

“Two Souls in One Chest:” The Creation of the German Ethnic Group As Reflected in the Romanian Press

Case Study: *Universul*

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Introduction

ON 16 August 1940, Nichifor Crainic, the head of the Romanian Ministry of Propaganda, gave a speech at the Romanian-German Culture Institute in Braşov. Besides underlining the full integration of the Romanian state into the Axis system, the Romanian official paid great attention to the issue of national minorities. “Integral nationalism,” as Crainic put it, “knows how to observe and love the ethnic genius of each national group” and pleaded extensively for the dissemination of German culture in Romania. The German minority as “loyal citizens of His Majesty Carol II and admirers of Führer Adolf Hitler” was to play an essential role in improving the bilateral relations between the two states. Citing from Goethe, the Romanian minister said that the Germans had “two souls in one chest,” Thus, they were called to act as a “golden bridge” between Romania and the Great Reich.¹

Nichifor Crainic’s declaration of faith in Nazi Germany and its new political order in Europe was not a novelty. Since the beginning of July 1940, the Romanian government had made numerous declarations of loyalty to Germany in the hope of gaining its support in dealing with the revisionist claims of Romania’s neighbors, Hungary and Bulgaria. What was new in Crainic’s public stand was the Romanian government’s willingness to accept the changing of the German minority’s situation “in the sense of a new and fundamental right of peoples and ethnic groups,” as one German newspaper enthusiastically put it.² This translated in November 1940 into the creation of the German Ethnic Group in Romania (GEG) as an official organization of the German minority. It was not simply a political party but a body with a legal personality that made all decisions about the fate of Germans in Romania.³

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My paper analyzes how the Romanian newspaper *Universul* (The Universe) covered the transformation of the legal situation of the German minority through the creation of the GEG. My argument is that this development reflected the changes in foreign policy after July 1940 that forced Romania into a close alliance with Nazi Germany and its allies. Moreover, in the context of the territorial losses in the summer of 1940, the Romanian press, including *Universul*, made only short (and officially approved) mentions to the GEG and what it represented: an independent and legally separate existence of the German minority within Romania.

My analysis considers the issues of the newspaper *Universul* covering the period between June and December 1940. The choice is justified by the need to historically contextualize the creation of the GEG and insert it in the emerging web of the transnational relations that developed between Romania and Nazi Germany. Considering the press as being “a social archive,”²⁴ of its time, I believe that the information provided by *Universul*, one of the most important newspapers in Romania, is relevant and worth knowing. The press articles contain basic and detailed information not found in archival documents or memoirs. Even though *Universul* (and the entire Romanian press) was subjected to censorship, what was published or omitted from the pages of the newspaper is relevant for how the Romanian government dealt with various political issues and presented them to the population. The qualitative analysis of the press articles will consider how the newspaper *Universul* reevaluated the role of Nazi Germany in Romania’s foreign policy and how it reported on the changing status of the Romanian German minority in the second half of 1940. As a result, Germany evolved from being one of Romania’s potential allies into the guarantor of its territorial integrity and independence and a valuable source of inspiration for its political organization.

Similarly, the role of the German minority as an intermediary between its kinstate and Romania was surpassed by the GEG’s recognition as a legal entity by public law. This put Germans on equal footing to Romanians and removed them from the Romanian state’s control. The diachronic approach shows how these developments unfolded as the country’s foreign policy changed in late 1940. The transnational perspective is helpful as it underlines how the Nazi organizational principles, propaganda, and culture reached Romania and how the GEG started to import and implement Nazi practices in the life of the German minority in Romania.

I structured my paper into three parts. The first one provides a general introduction to the Romanian political context at the end of the 1930s and several details about the newspaper under discussion—*Universul*. This short introduction will show that Romania’s transition to dictatorship during the 1930s imposed a drastic censorship on the press that limited the number of newspapers and the content of their published materials. There are several reasons behind the choice of *Universul* as a case study. *Universul* was one of Romania’s most popular daily newspapers with nationwide distribution. Its network of permanent foreign correspondents and collaboration with news agencies from abroad ensured it published the latest news. Given its popularity, the newspaper was a valuable channel for transmitting the official message to its numerous readers. Even more so, *Universul* survived without being suspended by the censorship. In the second part, I outline the changes in Romanian foreign policy in the second part of

the year 1940 and how *Universul* reflected these changes, especially the development of Romanian-German relations. In the third part, I will show how the same newspaper reported about the German minority and the creation and activity of the GEG.

Romania Under the Egis of Dictatorship

LIKE ELSEWHERE in Central and East Europe during the 1930s, Romania transitioned to a dictatorial regime. Since his return on the royal throne in June 1930, King Carol II aimed to obtain complete control of the political power where both the government and legislative power would obey and implement his ideas about the country's future. As a result, he constantly undermined parliamentary pluralism and the main political parties.⁵ The introduction of the state of siege in 1933 and its twice-a-year renewal until November 1937⁶ also weakened the democratic order. The state of siege limited or suspended constitutional rights and increased the power of the military.⁷ This drastically limited the political opposition's freedom of speech as its newspapers were banned temporarily or definitively.⁸

The elections of December 1937 shook, even more, the fragile Romanian democracy. None of the parties gained the needed majority to control the new Parliament. More importantly, the extreme right party Everything for the Fatherland (known as the Legionary Movement) won a surprising third position in the final electoral ranking. In the aftermath of the election, Carol's reaction was to go to the fourth-ranking party, the National Christian Party, an extreme right and anti-Semitic political organization. The government's measures that targeted Jews deepened the political crisis and attracted Britain and France's adverse reaction. As the political and social stability was crumbling, on 10–11 February 1938 King Carol II announced a new government formed of politically unaffiliated personalities.⁹

This was the beginning of Carol II's two-year dictatorship. The king replaced the 1923 Constitution with a new one that turned the Parliament into a sham institution and increased his control over the government. Moreover, on 11 February 1938, the new government reintroduced the state of siege in the country, which remained in place until the end of World War II.¹⁰ As mentioned above, the state of siege granted exceptional powers to the military authorities. They could perform house searches at their discretion, dissolve any meeting regardless of the number of participants and place of gathering, and "censor the press and other publications," "prevent the appearance of a newspaper or publication, or just the appearance of certain news or articles."¹¹ The reintroduction of (military) censorship was anticipated by the government's ban on independent newspapers including *Dimineaa*, *Adevărul*, and *Lupta* on 30 December 1937. The blow to the freedom of the press and to the political opposition continued with the elimination of all political parties and organizations and their publications between March and April 1938. As a result, the publication of the National Liberal Party (*Viitorul*, *Liberalul*) and of the National Peasant Party (*Dreptatea*, *Patria*) newspapers ceased in the following months.¹² Even if, in December 1938, Carol II had created the Front of National Rebirth as the sole political party of his regime, the activities of the

Liberal and National Peasant Party were tolerated. By comparison, the king cracked down on his sworn enemy, the Iron Guard (also known as the Legionary Movement), as their leaders were assassinated in November 1938.¹³

After the cessation of Bessarabia and Northern Bukovina at the end of June 1940,¹⁴ Carol II made peace with the Iron Guard and included its members in the pro-German government of Ion Gigurtu. The gesture was a desperate move: the king hoped to gain Nazi Germany's support against the revisionist claims of Romania's neighbors, Hungary and Bulgaria. The move proved futile as the 30 August 1940 Vienna Award forced Romania to cede the northern part of Transylvania to Hungary. In September 1940, Southern Dobruja (Quadrilateral) was returned to Bulgaria.¹⁵

Following the territorial losses in the summer of 1940, Carol II's dictatorship began to unravel. In order to secure his position, the king appointed General Ion Antonescu as the head of government. Given the widespread protests after the Vienna Award, Antonescu asked Carol to abdicate, which he reluctantly did on 6 September 1940. Another royal decree of 14 September 1940 proclaimed Romania as a National Legionary State where the legionaries controlled strategic positions.¹⁶ Regarding the political consequences of the regime change, Dennis Deletant mentioned that "King Carol had dismantled the existing political structure, so Antonescu did not have to do so himself."¹⁷ Indeed, the new (military) regime could rule the country without any constitutional constraints: King Carol II's ambitions for a personal dictatorship had already destroyed the Romanian democracy. Moreover, before his abdication, Carol II issued royal decrees that suspended the Constitution of 1938, dissolved the Parliament, and granted Ion Antonescu unlimited powers as the *Conducător* (Leader) of the Romanian state.¹⁸

Within this context, few newspapers survived the censorship and regime changes. Among them was *Universul*. It was the publication with one of the highest circulations in the Old Kingdom of Romania and then in Greater Romania. Its founder was Italian businessman and war correspondent Luigi Cazzavillan, who came to Romania in 1877 and settled in Bucharest. The first edition of *Universul* appeared on 20 August 1884. Conceived as a politically independent publication of "information and advertising"¹⁹ and intended for a broad audience, *Universul* soon became the most read Romanian newspaper. During the interwar period, its print circulation reached 200,000 copies, a leading position shared with other daily newspapers, including *Dimineața*, *Adevărul*, *Curentul*, *Cuvântul*, and *Timpul*.²⁰ Its success was a combination of its low price, an editorial policy that combined up-to-date political information (internal and foreign news), cultural materials, including pamphlets, literary chronicles and series, short stories, advertising, and "talk of the town" news.²¹ *Universul* was the first Romanian newspaper to have permanent foreign press correspondents. Known for making decent payments to its external contributors, the newspaper collaborated with several Romanian writers, including Camil Petrescu, Perpessicius, Vasile Voiculescu, Ion Barbu, G. Călinescu, Mircea Eliade, Mihai Beniuc and Zaharia Stancu. *Universul* used foreign press agencies during the interwar period, including Rador, Havas, Associated Press, and Reuters, to cover international events.²² *Universul's* editor in chief for the period under study was Stelian Popescu. A graduate in law, he worked as a lawyer at *Universul*, and after the death of Cazzavillan's wife, he bought the majority of the newspaper's shares and became its director.²³ He also began a political career as minister of Justice in two governments:

1921–1922 and 1927–1928. Thus, *Universul* became a right-wing publication²⁴ but its willingness to obey official regulations ensured its survival amid regime changes. *Universul* had two editions: a morning edition²⁵ (identified as C I) that reached Bucharest and the major cities, and an afternoon edition (identified as P III) for the rest of the country. There are significant differences between the two editions regarding the published articles and the number of pages. I chose the first (morning) edition, found in the Lucian Blaga Central University Library collection in Cluj-Napoca for my analysis.

Leaning Towards Germany: From Neutrality to Close Alliance

THE BREAKDOWN of the collective security system and the re-emergence of Germany as a (revisionist) Great Power in the mid-1930s required a change in Romania's foreign policy. Until July 1940, King Carol II and the Romanian governments pursued a policy of informal neutrality (or "equilibrium") between the powers. This meant that Romania aimed to maintain its traditional alliances with France and Great Britain. At the same time, it sought to establish closer relations with Germany. Both parties hoped that their solid political relations would grow out of economic cooperation. However, although Germany secured a dominant position in their foreign trade since 1935, Romanians did not want to find themselves dominated economically by the powerful Reich. Anschluss and the Munich settlement made their mission difficult, if not impossible: Germany absorbed all Austrian and Czechoslovak trade and foreign investments and thus, enhanced its economic position in Romania (and in Europe). King Carol II and his Foreign Minister Grigore Gafencu agreed to economic concessions to gain a German guarantee of Romania's territorial integrity and its support for building up the national economy. The result of the negotiations was an economic agreement signed on 23 March 1939. The document established the guidelines for future cooperation between Romania and Germany in agriculture, industry, the exploitation of natural resources, and building up the infrastructure. However, it did not impose a German monopoly on Romanian exports.²⁶

The policy of neutrality in regard to the Great Powers also implied that Romania diminished the foreign-policy obligations that could bring it into a conflict with Germany. This was the case with the Czechoslovakian crisis of 1938: Romania tried to evade its treaty obligations with Czechoslovakia and refused the passage of Soviet troops across its territory. The Anglo-French guarantee (April 1939) was a unilateral guarantee of these two countries of the Romanian borders against aggression. By contrast, Romania was not bound to assist Britain or its allies in the event of an attack.²⁷

As Dennis Deletant mentioned, the Romanian policy of neutrality

*rested on the tension between Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union, for the states of Eastern Europe represented a buffer-zone between the two great dictatorships, and the status quo of the area depended on Hitler and Stalin's mutual suspicion.*²⁸

This “equilibrium” was shattered by the Nazi-Soviet Pact of Non-Aggression of 23 August 1939 that sealed a surprising peace between two enemies. Fearing a Soviet threat, the government decided to speed up the rate of economic cooperation, especially in petroleum deliveries. This movement aimed to gain Germany’s support for maintaining Romania’s territorial integrity. Thus, on 27 May 1940 the Romanian government signed the so-called Oil for Arms Pact with the Reich. It ensured that Romanian petroleum was exchanged for German armaments at a prewar price.²⁹

The German victories in the West and the capitulation of neutral Belgium on 28 May 1940 marked the end of Romanian neutrality. Abandoning any hope of Anglo-French help against the territorial claims of Romania’s revisionist neighbors, King Carol II sought a close political collaboration with the Great Reich. The change came too late, as Germany advised the Romanian government to accept the cessation of Bessarabia and Northern Bukovina to the Soviet Union.³⁰ In order to prevent a further Soviet attack and the realization of Hungarian and Bulgarian revisionist claims against Romania, Carol II decided to speed up the establishment of formal political relations with the Reich. On 1 July, Romania renounced the Anglo-French guarantee, and three days later, the king created a pro-German government headed by Ion Gigurtu.³¹

The creation of the Ion Gigurtu government marked a visible change in how the newspaper *Universul* reported on Germany and on Romania’s official relations with it. During the first part of June 1940, the only news about Nazi Germany in *Universul* was limited to the developing military events of World War II. A particular event connecting the two countries was a four-day study trip of Romanian engineers to Berlin (14–18 June 1940). The head of the delegation was none other than Mihail Manoilescu, the Romanian economist known for his far right sympathies. During the official reception, Manoilescu spoke of “the community of interests” between the Romanian and German engineers and underlined the need to co-opt the latter in the reconstruction of Romania. On behalf of the hosts, the Minister of Transport, Julius Dorpmüller, spoke about the good relations between the two countries. They rested not only on “the reciprocity of economic interests” but also on “the resemblance of political ideas” of their leaders.³²

The same idea of shared interests between Romania and Germany was at the core of Gigurtu’s first official declaration as prime minister. In his view, the country’s integration into the Rome–Berlin Axis was a matter of “political realism” and arose from the government’s “political and ideological conceptions.”³³

The “new orientation” also required a change in internal policy. Commenting on Gigurtu’s speech, *Universul* unleashed an attack against those national minorities who took advantage of Romanian hospitality and profited from the endemic bureaucratic corruption in the country. Consequently, they managed to take control of “the entire economic life of the country” and also “slipped into areas from where public opinion is guided, where cultural, social and national directives are shaped.” The new regime based on “pure and creative nationalism” was to properly address the situation.³⁴

The editorial signaled the intensification of anti-Semitic governmental measures. On the following day, *Universul* published a discourse of the Minister of Propaganda, Nichifor Crainic, held during a meeting with the directors of the main newspapers. This was the first time a Romanian official openly argued for discriminatory measures with racial ar-

guments. Using the Nazi definition of the nation as a “blood community” (“nationality is the fate of blood”) bound together by shared language and culture,³⁵ Crainic mentioned that the new regime of “integral or totalitarian nationalism” could only be served by a “national press” from where the Jews were to be expelled. The Romanianization of the press was necessary as the foreigners could only express “the natural ideas of the respective race.”³⁶

Romania’s decision to enter a political collaboration with Nazi Germany resulted in its withdrawal from the League of Nations. The action had a symbolic value. On the one hand, in 1940, the League had already proven its inefficiency in preventing a new world conflict. On the other hand, before July 1940, Romanian governments, regardless of their political color, put their faith in the League of Nations to protect the Versailles system and the national frontiers drawn at the end of World War I.³⁷ Thus, the renunciation to the membership of the League signaled a change in its foreign policy: it was no longer the League of Nations but rather its scorned enemy Germany in which Romanians put their hopes for preserving their national integrity. *Universul* informed its readers about the Romanian government’s decision by reproducing the statement of the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mihail Manoilescu: the League of Nations was nothing more than a lasting “political illusion” that did not benefit Romania. Instead, the country allegedly found itself in “damaging political actions and contrary to its true feelings towards some great and noble friendly nations.”³⁸ With his declaration, the minister trampled on Romania’s existing line in foreign policy that considered the League of Nations and its collective security the main guarantee of the state’s territorial integrity. Also, Manoilescu blamed the same League of Nations for the country’s reluctance to join Germany and its allies sooner.

Closer relations to the Axis powers also commanded concrete diplomatic action. The first step in this direction was the official visit of Ion Gigurtu and Mihail Manoilescu to Berlin and Rome at the end of July, where they met Hitler and Mussolini. *Universul* did not hide its enthusiasm about the event, which was interpreted as validating the righteous change in Romania’s foreign policy. As a result, the visit received extensive coverage in terms of organization and official (Romanian) declarations. Consequently, *Universul* provided its readers with general details (“political and economic problems concerning Romania and Southeastern Europe”³⁹) about the content of discussions and an optimistic conclusion on their finality: Germany and Italy had shown “a real interest and understanding” towards Romania.⁴⁰

The optimistic tone was, to some extent, justified. *Universul* did not tell its readers that since mid-July 1940, Germany had directly pressured Romania on the issue of concessions to Hungary and Bulgaria as a condition for closer bilateral collaboration. During their meeting on 26 July 1940, Hitler accepted Gigurtu’s solution for a population transfer and a small territorial concession to appease revisionist Hungary. The situation favored Romania, as Hungary had requested the entire Northern Transylvania.⁴¹

The Romanian prime minister broke the news about the Hungarian and Bulgarian revisionist claims on 9 August 1940. In his radio speech, published in full by *Universul*, Ion Gigurtu mentioned the history of good relations between Romania and Germany and blamed the former democratic regime for preventing a close alliance between the

two countries. For the new government, the alliance with the Axis was “absolutely indispensable,” but it required “some sacrifices” from Romania, namely reaching an agreement with Hungary and Bulgaria. The prime minister mentioned that he had received this suggestion during his visits to Germany and Italy.⁴²

Although *Universul* covered the development of the negotiations with Hungary extensively, it was not until the Vienna Award of 30 August 1940 that Germany was mentioned in connection with the Axis’s unconditional arbitration of the Transylvanian dispute. *Universul* refrained from underlining the ill-fated role of Germany and Italy in solving the Romanian-Hungarian dispute. Instead, the newspaper supported the governmental standpoint that the Vienna Award brought the long-awaited territorial guarantee of Romania by the Axis.⁴³

Strengthening the alliance with Germany prior to the Vienna Award also implied an import of its political model. Thus, the contact between mass organizations was now encouraged by the Romanian regime and the open endorsement of Nazi symbols. On 11 August 1940, a group of 12 leaders of the Hitlerjugend visited the training camp of Straja Țării⁴⁴ in Breaza in an exchange of experience. *Universul* describes the visit of the German guests in detail. They received a festive welcome: 400 *străjeri* (sentinels) waved the flags of both countries, “expressing this way their great joy of fraternizing in the field of common aspirations.” At the same time, the band played the German national anthem. The commandant of the Breaza training center gave a welcome speech in German. The Romanian official praised “the pride and strength of the brave German people,” Führer Adolf Hitler, for creating a new destiny for the entire world, and ended his speech with “Heil Adolf Hitler!,” the required formula of salutation used in Nazi Germany.⁴⁵ His last words were accompanied by the *străjeri* and their band singing the German national anthem and *Die Fahne hoch*.⁴⁶ The representative of the Hitlerjugend gave his thanks for the festive reception and praised the king and his aide, Teofil Gh. Sidorovici, for their work in organizing Straja Țării. The German guest finished his speech by chanting slogans for King Carol II and Romania. After Breaza, the Hitlerjugend delegation visited Peleş Castle in Sinaia, and the training center for *străjere* (women sentinels) in Predeal.⁴⁷ Another gesture to win over Germany was opening a dialogue with the German minority, a subject that will be approached in the next section of my paper.

Ion Antonescu’s appointment as prime minister on 4 September 1940 and the series of events that led to King Carol II’s abdication and establishment of the National Legionary State only reinforced Romania’s close relations with Germany. *Universul* printed special editions of no more than two pages to capture the rapid development of political events at the beginning of September 1940. However, it failed to mention the contribution of German Minister Wilhelm Fabricius to the unfolding of these events.⁴⁸ Thus, the newspaper’s special edition of 5 September 1940 mentioned laconically that General Ion Antonescu had visited the German and Italian Legation. He met Fabricius, the German minister to Bucharest, and Pellegrino Chigi, the Italian minister to Bucharest.⁴⁹ On 5 September, Ion Antonescu also sent two official telegrams to “Führer-Chancellor Hitler and Duke Mussolini.” He expressed the Romanian people’s confidence in the German and Italian people and their great leaders.⁵⁰

The exchange of telegrams continued for the rest of the month and signaled the gradual alignment of Romania to the Axis alliance. *Universul* proudly published Adolf Hitler's answer to Antonescu's telegram on the first page. In his response, the German leader welcomed the new regime and gave assurances that "the future of the Romanian people is guaranteed in connection with the Axis powers, Germany and Italy."⁵¹ On 18 September 1940, General Ion Antonescu sent his "friendly and military thought" to "the glorious Marshal Göring" as a token of gratitude for the German high official's "feelings of sympathy" towards Romania.⁵² Since the telegram did not mention the reason behind Antonescu's gesture, one can only assume that it was connected to sending the first German planes in Romania in late September 1940.⁵³ This prompted the Legionary Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mihail Sturdza, to emphatically declare that "We are with the Axis, we are with the Axis up to the end."⁵⁴

The main event of the Romanian-German relations in October 1940 was the sending of a German military mission to Romania. King Carol II had initially requested a German military mission in July 1940. On 5 September, Ion Antonescu reiterated the request, and the military mission arrived in Bucharest on 14 October.⁵⁵ Starting with the end of September, *Universul* published several denials of the rumors spread by foreign media about the presence of the German military in Romania.⁵⁶ Three days before the arrival of the German mission in Bucharest, the same newspaper published Wilhelmstrasse's official denial of the presence of German soldiers on Romanian soil. However, the document did not exclude the possibility of sending German soldiers to Romania in the future "in connection with the guarantees given to Romania by Germany" and to train the Romanian army, "which has not yet reached the level of the latest technical and military advances."⁵⁷

Despite the repeated official denials, on 14 October *Universul* suddenly announced the arrival of the first divisions of the German military mission in Bucharest. Its pages also included reports of the welcome ceremony organized for General Erik Hansen, head of the military mission to Romania, and other German officers at Mogoșoaia train station,⁵⁸ the banquet organized in their honor by the Romanian government, and the visit of the German officers to the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in Bucharest. The official explanation for the presence of the German military mission came from Ion Antonescu. During the speech given at the banquet, he stressed that the Romanian government had requested the German military mission, and its presence was "the decisive expression of a realistic and fruitful collaboration" between the two countries. The Romanian army, he continued, would benefit from the experience of the German armed forces and the modern technology produced by the German war industry. Consequently, Antonescu concluded that requesting the presence of the military mission was "a measured and realistic act of patriotism."⁵⁹ Dennis Deletant mentioned the German military mission had a different task that involved "preparing the Romanian army for an attack and consolidating the air defenses of the oil fields around Ploiești."⁶⁰

Although the military relations got the lion's share, the cultural and economic domains also drew Romania closer to Nazi Germany. The German book exhibition opened in Bucharest at the beginning of October 1940 and occasioned lectures on German literature.⁶¹ Radio Romania broadcast *The German Hour*, a program for the German

minority in Romania.⁶² Cultural exchanges also entailed the organization of the concert of Regensburg Domspatzen children's choir in Bucharest.⁶³

Constantin Papanace, the undersecretary of state at the Ministry of Finance, announced the intensification of economic relations between Romania and Germany in his interview to German magazine *Volk im Osten*. Stating that with the creation of the National Legionary State, the bilateral relations had entered "a phase of absolute sincerity," the Romanian official hoped for a close collaboration with Germany for the economic reconstruction of Romania and the improvement of the peasantry's living standards. As a result, *Universul* announced that economic negotiations with Germany would start in Berlin on 18 December 1940.⁶⁴

The activity of the German military mission officially began on 11 November 1940 when a motorized training center was opened at the Mărăști barracks in Târgoviște. The festivity included laying wreaths at the Tomb of the Unknown (Romanian and German) Hero in the heroes' cemetery in Teiș followed by cannon fire. In the afternoon, a military parade took place at the center.⁶⁵ On the same day, a similar event was organized at the military garrison in Râmnicu Vâlcea, where soldiers of the German military mission were billeted.⁶⁶ *Universul* also covered the opening of an artillery training center. In this case, the article focused on the equipment and the excellent organization of the German division stationed at this center. Great attention was paid to how Romanian officers benefited from the knowledge and experience of the German officers.⁶⁷ A few days after their official opening, General Erik Hansen, head of the military mission to Romania, visited the two centers and personally verified the German and Romanian officers' living and training conditions.⁶⁸

The celebration of the King's Name Day on 8 November 1940⁶⁹ brought to Romania the delegations of German and Italian youth organizations. They participated in a mass demonstration organized in Iași, where the Legionary Movement had begun "the fight against communism and rising nationalism as dogma."⁷⁰ Before they participated in the legionary demonstration in Iași, Ion Antonescu and Horia Sima, the leader of the Legionary Movement, welcomed the Hitlerjugend delegation. From Iași, the German delegation stopped in Brașov,⁷¹ a city with a significant German minority (in fact, Transylvanian Saxons) and home to the headquarters of the German Ethnic Group (GEG).

The most important moment of Romanian-German relations was when General Ion Antonescu signed the Tripartite Pact of Germany, Italy, and Japan on 23 November 1940. *Universul* covered the event by reproducing the official declaration of the Romanian leader⁷² and that of the German Foreign Minister, Joachim von Ribbentrop.⁷³ For Ion Antonescu, the signing of the pact represented "a state act," "a fundamental act of the new orientation of the Romanian state and a sincere and veritable contribution of the Romanian people to the reconstruction of Europe and of the world, as well as to the defense of contemporary civilization" created by the victory of Tripartite Pact. Consequently, Antonescu's understanding of the Pact went beyond its military significance to include willing participation and support for the postwar world of the winning Axis powers. Romania's joining the Tripartite Pact was celebrated with a parade of the German military mission in Bucharest on 3 December 1940. King Michael I, Ion Antonescu, Horia Sima, and other German officials attended the parade. The press re-

port underlined the force and technological superiority of the German forces from which Romania benefited owing to its alliance with the Great Reich.⁷⁴

A significant part of Antonescu's talks with Hitler referred to economic cooperation.⁷⁵ *Universul* hinted at this subject by publishing an unsigned article that dealt with the history of economic relations and the bright perspectives opened by the cooperation between Romania and Germany in the new European order.⁷⁶ The next mention of this subject was the official communique about signing economic accords between the two countries. Among them, there was the ten-year economic treaty that promised German financial and technological support for "the reconstruction of Romania."⁷⁷ *Universul* resumed the subject in the following days, but its analysis mirrors the official interpretation of the subject. Accordingly, the new agreements further developed the economic treaty of March 1939. The ten-year agreement would open the Romanian economy to German credits and technology, increasing its production capacity and ensuring Romania a privileged place in the new world.⁷⁸

The improvement and the consolidation of the relations between Romania and Germany benefited the German minority. As I will show below, its legal status underwent a dramatic change. It placed Germans on equal footing to Romanians and allowed their organization, the GEG, to take complete control of their destiny.

The GEG's "Alignment" (*Gleichschaltung*) to Nazi Germany

A PART OF the German minority in Romania was radicalized towards the extreme right with the rise of Nazism in Germany. Its leadership was divided over following the Nazi model, as some of its leaders wished to preserve their independence from Nazi Germany. The Nazis aimed to unify and subordinate German ethnics to increase their influence in their respective countries all over Europe. This was also the case in Romania. At the end of 1939, Berlin managed to ensure its complete control over the German minority by appointing its leader. The event intensified the Nazification of Germans, which was further stimulated by the Nazi victories in World War II in the first half of 1940. Winning Germany's benevolence after June 1940 required, among other things, measures that would satisfy the Germans' demands for administrative and greater political autonomy. As a result, the Romanian government was willing to revise the situation of the German minority and use it to foster the collaboration with Germany.⁷⁹

Nichifor Crainic's speech at the Romanian-German Culture Institute in Braşov on 16 August 1940, published in *Universul*, was the first public acknowledgment of the government's readiness to ally with the German minority. As mentioned in the introduction, the Romanian official saw the Germans as the "golden bridge" between Romania and the Great Reich. They were to act as both faithful Romanian citizens and German ethnics.⁸⁰ The same newspaper announced governmental concessions to the German minority the following day. The Ministry of Education authorized several denominational schools and classes in Transylvania and Banat, where German would be the language of instruction.⁸¹ This represented a significant achievement, as education in the mother

tongue was one of the provisions of the Alba Iulia Declaration of 1 December 1918,⁸² largely ignored by the interwar Romanian state. The first time *Universul* mentioned in the German Ethnic Group in connection with its newspapers (*Deutsche Tageblatt*, *Kronstadterzeitung*, *Bukarest Tageblatt*) was in the summer of 1940, in its positive report on Crainic's speech. When referring to the GEG, the Romanian daily newspaper never used capitals letters in this context.⁸³

The problem of the German minority was resumed with the Vienna Award on 30 August, when the Reich concluded two conventions with the Romanian and Hungarian governments regarding the protection of national minorities.⁸⁴ The agreement signed with Romania included the government's pledge to put the German ethnic minority in Romania on equal footing with the Romanian majority in every respect. In addition, the government promised "to consolidate the position of the German ethnic group as stipulated by the decisions taken in Alba Iulia, to preserve their German ethnic particularities."⁸⁵ However, there was no mention of how the Romanian state was to keep its promises.

As shown above, *Universul* usually printed official documents or statements about an event and hardly ever editorial comments. When published, they only endorsed the governmental point of view. This was related to the introduction of the state of siege and to censorship, which prevented the publication of any critical materials about the Romanian government and its decisions. The newspaper only published scattered and unconnected official news with no additional information that could explain to an uninformed reader what the GEG was and how it influenced the existence of the German minority. One example is the news regarding the birthday celebration of Artur Konradi. He received greeting telegrams from Adolf Hitler and other Nazi officials, including Rudolf Hess, and a golden plate from the German Institute in Stuttgart. The article only mentions that he was "the leader of the German National-Socialist organization NSDAP" in Romania.⁸⁶ There was no information about the NSDAP in Romania and its connection to the German minority. Furthermore, *Universul* had never mentioned the existence of this organization before this short news excerpt about Konradi's birthday celebration. The naming of the Nazi personalities that congratulated Artur Konradi was probably a way to stress the close connection between the Reich and the local political structures of the German minority in Romania. The newspaper also failed to mention the appointment of Andreas Schmidt as the new leader of the GEG on 27 September 1940 or that the GEG's headquarters had moved from Sibiu to Braşov.⁸⁷

In October 1940, *Universul* focused on balancing news about the GEG's alignment with the Nazi model and its integration within the legal framework of the Romanian state. The newspaper reproduced an official statement of the GEG's press service that announced the beginning of the 1940/1941 winter help program for impoverished Germans. The program, suggestively called "one-pot" meal, implied that each German family would only have one dish for lunch one Sunday every month, and this lunch would be eaten from the same plate. The resulting food surplus would be collected by young Germans and donated to those in need.⁸⁸ The GEG initiative copied the *Einstopfsonntag* ("one-pot" meal to be eaten on Sunday) campaign introduced in Germany in October 1933. The Nazis asked the Germans to replace their traditional and expensive Sunday

lunch with a one-pot meal. The money saved by preparing a cheaper meal was collected by volunteers working for the Winter Relief Agency (Winterhilfswerk). The Nazi charity drive aimed to feed and clothe veterans and the poor in wintertime. In addition to adjusting the Germans' consumption habits to alleviate the pressure on certain types of food, the *Einstopf* became a symbol of the German people's racial and organic community⁸⁹ and the population's loyalty to the regime.⁹⁰ The introduction of the "one-pot" meal program in Romania signaled the beginning of the Romanian Germans' alignment to the Nazi model. It served to subordinate them to the GEG and strengthen their ethnic identity as a group that was part of the German Reich and the great German nation.

By contrast, *Universul* also paid particular attention to the GEG's relations with the Romanian state. The newspaper first mentioned Andreas Schmidt's name at the beginning of October 1940, identifying him as the leader of "the ethnic Germans groups." The designation did not imply the existence of some official structure that would require a leader. In his message, Andreas Schmidt mentioned that due to the full integration of the Romanian state into the German political system, the ethnic group he represented pledged "to fulfill its duties to the state." This support was based on Ion Antonescu's assurance that Germans would receive fair treatment as soldiers in the Romanian army where they had been previously subjected to "humiliations and mistreatments." Also, the Romanian leader promised to pardon those Germans who had evaded military conscription. Consequently, Schmidt asked "all our citizens" who had received draft papers to report immediately to the military units, as "the higher interests of our time require discipline towards a State that will always stand beside Germany."⁹¹ The next day, *Universul* published a statement by the Presidency of the Council of Ministers. The document confirmed the agreement between the two leaders and the main points previously mentioned by Andreas Schmidt.⁹²

These official declarations were related to a series of events that connected the fate of the German minority in Romania with that of Germany. Since 1939, the Nazi SS was interested in recruiting German ethnics for its armed units outside the Reich. Andreas Schmidt, twenty-eight years old, lacking any political experience but well connected with the upper echelons of the SS, including Obergruppenführer Gottlob Berger, was entrusted with recruiting Romanian German ethnics for the Waffen-SS.⁹³ His pilot project entitled "The Action of One Thousand" recruits showed the SS leaders the massive potential of recruiting outside the Reich. Although Andreas Schmidt managed to enlist two thousand young Germans, only a thousand left for Germany due to the opposition of the Romanian government. The success of Schmidt's action ensured his appointment as the leader of the GEG in September 1940. Andreas Schmidt was forced to stop the voluntary recruitments as the German Foreign Ministry feared that his actions would damage Germany's good relations with Romania. The result was the agreement between Ion Antonescu and Andreas Schmidt concerning the Germans in Romania who had evaded conscription. Schmitt's official declaration published by *Universul* was to prove the loyalty of the GEG towards the Romanian state.⁹⁴ Not a single word was said about the voluntary enlistment into the SS. Instead, the official communications focused on the deserters from the Romanian army. The deserters were the same people who had fled the country and aimed for military service in Germany. Among the reasons cited in

Schmidt's declaration, which ultimately ensured the success of his recruiting mission, were the poor living conditions of the soldiers, old military equipment, corporal punishments, lack of winter equipment, and poor food supply in the Romanian army. For all these reasons, illegal recruitments to SS successfully continued until 1943.⁹⁵

The Romanian state's pledge to work with the GEG was confirmed in Ion Antonescu's interview for the NSDAP's official newspaper, *Völkischer Beobachter*. When referring to his country's relations with Germany, the Romanian *Conducător* considered the German ethnic group as "a bridge of kinship with the great German nation" and "an element of collaboration, understanding, and fraternization with the Romanian nation."⁹⁶

The consequences of the agreement between the GEG and the Romanian state were underlined in Andreas Schmidt's speech broadcast during *The German Hour* on Radio Romania. Transcribed in full by *Universul*, the discourse announced significant changes in the fate of Germans. Stating that the recent agreement with the Romanian leadership ensured the German ethnic group "a life and an existence as part of the German people," Andreas Schmidt announced that the GEG had become a legal entity of public law, and NSDAP "the national will and executive power" of the GEG. This allowed the GEG to act for "the preservation and consolidation of the German people" by devising laws for its members.⁹⁷ *Universul* provided no explanation about what Schmidt's declaration meant. Again, the newspaper limited itself to reproducing an official document, as it was with Decree no. 3884 published on 21 November 1940. It declared the German Ethnic Group in Romania a "Romanian legal entity by public law." The document officially consecrated Andreas Schmidt's previous declarations about the GEG and its complete control over the German minority and about the existence of GEG's NSDAP. Moreover, it mentioned the GEG's right to display the German flag alongside the Romanian one.⁹⁸ The time gap between Andreas Schmidt's declarations and the decree that declared GEG as a legal entity of public law was due to General Ion Antonescu's postponing of the signing of the decree.⁹⁹

In this context, one should bear in mind that by the time this decree was published, the GEG's NSDAP was officially founded in a ceremony held in Mediaș on 9 November 1940. The date was not chosen randomly: it corresponded to the day of the failed Munich Putsch, or the Beer Hall Putsch in 1923, leading to the imprisonment of the future Nazi leader, Adolf Hitler.¹⁰⁰ Creating a Nazi-affiliated political organization for the ethnic Germans contravened the existing Romanian law that prohibited any political parties except for the Legionary Movement. This may be the reason why *Universul* did not mention the event.

The way the same newspaper reported on the official recognition of the GEG as a political entity of public law is also significant. The decree was published on the fifth page in between paid advertisements and close to an article about the capture of "Berilă the bandit," who had escaped from prison.¹⁰¹ This was a way to obscure its existence and downplay its significance. The lack of any comments or explanations on the decree also testifies to the efficiency of the censorship. After the territorial cessions in the summer of 1940, the new regime made repeated claims that its alliance with Germany guaranteed Romania's sovereignty and integrity. The decree-law openly contradicted this claim: it privileged the German ethnic group at the expense of the sovereignty of the Romanian

state. The GEG was allowed to proceed with the “alignment” (*Gleichschaltung*) process of the German minority to the National Socialist model and subordinate it to the leadership of the Great Reich.¹⁰² This was possible because by issuing Decree no. 3884 of 21 November 1940, the Romanian state granted regional autonomy to the territories inhabited by Germans, and thus put the Romanian ethnic Germans under the exclusive authority of the GEG. By the end of 1940, *Universul* briefly mentioned the GEG once, in connection with a tea meeting organized at the German Club’s salons in Bucharest on 12 December 1940. The article named the German military and diplomatic personalities that participated in the event at the invitation of Andreas Schmidt.¹⁰³

Conclusion

THE SECOND half of the year 1940 brought radical changes to Romania. King Carol II abdicated in favor of his son, and General Ion Antonescu received unlimited powers as leader of the state. After ceding significant parts of its territory, Romania abandoned its neutrality and allied with Nazi Germany and the Axis to appease its revisionist neighbors. Moreover, its alliance with the Reich changed the status of the German minority in Romania and granted its representative structure, the German Ethnic Group, unlimited power in dealing with its members. My paper analyzed how *Universul*, one of the most important Romanian newspapers at the time, reported on these developments. With censorship in place due to the state of siege, the newspaper avoided any critical comments about the performance of the political leadership. Therefore, one could only read official declarations about political events. When it did publish a comment, *Universul* openly endorsed their official interpretation. The analysis of the press articles between June and December 1940 reveals the change in Romania’s foreign policy. Mirroring the official stance on the topic, Germany evolved from a subject approached in connection with the military operations of World War II into the focus of governmental declarations and a model to be emulated by the authoritarian regime in Romania. Not a single word could be read on Germany’s unfortunate role in the territorial cessions in the summer of 1940. Instead, *Universul* underlined the political, economic, and military advantages that Romania would gain because of its alliance with Germany. A similar development is noticed in the case of the German minority. Its public profile increased gradually after July 1940. Romanian officials identified the German ethnics as the principal means for facilitating a rapid and closer alliance with the Reich and thus accepted their particular position within the state. This culminated with the recognition of the GEG as a legal entity by public law, which granted it complete control over the lives of Germans in Romania. Again, *Universul* limited itself to reproducing the content of official documents without providing explanations about their significance to the German minority (and to the Romanian state).



Notes

1. “Înfrățirea culturală româno-germană: Declarațiile făcute de domnul ministru Nichifor Crainic la Brașov,” *Universul* (Bucharest), 17 August 1940, 7.
2. “Presa grupului etnic german despre declarațiile d-nului ministru Nichifor Crainic la Brașov,” *Universul*, 21 August 1940, 6.
3. See on the subject, Vasile Ciobanu, *Contribuții la cunoașterea istoriei sașilor transilvăneni 1918–1944* (Sibiu: hora, 2001); Ottmar Trașcă, “Grupul Etnic German din România în ‘era’ Andreas Schmidt: Septembrie 1940–august 1944,” in *Un veac frământat: Germanii din România după 1918*, edited by Ottmar Trașcă and Remus Gabriel Anghel (Cluj-Napoca: Institutul pentru Studiarea Problemelor Minorităților Naționale, 2018), 113–148; Paul Milata, *Între Hitler, Stalin și Antonescu: Germanii din România în Waffen-SS*, translated by Nadia Badrus (Sibiu: Schiller, 2018).
4. Pierre Albert, *Istoria presei*, translated by Irina Maria Sile, foreword by Marian Petcu (Iași: Institutul European, 2002), 9.
5. Maria Bucur, “Carol II of Romania,” in *Balkan Strongmen: Dictators and Authoritarian Rulers of Southeast Europe*, edited by Bernd J. Fischer (West Lafayette, Indiana: Purdue University Press, 2007), 87.
6. Marian Petcu, ed., *Enciclopedia cenzurii*, vol. I, 1640–1945 (Bucharest: Ars Docendi, 2019), 251; Corneliu Pintilescu, “The Reverberations of the October 1917 Revolution and the State of Siege in Interwar Romania,” in *1917 and the Consequences*, edited by Gerhard Besier and Katarzyna Stokłosa (London–New York: Routledge, 2020), 121–124, and “Fetișizarea siguranței statului, starea de asediu și ascensiunea autoritarismului în România interbelică,” *Anuarul Institutului de Istorie “George Barițiu” din Cluj-Napoca*, Series Historica 59 (2020): 219–235.
7. Răduț Bilbâie, “Cenzura militară: Cadru juridic,” in *Cenzura în spațiul cultural românesc*, edited by Marian Petcu (Bucharest: Comunicare.ro, 2005), 331–337.
8. Marian Petcu, *Puterea și cultura. O istorie a cenzurii* (Iași: Polirom, 1999), 137.
9. Bucur, 87–105; Ioan Scurtu, ed., *Istoria românilor*, vol. 8, *România Întregită (1918–1940)* (Bucharest: Univers Enciclopedic, 2016), 280–390.
10. Bilbâie, 335. For a complete overview of the functioning of censorship at the end of 1930s and in 1940, see Petcu, *Puterea și cultura*, 137–144.
11. *Istoria românilor*, 8: 391.
12. Petcu, *Enciclopedia cenzurii*, 1: 249–259; *Istoria românilor*, 8: 379.
13. Bucur, 106–108.
14. On the subject, see *Istoria românilor*, 8: 565–574.
15. See Rebecca Haynes, *Romanian Policy towards Germany, 1936–40* (Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire–London: Macmillan Press; New York: St. Martin’s Press, 2000), 150–159; *Istoria românilor*, 8: 577.
16. Dennis Deletant, *Hitler’s Forgotten Ally: Ion Antonescu and His Regime, Romania 1940–44* (Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire–New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), 52–57.
17. Deletant, 52.
18. *Universul*, 6 September 1940, 1.
19. Pamfil Șeicaru, *Istoria presei*, edited by George Stanca (Pitești: Paralela 45, 2007), 241.
20. Ilie Rad, *Incursiuni în istoria presei românești* (Cluj-Napoca: Accent, 2008), 98.

21. Nicolae Iorga, *Istoria presei românești*, foreword by Alexandru Condeescu (Bucharest: Muzeul Literaturii Române, 1999), 194; Iulian Negrilă, *Istoria presei* (Arad: Multimedia, 1997), 47.
22. Rad, 68, 98.
23. Șeicaru, 275–276.
24. Marian Petcu, *Istoria jurnalismului și a publicității în România* (Iași: Polirom, 2007), 58–59; Iulia Barbu and Simina Stan, “Palatul Universul, vândut și țepuit cu blocuri-turn,” *Jurnalul.ro*, 28 October 2009, accessed 18 January 2022, <https://jurnalul.ro/stire-miscarea-de-rezistenta/palatul-universul-vandut-si-tepuit-cu-blocuri-turn-525320.html>.
25. *Universul* was the only Romanian newspaper which appeared in the morning. See Rad, 68.
26. Haynes, 19–90; Deletant, 11.
27. Haynes, 52–56, 99–101.
28. Deletant, 12.
29. Haynes, 109, 126–131.
30. Deletant, 15.
31. Haynes, 131–134, 145–146; Deletant, 13–22.
32. “Călătoria de studii a grupului de ingineri români în Germania,” *Universul*, 21 June 1940, 8.
33. “Declarația guvernului,” *Universul*, 6 July 1940, 1.
34. “Noua orientare,” *Universul*, 9 July 1940, 1.
35. For a comprehensive overview of the Nazi ideas about nation and ethnic nationalism, see Carl Müller Frøland, *Understanding Nazi Ideology: The Genesis and Impact of a Political Faith*, translated by John Irons (Jefferson, North Carolina: McFarland & Company, 2020).
36. “Ziarele românești nu pot fi conduse de evrei, iar la ziarele conduse de români evreii nu pot colabora,” *Universul*, 10 July 1940, 1.
37. Keith Hitchins, *Romania 1866–1947* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994), 426–427.
38. “România s-a retras din Societatea Națiunilor: Declarațiile d-lui Mihail Manoilescu, ministrul afacerilor streine,” *Universul*, 12 July 1940, 1. On the same subject, see “Retragerea României din Societatea Națiunilor,” *Universul*, 13 July 1940, 1.
39. “După vizita miniștrilor români în Germania și Italia,” *Universul*, 30 July 1940, 1.
40. “Încadrarea României în politica Axei Roma Berlin,” *Universul*, 26 July 1940, 1; “Domnii Gigurtu și Manoilescu la Roma: Miniștrii români au avut o întrevedere cu contele Ciano și au fost primiți de Ducele Mussolini,” *Universul*, 29 July 1940, 1, 15; “După vizita miniștrilor români în Germania și Italia,” *Universul*, 30 July 1940, 1.
41. Haynes, 148–149.
42. “Problemele românești în noua evoluție internațională: Discursul de eri la radio al d-lui prim ministru I. Gigurtu,” *Universul*, 10 August 1940, 1, 3.
43. “Garantarea integrității și a inviolabilității frontierelor României,” *Universul*, 1 September 1940, 1; “După arbitrajul de la Viena: Expunerea d-lui ministru Mihail Manoilescu făcută aseară la radio,” *Universul*, 2 September 1940, 9; “Garanțiile date României de guvernul Germaniei și Italiei după arbitrajul de la Viena: Textul scrisorilor schimbate între miniștrii de afaceri străine ai Germaniei, Italiei și României în limbile celor trei state,” *Universul*, 5 September 1940, 7.

44. Straja Țării (in English, The Sentinel of the Motherland) was a mass organization created by King Carol II in 1935. In December 1938 it was reorganized to include all youths aged between 7 and 18 or 21. *Străjerii* (sentinels) received a low-level military education and training under the supervision of the group commandants. Although the King was referred as Marele Străjer (The Great Sentinel), Straja Țării's actual commandant was Colonel Teofil G. Sidorovici. See *Istoria românilor*, 8: 386; "Măria Sa Mare Voevod Mihai a vizitat eri taberele străjerești de la Breaza și Predeal," *Universul*, 12 August 1940, 11.
45. "Heil Hitler!: Lesson of Daily Life," accessed 24 January 2022, <https://www.facinghistory.org/holocaust-and-human-behavior/chapter-6/heil-hitler-lessons-daily-life>.
46. *Horst Wessel Song*, also known by its opening lines "Fie Fahne hoch" (Raise the Flag) was the anthem of the Nazi Party. See <https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/the-horst-wessel-song>, accessed 24 January 2022.
47. "Comandanții germani din Hitlerjugend în mijlocul străjerilor," *Universul*, 12 August 1940, 11.
48. Deletant, 49.
49. "Proclamația d-lui prim-ministru Generalul I. Antonescu către țară," *Universul*, 5 September 1940 (special issue), 1.
50. "Telegramele d-lui General I. Antonescu, președintele Consiliului de Miniștri către Fuehrerul-Cancelar Hitler și Ducele Mussolini," *Universul*, 6 September 1940, 3.
51. "Răspunsul Fuehrerul-Cancelar Hitler la telegrama d-lui general Antonescu, conducătorul statului român și președintele Consiliului de Miniștri," *Universul*, 10 September 1940, 1.
52. "Telegrama d-lui General I. Antonescu către D. Mareșal Goering," *Universul*, 18 September 1940, 1.
53. "Avioane din Germania pentru aviația civilă română," *Universul*, 20 September 1940, 11.
54. "Politica externă a statului legionar: Declarațiile d-lui ministru de Externe Sturdza," *Universul*, 30 September 1940, 1.
55. Deletant, 22, 61.
56. "Nu se amenajează la noi aerodromuri pentru avioanele germane," *Universul*, 29 September 1940, 1; "Dezmințirea unor știri false asupra situației din România," *Universul*, 3 October 1940, 1; "Dezmințirea unor știri neexacte," *Universul*, 6 October 1940, 11.
57. "Precizări cu privire la prezența unor elemente militare germane în România," *Universul*, 11 October 1940, 13.
58. "Ofițerii germani în Capitală" and "Sosirea în Capitală a unui grup de ofițeri germani: Primirea în gara Mogoșoaia," *Universul*, 14 October 1940, 1, 19.
59. "Banchetul oferit în onoarea misiunii militare germane," *Universul*, 16 October 1940, 9. On the same subject, see "Misiunea militară germană," *Universul*, 17 October 1940, 9.
60. Deletant, 61.
61. "Poezia germană contemporană: Conferința profesorului universitar doctor Fricke în cadrul expoziției cărții germane," *Universul*, 4 October 1940, 11; Adrian Maniu, "În fiecare zi: Cartea răspândită," *Universul*, 6 October 1940, 3; G. Opreșcu, "Expoziția cărții germane," *Universul*, 7 October 1940, 15; "Pe marginea expoziției cărții germane," *Universul*, 10 October 1940, 2; "Poetul german Carossa, oaspetele Capitalei," *Universul*, 11 October 1940, 7.

62. "Inaugurarea Orei Germane la Radio România," *Universul*, 4 October 1940, 13; I. Constantinescu, "Relațiile culturale germano-române," *Universul*, 6 October 1940, 1.
63. "Schimbul de artiști cu Germania: Concertul corului de copii Regensburg Domspatzen," *Universul*, 5 October 1940, 8; R. Alexandru, "Concertul coral Regensburg Domspatzen," *Universul*, 16 October 1940, 4.
64. "Relații economice româno-germane," *Universul*, 4 October 1940, 4. As shown below, the negotiations began during Ion Antonescu's visit, and the economic agreements were signed at the beginning of December 1940.
65. "Inaugurarea colaborării între armata germană și cea română la Târgoviște," *Universul*, 13 November 1940, 9.
66. "Începerea colaborării dintre armata română și cea germană la R.-Vâlcea," *Universul*, 14 November 1940, 3.
67. G. Tășlăuanu, "Colaborarea militară româno-germană: Inaugurarea programului de instrucție la centrul de instrucție al artileriei," *Universul*, 16 November 1940, 7.
68. G. Tășlăuanu, "Vizita d-nul general Hansen la centrul de instrucție al artileriei," *Universul*, 17 November 1940, 7; "Vizita d-nul general Hansen la Centrul de instrucție mecanizat din Târgoviște," *Universul*, 25 November 1940, 6.
69. The Eastern Orthodox Church commemorates the Archangel Michael on 8 November. The archangel was also the patron saint of the Legionary Movement, which initially bore his name, the Legion of the Archangel Michael.
70. "Semnificația serbărilor de la Iași," *Universul*, 8 November 1940, 11.
71. D.S., "Sosirea delegației tineretului german," *Universul*, 8 November 1940, 11; "Marile festivități de la Iași," *Universul*, 10 November 1940, 1, 3; "Defilarea delegațiilor tineretului german și italian la festivitățile de la Iași," *Universul*, 11 November 1940, 17; M. M., "Trecerea prin Brașov a tineretului național-socialist german," *Universul*, 14 November 1940, 4.
72. "România a aderat la Pactul Tripartit: Declarația d-lui general Antonescu," *Universul*, 25 November 1940, 1.
73. "Declarația d-lui Ribbentrop," *Universul*, 25 November 1940, 1.
74. "Parada militară de eri," *Universul*, 4 December 1940, 9.
75. Deletant, 63.
76. "Caracteristicile și perspectivele comerțului germano-român," *Universul*, 24 November 1940, 4.
77. "La Berlin s-a semnat protocolul privitor la conlucrarea germano-română pentru realizarea unui decenal românesc," *Universul*, 6 December 1940, 1.
78. "Bazele colaborării economice cu Germania," *Universul*, 9 December 1940, 1.
79. Vasile Ciobanu, *Contribuții*, 201–211, 218–219, 222–226; Milata, 76, 104.
80. "Infrățirea culturală româno-germană: Declarațiile făcute de domnul ministru Nichifor Crainic la Brașov," *Universul*, 17 August 1940, 7.
81. "Școli germane, autorizate să funcționeze în Transilvania și Banat," *Universul*, 18 August 1940, 7.
82. Vasile Ciobanu, *Germanii din România în anii 1918–1919* (Sibiu: Honterus, 2013), 56.
83. "Presa grupului etnic german despre declarațiile d-lui ministru N. Crainic la Brașov," *Universul*, 11 August 1940, 5.
84. "Protecția minorităților germane din România și Ungaria," *Universul*, 1 September 1940, 1.

85. "Acordul germano-român privitor la minorități," *Universul*, 2 September 1940, 13.
86. "Sărbătorirea conducătorului organizației național-socialiste din România: Telegramă de felicitare adresată de Fuehrer," *Universul*, 30 September 1940, 17.
87. Milata, 104; Trașcă, "Grupul Etnic German din România," 116–117.
88. "Opera de ajutorare de iarnă a germanilor din România," *Universul*, 5 October 1940, 9.
89. As Alice Weinreb mentions: "Cooking in one pot (*ein Topf*) was supposed to symbolize the Nazi creation of *one people* (*ein Volk*), the crafting of a delicious casserole by combining diverse ingredients analogous to the uniting of the various native German peoples into a single and self-sustaining whole. . . . Race scientists used their research to justify national policies of austerity when they proclaimed that too much and too rich food was as dangerous to the race as too little." See Alice Weinreb, *Modern Hungers: Food and Power in Twentieth-Century Germany* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2017), 52–53, 55.
90. David Welch, "Nazi Propaganda and the *Völksgemeinschaft*: Constructing a People's Community," *Journal of Contemporary History* 39, 2 (2004): 228–229; Gesine Gerhard, *Nazi Hunger Politics: A History of Food in the Third Reich* (Lanham–Boulder–New York–London: Rowman & Littlefield, 2015), 33–35; Natasha Frost, "The Forgotten Nazi History of 'One-Pot Meals,'" *Atlas Obscura*, 12 April 2018, accessed 29 January 2022, <https://www.atlasobscura.com/articles/one-pot-meals-nazi-germany-eintopf>.
91. "Apelul conducătorului grupurilor etnice germane," *Universul*, 5 October 1940, 9.
92. "Încadrarea grupului etnic german în cadrul legal al Statului român," *Universul*, 6 October 1940, 1.
93. *Waffen-ss* (literally Weapons-ss) was the military branch of the German organization called *ss* (*Schutzstaffel* or Protection Squadrons). The *ss* was initially created as a protection force for Hitler. However, under the leadership of Heinrich Himmler, it became an elite force entrusted, among other things, with the implementation of Nazi racial policy and administration of the concentration camp system. The *ss* was responsible for the so-called "Final Solution," or the murder of European Jews. The *Waffen-ss* fought in all major battles in Europe during the Second World War. It earned an infamous reputation for its aggression and cruelty against civilians, prisoners, and allegedly racially inferior people. In order to increase its number, Himmler's deputy, Gottlob Berger, began recruiting German ethnics from outside Germany. See "The *ss*," accessed 29 January 2022, <https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/ss>; Al Cimino, *The Story of the *ss*: Hitler's Infamous Legions of Death* (London: Arcturus Publishing, 2018); Adrian Gilbert, *Waffen-ss: Hitler's Army at War* (New York: Da Capo Press, 2019).
94. Milata, 74, 76–77, 79, 83, 88, 137–138.
95. Milata, 77, 83.
96. "Un interviu cu d. general I. Antonescu: Conducătorul statului român vorbește corepondentului din București al lui *Völkischer Beobachter* despre reformele noului regim legionar, problema evreească și azeziunea la Axă," *Universul*, 16 October 1940, 1–2.
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Abstract

"Two Souls in One Chest:" The Creation of the German Ethnic Group As Reflected in the Romanian Press: Case Study: *Universul*

My paper examines how the Romanian newspaper *Universul* (The Universe) traces the transformation of the German minority's judicial situation through the creation of the German Ethnic Group (GEG). The analysis will consider the larger context of the changes in Romanian foreign policy over the second half of 1940 that brought the country in a close alliance with Nazi Germany and opened the way to recognize the GEG as a legal entity by public law. Given that censorship was in place due to the state of siege, *Universul* refrained from criticizing any governmental decisions. Consequently, it made only short (and officially approved) references to the GEG and what it represented: an independent and legally separate existence of the German minority within Romania and a means to fully "align" with the Nazi model. The paper is composed of three parts. The first one shows how Romania's transition to dictatorship during the 1930s imposed drastic censorship on the press (*Universul* included), limiting the number of newspapers and their published content. In the second part, I outline the changes in the Romanian foreign policy in the second part of 1940 and how *Universul* reflected these changes, especially the development of Romanian-German relations. Lastly, I will show how *Universul* reported about the German minority and the creation and activity of the GEG.

Keywords

German Ethnic Group, *Universul*, Waffen-ss, Nazi Germany