

Two Historiographical Perspectives, One Historical Reality: the Năsăud Military Border

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WELL REPRESENTED at the level of the studies dealing with the entire border system of Transylvania and Banat or focusing only on certain segments of this system, the research conducted on the military border has highlighted both its general aspects, of a military nature, and its effects on the daily lives of those incorporated within this system.¹ In this context, the historiographical investigations into the former Second Border Regiment of Năsăud fully illustrate the trends mentioned above. In what follows, we shall take a closer look at the perspectives adopted by two Romanian and two German authors, who examined various aspects of the Năsăud military border.

The first of these authors, Florian Porcius (who was born in Rodna on 16 August 1816 and died in Rodna on 30 May 1906), was known primarily for his scientific work in the field of botany,² but his presence was just as important in the life of the Năsăud border guard

community, especially in the immediate aftermath of the abolition of this system, when he worked in the administration and was committed to the movement for the recovery of the properties of the former border guards. Florian Porcius's lengthy administrative experience made him extremely familiar with the institutional system of the monarchy. In this respect, he acquired thorough knowledge pertaining to the legal system and the legislation, which he applied in all the positions he held. During the period in which Năsăud district operated as a distinct entity (1861–1876), he used the knowledge and experience he had accumulated to serve the interests of the former border guards.³ More specifically, he was involved in the drafting of memoranda and petitions which advocated the just cause of the former soldiers and demanded a return of their properties.

One of Porcius's major achievements was a petition addressed to the monarch in 1865. The document included a synthetic overview of the past of this area, as well as considerations pertaining to property law and, based on a solid argumentation, invoking elements of a juridical nature, presented the rights to which the former border guards were entitled.⁴ The document listed primarily the services rendered to the monarch while the border regiment was operational, in return for which the border guards had been rewarded with properties and a special status. In what concerned the present situation to which they referred, the documents recorded the arbitrariness manifest in both the deeds issued by the regulatory commission and in the conduct of the authorities in Cluj and Vienna. All these decision-makers worked in the interest of the erarium and of the noble Kemény family. The documents also took issue with the practice these bodies had adopted in addressing matters of ownership from a political and administrative vantage point, without following the logical and natural recourse to the courts of justice.

In 1868, in collaboration with another representative of the former border guards, Vasile Buzdug, Porcius drew up a new document, this time presenting it to the Hungarian Diet. While reiterating arguments from the previous petitions, the document insisted mainly on the matter of settling ownership disputes in court, in keeping with the new guidelines from the capital, which advocated the need for legal solutions to such cases.⁵

Under the agreement of 12 March 1872, concluded between the Royal Hungarian Ministry of Finance and the representatives of the 44 former border guard communes in Năsăud district, “for the definitive regulation of the relations of ownership and property rights,” the issue of ownership over meadows, forests, pastures and mountains was also settled, in the sense that they were “forever and irrevocably ceded to the former border guard communes.”⁶

A second aspect of Florian Porcius's activity consisted of his involvement in the administration of Năsăud district. As a vice-captain between the years 1867 and 1876, he drafted statutes governing road maintenance, the organization and

functioning of the administrative institution, its residence, the town of Năsăud, forest conservation, etc.⁷

Equally important was the statistical questionnaire Porcius developed on 10 March 1870. Addressed to the judges of the 6 circles of Năsăud district, the questionnaire started from the need to compile a statistical survey of the area. Moving beyond the scope of this survey, however, Porcius broadened the range of the elicited information, also requesting data concerning the “history of each and every community,” the traditions of these communities, the officers from the time of the regiment and the number of those who were still alive, the names of those decorated for feats of arms, the past and present condition of the roads, the prominent figures in the fields of politics, culture, education, and religion, information about the church, the officiating priests, the more special events such as epidemics, famine, unfruitful years, the major events occurred during the years 1848–1849, the number and condition of bridges and culverts, the number of flour mills, the name, location and size of the mountains owned by various communes, the names of the rivers, brooks or more important streams and whether rafting could be practiced on them, the settlements where weekly or country fairs were held, the number of large and small cattle sold in a year and the proceeds thereof, the manner of toiling the land, the drawing of boundaries and the autumn and spring sowing. All this attested to a genuinely scientific manner of investigating the past in order to find information about the people, the localities, the institutions, the natural and economic status of these localities, the manner of working the land, the livestock and the food production capacity, or the marketing of products in fairs.⁸ Porcius’s undertaking amounted to both a vertical scan, a foray into the past, and a horizontal investigation, aiming to acquire information about the current assets of those localities.

A third aspect of Florian Porcius’s personality represents a corollary of the former two. As an enthusiast of the past, Porcius valorized much of the data he had obtained by becoming involved in the property restitution process concerning the former Năsăud regiment. As a member of the administration, he systematized them in a study on the history of the area. Concurrently or not with other concerns in the field,⁹ Porcius structured his historical investigation into three parts: before the militarization, during the militarization, and after the cessation of militarization. The feats of arms and the sacrifices made by this community during the military campaigns are recorded under the formula “the border guards on the battlefields of Europe”; Porcius gave special attention to the events he had experienced during the tempestuous years 1848–1849. The higher the value of the material, the more likely it is for certain important documents to be reproduced entirely in the notes, the author thus preventing them from fading into oblivion or making them more accessible for those interested. With this histo-

riographical achievement, Porcius left us a source of prime importance for the investigation of the past of the region of the former Năsăud border regiment.¹⁰ The quality of the material is defined by the author's attitude in everything he accomplished: rigor, accuracy, correctness and loyalty to the offices he held.

The second Romanian historian, Nestor Şimon (who was born at Ragla in the present-day Bistriţa-Năsăud county on 6 January 1862 and died in Năsăud on 19 January 1915) was a typical product of the experience of being educated and living in a cultural space defined by the inter-relations between the Hungarians, the Germans and the Romanians. When he became a student at Francis Joseph University in Cluj, he received financial support from the Năsăud Border Guard Fund, between 1883 and 1887; it was also in Cluj that he obtained a Ph.D. in law in 1897.¹¹ During the period of his studies in Cluj, he was actively involved in organizing the societies of young Romanian intellectuals. On 1 August 1889 he became the secretary of the institution that managed the financial and cultural assets of the former military border region, the Năsăud Border Guard Fund Administration. He served this institution with devotion and total dedication until 1914, when he retired due to illness.

During his university studies in Cluj, he stayed in contact and became friends with personalities that influenced the course of his research into the past (Ladislaus Vajda, gubernatorial secretary and a remarkable figure amongst the Cluj intellectuals from the latter half of the 19th century, and then Störch von Arben, the former colonel of the Second Border Regiment of Năsăud). Şimon had a special relationship with Professor Károly Szabó, the custodian of the Transylvanian Museum (Erdélyi Múzeum) library, who mediated his access to sources of primary importance for his understanding of the past and made available to him his own works on the history of Transylvania. It was also here that he perused works written by foremost authors of the previous centuries or by contemporaries, documenting himself thoroughly as regards the trends manifest in the Cluj academic world.

In Năsăud, he could further his investigation of documents relating to the past, also due to the fact that he was the one who put order into the archive, answering primarily some practical needs of the institution he worked for. In order to meet the requirements of the position he occupied (secretary of the Năsăud Border Guard Fund, he was forced to permanently document himself, read and stay updated on legislative regulations. Equally, this impelled him to permanently scour the past in order to find arguments for the rights he was to support. Hence, his propensity for researching documents, which in time became second nature for him. During his professional training and education, he created a solid basis of study in the form of a valuable personal library,¹² demanding great effort and many sacrifices insofar as the material needs of his daily life were concerned.

As regards his personality, Nestor Şimon represented the opposite of Florian Porcius. While Porcius was a model intellectual, engaged in the practical process of regaining a status earned during the time of the military border, Şimon appears as a typical product of this space, with a thorough education and professional training, a servant of the institution that succeeded—in material and spiritual terms—the military regime. In this context, since his university studies, Şimon demonstrated his interest in studying the past of the former militarized area of Năsăud. This is attested by the plea he published in the press of the time, in which he addressed “a word” to the followers of the two Romanian border guard regiments, the first with the headquarters in Orlat and the second based in Năsăud, and made a call for joint efforts towards acquiring an understanding of the past. Evoking the thousands of human sacrifices made by the Romanians from the two regiments during various military campaigns, Şimon showed their important role in the protection of Transylvania from the Turkish invasion and concluded by highlighting the great valor of the ancestors’ feats of arms.¹³

He managed to publish only a small part of his vast project.¹⁴ However, what he published amounts to a work of reference insofar as the themes he approached are concerned, particularly when it comes to his studies on the personality of Vasile Naşcu, Lieutenant George Pop, to his toponymical analyses or his examinations of certain aspects pertaining to the events of 1848–1849.¹⁵ His correspondence was published posthumously, as was his dictionary of Bistriţa-Năsăud county,¹⁶ the feats of arms of the Năsăud regiment in the Revolution of 1848–1849, and several studies that were part of his project of writing a history of the Năsăud military border.

Examining both what he published himself and what was published posthumously, we may reach some conclusions that define the historiographical model assumed and practiced by Nestor Şimon. Above all, we should mention the decisive influence exerted on his intellectual development by various works in the field of law and, in particular, by the work of Ladislaus Vajda,¹⁷ who launched a new perspective on the writing of history. It had to be based on a true reality, rendered as such, without interpretations, in the order in which events had taken place; moreover, only those facts that served the stated aim were to be extracted, so as to avoid wasting time on documentation. Historical sources were to assist in the acquisition of knowledge referring to daily life, presenting not only the stories, but also their reasons and consequences. Another person who influenced him in writing his work was Florian Porcius. The latter’s practical experience in the administration, his involvement in the struggle of the former guards for regaining ownership rights after the dissolution of the regiment, his initiatives for the preservation of historical sources and his valorization of historical documents—all these were reflected in the historical studies written by Şimon.

Nestor Şimon also benefited from the favorable climate of the Cluj intelligentsia, through his contacts among the various Hungarian and German representatives thereof and through his access to the historical writings of authors from Romania. A special feature of the bibliography used by Nestor Şimon was precisely his recourse to Romanian authors, at a time when, according to his own confession, it was risky to even mention their names or utilize the content of their works in the language in which they had been written—the Romanian language. To all these were added his legal training, his knowledge of the main periodicals on historical subjects and the huge amount of information contained in the documents he handled in his official capacity with the Border Guard Fund.¹⁸ He also used working tools related to Latin terms (Antonius Bartal, Johannes Baumgarten), German terms (Joseph Trausch) or encyclopedic knowledge (Eugen von Trauschenfels). Finally, in his historical survey of the Revolution of 1848–1849, he resorted to the reference works in the field written by Johann Csetz, László Kőváry, or the well-known volume *Der Winterfeldzug des Revolutionskriegs in Siebenbürgen*.

In accomplishing his project, Nestor Şimon was initially motivated solely by translating Gustav Ritter Amon von Treuenfest's work and supplementing it with further information.¹⁹ As he progressed with his documentation, he reassessed his initial draft and critically analyzed this source. After evoking the possibility of taking up, or, at best, bibliographically using Treuenfest's manuscript on the regiment's history,²⁰ Şimon also revealed other negative aspects of his work. One of these shortcomings referred to the fact that the author had not cited any historical works. Based on the arguments outlined above, Nestor Şimon demonstrated his capacity for critical analysis and his impartial attitude. He recognized the merits of Treuenfest, an author who had accomplished a work that, despite its brevity, provided a lot of information about the Năsăud border guards.²¹ Şimon presented in this analysis an honest and at the same time elevated intellectual "dialogue" between the descendant of a "border guard" from Năsăud and an official historian of the Imperial-Royal Army from the end of the 19th century.

Therefore, we may conclude that the Romanian personalities evoked here occupied a prominent place in the historiographical gallery of the military border. In terms of their accomplishments, the two historians provided an attitude model that was consistent with the realities of the periods in which they lived and wrote, showing, at the same time, that the Romanian society which had been the beneficiary of the border guard system was an equal partner in the dialogue with those who had proposed and organized it. This attitude model had been beneficial for the government and the governed alike.

IN WHAT follows, we shall present the portraits of two of the Germans who wrote about the Năsăud military border. We should emphasize from the outset that both were military men. The former, Karl Klein, completed his history of the Năsăud-based regiment in 1867, his work remaining to this day unpublished as a self-standing study. The latter, Gustav Ritter Amon von Treuenfest, published his synthesis in Vienna in 1882.

Of the Evangelical confession, Karl Klein was born at Capul Codrului in Bukovina on 25 November 1829, in a bourgeois family of some wealth; he achieved good results and graduated from the seven-grade Evangelical Gymnasium in Bistrița.²² Thus, the young Karl Klein was at a crossroads regarding his future in the spring of 1848, when the revolution broke out. The events from the summer of 1848, after Transylvania was annexed to Hungary and the Hungarian authorities began conscriptions for the Hungarian revolutionary army, led to ample social-political unrest in the province. The worsening social and national tensions in Transylvania, the increasingly divergent course followed by the Hungarian revolution and the Romanian revolution, and the Romanians' relations with the court in Vienna influenced the orientation adopted by the young Karl Klein, who, on 9 August 1848, voluntarily enlisted as a soldier in the Romanian Second Border Regiment No. 17. His qualities and skills were quickly noticed by his superiors and the young Klein was promoted to soldier first class on 10 October 1848 and to corporal on 1 April 1849, participating with Colonel Carl Urban's troops in all the operations carried out in Transylvania and outside the province in 1848–1849²³ (these battles are described in detail by Klein, the “historian-participant,” in his manuscript).

After the end of the revolution and his return to Transylvania, between 1850 and 1851 Karl Klein attended the Regimental School for Cadets of Năsăud with good results, being promoted to lieutenant. During the Crimean War, between 13 September 1855 and 20 May 1856, Lieutenant Karl Klein performed his duties as the commander of the Commission for the Quartering of Imperial Troops in Bucharest. Klein's military career reached a new milestone in 1859, when, on January 1, he was promoted lieutenant major; then, over the course of that year, he participated in the military campaign in northern Italy, where, without effectively taking part in any battle, he distinguished himself through his contribution to the protection of the coastline against enemy landings. In 1866 he was promoted again, to the rank of captain, first grade. In the same year, he participated with the Imperial-Royal Infantry Line Regiment no. 50, led by Friedrich Wilhelm Ludwig, Grand Duke of Baden, in the battles fought in Italy, standing out during the bloody battle of Custozza of 24 June 1866, and receiving a distinction for his merit in combat by an imperial decision issued on 18 July the same year.²⁴ In 1870, Karl Klein completed the course for superior staff officers. Without further advancing in rank, Klein filled several com-

mand positions in the following years: company commander and, for four months, acting battalion commander.

How did Karl Klein, however, come to focus on the history of the regiment in which he had begun his military career and in which he had experienced numerous moments of professional fulfillment? Besides German, he had an excellent command of Romanian and Hungarian, which was of great help to him in directly perceiving the political, economic and social realities present in Transylvania at that time. The outbreak of the revolution and his enlistment as a volunteer in the Năsăud border regiment meant that his first military experiences took place in the midst of the Romanian border guards, to whom he was connected by profound feelings of camaraderie, as he shared with the Romanians all the downfalls and elations of the military campaigns from the years 1848–1849. This allowed him to witness directly the Romanians' bravery and their loyalty to the emperor and the House of Austria, as he saw with his own eyes what the Romanians were capable of on the battlefield, in keeping with their oath of allegiance to the emperor.²⁵ He must have heard the stories of his Năsăud comrades about the Romanian border guards' heroic deeds at Arcole, against the man who had dominated the history and collective memory of 19th-century Europe, Napoleon Bonaparte.²⁶ Klein's work evinces in-depth knowledge of the events in which his regiment had been involved. The accuracy of some of the data he used could not have been possible without his consulting the operation logs and other documents that could be found only in the Viennese or the local military archives.

As summarized by the "title" given by the author himself (*The Military History of the Transylvanian Romanian National-Imperial-Royal Border Guard Infantry Regiment No. 17*), Karl Klein's synthesis was intended to be a military history of the border regiment based in Năsăud, made possible by the author's training and completed with the means that were available to him.²⁷ In the preamble to the manuscript, Klein presents the geographical framework of the border guard district, the number and condition of the regiment's means of communication, data on the population of the area, etc. Here, as well as throughout his work, the author speaks with warmth, sympathy and respect about the people in the regiment, the Romanians who, in his opinion, were "descendants of the ancient Romans who, after the conquest of Dacia, which had been severely depopulated in the aftermath of its wars with Rome, had been brought as free settlers in Transylvania by Emperor Trajan, populating this country." It is also here that Klein insists on providing a physical and moral characterization of the typical Romanian border guard, the anonymous (sometimes personalized) hero of the military campaigns described in the work: "He is hardened and able to withstand all the hardships of the war; as a mountain man, he enjoys good health; he stands out through his natural capacities and good moral character.

The Romanian border guard has distinguished himself in all the wars through his courage, boldness, resilience, determination and bravery, beautiful qualities that have been recognized by the great army leaders of the 19th century: Emperor Napoleon I and Archduke Charles I.²²⁸

It is not our intention to further summarize the content of Karl Klein's work, which renders, in chronological fashion, the history of the Năsăud border regiment from its creation until the year 1866, explaining the transformation of the Romanian Second Border Regiment no. 17 into Line Regiment 50, with the abolition, in 1851, of the Transylvanian military border by the court in Vienna. We cannot, however, avoid highlighting some elements in Klein's manuscript which are suggestive of the author's outlook and capture a historical reality valorized here only too often. First of all, Karl Klein uses every opportunity to emphasize not only the military qualities of the Romanian border guards from Năsăud (their diligence in learning and then mastering the skill of handling weapons, their fortitude, their resistance to deprivation during military campaigns, as well as their heroism and spirit of self-sacrifice, etc.), but also their deep feelings of loyalty to the throne, to Austria. The remarkable consistency with which the Romanian soldiers in the imperial-royal army (not only those from Năsăud) had demonstrated this loyalty for nearly a century and a half, until the collapse of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy at the end of World War I, clearly proved that there had been numerous examples of professionalism and loyalty in the history of the Romanians. The Transylvanian Romanians, and we refer here primarily to the ordinary people, but also to the military elite, since in the second half of the 19th century more and more Romanians had become non-commissioned officers and even high-ranking officers (true, not as many as the demographic weight of the Romanians within the general population of the Austrian monarchy would have allowed), stayed true to their oath of allegiance to the emperor in Vienna. The episode of the sacrifice of the two Romanians (Nicolae Blebea and Ioan Moca), which Klein recounted at the end of his work in connection with the bloody battle of Custozza from 24 June 1866, is quite exemplary in this regard. As regards the former, Nicolae Blebea, the author says that "he was heard saying he was happy to welcome a heroic death for his emperor and for his country," while about Ioan Moca, Klein claims that "he received three bullets in his chest, ripped his jacket apart, showed his wounds to his comrades and cried: 'Long live our emperor, I'm proud to have received these wounds for him because we are victorious and I have contributed to this.'" This behavior represented a correlative of the material but also the mental changes that the military border of Transylvania and the imperial army as a whole had brought about amongst the Romanian society in the province. A keen observer of this issue, he noted the fact that the Romanians "have proven—remark-

ably—their loyalty, trust and respect of the military laws and the oath they had taken upon their entry into the garrison.” In time, this loyalty to the emperor in Vienna, the oath of allegiance taken by all those who were conscripted into the army of the emperor, left deep and long-lasting traces in the Romanians’ conduct.²⁹

The second German historian who approached the past of the Năsăud border regiment was Gustav Ritter Amon von Treuenfest. A former officer in the imperial Habsburg army, Treuenfest was born “at Mainz, in the Grand Principality of Hessen, on 29 June 1825”; he was of Roman Catholic confession. He continued his father’s military career by joining the army on 13 June 1841, as a regimental cadet in Infantry Regiment 31. Later on, he advanced in the military hierarchy through successive promotions: Feldwebel/sergeant (1845); lieutenant second grade (1848); lieutenant, first grade (1849); lieutenant major (1849); captain, second grade (1854); captain, first grade (1855); major (1885), after having filled—this time by appointment—the positions of vice-master (1881) and master (1885) in the Arcieren body guards. He was discharged on 30 April 1888, after 46 years, 7 months and 18 days of active service.³⁰

An impressive career, therefore, throughout which Treuenfest proved his devotion and steadfast loyalty—values that were so cherished in the imperial Habsburg army. All these derived from the officer’s attitudinal traits, which defined his upstanding and honest conduct. Following Treuenfest’s professional path, we may also detect his behavior on the battlefield, where he demonstrated possessing the great skills required of an officer. He was actively involved in the campaign of his regiment during the events of 1848–1849. His involvement was recorded as one that was specific to a soldier, in full compliance with the military rules at the time of armed conflict, but also with a sense of humaneness, manifested in his attitude towards the civilian population from the conflict zone. Not incidentally, his behavior in the battles fought in the Păuliș-Arad area during the winter of 1848–1849 was quite noteworthy, those events reaching maximum intensity at the time of the defense of Arad, until this town eventually surrendered. For his merits, he was awarded major military honors: the Order of the Iron Crown, third class, in 1849, the Military Cross of Merit in 1859, as well as many other praises in the reports drawn up by his superiors.³¹ Beside his hierarchical advancement, Treuenfest also evinced genuine qualities as a researcher of the past. This side of his personality led to his writing a series of works on the history of some of the military units in the monarchy.³² This is indeed an impressive list of works, both quantitatively and in terms of the topics he addressed. His writings focused on “recounting the story” of military units from the traditional braches of the imperial army, such as the infantry, the cavalry/dragoons/Uhlans (light cavalry) and the hunters/Jägers. His achievements in the

field of military historiography were rewarded during his lifetime, when he was awarded *encomia*/distinctions by the military decision-makers, such as the Order of the Guard Commandment, Presidium no. 21, of 22 June 1882, for his outstanding literary activity and for his patriotic activity.³³

Thus, Treuenfest was an accomplished author during his lifetime, a military historiographer with definite qualities and with an interest in the reconstruction of military history. It should come as no surprise that, as part of his vast activity of documentation and historical writing, he also focused on the past of the Second Border Regiment of Năsăud. This was not accidental, if we take into account the feats of arms of the Năsăud border guards from and the existence of historical surveys of and in this area. In his approach, he certainly benefitted from the major interest manifested by the military authorities in collecting documents relating to the former border regiments and depositing them for safe-keeping in Sibiu and Vienna. Moreover, he must have been familiar with at least some of the local historiographical works. His most significant source of inspiration in writing the history of the Năsăud border regiment—during the documentation period—appears to have been the manuscript written by Karl Klein, a captain in the former Năsăud border regiment.³⁴ We cannot exclude the possibility that he also knew—at least in terms of the chosen approach—the work of George Barițiu, or other manuscripts about the history of the area. All these assumptions are based on the statement on the qualifying sheet, which indicated that in addition to his very good knowledge of written and spoken German, the author spoke Hungarian quite well and was fluent in Romanian.³⁵ We should also mention his easier access—due to his position in the military hierarchy—to official documents held in the Austrian military archives. We might include here the combat journals of the large units, the records and testimonies of those involved in the military campaigns, as well as the syntheses addressed to some high decision-making circles in the military and political Habsburg hierarchy.

In this context and based on the experience he had already gained in previous works, in 1882 the author compiled the history of the former Năsăud border regiment. The work was a landmark in the research conducted on the history of this unit. That is why it appears as an important achievement, recorded as such in the Transylvanian press of the time. “The Knight of Treuenfest approaches the history of this regiment chronologically, from its establishment until 1881. Both before and, especially, from 1848 until 1874, the author reproduces many public documents as historical documents of great value and content, which could not have become known to the public except under permission granted by the competent military authorities,” as the press of the time noted.³⁶

His attitude towards this work impels us to decipher the intricate twists and turns underlying its creation. Nestor Șimon suggests that Treuenfest might

have benefited, during his period of documentation in Vienna, from access to a manuscript on the history of the Năsăud border regiment. In supporting his hypothesis, Şimon starts by showing that upon the abolition of the border in 1851, the documents were gathered, some in Sibiu, some in Vienna. As early as 1850, based on whatever was left after the cataclysm of 1848–1849, Captain Auditor Schöttel received the order to write a history of the regiment. For this, steps were taken to gather the necessary documentary material. Evoking an older history of the regiment, the military authorities requested the assistance of the officers and the clergy³⁷ in uncovering information related to it. Confirmation came that notes or copies of the abovementioned history had been identified, having been passed down from generation to generation, until they had reached Şimon. Such a copy was presented as a chronology of the regiment, for the period 1762–1841. The accuracy of the data confirmed that they had been “pulled out” of the aforementioned history of the regiment. Here Şimon hypothesizes that if data from this copy were to be examined in correlation with the events described by Treuenfest, “we shall find not only great accuracy, but also the same words and events strung together, as if his lordship, the Knight of Treuenfest, had had access to these very notes.”³⁸

Still, alongside some negative elements, the merits of the work were also recognized. Nestor Şimon stressed the fact that “the merit of the Knight of Treuenfest is great, for although along brief lineaments, he nonetheless uncovered a significant historical timeline of the Romanian Second Border Regiment and the great deeds of the border guards can thus be made known to the world.”³⁹

Adopting and critically developing the assessments of the time, we may present in what follows some of the essential features of Treuenfest’s work. First, we notice that the author was an excellent staff officer; this is clear from the manner in which he compiled his work, with descriptions of large units, their deployment and assembly, but also with details related to small units, down to platoon or group size, or with references to individual acts of heroism. This creates the impression of a very good strategist who “moves,” on a hypothetical map, armies, units, subunits and large masses of people. Treuenfest’s work falls in line with writings devoted to the glorious history of the Habsburg dynasty, in which the army played a key role. The army is presented as the glue that held together the component parts of the monarchy; here, the myth of the emperor runs its full course. The author produces a history, above all, of the military elites; the great commanders of armies are those at the forefront, those who develop strategies, lead large units into battle and provide assurance to the emperor of the success of their military undertakings. Through the involvement of the military, the monarchy was presented as the main actor in the life of the European continent, as one of the forces that had shaped its history. On account of his entire

work, including the text analyzed here, the author can be considered—without fear of being wrong—a committed historian of the Court, devoted to glorifying the greatness of the Habsburg dynasty and the important role of the army.

Still, the work represents an important achievement for the history of the Second Border Regiment of Năsăud. Its content can be interpreted in a dual manner. On the one hand, it introduces the regiment within the greater history of the monarchy, as the regiment that participated in its wars and “wrote” the history of the monarchy, through the sacrifice of thousands of soldiers who died on the battlefields, along with those from other important military units. On the other hand, it does not provide significant details and overlooks many important moments—we should mention here the events of the winter-spring of 1848–1849, which are not recorded—from the regiment’s participation in military conflicts. The author therefore presents only the importance of the military aspect in the regiment’s existence, without mentioning at all its impact on the civilian population, which remained outside the conflicts, but was rather strongly affected by this system.

IN CONCLUSION, the two German authors performed valuable synthetic overviews of the military history of the border regiment of Năsăud, setting the events related to this regiment against the background of the general political and military history of the Austrian monarchy and even of Europe. They did not intend to use the history of the regiment for any political or administrative purpose, as Porcius or Şimon did, but some descriptions, especially those in Klein’s work, provided sufficient examples that the Romanian political leaders adopted in their vindictive action in favor of the Transylvanian Romanians.

Karl Klein’s work offers rich and varied information, which completes and nuances the aspects already covered in several published works, providing synthetic overviews or special studies dedicated to the Năsăud regiment. Moreover, some information in his manuscript is almost identical to that present in the work of Gustav Ritter Amon von Treuenfest. Naturally, one wonders how it was possible for such visions and expressions to sometimes reach a full overlap between the two authors, who supposedly worked individually and independently. Those who are familiar with Treuenfest’s book would have to admit that he was a knowledgeable military historian, who also wrote other specialist works. In the synthesis Treuenfest dedicated to the history of the Năsăud border regiment, one can notice a good framing of the events dealt with in the overall political and military history of the Austrian monarchy and even of Europe, a depth of analysis and extensive knowledge that are not always found in Klein’s manuscript, more modest in terms of its dimensions. And yet, faced with this evidence, we cannot but hypothesize that when he published his book in Vienna in 1882, Treuenfest

had consulted or at least partially used Karl Klein's manuscript, which the latter had completed on 16 February 1867. Therefore, we believe that Treuenfest's use of Klein's work as a whole or of parts thereof, or the failure to indicate the sources that he resorted to shows that the Austrian historian appreciated the quality of the information as well as the manner in which Captain Karl Klein had approached the issue of the Năsăud border regiment.

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(Translated by CARMEN-VERONICA BORBÉLY)

Notes

1. For a synthesis of these preoccupations, see Josef Wolf, "Granița militară din Transilvania și din Banat (1762/64–1851/73)," in *Călător prin istorie: Omagiu profesorului Liviu Maior la împlinirea vârstei de 70 de ani*, eds. Ioan-Aurel Pop and Ioan Bolovan (Cluj-Napoca: Academia Română, Centrul de Studii Transilvane, 2010), 83–113; see also Vasile Tutula, "Granița militară de sud și sud-est a Imperiului Habsburgic (1522–1881)," *Arhiva someșană* (Bistrița), third ser., 6 (2007): 295–303.
2. We should mention the works *Enumeratio plantarum phanerogamicarum Districtus quondam Naszodiensis* (Cluj, 1878); *Flor'a Phanerogama din fostul district al Naseudului* (Sibiiu, 1881); "Diagnosele plantelor fanerogame și criptogame vasculare cari cresc spontan eu în Transilvania și nu sunt descrise în opul lui Koch: 'Synopsis florae Germanicae et Herveticae,'" *Analele Academiei Române: Memoriile secțiunii științifice* (Bucharest), 2nd ser., 14 (1892/1893). In recognition of his scientific activity, he was elected as a member of the Romanian Academy in the session of 10 March 1882. See also Liviu Păiuș, *Florian Porcius: Viața și opera* (Cluj-Napoca: NapocaStar, 2006), 3–56.
3. Adrian Onofreiu, *Districtul Năsăud 1861–1876* (Cluj-Napoca: Argonaut, 2010).
4. "Majestät-Gesuch der Bevölkerung des betandenen II Romanen 17 Grenz-Regimentes, nunmehrigen Nassoder Districts-Gebietes in Siebenbürgen, in der Grundbesitz-Regulierungsfrage, überreicht durch eine eigene Deputation in der Audienz am 5. Oktober 1865" (Vienna, 1865), 4 pp. Florian Porcius reports that beside other memorials and petitions, "I have primarily contributed to the petition submitted to the emperor": "Florian Porcius—Autobiografie," *Arhiva someșană* (Năsăud) 8 (1928): 68. The Romanian translation is included in the volume *Contribuții documentare referitoare la situația economică a satelor năsăudene în a doua jumătate a secolului al XIX-lea*, eds. Simion Lupșan and Adrian Onofreiu (Bistrița: Mesagerul, 2007), 117–157. The model was announced in the report drafted by Porcius, as a judge in the Rodna circle (administrative unit), on 1 October 1861: "Document despre starea pădurilor din Districtul Năsăudului," in *Districtul Năsăud 1861–1876: Contribuții documentare*, eds. Simion Lupșan and Adrian Onofreiu (Năsăud: Ed. Fundației George Coșbuc, 2003), 177–183.

5. Its original title was “A feloszlatott nászódvidéki határörség nevében Portius Flórián alkapitány és Buzdug Vazul ülnök alázatos kérvénye,” in *Contribuții documentare*, 231–248. The press of the time reported that it had been drafted “out of despair”; cf. *Gazeta Transilvaniei* (Brașov), no. 22 (17/29 March 1868): 87.
6. The text is found in the National Archives, Bistrița-Năsăud County Division, *Vicariatul Rodnei* coll., file 314/1872, fols. 21–27 (hereafter cited as NAB-N); Victor Onișor, *Legile grănicerilor năsăudeni* (Bistrița, 1905), 53–58. “The plenipotentiaries and the funds in this District,” said the letter addressed by the Greek-Catholic Episcopal Chapter of Gherla, “were entrusted with securing, for those communes and school funds, every property that had been awarded to the Erarium, as well as all the mountains with the forests and all the mountainous terrain in Rodna, at Dosul Poienii Rotunde, all the vacant plots, all establishments with a revenue of Năsăud and the Borgo-Prund circle, with their gardens, and other incorporated and unincorporated areas, and also the royal inn-keeping and milling rights in the Borgo-Prund and Monor circles, so that the Erarium, with ownership rights, has no plot of land in this District”; NAB-N, *Vicariatul Rodnei* coll., file 314/1872, fol. 41.
7. For the conscientious manner in which he committed himself to carrying out the census of 1869, he was awarded the Iron Cross, third class; see the “individual sheets” of the census for Năsăud in Ioan Bolovan, Adrian Onofreiu, and Viorel Rus, *Familiile din Năsăud în anul 1869: Contribuții de demografie istorică* (Cluj-Napoca: Argonaut, 2010). The general ones, at the level of Năsăud district, in Onofreiu, *Districtul Năsăud*, 611.
8. Lupșan and Onofreiu, 362–364, doc. no. 70.
9. See, in this respect, only the summons made by Vicar Grigore Moisil in April 1863, in which he “assumed” the 100 years that had passed since the establishment of the border, acknowledging also the fact that its great history had not been written down; therefore, he urged that the necessary data for this effort should be collected; apud Ioan Bolovan and Adrian Onofreiu, *Contribuții documentare privind istoria regimentului grăniceresc năsăudean* (Bucharest: Ed. Enciclopedică, 2006), 31–32, n. 30.
10. It is the editor’s merit—even though he commits some errors due to his lack of familiarity with the German language, in particular—to have retrieved Porcius’s study and revealed its true value; see Florian Porcius, *Istoricul ținutului grăniceresc al Năsăudului*, ed. Liviu Păiuș (Cluj-Napoca: Napoca Star, 2005). Thus, the error made in the interwar period, when the manuscript was published without the full text of the footnotes, was repaired; see “Istoricul Districtului năsăudean,” *Arhiva someșană* 9 (1928): 1–64. The material was published by Virgil Șotropa, who mentions at the end that he received it from Porcius in 1905, to edit and then publish it. The result can be consulted in the aforementioned source, even though the publisher took some precautions, in the final considerations, on pages 63–64. Porcius also left a material providing a brief overview of the period after the dismantling of the border; see Florian Porcius, “Din istoria fondurilor năsăudene,” *Revista Bistriței* (Bistrița) 1, 42 (31 October 1903): 2.

11. NAB-N, *Administrația fondurilor grănicerești năsăudene* coll., file 366, passim.
12. According to the inventory records at the Cluj-Napoca Academy Library, the Năsăud Branch, comprising 1,382 entries, which include titles of books and periodicals; apud Alin Șteopan, “Catalogul cărților din biblioteca lui Nestor Șimon,” *Studii și cercetări etnoculturale* (Bistrița) 17 (2012): 129–194.
13. Apud Adrian Onofreiu, “Nestor Șimon—Omul și opera,” *Arhiva someșană* (Bistrița), 3rd ser., 2 (2003): 386.
14. *Nestor Șimon, 1915–2005: Corespondență*, ed. Adrian Onofreiu (Cluj-Napoca: Supergraph, 2005), 159, doc. no. 94. The final form—influenced by the work of George Barițiu—was to receive the title *Părți alese din Istoria teritoriului Daciei nordice, mai târziu a Regimentului al II-lea român de graniță din Ardeal nr. 17, astăzi comitatul Bistrița-Năsăud, cu deosebită privire la istoria poporului românesc locuitor în acest ținut, din timpurile cele mai vechi până astăzi, scrisă pe bază de documente istorice de Nestor Șimon, doctorand în științele juridice, secretar și controlor al fondurilor centrale școlastice și de stipendii din Districtul Năsăudului*.
15. *Nestor Șimon: Restituiri*, ed. Adrian Onofreiu (Cluj-Napoca: Academia Română, Centrul de Studii Transilvane, 2012), 16–18, in the footnotes.
16. Nestor Șimon, *Dicționar toponimic*, eds. Ioan Mureșan, Adrian Onofreiu, and Mircea Prahase (Cluj-Napoca: Napoca Star, 2007).
17. *Az erdélyi polgári magános törvények Historiája* and *Az Erdélyi polgári magános törvényekkel való esmeretségek harmadik könyve*, both published in Cluj (Kolozsvár), in 1830.
18. See the description of the historical outlook in *Nestor Șimon: Restituiri*, the subchapter “Condiționări și atitudini istoriografice,” 25–28. See the systematization of the bibliography used for writing the work—both published and unpublished sources—consisting of 237 book titles and 34 periodicals, in *ibid.*, 263–272.
19. “At first I had considered,” Șimon wrote in the preface to his draft, “merely translating and completing the history published in German by Amon, Knight of Treuenfest, and had requested data that I’d thought would be found in Mr. Barițiu’s possession in Sibiu”; apud *Nestor Șimon: Corespondență*, 262.
20. Șimon was convinced that Treuenfest had been aware of a copy of the regiment’s history, located in the archives of Vienna, which had “been made available to Mr. Treuenfest when he wrote the history.” The historical outline invoked by Șimon—under the title “Notizien aus der Geschichte des 2. Walachen Grenz-Infanterie-Regiment Nr. 17,” is kept in NAB-N, the *Iulian Marțian* coll., file 168/24.
21. Beside the fact that he approached the history of the regiment chronologically, from its creation until 1881, with particular emphasis on the more recent period, from 1848 until 1874, “the author reproduces many public deeds, as documents of great value and amplitude, so much so that they could not have come to the public awareness, except under permission granted by the competent military authorities.” Moreover, Șimon’s assessment of the work also took note of the outstanding graphic design of the work, the “large and elegant lexicon format, 421 pages with 6 colored illustrations, which represent Romanian soldiers and their officers in uniforms, from various time periods,” and the low circulation number of merely 300 copies—

quickly exhausted, so although it cost 5 florins, “a second edition has not yet been released and, therefore, it is a work that one can barely lay their hands on.”

22. Österreichisches Staatsarchiv Wien, Kriegsarchiv (hereafter cited as ÖSWK), *Conduitelisten der Offiziere* coll., carton 406, k.k. Grossherzog von Baden 50. Linien Infanterie Regiment. Conduite Listen für das Jahr 1867 über innbenannte Officiere für das hohe Reichs Ministerium. 50. Infanterie Regiment 1867—Karl Klein.
23. ÖSWK, *Qualificationslisten der Offiziere* coll., carton 1394 (Klein Kamillo-Louis)—Qualification list of Karl Klein.
24. Ibid.
25. On the valorization of this dynastic loyalism, see Liviu Maior, *Românii în armata habsburgică: Soldați și ofițeri uitați* (Bucharest: Ed. Enciclopedică, 2004), 6 sq.
26. Ioan Bolovan and Adrian Onofreiu, “Grănicerii năsăudeni pe podul de la Arcole,” *Magazin istoric* (Bucharest) 48, 11 (512) (November 2009): 82–86.
27. The translation into Romanian has been published by Bolovan and Onofreiu, *Contribuții documentare*.
28. Ibid., 2nd ed. (Cluj-Napoca: Argonaut, 2012), 33.
29. Maior, 13.
30. ÖSKW, *Conduitelisten der Offiziere* coll., Qualification list no. L. 35—Gustav Adolf Amon, Knight of Treuenfest, [former] vice-guardsman and cavalry guardsman first class in the Arcieren Body Guards, [currently] guardsman and major in the Imperial-Royal Regiment I of the Arcieren Body Guards, passed into reserve on 30 April 1888.
31. Ibid.
32. Gustav Ritter Amon von Treuenfest, *Geschichte des k.k. 12. Huszaren-Regiments. 1800-1850 Palatinat; 1850-1875 Graf Haller; 1875 von Fratricsevics. Nach den Feldakten und sonstigen Originalquellen des k.k. Kriegs-Archivs, den Inhabers-Correspondenzen und den Regimentsschriften im Auftrage des dermaligen Regiments-Kommandanten* (Vienna: Verlag des Regiments, 1876); *Geschichte des k. k. Infanterie-Regiments Nr. 20, Friedrich Wilhelm, Kronprinz des Deutschen Reiches und Kronprinz von Preussen: Ergänzungsbezirk Neu-Sandec in Galizien/nach den Akten der k. k. Archive und des Regiments verfasst* (Vienna: Verlag des Regiments, 1878); *Geschichte des k.k. Infanterie-Regimentes Hoch- und Deutschmeister Nr. 4. Ergänzungs-Bezirks-Station Wien. Nach den Feldakten und sonstigen Originalquellen der k.k. Archive verfasst* (Vienna: Verlag des Regiments, 1879); *Geschichte des k.k. Huszaren-Regimentes Alexander Freiherr v. Koller Nr. 8. von seiner Errichtung 1696-1880. Nach den Feld-Akten und sonstigen Original-Quellen der k.k. Archive* (Vienna: Verlag des Regiments, 1880); *Geschichte des k. k. Infanterie-Regimentes Nr. 47. nach den Feldakten und sonstigen Original-Quellen der k. k. Archive verfasst* (Vienna: Verlag des Regiments, 1882); *Geschichte des k. k. Infanterie-Regimentes Nr. 50, Friedrich Wilhelm Ludwig, Grossherzog von Baden, 1762 bis 1850 zweites Siebenbürger Romanen-Grenz-Infanterie-Regiment Nr. 17* (Vienna: Verlag des Regiments, Druk von Ludwig Mayer, 1882); *Geschichte des k. k. Infanterie-Regiments Nr. 18, Constantin Grossfürst von Russland, von 1682 bis 1882. Ergänzungs-Bezirks-Station Königgrätz. Nach den Feldakten und sonstigen Original-Quellen der k. k. Archive ver-*

fasst (Vienna: Druck von L. Mayer, R. Brzezowsky, Verlag des Regimentes, 1882); *Geschichte des k.k. Huszaren-Regimentes Freiherr von Edelsheim Guylai Nr. 4. von seiner Errichtung 1734-1882. Nach den Feld-Akten und sonstigen Original-Quellen der k.k. Archive* (Vienna: Verlag des Regimentes, 1882); *Geschichte des k.u.k. Infanterie-Regimentes Nr. 46. 1762 bis 1850 erstes Siebenbürger Romanen-Grenz-Infanterie-Regiment Nr. 16* (Vienna: Verlag des Regimentes, 1890); *Geschichte des kaiserl. und königl. Kärnthnerischen Infanterie-Regimentes Feldmarschall Graf von Khevenhüller Nr. 7.* (Vienna: Verlag des Regimentes, 1891); *Geschichte des k.k. Huszaren-Regimentes Nr. 10. Friedrich Wilhelm III, König von Preussen. Zum 150 Jährigen Regiments-Jubiläum im Auftrage des Officiers-Corps* (Vienna: Verlag des Regimentes, 1892); *Schicksale und Thaten des k. u. k. Infanterie-Regimentes Hoch- und Deutschmeister Nr. 4. Ergänzungs-Bezirks-Stations Wien/Nach Gustav Ritter Amon von Treuenfest dargestellt von Gustav Rusch* (Vienna: Kaiserlich-königlicher Schulbücher-Verlag, 1895); *Geschichte des k.u.k. Huszaren-Regimentes Kaiser Nr. 1.* (Vienna: Verlag des Regimentes, 1898); *Geschichte des k.u.k. Bukowinaschen Dragoner-Regiments General der Kavallerie Freiherr Piret de Bihain Nr. 9. von seiner Errichtung 1682 bis 1892* (Vienna: Verlag des Regimentes, 1918).

33. ÖSKW, *Conduitelisten der Offiziere*.

34. Completed on 16 February 1867, at Kaiser Obersdorf, near Vienna. See, in this respect, the arguments developed in Bolovan and Onofreiu, *Contribuții documentare* (2006), no. 33: 35–40.

35. ÖSKW, *Conduitelisten der Offiziere* coll., Qualification list no. L. 35—Gustav Adolf Amon, Knight of Treuenfest.

36. Under the title “Towards a History of a Border Guards’ Regiment,” the press noted also that there were “plenty of unpublished handwritten documents relating to the history of the border regiments in the archives of the regiments and of the corps headquarters, but those are not to be released to anyone, for it is known from experience how easily those may be lost, as it happened here in Sibiiu, until the year 1850. Documents such as those may only be taken out in the form of copies and with the clear permission of the higher authorities”; apud *Observatoriul* (Sibiu) 8, 41 (29 May/10 June 1885): 163. In fact, the article presented the position of the erudite scholar Nestor Șimon from Năsăud. The newspaper review contained whole passages from his work devoted to the history of the Năsăud regiment; apud Bolovan and Onofreiu, *Contribuții documentare* (2006), n. 27: 30; see also Nestor Șimon, “Starea regimentului și evenimentele din anii 1848–1849,” in *Arhivele—mărturii ale trecutului*, eds. Ioan Mureșan, Adrian Onofreiu, and Mircea Prahase (Bistrița: Mesagerul, 2007), 49–301. As regards the attitude of the authorities of that time, what is exemplary is the response Șimon received from a former officer of the Năsăud Border Regiment. Referring to the events of the years 1848–1849, as described by Șimon, the officer stated that “although the people who took an active part in these affairs are no longer alive, there are things mentioned there that do have an impact upon their successors. And,” the former Captain Ioan Mărginean from Ragla continued, “when they might now read about the events of those times, of course they might be unpleasantly surprised. Especially since one of those followers/successors [our note] is at present in a very high and influential position”; in

the end, he stated that “with us, any kind of abusive use of restricted documents is most harshly treated”; apud *Nestor Șimon 1915–2005: Corespondență*, 148.

37. “So, since it is possible that the history of the regiment was entrusted for reading partly to the officers, partly to the clergy, somebody may have made some copies”; apud Șimon, “Starea regimentului,” 90.
38. This coincidence reinforced his conviction that Treuenfest had seen a copy of the aforementioned history, found in the archives of Vienna, which had “been made available to Mr. Treuenfest when he wrote the history,” apud *ibid.*
39. Șimon, “Starea regimentului,” 78.

Abstract

Two Historiographical Perspectives, One Historical Reality: the Năsăud Military Border

The authors investigate the perspectives adopted by two Romanian (Florian Porcius, Nestor Șimon) and two German authors (Karl Klein, Gustav Ritter Amon von Treuenfest), who explored various aspects pertaining to the Năsăud military border. In terms of their accomplishments, the two Romanian historians provided an attitude model that was consistent with the realities of the periods in which they lived and wrote, showing, at the same time, that the Romanian society which had been the beneficiary of the border guard system was an equal partner in dialogue with those who had proposed and organized it. This attitude model had been beneficial for the government and the governed alike. The two German authors performed valuable synthetic overviews of the military history of the Năsăud border regiment, setting the events related to this regiment against the background of the general political and military history of the Austrian monarchy and even of Europe. They did not intend to use the history of the regiment for any political or administrative purpose, but some descriptions provided sufficient examples that the Romanian political leaders adopted in their vindictive action in favor of the Transylvanian Romanians.

Keywords

Austrian military border, Transylvania, Romanians, Germans