidarity. The Sufferings of the Romanians of Transylvania and the support received from their brothers across the mountains are two of the guiding ideas of the book. Both were the reasons for the entry of the Kingdom of Romania into the First World War. The book was a means used by the Romanian delegation to convince the North American opinion of the rightness of the Romanian cause. The honesty of the author, a Romanian originally from Ardeal, with his ability to synthesise, make “The sorrows of Ardeal” a representative work for the Romanian perspective on the history of this area.

Keywords: Vasile Stoica, Ardeal, Romanian historiography, World War I, Social History.

VASILE STOICA – THE ROMANIAN DIPLOMAT WHO FOUGHT VOLUNTARILY ON THE FRONT

“The Sorrows of Ardeal” is the result of the efforts of the distinguished diplomat Vasile Stoica (1889–1959), a Romanian of Ardelean origin, who graduated from high school in Sibiu and Brasov, and from higher education in Budapest, Paris, and Bucharest. His vast linguistic skills (fluent in 14 languages, including Hungarian) enabled him to keep informed about the problems of the Romanians in Transylvania during the period of Austro-Hungarian dualism (1867–1918), working as editor of the daily “Românul” in Arad, the newspaper of the Romanian National Party¹⁸⁶.

During the First World War, he avoided enlistment in the Austro-Hungarian army and voluntarily joined the Romanian army and was wounded in the battles in 1916. The battle at the front was supplemented by intense diplomatic activity. He drafted King Ferdinand I’s proclamations for Romania’s entry into the “glorious War

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¹⁸⁶ Gheorghe Buzatu, “Diplomație și propagandă” [“Diplomacy and propaganda”], in Vasile Stoica, *Suferințele din Ardeal [The sorrows of Ardeal]*, Bucharest, Arsenie Boca Publishing, 2016, p. 4.

of National Unity of 1916–1919”¹⁸⁷. The Government and the Great Romanian Headquarters sent him in 1917 together with Vasile Lucaciu, president of the Cultural League, and the priest Ion Moța¹⁸⁸ in the United States of America to plead for the national cause against the powerful ally.

The diplomat’s efforts did not stop at the end of the war. At the personal request of Prime Minister Ion I. C. Brătianu, Vasile Stoica was included in the Romanian delegation sent to Versailles in February 1919, a delegation that obtained the agreement of the great powers for the union of Transylvania, Bukovina, and Bessarabia with the Kingdom of Romania. He continued his diplomatic career, being plenipotentiary minister of Romania in Albania (1930–1932), Bulgaria (1932–1936), and the Baltic States (1937–1939). He was Romania’s first ambassador to Turkey (1939–1940) and ambassador to The Hague (1946–1947)¹⁸⁹.

Ana Pauker, the Communist Minister of Foreign Affairs, abruptly ended his diplomatic career in November 1947 to “disaffiliate it from the landed bourgeois elements”¹⁹⁰ despite the assistance it gave to the Romanian Delegation to the Paris Peace Conference (July-October 1946). Imprisoned by the Communists, he dies on 27 July 1959 in Jilava prison.

THE KINGDOM OF ROMANIA IN THE FIRST WORLD WAR – THE BACKGROUND TO THE BOOK’S PUBLICATION

The Romanian diplomat first published his work shortly after the entry of the Kingdom of Romania into the First World War on the side of the Entente. The book was a success as the author confessed: “in a few weeks it was almost completely sold out”¹⁹¹. The public impact was so great in Romania that it led Vasile Stoica to publish a new edition for Romanians in the United States on November 1, 1917. Thus, the work became an instrument used by the Romanian delegation sent to the United States of America by the Government in retreat in Iasi (25 November 1916 – 30 November 1918) to achieve the following objectives:

- supporting the Romanian cause before North American opinion¹⁹² and
- recruiting a legion of volunteers from among the more than 150,000 Romanians from Transylvania and Bucovina who emigrated to the “New World” to fight under the American flag on the front in France¹⁹³. The Legion was not sent to the battlefield although it had formed¹⁹⁴.

¹⁸⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 5.

¹⁸⁸ *Ibidem*.

¹⁸⁹ *Ibidem*, p. 8.

¹⁹⁰ *Ibidem*, pp. 6–7.

¹⁹¹ *Ibidem*, p. 15.

¹⁹² Gheorghe Buzatu, “Diplomație și propagandă” [“Diplomacy and propaganda”], in *Ibidem*, p. 5.

¹⁹³ Robert Stănciugel, *Lumea balcanică în viziunea și activitatea diplomatului Vasile Stoica [The Balkan Region in the Perspective and Work of Vasile Stoica]*, Bucharest, Colias Publishing, 2008, p. 38.

¹⁹⁴ Gheorghe Buzatu, *op. cit.*, in *Ibidem*, p. 5.

The future diplomat gave lectures about the Romanians in Transylvania on American soil, published articles in the largest newspapers of the time in the U.S. (“The Washington Post” and “The New York Times”) and met President Woodrow Wilson along with the Czechoslovak leader Tomáš Masaryk, the Polish leader Ignacy Paderwski and the Croatian leader Hinko Hinkovici, representatives of peoples who shared the same fate as the Romanians within the Austro-Hungarian Empire¹⁹⁵. Thanks to him, the most significant union of Romanians in the U.S. was formed, representing 182 Romanian organisations and parishes in the U.S. in several states on July 5, 1918¹⁹⁶.

“The Sorrows of Ardeal” is part of a series of studies on the national problem published by Vasile Stoica during the First World War: “The Habsburgs and Romania, Bucharest”, 1915, in collaboration with Ion Rusu Abrudeanu; Bessarabia, Dobrodja, New York, 1919; “The Roumanian Question”, Pittsburgh, 1919; “The Roumanian Nation a Sentry of Western Latin Civilization in Eastern Europe”, Pittsburgh, 1919¹⁹⁷.

This was the only one of the above works republished after 1989 in Cluj-Napoca in 1994, in Bacău in 2008, and 2014 and at the Arsenie Boca publishing in Bucharest in 2016. The ideas below are based on the notes from the last edition. It is 350 pages long and includes an introduction-study by historian Gheorghe Buzatu, taken over by the Arsenie Boca publishing from the 2008 edition of the book, where it was originally published.

Vasile Stoica addressed the Romanian public during a time of tension and major changes in national history. To strengthen the consciousness of nationhood and national unity, the diplomat adopted in “The Sorrows of Ardeal” a style that combines logical argumentation, the rendering of historical facts, and storytelling. The historical facts took precedence because they “speak quite clearly” about the sufferings of the Romanians, as the Romanian diplomat confesses in the preface. Thus, the book ends with an appendix made up of documents (letters, newspaper articles and more) that describe the injustices endured by Romanians of all social classes during the Austro-Hungarian dualism.

HISTORICAL SERIES OF ROMANIAN SORROWS IN ARDEAL

From the introduction, the author divides the history of Transylvania into seven parts, thus succeeding in chronologically ordering from a Romanian perspective the main moments of Transylvanian history up to the Great Union:

- “I. From the arrival of the Hungarians until 1526, when, following the defeat at Mohaci, Ardeal and its Hungarian parts separated from the rest of Hungary, becoming a principality.

¹⁹⁵ *Ibidem*.

¹⁹⁶ Robert Stănciugel, *op. cit.*, p. 40.

¹⁹⁷ Gheorghe Buzatu, *op. cit.*, in *Ibidem*, p. 11.

- II. 1526–1599, from the founding of the principality to its conquest by Michael the Brave.
- III. 1599–1691, from Michael the Brave's murder to the overthrow of the princes and the arrival of Habsburg rule in Transylvania.
- IV. 1691–1784, from the arrival of the Habsburgs to Horia's revolution.
- V. 1784–1848, from Horia's revolution to the revolution of 1848.
- VI. 1848–1867, from the defeat of the revolutionary Hungarians to their reconciliation with the Emperor.
- VII. 1867–1914, from our coming under the whip of Hungarian chauvinism to the outbreak of today's huge war"¹⁹⁸.

All the arguments claim that without the intervention of the Kingdom of Romania the Romanians in the Austro-Hungarian Empire would have been denationalized. Why was the presence of the Romanians in Transylvania a problem for the powers interested in the rule of the principality? Vasile Stoica's answer has to do with the geostrategic and geoeconomic position of the principality. Ardeal is a natural stronghold in Eastern Europe, and its dominion offers control over the territory between the "Balkans and the Dniester", including the Danube, a commercial artery facilitating the link between the East and Europe.

"You do not have to be a soldier to understand how important this state is for the defence of a nation. Nature has made of it a citizenry, destined to protect its own and to rule the plains (...)

The dominion of this corner of south-eastern Europe, which lies between the Balkans and the Dniester, can only be in the hands of those who rule the mighty Carpathian fortress (...)

Because of its favourable situation, Ardeal was destined to be the strongest military shield of an empire"¹⁹⁹.

In the logic of Viennese diplomacy, the majority of Romanians in Transylvania were an impediment to the domination of the region, and Moldavia and Wallachia are two obstacles between the empire and the Black Sea. Vasile Stoica demonstrates,

¹⁹⁸ „I. De la venirea Ungurilor până la 1526, când în urma înfrângerii de la Mohaci, Ardealul și părțile lui ungurene se despart de restul Ungariei, transformându-se în principat;

II. 1526–1599, de la întemeierea principatului până la cucerirea lui de către Mihai Vodă Viteazul;

III. 1599–1691, de la uciderea lui Mihai Viteazul până la înlăturarea principilor și sosirea stăpânirii Habsburgilor în Ardeal;

IV. 1691–1784, de la sosirea Habsburgilor până la revoluția lui Horia;

V. 1784–1848, de la revoluția lui Horia până la revoluția din 1848;

VI. 1848–1867, de la înfrângerea Ungurilor revoluționari până la împăcarea lor cu împăratul;

VII. 1867–1914, de la ajungerea noastră iarăși sub biciul șovinismului unguresc până la izbucnirea uriașului război de astăzi.”, in Vasile Stoica, *op. cit.*, p. 16.

¹⁹⁹ „Nu trebuie să fie cineva militar, ca sa înțeleagă, ce mare însemnătate are acest stat pentru apărarea unui popor. Natura a făcut dintr-însul o cetățuie, menită să ocrotească pe cei din sânul ei și să stăpânească șesurile (...)

Stăpânirea acestui colț din sud-estul Europei, care e cuprins între Balcani și Nistru nu poate fi decât în mâna celor ce stăpânesc puternica cetate carpatină (...)

În urma situației sale favorabile, Ardealul era menit, să fie cel mai puternic scut militar al unui imperiu.”, in *Ibidem*, pp. 20–21.

therefore, that the history of Transylvania is the expression of tensions between the majority Romanians and the powers interested in the domination of this part of the country. His work approaches the character of a text specific to the scientific field of social history because the Romanian diplomat has extracted for the reader the social logic that generated the tension in Transylvania.

“Social history is a form of knowledge and a technique to integrate into society by understanding the social logic of time”²⁰⁰.

The facts that make up a historical series are produced in accordance with a social logic that, in this case, we will reproduce below, stating the guiding ideas of the work:

1. Romanians were the majority element in Ardeal and received support from the Romanians beyond the mountains.
2. The suffering of the Romanians in Ardeal took various forms, provoked by the Hungarians and the Habsburg Dynasty.
3. The Hungarian elites tried to denationalise the neighbouring peoples of Transylvania, of which the Romanians were the majority.
4. The Hungarians possessed Ardeal to ensure their biological and material survival after the invasions from the West and Balkans were stopped.
5. The Habsburg dynasty united with the Hungarian dynasty to take over Transylvania for economic reasons. It sought to control trade from central Europe to the East, trying to control the Danube and the Black Sea.
6. The Romanians in Transylvania, Wallachia, and Moldavia hampered the interest of the Habsburg Dynasty.
7. The Habsburg dynasty kept control of Transylvania by manipulating, as their interests demanded, the Romanians against the Hungarians and vice versa.

This paper focuses on the first two guiding ideas as they are the most representative of the social logic of suffering in Transylvania.

THE SUFFERING OF THE ROMANIANS IN ARDEAL TOOK VARIOUS FORMS, PROVOKED BY THE HUNGARIANS AND THE HABSBERG DYNASTY

Why did the Romanians suffer in Ardeal? Vasile Stoica offers a simple answer: they were in the majority in a region coveted by both the Hungarians and the Habsburg Dynasty. Both powers understood that they could not rule the Carpathian Fortress if their more organised and powerful brothers lived beyond the mountains.

What form did the suffering of the Romanians in Transylvania take? The first form was the revocation of rights. Under the dynasty of the Arpadian Hungarian kings, the Romanian nobility enjoyed the same privileges and rights as the Saxon

²⁰⁰ „Istoria socială este o formă de cunoaștere și o tehnică de integrare în societate prin înțelegerea logicii sociale a timpului.”, in Radu Baltasiu and Ovidiana Bulumac, *Istoria Socială [Social History]*, Bucharest, University of Bucharest Publishing, 2017, p. 27.

and Szekler nobility. The Hungarian king Andrei III himself recognised the importance of the Romanian nobility, summoning them to a meeting in 1291 in Alba Iulia alongside the Szeklers and Saxons²⁰¹. The Romanian nobility lost their rights after the accession of the Angevin kings to the throne of Hungary (after 1301). The first Angevin king pledged to the pope to catholicise the Orthodox Romanians, while beginning to withdraw the privileges of the Romanian nobles who kept their faith.

“This was done especially by the nobility: the lords, lords, and other noblemen and freemen, the King and his counsellors, who disposed of the wealth and liberty of the subjects of the country, following the exhortations from Rome, decreed loud and clear, that only that nobleman could keep his privileged situation and his wealth, who would not follow wrong faith, but would receive the true Christian law that the King follows. Thus, the greater part of our boyars received the new law, intermarried with the Hungarian families, alienated themselves from their own kindred, and melted altogether into the mass of the Hungarian nation”²⁰².

After the Bobalna Uprising (1437–1438), the Romanians became a tolerated nation in the Principality of Transylvania, which began to be ruled by a diet of three privileged nations: the Hungarians, the Saxons, and the Szeklers, who were a underrepresented group in the region. The author draws the reader’s attention to the fact that the Romanians, the numerical majority, were considered a tolerated nation by the Transylvanian authorities until 1848²⁰³.

Following the peasant uprising led by Gheorghe Doja (1514), the situation of the Transylvanian Romanians worsens. Ștefan Werboczi drafted a code of laws called “Tripartitum”, which gave rights to the secular and ecclesiastical nobility, while the “plebs”, mostly Romanians, had no rights. Additionally, the Romanian serfs were under the control of a nobleman with no possibility of leaving his control²⁰⁴.

The “Approbatae et compilatae constitutions”, the code of law used in Ardeal voted in 1576, is part of the series of legal injustices suffered by the Romanians, by which the Romanian nation

“has no political rights, because it is a tribe with its religion and is admitted to the country only temporarily, until it pleases the prince and the royal states (nobles and town representatives)”²⁰⁵.

At the same time as the confiscation of rights, an attempt was made to “change the consciousness of the nation”²⁰⁶ of the Romanians in Transylvania so that the

²⁰¹ Vasile Stoica, *op. cit.*, p. 41.

²⁰² „A făcut lucrul acesta mai ales nobilimea: voievozii, cnezii și alți boieri și oameni liberi, Regele și sfetnicii săi, care dispuneau de averea și libertatea supușilor țării, în urma îndemnurilor de la Roma, au decretat sus și tare, că numai acel boier își va putea păstra situația sa privilegiată și averile sale, care nu va urma o credință greșită, ci va primi adevărata lege creștinească pe care o urmează regele. Astfel marea parte a boierimii noastre primi legea cea nouă, se încuscri cu familiile ungurești, se înstrăina de neamul său și se topi cu totul în masa neamului unguresc.”, in *Ibidem*, p. 44.

²⁰³ *Ibidem*, p. 46.

²⁰⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 47.

²⁰⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 55.

²⁰⁶ *Ibidem*.

identity ties with their brothers across the mountains would be weakened and they would be deprived of their main source of support.

“They felt that the Romanian nation in Transylvania was in danger. So, they thought of removing the consciousness of a separate nation from this people and to somehow make it merge into the consciousness of the ‘Hungarian nation’ that made up the state. And until about 1526, until the battle of Mohaci, the road to this ideal was religious conversion to the Catholic religion, and the Hungarian kings never lost the opportunity to bring the Romanian nation and especially its leaders to this Christian law, sometimes by word and sometimes by force”²⁰⁷.

The change in national consciousness took three forms: the conversion of Orthodox Romanians to Catholicism and Calvinism until the 19th century and denationalisation proper until the Great Union. Both the Hungarians and the Habsburg dynasty worked towards these goals. The former began converting the Romanians to Catholicism and Calvinism. The Habsburg Dynasty continued the process of Catholicisation and allowed the full manifestation of Hungarianisation, which became a state policy, during the dualist period (1867–1918).

“Trefort’s law clearly proved that the purpose of Hungarian occupation is our Hungarianization. Hungarian schools are built in Romanian lands, and all sorts of mischief is done to Romanian schools. Many Hungarian cultural societies are being set up in these lands, with the sole aim of promoting Hungarianisation. Businesses are built, factories are set up in which the entire workforce is made up of Hungarians, and the Romanians, if they are admitted, are only allowed to speak Hungarian. Hungarians are brought from the Hungarian countryside and settled among the Romanian villages on the various estates of the state”²⁰⁸.

From the end of the 12th century, the Hungarian kings began Catholicizing the Romanians, and the Habsburg Dynasty continued the process from the 17th century, founding the Greek Catholic Church in Transylvania in 1700 after the model of the Croats and Serbs²⁰⁹. The Viennese diplomacy succeeded before the Romanians in weakening the cultural ties between Croats and Serbs, two related peoples, by attracting the Croatian people to the Greek Catholic Church. The Hungarians also tried converting the Orthodox Romanians in Transylvania to Calvinism between 1540 and 1691²¹⁰.

²⁰⁷ „Simțeau că neamul românesc în Ardeal e o primejdie. Deci se gândiră să înlăture conștiința de neam separat la acest popor și să facă oare cumva, ca și acesta să se contopească în conștiința «națiunii ungare» care alcătuia statul. Și cam până la 1526, deci până la lupta de la Mohaci, drumul care ducea spre acest ideal era convertirea religioasă la religia catolică, regii ungari nu pierd niciodată prilejul de a aduce, când cu vorba, când cu ciomagul, neamul românesc și mai ales pe fruntașii lui la această lege.”, in *Ibidem*, pp. 42–43.

²⁰⁸ „Legea lui Trefort dovedea lămurit, că scopul ocârmuirii ungurești e maghiarizarea noastră. Se ridică școli ungurești în ținuturile românești, iar școlilor românești li se fac tot felul de mizerii. Se înființează un mare număr de societăți culturale ungurești în aceste ținuturi, cu singurul scop de a promova maghiarizarea. Se fac întreprinderi, se ridică fabrici în care muncitorimea întreagă e alcătuită din Unguri, iar Românii, dacă sunt primiți, n-au voie să vorbească decât ungurește. Sunt aduși Unguri de pe șesul ungar și sunt așezați printre satele românești pe diferitele moșii ale statului.”, in *Ibidem*, p. 198.

²⁰⁹ *Ibidem*, p. 77.

²¹⁰ *Ibidem*, p. 53.

The formation of the dualist Austro-Hungarian federation meant that the denationalisation of the peoples on its territory became state policy, targeting the church and school, two pillars of national identity. The peak of the policy of Hungarianisation through schools came after 1907, with the adoption of the “Apponyi law”, when it became compulsory to study in Hungarian in schools, and this measure was extended to denominational and communal schools, which, being private, were allowed to teach in Romanian.

“Teachers are removed from the authority of the church and made «public servants». He asks them to swear to be faithful to the Hungarian homeland and to give their pupils a patriotic Hungarian education, and places them under the control of the administration. Romanian schools can be inspected at any time not only by the school inspectors, but also by the school administrators and the municipal notaries, who, if they are not satisfied with the progress made in the Hungarian language, can order the teacher to be punished, suspended, or even shut down”²¹¹.

MOMENTS OF SOCIAL EMANCIPATION OF THE TRANSYLVANIAN ROMANIANS

The book portrays the Romanians of Transylvania as tireless fighters for their own emancipation, reinforcing the idea that in tough times they received help from their brothers in Wallachia and Moldova. Vasile Stoica expressed his fear that the Romanians would have been denationalised in two or three generations despite their efforts and sacrifices without the union of Transylvania with the Kingdom of Romania:

“However optimistic we may be and deny the progress of Hungarianisation, it is nevertheless true, and it threatens us more and more. For the time being, there is no danger of Hungarianisation in the centre of Transylvania or in the regions where Romanians live in compact masses, but on the borders and in Szeklerland, where the ravages of Hungarianism are tearing away a piece of our coastline every moment. But the time will come when even in the centre we shall be so weak that we may be overthrown (...) If it continues like this, in 40 to 50 years, our powers will be weakened, and we will be defeated and mercilessly annihilated”²¹².

The Romanian diplomat brings to the readers’ attention the most important moments of emancipation that the Romanians in Transylvania have displayed

²¹¹ „Pe învățători îi scoate de sub autoritatea bisericii și îi face «funcționari publici». Le cere să facă jurământ că vor fi credincioși patriei maghiare și că vor da elevilor lor o educație patriotică maghiară. îi pune totodată sub controlul administrației. Școlile românești pot fi cercetate oricând nu numai de revizorii școlari, ci și de administratorii de plasă și de notarii comunali, care dacă nu sunt mulțumiți cu progresul făcut în limba maghiară, pot dispune pedepsirea învățătorului, suspendarea lui sau chiar închiderea școlii.”, in *Ibidem*, p. 233.

²¹² „Oricât am fi de optimiști și-am tăgădui progresele ungurizării, lucrul acesta e totuși adevărat și ne amenință tot mai năvalnic. Deocamdată nu e în primejdie de ungurizare în centrul Ardealului sau în ținuturile unde Românii locuiesc în mase compacte, ci la margini și în Secuime, unde talazurile ungurismului în fiecare clipă rup câte o bucată din litoralul nostru. Dar va veni vremea când și în centru vom fi așa de slabi, încât vom putea fi doborâți (...) Dacă se va continua așa, în 40–50 de ani puterile noastre sunt sleite, iar noi suntem înfrânți și nimicivi fără milă.”, in *Ibidem*, p. 253.

throughout history: the submission of the memorial “Supplex Libellus Valachorum” (1791), the Blaj Assembly (1848), and the Blaj Pronouncement (May 1868), the moment of the “Memorandum” (1892).

After the Austrian authorities suppressed the peasant uprising led by Horia, Cloșca and Crișan (1784), from which it benefited because it stopped for a time the nationalist movement of the Hungarian nobility, the Romanian leaders Iosif Meheș, the United Bishop Ioan Bob and the Orthodox Bishop Gherasim Adamovici submitted to the Habsburg Emperor the document “Repraesentatio totius nationis Valachicae”, called in Vienna “Supplex Libellus Valachorum” (1791). The historical arguments and the clarity of the demands transformed the document into the national programme of the Transylvanian Romanians, which was finalised only on 3 May 1848 and presented to the Great Assembly of Blaj on 15 May²¹³.

The Ruling House in Vienna remained indifferent to the wishes of the Romanians because it was at odds with its interests in the Danube and the Black Sea.

The Ruling House took advantage of the tensions between the nations within its empire and even antagonised them in order gain control over them. In 1784 and 1848, the Romanians were urged to fight against the Hungarian nation, and after 1867, when the Habsburg Empire was weakened and in need of Hungarian forces, it allowed the denationalisation policies of the Budapest Parliament to be implemented.

“The Habsburgs, however, were thinking above all of achieving their goal; and the goal excuses the means (...) Whenever the Hungarians dare to raise their heads and have fits of independence, thus threatening to cut off the Emperor’s free way to the East, the Habsburgs immediately turn on the screws and in the face of Hungarian raise the scarecrow of the Romanian nation. As soon as the Hungarians are satisfied and are once again grumbling at the throne, the Habsburgs turn back, see that this old-organized nation is of greater use to them than the unorganised Romanian nation, and mercilessly sacrifice those who had defeated the Hungarian beggars”²¹⁴.

The last great movement for emancipating of the Transylvanian Romanians occurred in 1892, when they drew up and sent to the Austro-Hungarian Emperor Franz Joseph a memorandum “whose painful storey is one of the most brilliant and most uplifting pages in our political history”²¹⁵. The memorandum has such a great significance for the history of the Romanians in Transylvania that Vasile Stoica introduces the entire content of the document in the book. Because they protested the Hungarianisation policies, the signatories of the document (among them

²¹³ *Ibidem*, p. 128.

²¹⁴ „Habsburgii se gândeau însă înainte de toate la îndeplinirea scopului lor; iar scopul scuza mijloacele (...) De câte ori Ungurii îndrăznesc să-și ridice capul și au accese de independență, amenințând astfel să taie împăratului drumul liber spre Orient, Habsburgii îndată pornesc șurubăriile și în fața ungurismului ridică sperietoare neamul românesc. Îndată ce Ungurii se astâmpără și se gudură iarăși pe lângă tron, Habsburgii se întorc, văd că acest neam cu organizație veche e de mai mare folos pentru dânșii decât neorganizatul neam românesc și jertfesc fără cruțare, pe cei ce înfrânseră cerbicia ungrească”, in *Ibidem*, p. 37.

²¹⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 199.

Gheorghe Pop de Băsești, Vasile Lucaciu, Ioan Rațiu, Aurel Suciu and others) were arrested by the Hungarian authorities in 1894.

ROMANIANS WERE THE MAJORITY ELEMENT IN ARDEAL AND RECEIVED SUPPORT FROM THE ROMANIANS BEYOND THE MOUNTAINS

Vasile Stoica clarifies for the reader from the beginning of the book that the Romanians in Transylvania are of the same lineage as those in Wallachia and Moldova. This consciousness of nationhood is affirmed in writing by Orest Năsturel in his “Slavonic Anthology” (1643), Varlaam of Iași’s “Romanian Book of Teaching” (1643) and in the Romanian Bible of Alba Iulia of 1648²¹⁶, and especially by Miron Costin in 1650²¹⁷.

Until the development of national ideas, the element of identity that linked the Romanians was the Orthodox Christian religion. The rulers of the Romanian countries over the Carpathian Mountains supported the Orthodox Church of the Romanians in Transylvania, which lacked financial support (after the Romanian boyar stratum was Catholicised) and was not tolerated by the rulers of the region.

“The ecclesiastical links between Ardeal and the Romanian Principalities were the arteries through which the unitary spirit and national thinking flowed from one side to the other. From the Principalities came to us in Ardeal, the superior priesthood protected by Stephen the Great, by Petru Rareș, by Radu of Afumați, by Pătrașcu Vodă, by Mihaiu Viteazul, from the Principalities came the guidance of perseverance in the ancestral customs, also from here the hopes in better times and the exhortations of defence”²¹⁸.

The support given by the Romanian voivodships to the Romanian Orthodox Church in Transylvania is most evident during the reign of Constantin Brâncoveanu. The Romanian ruler and the Metropolitan of Wallachia urged Metropolitan Athanasius not to make concessions to pressure from the Catholic Church. Thus, the Orthodox priests of Transylvania voted at the synod of union with the Catholic Church on September 4, 1700, only one point – recognition of the papal primacy of the four imposed by Rome. Thus, the Romanian rulers also extended north of the Carpathians the “Byzantium after Byzantium” policy, which consisted in supporting the symbolic space of Eastern Christianity after the fall of the Byzantine Empire on 29 May 1453²¹⁹.

²¹⁶ *Ibidem*, pp. 25–26.

²¹⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 27.

²¹⁸ „Legăturile bisericesti între Ardeal și Principatele Române au fost arterele prin care se scurgea dintr-o parte într-alta duhul unitar și cugetarea națională. Din Principate venea la noi în Ardeal, preoșimea superioară ocrotită de Ștefan cel Mare, de Petru Rareș, de Radu de la Afumați, de Pătrașcu Vodă, de Mihaiu Viteazul, din Principate ne veneau îndrumările de stăruință în datinile străbune, tot de aici nădejtile în vremuri mai bune și îndemnurile de apărare îndărătnică.”, in *Ibidem*, p. 24

²¹⁹ Radu Baltasiu and Ovidiana Bulumac, *op. cit.*, p. 79.

Vasile Stoica dedicates an entire chapter of the book to Mihai Viteazu, the ruler who united Wallachia, Moldova, and Transylvania for a short time in 1600. The achievement of the Romanian knight remained an ideal for the Transylvanian Romanians, which, according to the author, should have been achieved again after the First World War.

“Usually when we talk about Michael the Brave, we remember him as the ruler, who at a certain moment in history had the fortune and power to achieve the unity of the three Romanian countries, which has been in our minds ever since”²²⁰.

The establishment of the Fanariot regime in the Principalities (1711 – Wallachia and 1714 – Moldova) meant a severing of the ties between the Romanians across the mountains. After a century, the links between the Romanians of the three principalities were resumed in a context favourable to nationalist movements, created by the French Revolution (1789) and the Napoleonic Wars, which spread national ideals to the eastern part of Europe. After Tudor Vladimirescu’s Revolution (1821) ended the Fanariote reign, the intellectuals of the Transylvania took refuge in the Principalities, contributing to the flourishing of Romanian cultural life and strengthening the state formations so that, strengthened, they could resume their support for the Romanians of Transylvania until 1711.

“They realize that to create and spread a truly Romanian culture, it is necessary to create a model province of culture, a kind of center of the Romanian soul, from where this power can be spread everywhere, even where walls prevent its penetration. They understand that such a cultural nursery can only be created where the Romanian spirit is not hindered in its Romanian manifestation: in the two principalities (...) The Ardeleni, who had left the schools of Blaj, Vienna, and Rome, then came one after the other, giving the body of the Principalities a new, Romanian character, corresponding to the requirements of the time, founding the Romanian school in the Romanian Principalities, and educating the future leaders of the nation”²²¹.

The solidarity of the Romanians in Transylvania with those in Wallachia and Moldavia was observed during the Pașoptist revolution of 1848. The great personalities who brought about the Great Union (1859) were at the side of the Romanians led by Simion Bărnuțiu and Andrei Șaguna in their struggle for emancipation. Alexandru Ioan Cuza himself, the future ruler of the United Principalities, was present at Simion Bărnuțiu’s famous speech delivered in Blaj Cathedral before the National Assembly of Blaj on 15 May 1848²²².

²²⁰ „De obicei când vorbim de Mihai Vodă Viteazul, îl pomenim ca pe domnitorul, care într-o anumită clipă a istoriei a avut norocul și puterea, să realizeze acea unitate a celor trei țări românești, care de atunci încoace e pururea în mintea noastră.”, in Vasile Stoica, *op. cit.*, p. 57.

²²¹ „Ei își dau seama, că pentru a crea și răspândi o cultură curat românească e nevoie, să se creeze o provincie model de cultură, un fel de focar al sufletului românesc, de unde această putere să fie răspândită pretutindena, până și acolo unde zidurile îi opresc pătrunderea. Ei înțeleg, că o astfel de pepinieră culturală nu se poate crea decât acolo, unde spiritul românesc nu e stânjenit în manifestarea sa românească: în cele două Principate (...) Ardelenii ieșiți din școlile Blajului, ale Vienei, ale Romei, vin apoi pe rând, dând organismului din Principate un caracter nou, românesc și corespunzător cerințelor vremii, întemeind școala românească în Principatele Românești și făcând educația viitorilor îndrumători ai neamului.”, in *Ibidem*, p. 137.

²²² *Ibidem*, p. 148.

The last great act of solidarity of the Romanians in the Principalities with those in Transylvania before the Great Union was the very entry into the First World War for their liberation from Austro-Hungarian rule on 17 August 1916.

“THE SORROWS OF ARDEAL”, RELEVANCE A CENTURY AFTER PUBLICATION

Vasile Stoica managed to summarise the history of Transylvania in about 280 pages, marking, simultaneously, the significant historical moments until the Great Union²²³. Therefore, the work clarifies a subject still debated a century after its publication in the Romanian-Hungarian historiography. The author, a connoisseur of the Hungarian language, has been in contact with both the Romanian and Hungarian versions of the history of Transylvania. His work is not a combination of the two but expresses the Romanian perspective on the history of Transylvania.

Today’s readers may be inclined to accuse the Romanian diplomat of subjectivism, of a distortion of the historical truth to support the cause of the Transylvanian Romanians in the face of America, which had the last word at the negotiating table at the end of the First World War.

Vasile Stoica did not attack the forces opposed to the Romanian element in Ardeal, but concentrated on presenting the facts, being convinced that the sufferings of the Romanians “speak the facts clearly enough”²²⁴.

The author confesses in the introduction that he wrote the book to support the Romanian cause, thus assuming his own subjectivity and being closer to the historical fact than a researcher concerned with rendering the past as objectively as possible. Nicolae Iorga points out that there is no absolute objectivity in historical study, the researcher should assume, as Vasile Stoica did, his own subjectivity, *i.e.*, the perspective from which he observes the facts analyse:

“Objectivism [objectivity] in human works is unachievable. There is only one objectivity, that of lack of personality, but this is regrettable. There must be a single conception, a single personal interpretation, a single form, and there must be such a close link that, as so clever a man as Mr. Focillon said in a letter: things are bound together like rings, you cannot break one of them without destroying the whole continuity”²²⁵.

²²³ I. Hentea, “În loc de prefață” [“Instead of a preface”], in *Ibidem*, p. 23.

²²⁴ Vasile Stoica, *op. cit.*, 2016, p. 17.

²²⁵ „Obiectivismul [obiectivitatea] în lucrările omenești este irealizabil. Nu decât o singură obiectivitate, a lipsei de personalitate, dar aceasta este regretabilă. Trebuie o singură concepție, o singură interpretare personală, o singură formă și trebuie o legătură așa de strânsă încât, cum spunea, într-o scrisoare, un om așa de inteligent cum e dl. Focillon: lucrurile se cer legate ca niște inele, nu poți să rupi unul dintre ele fără să se distrugă toată continuitatea.”, in Nicolae Iorga, *Generalități cu privire la studiile istorice [Generalities regarding historical studies]*, Iași, Polirom Publishing, 1999, p. 238, apud Radu Baltasiu and Ovidiana Bulumac, *op. cit.*, p. 68.

“The condition of objectivity is, in fact, overcoming my own subjectivity by maintaining a permanent dialogue with the other subjectivity, which I want to investigate”²²⁶.

To sum up, the Romanians suffered in Transylvania from the beginning of the Hungarian rule until the Great Union. The inclusion of the province in the Habsburg Empire did not improve their situation. Despite countless efforts at emancipation, they understood that without the union of the province with Wallachia and Moldova, as in 1600, they would be denationalised within the Austro-Hungarian Empire.

The first edition of the book was published shortly before the entry of the Kingdom of Romania on the side of the Entente in the War, and only “a few weeks later”, as the author confesses, it was sold out, so that in September he was asked for a second edition²²⁷. He could not answer the request because he fought with the Romanian soldiers “around Sibiu, then (...) on Surul, on Gorganul, at the Coșilor ridge and at Măgura Racoviții de Argeș with the heroes of the 1st Regiment of the Grăniceri”²²⁸, especially since he was wounded in action. Fortunately, fate smiled on him in 1917, when he published a second edition for Romanians in the USA.

The success in the Kingdom had a counterpart in the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Because of this effort and the publication of another work on the same subject in collaboration with Ion Rusu Abrudeanu, the Court Martial in Cluj sentenced the Romanian diplomat to death in absentia²²⁹. The Romanian diplomat proves that assuming one’s own paradigm of analysis of the phenomenon and confessing the truth regardless of the consequences are still necessary today to produce a valuable historical work.

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²²⁶ „Condiția obiectivității este, de fapt, depășirea propriei mele subiectivități prin menținerea permanentă a dialogului cu cealaltă subiectivitate, pe care doresc să o investighez.”, in *Ibidem*, p. 50.

²²⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 15.

²²⁸ *Ibidem*.

²²⁹ Robert Stănciugel, *op. cit.*, p. 35