

# National History and Ideology

## The Union of 1918 As Reflected in the Work *A Quarter Century after the Union of Transylvania* by Silviu Dragomir

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### Biographical Highlights

**D**URING THE war, in 1943, the work *Un sfert de veac de la unirea Transilvaniei* (A quarter century after the union of Transylvania) by Silviu Dragomir was published in Sibiu, the Transylvanian city where the institutions of the Romanian state were relocated after northern Transylvania was ceded to Hungary. Before analyzing the content of the study, we will briefly present Silviu Dragomir's biography, in order to better understand the rationales and arguments present in the analyzed study. It is clear that there is a close link between the educational background, political choices, and the historical writing practiced in the twentieth century.

The future historian was born on 1/13 March 1888, in the commune of Gurasada in Hunedoara County.<sup>1</sup> Silviu Dragomir completed the first years of school in neighboring Ilia vil-

lage. He finished his elementary studies in 1897. The school in Ilia being a state school, the teaching language was Hungarian, so as a child he acquired from a young age the official language of the state, which would be useful to him in his future historical research.<sup>2</sup> In the fall of the same year, he enrolled at the Romanian gymnasium in Blaj, where he attended only the first six forms. In 1903, Silviu Dragomir transferred to Serbian high-school in Novi Sad, with a Gojdu Foundation scholarship.<sup>3</sup> Completing his studies at Novi Sad, he sought to enroll in a higher education institution. On 27 September 1905, Metropolitan Bishop Ioan Mețianu made a request to the Archbishopric Consistory in Cernăuți (Chernivtsi, Czernowitz) to accept Silviu Dragomir as a student of the Faculty of Theology at the University of Cernăuți.<sup>4</sup> Thus, the young Romanian from Transylvania, following in the footsteps of the metropolitan bishop of Sibiu, became a student of the University of Cernăuți in the autumn of 1905.

Silviu Dragomir completed his studies in Cernăuți, in July 1909, receiving his diploma in theology.<sup>5</sup> After only a few weeks, on 31 July 1909, the young Romanian participated in the first rigorous examination for doctoral studies in the biblical-historical disciplines.<sup>6</sup> Silviu Dragomir, aware that a specialization in Slavic languages required attending a prestigious university of Central Europe, enrolled on 8 October 1909 at the Faculty of Philosophy of the University of Vienna, receiving a scholarship from the Trandafil Foundation, administered by the Metropolitan Consistory of Sibiu.<sup>7</sup> The young graduate in theology, in parallel with attending courses in Vienna, took his second rigorous exam in Cernăuți on 21 March 1910, after which he received doctorate in theology.

Silviu Dragomir stayed in Vienna for only a year, most likely due to lack of financial means, but this time was profitable for his future historical training. Later, to complete his studies, Dragomir took steps to attend the courses of the Moscow Theological Academy. As early as 30 July 1910, he had asked the Metropolitan Consistory for a scholarship from the Trandafil Foundation to study at the Moscow Academy. He was given financial support of 1,000 crowns a year. Shortly afterwards, on 18 July, Ioan Mețianu, on the basis of the authorization received on 11 June from the Archdiocese Consistory, and in the absence of qualified candidates for teaching positions in the pedagogical section, appointed Silviu Dragomir as substitute professor in the pedagogical section of the Theological Institute in Sibiu.<sup>8</sup> Later, Silviu Dragomir was appointed temporary professor in the theological section of Church History and Ancillary Disciplines.<sup>9</sup> The future historian taught at the Theological Institute in Sibiu until 1919, with the exception of the 1916–1917 academic year, when, after Romania declared war on Austria-Hungary and its troops entered Transylvania, the authorities in Budapest decided to move the theological section of the institute to Oradea, and the pedagogical one to Arad. Silviu Dragomir and two other teachers, in

this exceptional situation, were transferred to the pedagogical department of the Arad Institute.<sup>10</sup>

The scholarly and didactic activity of the young intellectual, as well as his involvement in the national movement of the Transylvanian Romanians, led to his election as a corresponding member of the Romanian Academy on 26 May/9 June 1916, on the place left vacant after the election of Ioan Lupaș as a full member. Ioan Bogdan made the proposal and presented in detail Silviu Dragomir's activity, insisting on his special training, the importance of his works on the Romanian-Russian religious relations of the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries, as well as on the introduction to the volume *Contribuțiuni istorice privitoare la trecutul românilor de pe pământul crăiesc* (Historical contributions on the history of the Romanians from the royal lands).<sup>11</sup>

In 1918, Professor Silviu Dragomir intensively participated in the actions carried out by the Romanians in Transylvania for the completion of the union with the Kingdom of Romania. Together with Nicolae Bălan and his former colleague and friend from Cernăuți, Ioan Broșu, he founded and led in Sibiu *Gazeta Poporului* (The People Gazette).<sup>12</sup> In the pages of the newspaper were published materials supporting the achievement of national unity.

Silviu Dragomir was an official delegate to the Great National Assembly, representing the Romanian press in Transylvania; he spoke at the preliminary conference held in Alba Iulia on 30 November, pointing out that the only way ahead for the Transylvanian Romanians was “unconditional union with those beyond the Carpathians.”<sup>13</sup> On 1 December 1918, the historian was elected by acclamation as secretary of the assembly.<sup>14</sup> He was among those who spoke on the Field of Horea before the 100,000 Romanians present. His speech was “one of the most clear and coherent, full of wisdom and communicative enthusiasm.”<sup>15</sup> On the same day, the Great Assembly of the Romanian Nation, consisting of 212 members, was elected. The following day its board was established: Gheorghe Pop de Băsești—president, Miron Cristea, Iuliu Hossu, Andrei Bârseanu and Teodor Mihali—as vice-presidents, six notary-secretaries, among them Silviu Dragomir, Caius Brediceanu, and so on.<sup>16</sup> In this capacity, according to reports made by his wife while attending the Alba Iulia Assembly, Silviu Dragomir “was given the task and the honor to present the activity report of the last National Committee, elected in 1910.”<sup>17</sup>

The historian was elected head of the Press Office of the Ruling Council, a position he held until the end of 1919. He collected a rich and precious documentary material which he made available to the Romanian delegation participating in the peace negotiations.<sup>18</sup> Subsequently, he became the director for higher education in the Ministry of Instruction, Religion and Arts, led by Valeriu Braniște, until the beginning of 1920.<sup>19</sup>

At the Upper Dacia University, which was established in the autumn of 1919, Silviu Dragomir was proposed for employment by Sextil Pușcariu, as an aggregate professor for the history of the peoples of Southeast Europe, in the Department of History of the Faculty of Philosophy and Letters.<sup>20</sup> The young university professor held at the University of Cluj lectures on the history of the Slavic peoples, the Balkan Romanians, as well as the course on the Revolution of 1848, much appreciated by students, until 1947, when he was forced into retirement for political reasons, before the legal age.<sup>21</sup> Silviu Dragomir showed a constant interest in the university lectures on the medieval history of Serbs and Bulgarians, as well as on the Romanians in the northern Balkans, dedicating them a number of specialized studies. His research on the Romanian population living south of the Danube, as well as on the institutions of the North-Danube Romanians, was often praised by Ioan Lupaș.<sup>22</sup>

Silviu Dragomir was appointed professor in 1923 for the history of Southeast European peoples, the examining committee being Ioan Ursu—president—and Ioan Lupaș, Alexandru Lapedatu, Nicolae Bănescu, Ioan Popovici—members.<sup>23</sup>

The Transylvanian intellectual held various administrative positions during the interwar period. He was elected dean in the 1925–1926 academic year and dean in the 1926–1927 academic year.<sup>24</sup> Silviu Dragomir, during the refuge of the University in Sibiu, was one of the vice-rectors of the institution.<sup>25</sup> He was elected a full member of the Romanian Academy in 1928. The proposal was made by Ioan Lupaș, who announced at the meeting on 28 May 1928 the decision of the historical section of the academic plenum, reached by majority vote, that Silviu Dragomir be elected in the place left vacant after the death of Vasile Pârvan.<sup>26</sup>

The political changes that took place in Romania after 1945 affected the intellectuals with a prior involvement in politics. Thus, in the *Official Journal* of 4 October 1947 a decision was published, signed by Minister Ștefan Voitec on 2 October 1947, whereby 80 teachers from higher education had to retire from office on 1 September 1947. Most of them were thus forced through a ministerial decision to leave university life before reaching the minimum retirement age of 65, which was provided for by the law for the members of the teaching staff in higher education. In Cluj, Gheorghe Giuglea, the sociologist Constantin Sudețeanu, the ethnologist Romulus Vuia, and the botanist Alexandru Borza were forced to retire on this occasion. Alongside them was Silviu Dragomir, who at the time was only 59 years old.<sup>27</sup>

The year 1948 represented for Romania the institutionalization of the communist party state. It was the year when one of the national institutions, well respected and with a long tradition, namely, the Romanian Academy, was, in its turn, the victim of the destruction experienced by the system of values in

Romania.<sup>28</sup> Following the exhortations, especially by C. I. Parhon and Traian Săvulescu, for the reorganization of the academy, an unprecedented offensive against this institution was launched by the communist-Stalinist authorities. On 20 May 1948, Traian Săvulescu presented before the plenum of the Romanian Academy a resolution requesting its abolition and the establishment of the Romanian Popular Republic's Academy, as a party and state organization. Shortly after, on 9 June, Presidential Decree no. 76 turned the Romanian Academy into a state institution. According to this document, those who through their work had aided fascism and the reactionary forces, harming the interests of the country and the people, could not be members of the new academy. Claiming the guilt of the academy and its members, the authors of the decree practically sentenced them to death or lifelong labor.<sup>29</sup> In a request addressed to Dr. Petru Groza, the president of the Council of Ministers, on 6 September 1948, Silviu Dragomir protested against the decision removing him from the academy on the grounds that he had been sympathetic to fascist ideas, betraying the country's interests, on account of the defeatist attitude he had displayed when Transylvania was ceded.<sup>30</sup>

Silviu Dragomir, after his removal from higher education and the Romanian Academy, was sent to court, accused of committing an offense against the Law on Banks, and was convicted. The professor was arrested on 1 July 1949 in Cluj<sup>31</sup> and then transferred to the Caransebeș penitentiary, to serve six months of correctional punishment for an offense under the Banking Act, which also came with a corrective fine of 2,600,000 lei.<sup>32</sup> The correctional fine was subsequently changed to one year in prison, so Silviu Dragomir was to do one year and six months of correctional imprisonment.<sup>33</sup> On 5 May 1950, Silviu Dragomir was transferred to Sighet prison, joining the politicians and intellectuals arrested and imprisoned here. Silviu Dragomir and the other dignitaries remained in Sighet until 5 July 1955, when some were released, while others were transferred to other prisons.<sup>34</sup> After his release, Silviu Dragomir made a tentative return to scholarly activity in 1955, when he was initially employed as an external collaborator and then as a permanent scientific researcher at the Institute of History and Archaeology in Cluj.<sup>35</sup> Analyzing the investigations carried out by Silviu Dragomir after leaving the communist prisons, we find particularly interesting things. Thus, the historian resumed the research of some subjects such as: the Romanians in the north of the Balkan Peninsula in the Middle Ages, the Revolution of 1848 in Transylvania and the union of the Romanians with the Church of Rome, also investigated during the interwar period, subjects which after 1948 were forbidden by the political leadership. And yet, after incredible efforts, in a continuous battle with the censorship of the time, using the arguments accepted by the communists, Silviu Dragomir succeeded in 1959 to publish the first work

devoted to the Romanians south of Danube after the establishment of the communist regime in Romania.<sup>36</sup> The historian died on 23 February 1962.<sup>37</sup>

## Context and Rationale for Development

**I**N THE political-national disputes in Austria-Hungary at the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the next century, an important argument raised by the Romanian representatives in support of their claims was the historic one, respectively their seniority, continuity and Latin origin. Silviu Dragomir, a Transylvanian intellectual with a positivist background, was concerned with the investigation of the history of Transylvania. The author was convinced of the Romanian character of the province and was actively involved in supporting the national wishes of the majority Romanian community.<sup>38</sup> He knew the situation of this population and the deprivations it had been subjected to by Hungary's political leadership before 1918.

The historian was interested in the situation of the Romanian population in the new political realities that had emerged after the conquest of Transylvania by the Hungarians. His interest in the Early Middle Ages must be related to the existence of a current in Hungarian historiography which denied the presence of the Romanian population in Transylvania at the beginning of the 10<sup>th</sup> century. Dragomir directed his research in this respect, especially for the 11<sup>th</sup>–15<sup>th</sup> centuries, which Nicolae Iorga considered to be particularly important for the history of the Transylvanian Romanians.<sup>39</sup> He returned to the issues of Romanian-Hungarian relations at the time of the investigation, between the two world wars, and of the religious union of the Romanians with the Church of Rome.<sup>40</sup> The international political developments of the 1930s and 1940s, in particular the Vienna Dictate and the peace treaties that came after the World War, also drew the attention of the historian.<sup>41</sup> Among his contributions, some were scientific works drafted by the author in order to inform the public opinion and politicians in Europe during the prewar period or during the negotiations for the conclusion of the peace treaties. Others were polemic in nature, especially those involving Hungarian historians and politicians.

To understand the approach of the Transylvanian historian, we have to integrate it into his prior historical and political activity. Silviu Dragomir analyzed European political developments, especially in states dissatisfied with the peace treaties concluded after World War I and which threatened the territorial unity of Romania. Well acquainted with historical realities, the professor of the University of Cluj engaged in an intensive journalistic campaign aimed at demonstrating,

on a scientific basis, the ignorance behind the claims of revisionist states. In this respect, he set up in 1934, in Cluj, the *Revue de Transylvanie*, a publication that would host in its pages studies written with remarkable professionalism, meant to disseminate among the European scientific and general readership the results of the Romanian historical research.<sup>42</sup> The *Revue de Transylvanie* was edited under the moral and material auspices of the Association for Literature and Culture of the Romanian People (ASTRA), its director being Silviu Dragomir and her first editor-in-chief D. D. Roșca, his former student at the Theological Institute in Sibiu. The purpose of the review was to eliminate the informational gap caused by the absence of a regular publication in a widely-spoken language devoted to the problems of Transylvania.

The changes that took place in the architecture of Europe beginning with 1939 also affected the Romanian state. The loss of Bessarabia, northern Bukovina, the Hertsa region, and northern Transylvania created a profound state of discontentment in the country. It was necessary, in the new context, to intensify the journalistic action of Transylvanian intellectuals, especially since the Hungarian propaganda, following the establishment of the Transylvanian Institute in Cluj, continued to claim that Transylvania was a Hungarian province.

The establishment in 1942 of the Center for Transylvanian Studies, headed by Silviu Dragomir, was aimed at the publication of documented papers meant to demonstrate to the European political forces the unfairness of the Vienna Dictate and of the Soviet ultimatum from the summer of 1940. The works were meant to support the political efforts, so that Romania could be prepared in case the borders of Europe were redesigned.

After the end of the war, Silviu Dragomir, together with other specialists, became engaged in the preparation of a vast work, published under the aegis of the Center, a true history of Transylvania. The work was intended to be a fresco of Transylvanian realities, brought to the attention of the Romanian delegation at the Peace Conference, to sensitize the political forces of the moment to the issue of the rights to Transylvania. The study was published under the aegis of the Association for Literature and Culture of the Romanian People, in the Astra Library collection and by the Astra Publishing House, an institution that sought the cultural and political emancipation of the Transylvanian Romanians. If we consider Silviu Dragomir's involvement in the national movement of the Transylvanian Romanians and the use of history as an argument in the political debate, both before 1918 and in the interwar period,<sup>43</sup> we have a general picture of the reasons that led Silviu Dragomir to draw up this study.

This is not the only historiographical approach regarding the unification of Transylvania with Romania,<sup>44</sup> but it is representative of those drafted by the his-

torian and politician Silviu Dragomir. The study must be judged in the context of the studies published in the *Revue de Transylvanie*, as well as of the contributions published after 1941.

Our interest is especially directed at the message sent by Silviu Dragomir and the truthfulness of the information he provided. The construction of the national discourse of the historian, the significance of some terms and concepts such as the union of 1918, generations of the union, intellectuals, popular masses, historical destiny, historical truth, Romanianism, but also a series of other terms would be analyzed in political and historiographical context and in connection with the historical writing of Silviu Dragomir. The analysis pursues, from a methodological perspective, several levels of interpretation in relation to the discourse constructed by Silviu Dragomir in a difficult moment for the Romanians in northern Transylvania.

## Concepts, Meanings, Terms

**T**HE UNION of Transylvania with Romania was a moment with a distinct political, national and symbolic significance in the history of the Romanians. As a result, Silviu Dragomir put forward the reasons why he decided to discuss the union of Transylvania with Romania in the first part of the study. They are indeed related to the 25 years that had passed since this important moment in the history of the Romanians, but also to a dramatic moment, namely, the subsequent loss of the provinces united with Romania.

*On 1 December, twenty-five years have elapsed since the Romanians in Transylvania decided to unite with the Kingdom of Romania at the Alba Iulia National Assembly. The dramatic event holds today a special significance, on the anniversary of the national unity then accomplished by virtue of a historic decision. We consider useful a brief historical exposition devoted to it, especially because the evocation of the atmosphere from a quarter century ago brings forth a whole series of problems that were once discussed and properly clarified, and in the chain of events that led to the proclamation of unity the Transylvanian cause can find perennial arguments.<sup>45</sup>*

By presenting a series of contrasting moments, 1 December 1918 with its joy and happiness, and then 1943/present, with war and the loss of a part of Transylvania, the author succeeds to recreate for the reader the dramatic overtones of those times. The rapidly changing historical context and the increasing tension are circumscribed by the expression ‘dramatic unfolding of the events.’ It transposes the reader into recent history. The author also dwells upon the role of his-



tory and the mission of the historian. In exceptional circumstances, the historian had to be a militant, a man of the city, to present to contemporaries the teachings that emerge from the tragic contemporary experience. Silviu Dragomir, not by accident, described the historical experience of Transylvania in the following terms: “The Transylvanian cause can find perennial arguments.” But history/the historian must encourage his countrymen. In difficult moments for the destiny of the people, the remembrance of events with a special significance in the destiny of the Romanians was meant to show the contemporaries that although the Romanian nation had experienced considerable hardships, it nevertheless managed to achieve its established goals.

Silviu Dragomir presents the Romanian nation in a sinuous evolution, with ups and downs, with setbacks and successes. Then comes the historical parallel between the destiny of the Romanians in the First World War and in the Second World War. Between 1914 and 1918, as presently in 1940–1943, the Romanians almost lost hope. The author, using terms like *the Romanians in Transylvania decided, the national assembly, the union, national unity, the proclamation of national unity, the national character of the 1918 union*, argues that the union was the will of all Romanians, and that the act of union was legitimate. The Romanians, according to Silviu Dragomir, had historical truth on their side. In this sense, the author sets his political judgment in the wake of Greek Catholic Bishop Inocențiu Micu, of the Transylvanian political thinkers who participated in the Revolution of 1848 and of the generation that prepared and achieved the union. Last but not least, national solidarity, the belief in an ideal, the converging actions of the autumn–winter of 1918, should be emulated by the Romanian nation in the traumatic moments caused by the territorial losses.

Silviu Dragomir brings to the attention of contemporaries the status of the Romanians who lived in Transylvania under different rulers. From the vantage point of his present, the historian makes a recourse to the past, to historical memory. We find here some argumentative strategies that are meant to show the legitimacy of the 1918 union and to identify the essential steps taken by the Romanian nation on the road of unity. The union of 1918 is, in Silviu Dragomir’s eyes, the quintessence of the national movement and at the same time it has symbolic value for contemporaries. Consequently, the remembrance of the stages leading up to the union gains symbolic value for recent history:

*For hundreds of years, Transylvania lingered in a political configuration that was foreign to its natural traits. Subjected to the Hungarian Crown, at a time that cannot be established with precision, it could never fully fit into the idea of the Hungarian empire. Its ethnic character remained predominantly Romanian throughout all ages, though the new masters strove to impose themselves on its soil, not only*

*by political force, but also by settling colonists and organizing feudal institutions that excluded the Romanians from state life. The Hungarian princes of Transylvania, under the suzerainty of the Turks, devised a plan of action for the spoliation the Romanian people. . . . Neither the arrival of the Habsburgs nor the creation of the Great Principality of Transylvania, linked to the Austrian lands, curtailed political and religious oppression, but rather worsened it, by adding tough taxation and the police surveillance of its cultural or spiritual aspirations. Yet the dawn of the era of freedom found Transylvania permeated by the idea of Romanianism, awakened from its sleep of death.*<sup>46</sup>

The historian wants to show from the beginning that the presence of the Romanians in the Kingdom of Hungary and the Habsburg Empire was unnatural, resorting to a series of absolute truths: *it has never been able to fully fit in a political configuration foreign to its natural affinities*. Further on, in pursuit of the same truthful argumentation, he explains to the reader why the Romanians did not integrate into the foreign political structures. First of all, on account of the majority Romanian element: “its ethnic character remained predominantly Romanian throughout the ages.” The demographic majority led, in time, after the collapse of the Austro-Hungarian Empire and the imposition of the principle of self-determination, to a political majority in Transylvania.

But the demographic majority of the Romanians in Transylvania had been very difficult to preserve over the centuries. Here, Dragomir, in addition to the historical arguments, proven by historical and demographic sources, calls upon terms that are meant to sensitize the reader of 1943. The preservation of identity was made with sacrifices and amid struggles against the dominant element. Expressions such as *hundreds of years, the new masters . . . impose themselves on its soil, political force, excluded the Romanians, a plan of action, political and religious oppression, tough taxation, police surveillance* emphasized the conflict, the tension, centuries of struggle for the preservation of national identity. Such expressions were meant to stir and mobilize the contemporaries. Romania had great difficulties at that time, but what were three years compared to the ages of suffering of the ancestors. The historian also presents the oppressors of the Romanians: the Hungarian Crown, the Hungarian princes, the Habsburgs. The idea that emerges from the analysis of the historical evolution is that after these unfavorable experiences lived by Romanians under foreign domination, their only chance was to live in a different political configuration, together with their brothers over the mountains.

Silviu Dragomir remarks, however, that “the dawn of the era of freedom found Transylvania permeated by the idea of Romanianism, awakened from its sleep of death,” alluding to the invincibility, the destiny, the naturalness to

be pursued by the Romanian nation. The terms used, such as *freedom*, *Romanianism*, *awakened from its sleep of death* (rebirth) come from different political philosophies. The concept of freedom, a term specific to the French political philosophy, also taken up by the Romanian revolutionaries of 1848, and that of Romanianism, developed especially in interwar Romania, are meant to emphasize the two major directions of freedom and nationality.

The Romanians were conquered and integrated into the Kingdom of Hungary during the 10<sup>th</sup>–13<sup>th</sup> centuries, and had the destiny of any people under foreign domination. The position of the Romanian people, conquered and oppressed in the Middle Ages and the Modern Age, as it appears in Dragomir's text, fueled the national discourse and imposed among the Romanian political elite the idea that the only solution for the development of the nation was to be part of the same political configuration as the rest of the Romanian nation. At the time, the discourse on the oppression and exploitation of Romanians in the Middle Ages and the Modern Age was common. Silviu Dragomir speaks of a continuation of oppression under the Habsburg Empire, even if from a social and economic point of view the Romanians benefited indirectly from the Habsburg reformist policy. Probably Dragomir considered the realization of the religious union of a part of the Romanians with the Church of Rome an event that was perceived as a breakdown of the Romanian element in Transylvania.

However, according to the historian, Transylvania, permeated by the idea of Romanianism, woke up from this sleep of death. The historian evokes the causes, but also the most important moments that contributed to the emergence of the national consciousness of the Romanians in Transylvania: "Two and a half centuries have passed since the emergence a nationalist movement of the Romanians in Transylvania. Emerged under the influence of Western culture, the brilliant pleiad of the Transylvanian scholars formulated (in 1791) a national solidarity program and, in the blaze of 1848, the political objective began to emerge, the aspirations widened, and the massively homogeneous population of the Romanian land presently demanded its natural rights."<sup>47</sup>

We note the semantics used by the historian to highlight the important moments in the national movement. Intensity and tension increase as we approach 1918. For the genesis of the national movement, the historian prefers the formula *emerged under the influence of Western culture*, the moment of 1791 is *a national solidarity program*, and the revolutionary year 1848 is *the blaze of 1848*. The Revolution of 1848 is the time to clarify political aspirations. The concepts used by the author regarding the Revolution of 1848 contain elements of political philosophy (*the political objective began to emerge, the aspirations widened*) but also an argumentative strategy (*the massively homogeneous population of the Romanian land presently demanded its natural rights*). The author, with this *massively homo-*

*geneous*, gives weight and force to political aspirations, and these are placed and originated *in the Romanian land*. The land means endurance, eternity, and the national aspirations, being related to the Romanian land, also indirectly acquire that endurance and eternity which Lucian Blaga referred to.

The beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century brings with it clarifications on the Romanians' aspirations. This element is also present in Dragomir's study. The tension of the phrases increases, and for the moment of the global conflict the historian evokes a special state of mind: "Finally, the outbreak of the war in the summer of 1914 means the achievement of historical maturity for all the oppressed peoples of the Austro-Hungarian Empire."<sup>48</sup>

The historian sees in the war a watershed moment of historical determinism, a happy ending for the wronged. The expression *achievement of historical maturity* has an argumentative role, but is at the same time a consecration. History is full of examples showing that oppression and empires are not eternal. A moment of maturity always comes, as the legacy of historical processes. The deprivation of minorities of their national rights redefines them and determines them to seek, through their leaders, solutions for a new political and state construction. The phrase *oppressed peoples* adjoined to the *Austro-Hungarian Empire* creates an antagonistic, tense atmosphere, individualizing the adversaries. On the one hand, peoples, nations, natural, legitimate creatures who have the right to be free, on the other hand, the empires, remnants, relics of obsolete, retrograde times, which by their mere existence hinder the development of peoples. "Our political evolution in the last century and the purpose of our struggle for nationality and freedom are therefore summed up, on the eve of the great battle, in these two words: national freedom."<sup>49</sup>

The author recalls, for the eve of the great battle, the two fundamental dimensions of the national movement, two concepts of the era: *nationality* and *freedom*. Political rights, democratic values and national rights, the author sees them in a single phrase: *national freedom in the fall of 1918*.

The terms *the purpose of our struggle* expresses a certain legitimacy, and *the eve of the great battle* evokes the fierce, life or death clash between the oppressed and the Austro-Hungarian Empire. The historian sees in this conflict a true clash between the future and the past, between good and evil. Above all, this state of uncertainty is omnipresent. The state of tension, of uncertainty during the war, is expressed as follows: *The hard years of the war silenced all voices.*<sup>50</sup> *We felt the angel of death passing over our heads.*<sup>51</sup> *The political horizons of Romanians throughout Transylvania remain, however, covered until autumn 1918.*<sup>52</sup> *Pain, fear, uncertainty!* The terms: *the hard years, the angel of death, silenced, covered,* are meant to remind the contemporaries of the tragedy of the age. Undoubtedly, the historian's intention is to compare two situations, that of 1916–1918 and

that of 1940–1943. Looking at the desperate situation of the Romanians in the spring–summer of 1918, Silviu Dragomir identified the chain of the external and internal events that made possible the national assembly in Alba Iulia. A true national rebirth!

*The catastrophic defeat of the Austrian army at Piave in the summer of 1918, and then the increasingly clear victories of the Allies on the western front shaped the atmosphere in Transylvania prior to the final crisis.*<sup>53</sup>

*The subjugated peoples begin to weaken the chains of slavery, and no reorganization plan satisfies them any longer within the current frontiers.*<sup>54</sup>

*The disintegration of the monarchy was accelerated by the request for an armistice, which was presented on 7 October to the President of the United States. It was based on the recognition of the peoples' right to self-determination.*<sup>55</sup>

*President Wilson's response to the peace offers of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, issued on October 18, conditioned the cessation of hostilities on the recognition of Czechoslovaks and Yugoslavs as legitimate nations free to fully satisfy their national aspirations. The formula of national autonomies had become obsolete.*<sup>56</sup>

As we can see, changing fortunes on the frontiers in Europe led to the search for solutions for an armistice. The moment is described by Dragomir as *the atmosphere . . . prior to the final crisis*. Inevitably, the weakening of the Central Powers triggered a wave of national movements. By using terms like *subjugated peoples* and *chains of slavery*, the author sensitizes the public opinion and gives legitimacy to the nations' efforts to declare their choice for another political structure. Also, the *disintegration of the monarchy*, *the request for an armistice*, *the peace offers*, *the cessation of hostilities* are meant to highlight the failure of previous imperial policies and to reveal the crisis and the lack of solutions. In opposition to this state we have *national aspirations*, *the reorganization plan*, *the right to self-determination* as the new concepts required at the end of the war. The unfolding events are historically seen in an interdependence of external and internal factors. Among the external ones, the author identifies two, namely, the victory of the Allies and the principle of self-determination of peoples. But there are also internal factors that are equally important. The historian argues, for example, that the then generation of Romanians undoubtedly had merit, that it was perfectly prepared for the role that history had reserved for it,<sup>57</sup> He fully understands, due to his background, the role of political and religious leaders in the great movements of Transylvanian Romanians. Dragomir also remembers the great mass of the Romanian population in Transylvania: "But the thought of despair was now in the souls of all. In every corner in Transylvania, long counseling is given, projects are being woven, the determined voice of the Romanian people requires to be

heard with increasingly nervous insistence.”<sup>58</sup> The year 1918 was the moment of full convergence between political and religious leaders and the Romanian population in Transylvania.

Important events that took place in the autumn–winter of 1918, such as the Oradea Declaration of 12 October 1918, the organization of the Romanian National Council, and the negotiations with the new Hungarian government, prepared the National Assembly in Alba Iulia. According to the historian, “the National Assembly in Alba Iulia definitively ended the period of enslavement for the Romanian people and proclaimed to all future generations the desire for freedom and the determination to reintegrate the nation.”<sup>59</sup> Words like *definitively ended*, *period of enslavement*, and *the Romanian people* ascribe symbolic value to the assembly. This is the moment of the highest affirmation of the Romanian nation. It definitely breaks the ties with the past, it definitely changes the nation. Gains are expressed in the *desire for freedom* and *reintegrate the nation*. They introduce the National Assembly of Alba Iulia and its leaders in the National Pantheon. And with the formulations like *proclaimed to all future generations*, the historian brings the National Assembly into the actuality of the time. The example must encourage contemporaries, make them hope, force them to act in the same spirit, because it was the moment that brought the Romanian people out of bondage. Freedom and the reunification of the nation, according to Silviu Dragomir, become the major objectives for future generations. This is one of the aims behind the remembrance in 1943 of the union of Transylvania.

## Conclusions

SILVIU DRAGOMIR considered, together with the representatives of the Transylvanian Romanians, that the only realistic solution was the union with Romania. Historical writing, in his opinion, had to provide the European political and scientific world with evidence of the legitimacy of national aspirations. In this sense, the purpose of the historian involved in the national movement was to make it known that the national ideals at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century were in line with historical truth. The model of the militant intellectual already had a tradition among Romanians. The national and cultural actions initiated by Nicolae Iorga at the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century had influenced many intellectuals. The scholar emphasized, in the speech delivered on his acceptance into the Romanian Academy, that there is no incompatibility between scholarly activity and the national one.<sup>60</sup> Such a state of mind was present especially among the Romanians who were at

that time under foreign domination. Their intellectual elite considered it its duty to support and encourage the national and political aspirations of the Romanian population.

Silviu Dragomir, educated in the positivist atmosphere of the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, turned the historical document into the centerpiece of his work. However, within the great problems of the Romanian nation, Silviu Dragomir was very much involved in the achievement of national unity, in the reunification of Romania, and after 1940 in the restoration of national unity. His work, as we can see, is a blend of scientific work and popularization text. At a difficult time for Romania, the historian felt the need to recreate the atmosphere that had preceded the Great National Assembly in Alba Iulia of 1 December 1918. Also, Silviu Dragomir identified the internal and external causes that allowed the Romanians in Transylvania to unite with Romania. Last but not least, the author emphasized the role played by personalities such as Vasile Goldiș, Gheorghe Pop de Băsești, Alexandru Vaida-Voievod, Iuliu Maniu, Aurel Lazăr, Ștefan Cicio-Pop, Ioan Suciu, Aurel Vlad and others in the preparation and organization of the main moments that preceded the Great Assembly in Alba Iulia. Last but not least, the historian highlighted the solidarity between the elite and the mass of the Romanian population in Transylvania.

As we have seen, Silviu Dragomir does not analyze the reasons that led to the loss of part of Transylvania on 30 August 1940. He preferred to limit himself to a historical analysis. His active presence in Romanian politics, especially between 1937 and 1940, allowed him to observe many of the negative parts of the Romanian political life that facilitated the territorial losses suffered by Romania in 1940.



## Notes

1. According to an excerpt from the register of baptisms of the Romanian Orthodox Church of Gurasada commune, National Archives, Deva County Department (hereafter cited as AN-DJ Deva), Silviu Dragomir coll., file 1; Nicolae Stoian, "Date privitoare la formația intelectuală a istoricului Silviu Dragomir," *Anuarul Institutului de Istorie și Arheologie Cluj-Napoca* 28 (1987–1988): 563; Mircea Păcurariu, "O sută de ani de la nașterea istoricului Silviu Dragomir (1888–1962)," *Mitropolia Ardealului* (Sibiu) 33, 2 (1988): 109; Sorin Șipoș, *Silviu Dragomir—istoric*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, foreword by Ioan-Aurel Pop (Oradea–Chișinău: Ed. Universității din Oradea, Cartdidact, 2008): 30.
2. Stoian, 565; Șipoș, 34.
3. Ibid.

4. “Driven by the desire to train some of our candidates to the priesthood at the Faculty of Theology of Cernăuți, and by strengthening the spiritual canonical ties between the Orthodox metropolitan churches in the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, we have advised some of our clergy to enroll at the Faculty of Theology there” (Sibiu Archbishopric Archives, Consistoriu coll., file III/393, 1905, doc. 8597, p. 1).
5. AN-DJ Deva, Silviu Dragomir coll., file 1, pp. 30–32.
6. Păcurariu, 111.
7. Ibid., 111; Stoian, 570; Șipoș, 43.
8. AN-DJ Deva, Silviu Dragomir coll., file 90.
9. “As per the Seminary Regulation, art. 2, the election is provisional until the qualification exam, respectively, until the probationary service. The benefits associated with this post are: an annual salary of 2,000 crowns and quartering money in the amount of 400 crowns, paid at the Consistory House in addition to the stamped receipt; the salary in anticipatory monthly installments, the quartering money in three monthly installments as of 1 September 1912” (Decree number 10691 of 1912, in AN-DJ Deva, Silviu Dragomir coll., file 90).
10. Păcurariu, 115; Șipoș, 49.
11. “Mr. Silviu Dragomir, whom I propose to be elected as a corresponding member of our Section in the vacant place after electing Mr. Ioan Lupaș as an active member, was born in 1888 in Gurasada, Hunedoara County. He completed his high school studies in Blaj and Novi Sad, where he learned Serbian, and studied theology at the University of Cernăuți, where he received his doctorate in theology. He also attended some courses at the University of Vienna, then he traveled to Russia to improve his knowledge of the Russian language and to collect new materials for the history of the Romanian Church in Hungary. In 1911 he was appointed professor of Church history at the Andrean Seminary in Sibiu, where he still works today. Since 1915, when he was elected deputy to the Archdiocese Synod of our Orthodox Church in Transylvania and Hungary, he has also been a correspondent member of the Historical Section of the Romanian People’s Association for Literature and Culture. Therefore, Mr. Silviu Dragomir, through his situation and activity, is one of the leaders of the Romanians beyond the mountains. Although still very young, he published, besides articles of historical, literary and pedagogical content, in Transylvanian newspapers and magazines . . . , three other historical works: one in the Annals of the Romanian Academy of 1912, under the title ‘Contributions to the Relations of the Romanian Church with Russia in the 17<sup>th</sup> Century’; another self-published in Sibiu under the title ‘The Church Relations of the Romanians in Transylvania with Russia in the 18<sup>th</sup> Century’ (1914); the third one in a collective edition by Archimandrite Pușcariu and Preda, Borgia, Lupaș and Matei, under the title ‘Contributions to the Past of Romanians on the Royal Lands’ (1913). . . . This introduction, which is a thorough critical study of Georg Müller’s book, shows Dragomir as an excellent connoisseur of the social history of the Romanians in Transylvania. I do not want to perform here a more in-depth analysis of these three papers by Mr. Dragomir. They are important to any researcher of Romanian history as first-class works. I only mention that in his studies Dragomir was helped by the knowledge of the two Slavic languages absolutely indis-



- pensable for the original researches of Church history of the Romanians, the Russian and the Serbian languages, which provided the so useful skill of understanding the ancient Slavic church language. For Romanians in Hungary this knowledge is very rare. I want the title of corresponding member of the Romanian Academy to be for Mr. Dragomir not just the reward of his work so far, but the urge to work even more earnestly in the future.” *Analele Academiei Române: Partea administrativă și Desbaterile* (Bucharest), 2<sup>nd</sup> ser., 38 (1915–1916) (Bucharest, 1916): 196–198; Şipoş, 50.
12. “I was in Sibiu in 1918. Before the Union, my husband was one of the leaders of the Transylvanian youth. He was also the main founder, organizer and editor of *Gazeta Poporului*” (text drawn up by Flora Dragomir on the role played by Silviu Dragomir in organizing the Alba Iulia Assembly on 1 December 1918, in the Enescu family archive); Şipoş, 51.
  13. Silviu Dragomir, *Un sfert de veac de la unirea Transilvaniei* (Sibiu, 1943), 25; Ion Clopoşel, *Amintiri și portrete* (Timișoara, 1973), 197.
  14. Clopoşel, 197; Ştefan Pascu, *Făurirea statului național unitar român*, vol. 2 (Bucharest, 1983), 190.
  15. Eugeniu Sperantia, “Figuri universitare: Silviu Dragomir,” *Steaua* (Cluj) 17, 11 (1966): 43.
  16. Pascu, 225.
  17. “I remember that uplifting moment when my husband read the address in the summary form: ‘Honored National Assembly, on behalf of the Committee, I received the following address: The National Committee—arriving at the time of the release—submits its mandate.’ The enthusiastic applause of the Assembly, which covered his words, seemed endless.” (Text drawn up by Flora Dragomir on the role played by Silviu Dragomir in organizing the Alba Iulia Assembly on 1 December 1918, in the Enescu family archive, pp. 1–2).
  18. *Ibid.*
  19. Sperantia, 43.
  20. AN-DJ Cluj, coll. Universitatea din Cluj. Facultatea de Litere. Minute 186 (1921/1922); National Archives—Central Historical National Archives Bucharest (hereafter cited as AN-ANIC Bucharest), Onisifor Ghibu coll., doc. 1, 1919–1929, vol. 1, file 10; *Anuarul Universității din Cluj Anul I, 1919–1920* (Cluj, 1921): 32; Stelian Neagoe, *Viața universitară clujeană interbelică: Triumful rațiunii împotriva violenței*, vol. 1 (Cluj-Napoca, 1980), 111; Şipoş, 56.
  21. Neagoe, 1: 187–202. In the academic years 1919–1920, 1920–1921, Silviu Dragomir, from the Department of the History of Southeast European Peoples, held a series of lectures and seminars that familiarized him with the political, social and ethnic realities south of the Danube: Slavic-Romanian Paleography, 2 hours; History of the Serbian people until 1459, 3 hours of seminar in the first semester, and for the next semester Chapters of Serbian social and state life until 1459, 1 hour; the History of Banat, 2 hours of seminar; Slavic-Romanian Paleography, 2 hours: *Anuarul Universității din Cluj Anul I, 1919–1920* (Cluj, 1921): 32. In the academic year 1922–1923, the director of the Seminar of Southeast European History taught the following subjects: Slavic Language and Romanian Chancelleries, 3

hours, and Slavic-Romanian Readings, 2 hours of seminar: *Anuarul Universității din Cluj pe anul școlar 1922/23* (Cluj, 1924): 112. For the academic years 1923–1924 and 1924–1925, the courses held by Professor Silviu Dragomir anticipated the researches devoted to Western Romanians in the Middle Ages. Thus, in the first semester of the academic year 1923–1924, Dragomir taught the students from Cluj Old Slavic History, 1 hour; Slavic language of the Romanian Chancelleries, 2 hours; Slavic-Romanian documents, 2 hours of seminar. In the second semester: Old Slavic History, 1 hour; Elements of Slavic-Romanian Paleography and Diplomacy, 1 hour; Slavic documents of Stephen the Great; Crusades in the Balkan Peninsula, 2 hours: *Anuarul Universității din Cluj pe anul școlar 1923–24* (Cluj, 1925): 124. In the academic year 1925–1926, Dragomir taught the following disciplines: History of the Romanian Revolution in Transylvania in the years 1848–1849, 1 hour; The problem of Balkan Romanity, 2 hours; Criticism of the New Opinions on the Origin of the Romanians, 1 hour of seminar: *Anuarul Universității din Cluj pe anul școlar 1924–25* (Cluj, 1926): 105. In the academic year 1929–1930, Silviu Dragomir taught the Slavic Language of the Romanian Chancellery, 2 hours a week, and the seminar on Interpreting Slavic-Romanian Documents, 2 hours a week: *Anuarul Universității Regele Ferdinand I Cluj pe anul școlar 1929–30* (Cluj, 1930): 193. In the 1930–1931 academic year, he delivered the lecture on Political Movements in Southeastern Europe in 1848, 2 hours, and the seminar Slavic Paleography Exercises, 2 hours a week: *Anuarul Universității Regele Ferdinand I Cluj pe anul școlar 1930–31* (Cluj, 1931): 200. In the following year, he taught the Classical Language of the Romanian Churches, 2 hours, and the Seminar Lectures in Medio-Bulgarian Texts, 2 hours: *Anuarul Universității Regele Ferdinand I Cluj pe anul școlar 1931–32* (Cluj, 1932): 219. See also AN-ANIC Bucharest, Onisifor Ghibu coll., file 282/1919–1929, vol. 1, doc. 10.

22. *Analele Academiei Române: Partea administrativă și Dezbaterele*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ser., 49 (1927–1928) (Bucharest, 1929): 139–140. “You have continued, since then, year after year, with zealous research, publishing contributions of interest for the history of the Romanians in Arad County, for the age of the Romanian element in Banat, for the traditional settlements, about which they refer to the documents related to the Vlachs in Serbia in the 12<sup>th</sup>–12<sup>th</sup> centuries, as well as for the Vlachs and morals of Istria.” Ioan Lupaș, “Activitatea istorică a dlui Dr. Silviu Dragomir: Din răspunsul dlui I. Lupaș la discursul de intrare în Academia română a dlui Silviu Dragomir,” *Transilvania* (Sibiu) 60, 7–8 (July–Aug. 1929): 646.
23. “Dear Professor. By the High Royal Decree 1977/1923, on 1 May 1923 you were promoted to the rank of tenured professor in the Department of History of Southeast European Peoples.” AN-DJ Deva, Silviu Dragomir coll., file 3; *Anuarul Universității din Cluj Anul I, 1919–1920*, 112; Șipoș, 58.
24. “In the Ordinary Session held on 30 October 1925. Present: V. Bărbaț (president), G. Bogdan-Duică, G. Giuglea, I. Lupaș, Th. Capidan, I. Paul, D. M. Teodorescu, Fl. Ștefănescu-Goangă, O. Ghibu, Șt. Bezdechi, G. Kristof, P. Grimm. Prof. Silviu Dragomir, with unanimous vote, is elected dean for the 1925/1926 school year” (coll. Universitatea din Cluj, Minutes 1925–1926; Neagoe, 1: 178–179).

25. Neagoe, 2: 335.
26. "Following balloting in accordance with Article 24 of the Statutes, Mr Silviu Dragomir receives 17 of 23 votes. Mr. Emil Racoviță finds that Mr. Silviu Dragomir gathered two-thirds of the votes of the present members and proclaimed him an elected active member of the Academy, in the Historical Section." *Analele Academiei Române* 47, 1927–1928 (Bucharest, 1928): 140.
27. Maria Someșan and Mircea Iosifescu, "Modificarea structurii universității în anii consolidării sistemului comunist," in *Analele Sighet 6: Anul 1948—instituționalizarea comunismului*, ed. Romulus Rusan (Bucharest, 1998), 472; Toader Buculei, *Clio încarcerată: Mărturii și opinii privind destinul istoriografiei românești în epoca totalitarismului comunist* (Brăila, 2000), 91; Alexandru Zub, "Clio în derută: Istoriografia română a anului 1947," in *Analele Sighet 5: Anul 1947—căderea cortinei* (Bucharest, 1997), 267.
28. P. Popescu-Gogan and C. Voiculescu-Ilie, "Desființarea Academiei Române și înființarea Academiei R.P. Române," in *Analele Sighet 6*, 498.
29. Ibid.
30. "I was not a sympathizer with fascist ideas. On the contrary, I have systematically fought them over the last 20 years. I voted for resistance in the Crown Council on 30 August. The Legionnaire Ministerial Commission had me suspended from the department, for two years, for misconduct. As a guest of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the P. Groza government, we collaborated in preparing the material for the Peace Conference." AN-DJ Deva, Silviu Dragomir coll., file 4, p. 246; Șipoș, 88.
31. "Conceptul cererii adresată de Silviu Dragomir Președintelui Prezidiului Marii Adunări Naționale," in Enescu family archive, p. 1; Șipoș, 99.
32. According to the decision taken in the council meeting of 29 December 1948, the court issued the following statement: "the word 'jointly' is to be replaced with the words 'each to a 2,600,000 correctional fine'." AN-DJ Deva, Silviu Dragomir coll., file 4, p. 23; Șipoș, 99.
33. "Sentenced by the Cluj Court of Appeal on 6 November 1948 for an offense to the State Bank's Law to 6 months imprisonment and a fine transformed in a year of imprisonment, I was arrested in Cluj in July 1949, to be released on 27 December 1950." Autobiography of the author, AN-DJ Deva, Silviu Dragomir coll., file 4.
34. According to the Release Letter no. 193 534 of 1956, Silviu Dragomir was released on 9 June 1955 (AN-DJ Deva, Silviu Dragomir coll., file 4). The release on 9 June is also confirmed by the special travel ticket, Sighet–Cluj, third class, series A, no. 0635301, issued to Silviu Dragomir (ibid.). Șipoș, 106.
35. According to the address of the Department of Historical Sciences of the Romanian Academy of 30 January 1956, signed by Petre Constantinescu-Iași, Silviu Dragomir was told that "in the meeting of 24 January 1956, your application for employment [Subsection of Historical Sciences] was approved and submitted to the Presidium of the PRR Academy. Consequently, please present yourself to the Institute of History of the PRR Academy in Cluj, to receive the position for which you were recommended." AN-DJ Deva, Silviu Dragomir coll., file 92; Șipoș, 109.
36. Silviu Dragomir, *Vlahii din nordul Peninsulei Balcanice în evul mediu* (Bucharest, 1959), 224. The work with the initial title *Românii balcanici în evul mediu* was proposed for

publication by the author in February 1956. In the autumn of the following year, the finalized manuscript was corrected by the specialists from the Council for the Study of the Romanian People and Language, and in the following year by the publishing house of the Romanian Academy, the history department. Silviu Dragomir expressed his reservations towards some of the corrections made by the correctors. AN-DJ Deva, Silviu Dragomir coll., file 17, pp. 11–14, 62–67, 16–20, 44–52, 33–34.

37. Buculei, 92–93. “Certificatul de moarte nr. 565 807,” cause of death thrombophlebitis left leg. AN-DJ Deva, Silviu Dragomir coll., file 2; Şipoş, 147.
38. We consider the political-national activity carried out by Silviu Dragomir between 1911 and 1918. In recognition of his merits, he was elected secretary of the Great National Assembly in Alba Iulia. His initiatives have often put him in conflict with the authorities of the time. For example, the establishment of the newspaper *Gazeta Poporului* by the young teacher was the subject of an investigation by the management of the Theological Institute in Sibiu. Among the proposed measures to be taken against him by the Institute’s management was also his exclusion from the teaching staff. According to the survey, Professors Silviu Dragomir and Nicolae Bălan, as well as the catechist Ioan Broşu, were accused of engaging in political actions. AN-DJ Deva, Silviu Dragomir coll., file 4, “Rezultatul anchetei privind activitatea politică a lui Silviu Dragomir cerută de Mitropolitul Vasile Mangra,” pp. 6–7.
39. Nicolae Iorga, *Istoria românilor din Ardeal și Ungaria*, ed. Georgeta Penelea (Bucharest, 1989), 20.
40. Silviu Dragomir, *Istoria desrobirei religioase a românilor ardeleni în secolul XVIII*, 2 vols. (Sibiu, 1920–1930).
41. Silviu Dragomir, *La Transylvanie avant et après l’arbitrage de Vienne* (Sibiu, 1943); id., *Le Banat roumain: Esquisse historique* (Sibiu, 1944); *La Transylvanie* (Paris, 1946). See Stelian Mândruț, “‘Centrul de studii și cercetări privitoare la Transilvania’: Istoric și activitate (1942–1948) (I),” *Anuarul Institutului de Istorie și Arheologie din Cluj* 29 (1989): 317–344; Stelian Mândruț and Liviu Ursuțiu, *Historiographical Landmarks: The Destiny of an Institution* (= *Bulletin of the Center for Transylvanian Studies*, Supplement, October 1996).
42. Stelian Mândruț, “La ‘Revue de Transylvanie’ et l’école d’histoire de Cluj (1934–1945),” *Studia Universitatis Babeş-Bolyai: Historia* 32, 1 (1987): 65.
43. Only in the third decade he published over 60 articles in magazines and newspapers in Romania, which dealt with Transylvania and the Romanians in that region.
44. *Adunarea națională a unirii, 1 decembrie 1918*, with a foreword by Silviu Dragomir, with 12 illustrations containing the only original images from the national assembly of 1918 (Sibiu, 1929).
45. Dragomir, *Un sfert de veac*, 3.
46. *Ibid.*, 3–4.
47. *Ibid.*, 4.
48. *Ibid.*, 6.
49. *Ibid.*
50. *Ibid.*
51. *Ibid.*, 7.

52. Ibid., 8.
53. Ibid., 10.
54. Ibid., 10–11.
55. Ibid., 12.
56. Ibid., 17–18.
57. Ibid., 10. “But the thought of emancipation lives now in everyone’s heart. In every corner of Transylvania meetings are held, plans are devised, the determined voice of the Romanian people demands to be heard.”
58. Ibid.
59. Ibid., 28.
60. Nicolae Iorga, *Generalități cu privire la studiile istorice*, 4<sup>th</sup> edition, introduction, notes and comments by Andrei Pippidi, note on the edition by Victor Durnea (Iași, 1999), 196.

### **Abstract**

National History and Ideology: The Union of 1918 As Reflected in the Work  
*A Quarter Century after the Union of Transylvania* by Silviu Dragomir

Silviu Dragomir (1888–1962) considered, together with the representatives of the Transylvanian Romanians, that the only realistic solution was the union with Romania. Historical writing, in his opinion, had to provide the European political and scientific world with evidence of the legitimacy of national aspirations. In this sense, the purpose of the historian involved in the national movement was to make it known that the national ideals at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century were in line with historical truth. Silviu Dragomir identified the internal and external causes that allowed the Romanians in Transylvania to unite with Romania. Last but not least, the author emphasized the role played by personalities such as Vasile Goldiș, Gheorghe Pop de Băsești, Alexandru Vaida-Voievod, Iuliu Maniu, Aurel Lazăr, Ștefan Cicio-Pop, Ioan Suci, Aurel Vlad and others in the preparation and organization of the main moments that preceded the Great Assembly in Alba Iulia. The historian highlighted the solidarity between the elite and the rest of the Romanian population in Transylvania. Silviu Dragomir did not analyze the reasons that led to the loss of part of Transylvania on 30 August 1940. He preferred to remain focused only on historical analysis. His active presence in Romanian politics, especially between 1937 and 1940, allowed him to observe many of the negative parts of the Romanian political life that facilitated the territorial losses suffered by Romania in 1940.

### **Keywords**

Silviu Dragomir, 1918, national history, ideology, Transylvania