

ters, certificates, instructions for parishes, and so on), official school papers, lists of heroes of the conflagration from villages such as Rebrîșoara (pp. 275–282) and Șieu (pp. 283–294), and even a play (pp. 295–303). The work introduces the reader to the complex universe of the war, highlighting the problems of the combatants, of the people who remained home, of the Church and of the schools, and facilitates a direct contact with the sources and with the testimonies of the people who suffered so much. Despite the censorship, some aspects that highlight the difficult life in the trenches, the hard life of the widows and of the lonely women from the county villages are still present in the letters sent to representative people like teacher Ioan Marcu. The latter is the source of many of the published documents.

Therefore, we can conclude that this book is an important contribution to the reconstruction of the image of the First World War and to its understanding, given the impressive number of primary sources offered and the novelty of the information they contain. Like with all important researches, there are some shortcomings that, however, do not diminish its value. Thus, for example, there is no index of places and names, very useful for any researcher who has no time to read the entire book and who is searching just for a name or a place, and there are no biographical notes on the important people mentioned. It would be surely very useful for a reader to find out, in a few words, who was Ioan Marcu, who left behind such a wealth of documents, or who was Liviu Păiuș, etc. On the other hand, there is an excessive preoccupation with explaining archaisms. For this reason, the editors are, from time to time, explaining even words that are

still in use in some regions of the county and of the country. In our opinion, such explanations are not necessary. For example, it would be better to replace these digressions with short biographies of the important local personalities mentioned in the documents.

Despite these minor shortcomings of the book, which surely can be amended in a future edition, the volume is an important contribution to contemporary historiography and to the investigation of the First World War and of its consequences in Bistrița-Năsăud County, one that should not be absent from the libraries of the researchers tackling this subject.



IULIU-MARIUS MORARIU

HARALD HEPPNER, ed.

**Umbruch mit Schlachtenlärm:
Siebenbürgen und der Erste Weltkrieg**
Cologne–Weimar–Vienna: Böhlau Verlag,
Siebenbürgisches Archiv, 44, 2017

WORLD WAR I had a tremendous impact upon Transylvania and its inhabitants, decisively changing the history of this region by causing its separation from Austria-Hungary and the subsequent union with Romania, in keeping with the desire of the majority population, democratically expressed in the autumn of 1918. In recent years, several conferences and a significant number of articles, individual and collective volumes have approached, from various and multidisciplinary perspectives, the impact of the war upon this province and the manner in which the people of that time remembered and recounted the experiences of those dreadful years. Thus, an-

other book devoted to this topic is not likely to be seen as a surprise by the historians and the general readers in this geographic area. However, given the chosen approach and its content, the book presented in what follows is indeed a novelty, portraying in a new light both Transylvania and its inhabitants before, during, and in the aftermath of World War I. Coordinated by the reputed emeritus professor of Karl-Franzens University of Graz (Austria), Harald Heppner, a specialist in the history of Central and Southeast Europe, the volume stirs the reader's attention from the very first instance on account of its title: *A Reversal of Fortunes Amid the Din of Battle: Transylvania and World War One*. The book was published at a prestigious German academic publishing house, Böhlau, as volume 44 in the series "The Transylvanian Archive," edited by the Association for Transylvanian Studies (founded by the Saxons in Sibiu in 1843), with the support of the secretariat for culture and media of the German federal government.

The volume contains some of the papers presented at the conference organized by the Association for Transylvanian Studies at Graz University, between 5 and 6 September 2014, with the motto "World War I," and is structured into three parts: "Transylvania before World War I," with five studies, "Transylvania during World War I," with eight studies, and "Transylvania after World War I," with another five studies. The volume begins with a foreword by Professor Harald Heppner, who highlights the element of novelty represented by the structure of the volume and points out the two elements of the war that fundamentally affected Transylvania, namely, the battlefronts that opened in the region in the year 1916 and the events occurred in late 1918, which led to a "funda-

mental reversal that overwhelmed nearly all those involved," and it ends with two abstracts in Romanian and Hungarian, followed by a descriptive list of contributors (Germans, Hungarians, Romanians, and Austrians), an index of names and one of localities.

The first two studies included in part one present the diplomatic and military perspective of the Austro-Hungarian state upon Transylvania. Gerald Volkmer (The Federal Institute for the Culture and the History of the East-European Germans, of Oldenburg) approaches a topic to which he devoted a doctoral thesis in the years 2000 (the impact of the Transylvanian issue upon the diplomatic relations between Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Romania during the first two years of the war), and the reputed military historian Manfred Rauchensteiner (emeritus professor at Vienna University) discusses the role ascribed to Transylvania, a hereditary province of the Austrian Crown, decades before 1914, in the general pursuit of a clear strategy for the Austro-Hungarian army. Then comes the comprehensive analysis performed by Zsolt K. Lengyel (The Hungarian Institute at Regensburg), concerning the planned reforms and the strategies of the Hungarian government in regard to Transylvania, before, during, and right at the end of the war, when the cabinet in Budapest had less and less room to maneuver following the Romanian claims and given the international context. The last two pieces, signed by Stéphanie Danneberg and Enikő Dáczy of the Munich Institute for the Culture and the History of the Germans of Southeast Europe, discuss the relations between the Saxons and the Transylvanian Romanians between 1910 and 1916, strained by the adoption in 1905 of the activist political program of

the Romanian National Party, and respectively the actions and the speeches of the Transylvanian MPs—Saxons, Hungarians, and Romanians—in the Budapest Parliament during the war, demonstrating that as the war progressed the positions became increasingly divergent.

The “din of battle” mentioned in the title, with reference to what happened in Transylvania during the war, can be heard in the eight studies included in part two of the volume, which essentially focus on the world of the common people (soldiers, housewives, doctors, and military priests), involved in various manners in the events of the war. The first two studies, signed by Harald Roth (The German Cultural East-European Forum of Potsdam) and by Ulrich A. Wien (professor at the Institute of Evangelical Theology of Koblenz-Landau University) are devoted, on the one hand, to the life of Transylvania’s cities between 1914 and 1918, ravaged by battles and hosting the command centers of the military and civilian authorities and, on the other, to the life and activity of the Transylvanian Saxon Evangelical Church of the Augustan Confession, at central (bishopric), regional (deaneries) and local level (parishes), in the areas located on or near the battlefield. Ingrid Schiel (The Transylvanian Institute of Gundelsheim) comes up with new perspectives on the contribution of Saxon women to the war between 1914 and 1918 and in 1918–1919—when the absence of men led to significant changes in the traditional economy of the households and also in the modern urban and industrial one, as the women were forced to take the place of the men—, and also on the impact of the Transylvanian front and of the revolution from the autumn of 1918 upon the life of women. The next two studies, signed by

Irmgard and Werner Sedler (civil servants in Kornwestheim), and respectively by Frank M. Schuster (professor at the Faculty of Philology of the Academy of Humanities and Economic Science of Łódź, Poland) discuss the common topic of the events and the experiences (adventure, solidarity, fear, anxiety) lived by the Saxons of Veseud (Ziedt) and Cisnădie (Heltau) in the years of the Great War, and respectively in the autumn of 1916, when the Romanian royal army began its offensive in southern Transylvania. The primary source shared by these two contributions are the Saxon war memoirs, also employed by the authors of the other pieces featured in this second part of the volume.

The following three studies focus on the collective and individual destiny of two socio-professional categories that played an essential role in providing assistance to the combatants on the battlefronts: the army doctors and priests. Hansgeorg von Killyen (high inspector of schools in Lahr/Black Forest) writes about the Saxon doctors of Sibiu during wartime and the challenges they had to meet, while Erika and Eckbert Schneider (professors in Rastatt) present the experiences of the Saxon doctor Hermann Breckner (1892–1976), on the basis of previously unpublished memoirs and of 63 postcards and letters belonging to him and currently found in the private collection of his descendants. The story of Doctor Breckner shows that, just like for many other Transylvanian doctors and soldiers, the separation from the homeland meant not only one’s presence in army hospitals or on the battlefield, but also long periods in captivity—in his case, the “war memoirs” cover six and a half years, of which five years and two months spent as a prisoner of war in Siberia. The last study included in this section,

signed by Ionela Zaharia (Babeş-Bolyai University of Cluj-Napoca), briefly presents a topic to which the young researcher devoted a doctoral thesis—defended in 2016 at the Faculty of History and Philosophy of Babeş-Bolyai University—and several other articles published both in Romanian and in international languages, namely, the activity of the Orthodox and Greek Catholic army priests in Transylvania during the war. Drawing on primary sources identified in the War Archives of Vienna, Ionela Zaharia begins by presenting the organization of religious services in the Austro-Hungarian army during the war, and continues with the mission and the pastoral care provided by the priests to the Romanian soldiers on the battlefield, behind the frontlines, and in hospitals.

The third part includes five studies devoted to the events occurred after the war and during the interwar period. The first two texts present the political activity of two Transylvanians: Professor Rudolf Gräf (vice-rector of Babeş-Bolyai of Cluj-Napoca) writes about the Banat social-democrat Koloman Müller in the years 1918–1919, on the basis of his memoirs, while Florian Kühner-Wielach (director of the Munich Institute for the Culture and the History of the Germans of Southeast Europe) presents the political activity of Iuliu Maniu, largely on the basis of articles published in Romanian newspapers (*Ardealul*, *Gazeta Ardealului*). The latter sought to illustrate the utter “disappointment” experienced by Maniu and by the Romanian politicians from Transylvania a few years after the creation of Greater Romania, an approach never encountered in Romanian historiography. The following three pieces discuss matters pertaining to culture and cultural history. Franz Sz. Horváth (school counselor in Rüsselheim) approaches two

interrelated aspects: the relations of the Transylvanian Hungarians with the Romanians and the Saxons during the war, and the cult of heroes and the war memoirs of the Hungarians in Romania between 1918 and 1940, and of the Hungarians living in Northern Transylvania in 1940–1944. Bernhard Böttcher (professor at Paderborn University) writes about the war memoirs of the Transylvanian Saxons and of the Banat Swabians during the interwar period, presenting, with edifying examples, the manner in which the Saxons and the Swabians took care of the graves, the plaques and the commemorative monuments devoted to the heroes who died on the battlefield. Finally, Markus Lörz (The Transylvanian Museum of Gundelsheim) comments upon the war art of philatelist and artist Ludwig Hesshaimer, born in Braşov in 1872 but relatively little known in his native region.

The book presents the European historiography with the results of the latest research devoted to the Great War in Transylvania, also providing relevant analyses of the pre-war situation and of the subsequent developments. On the other hand, the articles included in the volume come to complete, enrich and refine the investigations carried out in recent years by Romanian researchers, showing that the representatives of the various nations or ethnic groups that once lived or still live in Transylvania, while having their own perspectives on the history of this land and of their ancestors, are nevertheless capable of building bridges and setting up joint projects.



MIRCEA-GHEORGHE ABRUDAN