

excessive consumption of corn), but also its social and cultural impact.

In a space dominated by illiteracy, superstition and bad nutrition like the investigated one, the role of traditional medicine was a very important one. Aware of this fact, the author dedicates the 3rd part of his approach (pp. 227–268) to the comparative analysis of the way in which medical culture and peasant culture were seen by the people from different villages. His conclusions are based on the observations of the doctors who tried to visit different places and to contribute to the improvement of daily life. Also, attention is paid to the legislation and its role in changing lifestyles and mentalities. The author underlines the fact that, for the investigated period, “The creation of a modern health system is inconceivable without a legislative and normative framework, which forms the topic of the present chapter. Even a rapid survey of the health legislation will reveal the massive scale of the modern state’s efforts in setting up and managing the health services in the last three decades of the nineteenth century and in the early twentieth century. But what do these prescriptive texts tell us? They present an ideal situation, a this-is-how-things-should-be scenario. Alongside this *Belle Époque* representation of Romanian society as envisioned by health legislators, there is another, apparently very different, picture. This chapter aims to analyze the two images comparatively. I am not, in fact, interested in legislation as a social projection. I want to know what was done to put it into practice and what changed in society as a result. We thus enter the sensitive area of norms versus practice, which remains a minefield for legislators even today” (pp. 228–229).

Well-documented and offering an interesting approach to a relevant, but in-

sufficiently investigated topic pertaining to Romanian history (with relevance for anthropological research), the book of Professor Constantin Bărbulescu brings to the attention of foreign specialists important aspects of Romanian research and will surely create bridges of debate between our cultural space and others.

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ANA VICTORIA SIMA and TEODORA-ALEXANDRA MIHALACHE, eds.

Persuading Minds: Propaganda and Mobilisation in Transylvania during World War I

Berlin etc.: Peter Lang, 2018

FOCUSING ON the impact of the Great War upon the multiethnic Transylvanian population, the book edited by Ana Victoria Sima and Teodora-Alexandra Mihalache is of great interest for the historians who research the European history of the “long nineteenth century” and the beginning of the “short 20th century.” In recent years, more and more research on the Great War has outlined the importance of these events, not only as a turning point in world history, but also from other perspectives, such as the political, economic, social and gender relations dimensions of the war. Historians dealt with the transformations in Transylvanian society which occurred before and during the First World War and their consequences both in macro- and micro-history. The editors and contributors to this volume focus on some key points which have not been researched in Romanian historiography, such as propaganda and mobilization during the

Great War. In the pages of this volume, the reader will discover not only the route of propaganda messages, from the transmitter to the receiver, but also the means of their transmission, the filters and the obstacles they encountered along the way and, last but not least, the feedback that was recorded at the level of communities and of individual combatants.

The volume contains 13 scientific studies regarding the way in which propaganda functioned in Transylvania during the First World War through different channels, and for various strata of the population. Discussing both the elite (ecclesiastical, administrative, cultural) and the ordinary people, the studies included in this volume bring together different perspectives and approaches upon the Great War and its meanings.

Diana Covaci recreates in her study entitled “The Church’s Mobilisation of the Population in Support of the War Effort: A Study of Communication” the way in which the ecclesiastical elite managed the communication with the people in times of crisis. The approach is interesting and one of a kind, because it analyses the way in which the communication occurs between three successive nodes in the chain of command: the central ecclesiastical authorities—the archpriests—the priests. In the matter of harvesting the blackberry leaves as a command coming from the center, the administration and the priests react in different ways, the aim being to show the way in which people react during crisis situations.

Mirela Popa-Andrei focuses, in her study regarding “The Priests’ Manifold Roles in Transylvania’s Romanian Communities during World War I,” on the multiple roles that the Romanian Transylvanian clergy assumed during the years of World War I. Becoming agents of wartime propaganda

and transmitters of the official message sent by the center—the Habsburg state—the priests spread the news amongst the Romanian communities. Their roles multiplied during the war, and the clergy may be analyzed from different perspectives: the priest as a “spiritual shepherd,” as a civil servant, as a teacher or even as a victim. The author concludes that these overlapping roles revealed the important status the clergy still enjoyed among the Romanian communities in Transylvania, but also the difficult situation of the priests during those years, when they had to carefully accommodate the requirements or to dispel the suspicions of the authorities, on the one hand, and to accomplish the highest aspirations of their co-nationals, on the other hand.

Floarea Pop analyses “Episcopal Circulars as a Means of Conveying War Propaganda. Case Study: The Circulars Issued by the Vicariate of Maramureş (1914–1918).” After researching the archive collection of the Greek Catholic Vicarage of Maramureş, Floarea Pop was able to examine the war propaganda, which was initialized by the Hungarian authorities through the channel of ecclesiastical circulars, in order to conduct the mobilization of the Transylvanian population.

Ionela Zaharia contributed a study regarding “War Propaganda: A Duty to the Nation and the Emperor. ASTRA and the Military Clergy during the Great War” in which, based on various archival sources, press releases, memoirs, petitions and correspondence, she demonstrates that the link between the institutions of state propaganda and Romanian cultural institutions (such as ASTRA) played an important role both in the daily life of the soldiers, and in the war economy. An aspect observed by the author is the importance of the letters received by the soldiers on the front line

as a means to uphold national culture and consciousness and to mentally overcome the horrors that they experienced.

Andreea Dăncilă Ineoan discusses in her study entitled “Looking for Allies in the Enemy Camp: Secret Actions Undertaken by the Romanian Kingdom’s Intelligence among their Conationals from Austria-Hungary (1914–1916)” about the way in which the Directorate of Police and General Security conducted activities in order to attract Romanians from Transylvania and Bukovina in the Kingdom of Romania as informants. Adapting to the new methodologies, the author concludes that the category of those who were recruited included teachers, professors, editors, lawyers, priests and doctors. All of them were members of an educated social layer and belonged, with few exceptions, to the middle class elite.

Corneliu Pădurean investigates “The Activity of Ștefan Cicio Pop during World War I.” One of the most important political representatives of the Transylvanian Romanians in the Austrian-Hungarian Monarchy, Ștefan Cicio Pop undertook political actions seeking to secure the rights of the Romanians and of other nationalities in Hungary. Most important was his intervention in 1917 in favor of the Romanians who were deported and sentenced to forced labor in the county of Sopron, in the coal mines and the factories of Csepel, near Budapest.

Discussing about loyalty problems during the First World War, Marius Eppel tries to reconstruct the personality and political choices of Vasile Mangra, in his study entitled “A Transylvanian Metropolitan Involved in War Propaganda: Vasile Mangra in Unsettled Times (1916–1918).” Vasile Mangra, who was the Metropolitan of Transylvania during 1916–1918, took

over the prerogatives of a state agent, playing an important role in the distribution of war propaganda. Although seen as a “national traitor,” Eppel argues that the actions undertaken by Mangra were in fact desperate attempts to enhance the Transylvanian Romanians’ loyalty to the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, on the front lines or in the home communities.

Ioana Mihaela Bonda and Oana Mihaela Tămaș discuss in the study “Behind the Front: The Transylvanian Clerical Elite’s Stance on World War I” about the importance of the ecclesiastical discourse for the Romanian population in times of war. The sources of their research, *Revista teologică* (The Theological Review) and *Cultura creștină* (Christian Culture), reveal the ways in which the ecclesiastical elite of the two Churches in Transylvania sought to mobilize moral and practical support for the population on the cold front. Discussing about issues of Providence in peoples’ lives, social conditions and religious consciousness during wartime, the authors underline the role played by the two journals in the mentality and loyalty of the Romanians from Transylvania.

A comprehensive study regarding the administrative measures of the city of Brașov during the Great War is signed by Teodora-Alexandra Mihalache. The study “A ‘Mobilisation of Souls’: Actions in Support of the War Effort in Brașov during 1914” analyses the first forms of propaganda and the steps taken in a Transylvanian city by the elite in order to organize the home front and to support the war effort. Teodora-Alexandra Mihalache focuses on the mobilization of both Transylvanian Saxons and other nationalities in the city, concluding that the population did not remain passive, but organized itself in order to support the war effort.

Oana Habor contributes an article entitled “Sickness and Suffering: Recollections of the Transylvanian Romanians Enlisted in the Austro-Hungarian Army during the Great War.” Based on diaries, memoirs and letters, the study focuses on the way in which disease and sickness spread during the Great War and caused psychological trauma to the soldiers on the battlefield. As little has been written in Romanian historiography about the epidemics and the medical situation in Transylvania during the Great War, this study is most welcome, as it brings to light some important aspects about the diseases spread and the actions which were undertaken in order to prevent and heal the soldiers.

The study of Nicolae Bocşan and Mihaela Bedecan regarding “The Sentiment of Fear in the Great War: An Attempt to Reconstruct the Psychological Mindset of the Transylvanian Romanians” examines the psyche of soldiers during wartime. Arguing that while the early months of the conflict were marked by the euphoria of mobilization, seen as a sign of bravery and heroism, everyday hardships modified this behavior, leading to the emergence of a diametrically opposed conduct. In the later years of the war, courage and enthusiasm disappear, being replaced with the first signs of anxiety, generated by the proximity of battlefields, and eventually the sentiment of fear—as seen in memoirs.

Ana Victoria Sima examines a large number of letters from the Great War in her study “Writing and Waiting for Peace: Letters of Ordinary Romanian People from Transylvania at the Time of the Great War.” Looking upon the ordinary population of Transylvania, Ana Victoria Sima analyses correspondence as a source of cultural history, examining the way in which the letters were an expression of life,

a channel to express solidarity and support both for the people on the “cold front,” and for the soldiers on the battlefield. Revealing the mindset of the soldiers during the four years of the war, the letters are a great example of how to approach the war from a psychological perspective.

Discussing the issue of visuals during the Great War, Tiberiu Iordan examines in his study “With the Camera in the Trenches” some important moments in the history of Romanian cinema. An extensive film production was made during communism, the author highlighting the way in which propaganda was mixed with entertainment, in order to influence the viewers about war issues.

To sum up, the studies in this volume edited by Ana Victoria Sima and Teodora-Alexandra Mihalache are of great importance for the research of the Great War and its consequences for Transylvanian history, due to the various sources which were researched, such as archives, memoirs, war letters etc. The different perspectives and approaches of the authors shed light upon crucial aspects of the Great War, from Church mobilization and propaganda, attitudes and propaganda channels of the administration, disease and epidemics during wartime, physical and psychological trauma, to the perception of the propaganda message by the ordinary people. The quality of the printing is also to be noted. □

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