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## TRANSSILVANICA

# Transylvania Until World War I Demographic Opportunities and Vulnerabilities (III)

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*Over the centuries, relations between the native Romanians and the other peoples that inhabited the Transylvanian space were neither pure or immaculate, nor horrible and disastrous.*

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### MIXED MARRIAGES IN TRANSYLVANIA IN THE MODERN ERA: BETWEEN IDENTITY AND OTHERNESS

**A**N INTERESTING insight into the demographic and psychological behavior in Transylvania in the decades prior to World War I is offered by the matter of religiously and ethnically mixed marriages. Talking to her daughter Persida about her love for Ignatius (Națl) Huber, Mara (the famous female character in the homonymous novel written by Ioan Slavici) confessed: “God knows how much I thought about you, how much I toiled for you, how devotedly I took care of you, and He cannot possibly punish me so harshly. If I were to see you dead all the joy in my life would be lost, but I would tell to myself that this happened to other mothers as well, and I would eventually find my peace. But no one in our family has ever tainted their blood!”<sup>1</sup> How much is fiction and how much is reality in this

fragment written by Ioan Slavici in 1894? His later memoirs, written beginning with 1924, also include an interesting passage: “The Romanians did not live together with, but alongside the others; they got along well, but did not live together. I was different, even if my mother always remained determined that one must not eat from the same plate with a foreigner.”<sup>2</sup> Undoubtedly, these texts—fiction or memoirs—had in them a significant amount of reality, but ascribing general validity to their content cannot help us piece together an extremely complex phenomenon (mixed marriages), with implications that were demographic as well as ethno-confessional, sociological, cultural, etc., and defined modernity in Transylvania.

Human identity is defined by one’s membership to a religious community, to an ethnic group or a nation, something which comes at birth or can be gained later in life through socialization. To put it simply, the ethnic diversity of humankind found an expression in the competitive ethnological image of WE and THEY, in which national awareness was also grounded. It was on this foundation that nearly all nations built their image of themselves, contemplating their own identity but at the same time comparing themselves to OTHERS. Throughout history, until World War I, most of the peoples in Central and Southeastern Europe lived in a state of constant insecurity when it came to their borders and to their ethnic and religious survival. Of course, this kind of geopolitical heritage left a deep imprint upon the collective mentality, and each generation produced and assimilated stereotypes, “ethnic mentalities and images, both of the self and of the OTHERS, which in time turned into natural norms of their daily life. Mistrust of the neighbors and the fear of foreigners came to define, consciously or not, one’s ethnic behavior. With these nations we see an exaggerated concern for the affirmation of their national identity. Ethnicity became one and the same with survival.”<sup>3</sup> In such a context, it would be interesting to see how the people of Central Europe looked at mixed marriages, basically a way in which, alongside other social and political mechanisms, one could gradually change his or her ethnic and confessional identity.

At least until the modern era, marriage was the essential way to establish a family, to socially legitimize a basic institution of humankind. By marriage, the spouses and their offspring entered the cosmic cycle of life and death. Marriage was ascribed such a significance precisely in order to protect family life from human weaknesses, from pagan influences, so that the family could fulfill its economic, social, and cultural role.<sup>4</sup> How did the inhabitants of Transylvania look at mixed marriages at the end of the modern era? How relevant are for a historian the aforementioned texts by Slavici? Of course, such fictions and memoirs also describe true instances of demographic behavior, stereotypes and prejudices that decisively influenced the conclusion of marriages in Transylvania

during the last decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Slavici's texts also present us with a world in motion, showing both the conservative attitude of Mara with regard to ethnically mixed marriages or to the adoption of other religious and social practices, and the psychological openness to interculturality illustrated by Persida and by Națl, or by the writer himself, in his memoirs or in the actual mixed marriage he himself concluded.

After 1865, we find statistical data for the counties, the seats, and the districts of Transylvania, making it possible to assess the magnitude of the phenomenon of mixed marriages in this region. Before examining the quantitative features of this phenomenon, we must explain the term "mixed marriage." The statistics produced by the Hungarian authorities in our period of interest recorded denominational differences, indicating all of the marriages concluded by people belonging to two different denominations. This means that what the documents listed as a mixed marriage (*vegyes házasság*) did not necessarily involve spouses from different ethnic groups, as the ethno-confessional diversity of Transylvania made it so that people from the same ethnic group embraced different denominations: the Romanians were Orthodox and Greek-Catholic, the Hungarians were Roman-Catholic, Evangelical, or Unitarian, the Germans were Roman-Catholic and Lutheran (also known and Evangelical *ca* – *Confessio Augustana*), or members of different ethnic groups embraced the same religion. Of course, these interdenominational marriages (among members of the same ethnic group) are relevant for the chosen topic, but much more interesting are the marriages that were both interdenominational and ethnically mixed. It must be said that mixed marriages have been a significant factor in the numerical increase or decrease of certain communities, with long-term demographic consequences. Of course, this type of marriage represented a smaller percentage of the overall marital exchanges between social units.<sup>5</sup>

The statistical evidence available at this point allows us to piece together the dynamics of interdenominational marriages in Transylvania over nearly a quarter of a century, that is, for the period between 1866 and 1889 (see Tables no. 1 and 2). A first observation concerns the regional variations in the intensity of the studied phenomenon. Thus, we have units with a reduced or extremely low rate of mixed marriages, such as: the seat of Ciuc (dominantly Roman-Catholic), where between 1866 and 1875 the rate of interdenominational marriages varied annually between 0.8% and 2.8%; Zarand County (dominantly Orthodox), with values for the same period between 0.7% and 2.3%; the seat of Cincul Mare, with a minimum of 0.8% and a maximum of 4.3%; Maramureș County, with values between 1.3% and 3%; Solnocul de Mijloc County, with a variation between 1.9% and 3.3%. At the other end of the spectrum we find units with much higher rates: Alba de Jos County, with a minimum of 11.6%

TABLE 1. INTERDENOMINATIONAL MARRIAGES IN TRANSYLVANIA BETWEEN 1866 AND 1875 (%)

Administrative Unit	1866	1867	1868	1869	1870	1871	1872	1873	1874	1875
Alba de Jos										
County	13.2	11.9	11.7	11.6	11.7	11.6	12.1	12.5	13.4	13.8
Arieş Seat	10.9	10	14.4	17.2	13.4	20.7	19.4	20.3	17.1	11.8
Solnocul										
Interior County	5.1	6.9	6.7	8.9	9	7.3	7.3	8.7	8.8	7.3
Bistriţa District	11	4.8	11.3	10.8	5.8	9.4	6.3	8.8	4.7	7.1
Braşov District	8.2	7.3	9.9	9.1	8.9	7.6	10	9.6	9.6	10.2
Ciuc Seat	1.8	0.8	1.2	1.3	2.1	1.7	2	1.7	1.7	2.8
Dăbâca County	6.7	7.4	7.1	7.4	6.3	7.6	8.1	7.3	9.2	9.1
Alba de Sus										
County	5.1	6.5	6.8	6.4	7	8.3	5.7	7.5	10.7	11.4
Făgăraş District	12.2	13.6	12.8	12.7	17.2	10	12.2	11.6	12.7	11.2
Trei Scaune Seat	13	13.8	15.5	12	14.6	10.5	13.6	13.4	14.5	14.5
Hunedoara										
County	6.9	5.4	6.7	7	7	7.4	7	8.6	10.4	8.2
Cojocna County	7.4	7.6	8.3	9.8	7.2	12.1	12.3	11.1	11.9	11.4
Rupea Seat	4.1	7	7.6	7.8	3.8	11	7	7.3	3.4	7.7
Chioar District	6.9	7	4.8	4.7	5	4.8	3.9	5.4	4.8	3.9
Solnocul de										
Mijloc County	2	2.3	1.9	3.3	2.7	2	3.1	3.2	2.2	2.1
Crasna County	2.3	2.5	2.6	3.4	3.5	3.9	3.3	3.1	4	1.8
Târnava County	12.5	13.2	16.3	15.2	14	15	13.9	17.7	16.8	13.5
Mediaş Seat	5.3	10.9	8.3	9.3	11	14	15.5	16.6	12.2	11.7
Cincul Mare										
Seat	3	0.8	0.9	1.3	3.7	2.9	4.3	3	2.7	3.2
Năsăud District	4.5	3.6	4	4.4	4.8	5.5	5.4	6.1	4.9	5.9
Sighişoara Seat	6.5	2.5	7	3.3	3.6	3.2	8.3	4.6	2.5	3.5
Mureş Seat	11.4	13	13.3	13.3	14	16.1	15.1	15.8	15.2	15.2
Sebeş Seat	3.8	12	7.6	7	9	6.5	6.2	7	6.7	9.4
Orăştie Seat	16.9	18	16.6	19.4	17	8.5	4	6.8	11.6	19.5
Sibiu Seat	11.2	9.2	9	9.5	9.8	12.3	10.2	12.8	13.4	12.4
Miercurea Seat	4.1	1.6	6.7	6.4	1.5	3	3.5	3.4	4.5	6.1
Turda County	12.3	12	12.5	11.2	10.7	5.7	6.3	4.5	15.5	14.5
Odorhei Seat	9.3	10.1	11.7	10.3	10.7	10.1	12.4	11.4	11.5	10.8
Nocrich Seat	10.8	9.7	12.4	11.4	7.9	10.9	10.7	14.4	12.8	14.1
Zarand County	0.7	1.3	1.3	0.8	1	0.8	1.1	1.5	1.5	2.3
Caraş County	3.4	3.8	3.3	3.5	4.2	4.3	3.7	4	5.1	4.8
Timiş County	3.2	3.3	3	3.9	3	3	2.9	3.8	3.1	4.2
Arad County	4.3	3.9	4.5	5.6	5.4	6	5.6	5.9	6.1	5.5
Bihor County	7.3	7	8.5	8.7	8.8	7.1	7	6.8	7.2	7.3
Maramureş										
County	2	1.8	1.4	1.3	1.5	1.8	3	1.9	2.1	2.1
Sătmar County	8.5	6	5.4	5.7	5.6	6.8	6.5	6.4	6.3	6.4

SOURCE: *Magyar Statisztikai Évkönyv*, vols. 2–5 (Budapest, 1874–1878).

NOTE: For the counties of Caraş, Timiş, Arad, Bihor, and Maramureş the data includes those areas that are currently not part of Romania.

in 1871 and a maximum of 13.8% in 1875; Făgăraș District, with a minimum of 10% and a maximum of 17.2%, the seat of Odorhei, with values between 9.3% and 12.4%; the seat of Mureș, with 11.4% and 16.1%, etc.

A tentative association between the variation in the rate of mixed marriages and a certain ethnic or religious group might not withstand a thorough analysis. For instance, in the Szekler seats we find contrasting attitudes towards this phenomenon, the seat of Ciuc being typical for religious endogamy, while the seats of Odorhei and Trei Scaune exceeded the Ciuc rate by more than 10%. Similarly, in the Saxon seats we find some with lower rates (Cincul Mare, Miercurea), and others with high rates (Orăștie, Nocrich, etc.). When it comes to the Romanians, absolutely dominant in the counties of Zarand or Hunedoara, the attitudes towards mixed marriages also varied considerably: Zarand shows very low rates, exceeded by those of Hunedoara by more than 5%; Făgăraș District featured even higher rates than that. Under these circumstances, we believe that only case studies that would take into account the local realities, matrimonial traditions and practices, ethno-confessional structures, geography, etc. could offer a pertinent explanation regarding the regional variations in mixed marriages. Only interdisciplinary perspectives can shed new light on the circumstances that, in time, led to an expansion in the marriage selection pool, beyond the confines of one's community, religion, or ethnic group. This selection of spouses from outside the community also involves cultural connotations which are "related to the axiological systems of the social groups, to the degree of religious tolerance, to customs and to the prestige value attached to some ethnic or religious groups."<sup>6</sup>

After the administrative reorganization of 1876, which abolished the seats, the districts, and all the local forms of administrative autonomy, replacing them with a uniform organization into counties at the level of the whole Hungary, statistical sources offer us information about mixed marriages in the counties and in the main cities of Transylvania. Thus, for the period 1876–1889 (see Table 2), we notice first and foremost a great regional diversity in what concerns the phenomenon of mixed marriages. There were areas of increased confessional and ethnic endogamy, such as Maramureș County, where the minimum rate of interdenominational marriages was 1.9% and the maximum one of 4.7%; in Severin County the rate varied between 2.2% and 2.9%; in Timiș County, the annual rate of mixed marriages varied between a minimum of 3.4% and a maximum of 4.9%; in Sălaj County the extreme values were of 4.1% and 6.5%, and in Arad County of 4.3% and 5.8%. While the majority of counties displayed average rates, there were some with a high incidence of mixed marriages. Thus, in Alba de Jos County the rate varied between 14.6% and 19%; in Mureș–Turda County, between 13.2% and 19.9%; in Târnava Mică County,

TABLE 2. MIXED MARRIAGES IN TRANSYLVANIA BETWEEN 1876 AND 1889 (%)

Administrative Unit	1876	1877	1878	1879	1880	1881	1882	1883	1884	1885	1886	1887	1888	1889
Alba de Ios County	14.6	15.8	16.9	17	16.3	19	16.9	17.4	17.2	17.8	18.3	16.8	18.6	16.9
Arad County	4.3	4.3	4.8	5.2	5.7	5.6	5.3	4.7	5.7	5.1	5.4	5.6	5.8	5.2
Arad City	20.8	18.3	23.4	22.6	23	19.5	24.2	24.8	28	26.6	25.9	24.1	21.5	22.3
Bistrița-Năsăud County	7.2	8.6	7.5	8.2	7.6	9.5	6.9	8.9	8.2	8.7	9.4	10.2	10.4	10.8
Bihor County	6.5	7.8	6.9	7.3	7.8	8.9	8.8	8.1	8	8.8	9.3	8.6	9.5	9.3
Oradea City	29.3	23.2	29.9	28.5	22.8	28.9	26	26.8	27.7	33.6	33.5	34.7	29.3	29.9
Brașov County	10.4	13.6	13.3	12.1	9.7	11.3	14	13.1	11.9	11.2	11.7	11.4	10.4	12.5
Cluj County	0.9	4.7	3.5	4.2	3.8	4.5	3.2	3.6	4.8	4.4	5.7	5.5	7.4	5.5
Făgăraș County	14.5	24.5	16.5	14.7	16.5	15.1	13.7	18.6	18.5	13.1	14.8	17.8	16.7	12.3
Irei Scaune County	15.3	15.5	16.8	14.5	15.9	15.3	18.4	16.9	16.9	16.1	17.9	17.5	19.3	19.1
Hunedoara County	8.3	9.3	9.5	8.3	9.4	7.7	9.6	8.7	10.9	9.8	8.9	9.5	10.3	11
Târnava Mică County	12.9	16.5	19.5	15.3	16.3	15.5	15.6	17.9	16.2	15.1	20.4	16.6	17.9	17.8
Cojocna (Cluj) County	9.2	9.8	9.4	9.4	11.3	11	11.1	9.3	10.1	9.3	10	10.6	10.2	11
Cluj City	34.9	39.7	39.8	44	37	36.9	45.8	38.4	37.6	44.1	40.6	39.4	47.9	46.9
Caraș (after 1880, Caraș-Severin) County	5.3	5.7	6.5	6.1	5.9	5.5	5.3	6	5.9	5.2	5.9	6.1	6.6	6.9
Maramureș County	1.9	4.6	4.1	4.7	3.7	4.3	4.2	3.2	4.1	3.9	4.4	3.8	3.9	4.5
Mureș-Turda County	14.1	13.2	16.7	14.2	15.6	15.4	15.1	14.8	16.6	17.9	17.5	17.6	15.8	19.9
Târgu-Mureș City	28.6	41.9	43.4	38.5	42.8	37.1	43.1	39.1	36.6	44.4	39	43.2	37.3	44.2
Târnava Mare County	7.1	9.4	9.1	8.6	8	8.8	9.8	9.7	11	9.7	9.8	9.6	10.6	10.2
Sătmar County	6.8	9.1	8.5	9.8	7.2	8.7	9.1	9.7	9.6	10.6	9.8	9.7	9.7	10.2
Satu Mare City	17.1	23.8	22.5	22.2	24.2	26.5	17.3	22.5	26.7	25.9	26.8	25.3	26.3	28.9
Sibiu County	8.1	11.5	9.8	10.7	10.4	13.3	11.5	10.9	11.8	10.9	11.5	10.7	12.9	12.2
Sălaj County	4.3	4.1	4.3	6.5	4.5	4.6	4.1	4.1	4.8	4.7	6	4.1	4.8	4.5
Solnoc-Dăbâca County	10.6	9.4	8.2	10.5	9.4	8.6	10.6	11.6	8.7	11.3	10.4	11.4	11.3	13.8
Severin County	2.5	2.6	2.9	2.2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Timiș County	3.4	4.3	4.4	4.9	3.6	4.8	4.4	4.6	3.9	4.6	4.1	4.9	4.4	4.3
Timișoara City	22.8	14.1	14.4	19.4	17.7	19.6	17.3	12.2	15.5	17.3	20.4	20.4	21.1	16.7
Turda-Arieș County	12.3	13.5	13.2	13.3	12.5	13.8	14	14.2	12.9	13.9	16.5	16.4	15	16.3
Odorhei County	13.6	13.9	13.2	13.5	10.5	13	13.5	13.3	12.8	15.4	13.2	14	13.4	14.7

SOURCE: *Magyar Statisztikai Évkönyv*, vols. 6–19 (Budapest, 1876–1891).

NOTE: For the counties of Caraș, Severin, Timiș, Arad, Bihor, Sătmar, and Maramureș the data includes those areas that are currently not part of Romania.

between 12.9% and 20.4%, and in Turda–Arieș County between 12.3% and 16.5%. While no spectacular increase was recorded in the period for which we have synthetic data for the counties, we do see an increase in the percentage of mixed marriages. In nearly all counties, the annual rates for the mixed marriages in the 1880s are generally higher than those of the previous decade.

The data in Table 2 shows a surprisingly high rate of mixed marriages in the urban environment as compared to the rural hinterland. In the big cities for which we have statistical data (Timișoara, Arad, Oradea, Satu Mare, Cluj, Târgu-Mureș), we notice that interdenominational marriages were 4 or 5 times more common than in the rest of the county. For instance, in the city of Arad, the rates for the investigated phenomenon stood at 18.3%–28%, while in the rest of the county they were merely 4.3%–5.8%. In Timișoara, mixed marriages varied between 12.2% and 22.8%, but in the rest of the county only between 3.4% and 4.9%; in the city of Cluj, the rate varied between 34.9% and 47.9%, and in the rest of Cojocna County it stood between 9.2% and 11.3%. Of course, in the urban environment, the ethno-confessional diversity was much greater than in the rural environment. Hence the increased possibility for urban dwellers to choose their partner from a much richer ethnic and religious selection pool. Furthermore, the rural restrictions or reluctance in matrimonial matters were less present in the urban areas, more liberal when it came to marrying outside one's own social group. Interestingly enough, the cities in Banat and Partium fare less better than many Transylvanian towns in what concerns the percentage of mixed marriages (thus, even the upper limit of the mixed marriage rate in the western cities was below the lower limit recorded in Cluj or Târgu-Mureș!). The relatively similar ethnic and denominational structures of these two categories of cities cannot provide an explanation for this. Instead, we have to take into account historical tradition and the pattern of tolerance-intolerance in the course of time.<sup>7</sup>

Table 3 illustrates the dynamics of mixed marriages in the whole of Hungary (urban as well as rural) over the past two decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The first observation we could make has to do with the yearly increase in the percentage of mixed marriages. If between 1881 and 1885 there was an average of 11,643 mixed marriages a year, in the last 5 years of the 19<sup>th</sup> century the number increased to approximately 15,300. The percentage of mixed marriages increased proportionally from 8.1% between 1881 and 1885, to 8.8% between 1886 and 1890, to 9.1 between 1891 and 1895, and to 11.1% between 1896 and 1900. This confirms the observations based on the data in Table 2, which shows a similar development in nearly all cities and counties in Transylvania. Surprising in the case of Table 3 is the rather abrupt increase in the average



TABLE 3. INTERDENOMINATIONAL MARRIAGES IN HUNGARY BETWEEN 1881 AND 1900

Year	Number	%
Average no. between 1881 and 1885	11,643	8.1
Average no. between 1886 and 1890	11,688	8.8
1891	11,383	8.6
1892	12,610	8.9
1893	12,871	8.9
1894	13,170	9.1
1895	13,136	9.7
Average no. between 1891 and 1895	12,634	9.1
1896	14,362	11.3
1897	14,461	11
1898	14,709	10.9
1899	16,269	11
1900	16,616	11.2
Average no. between 1896 and 1900	15,283	11.1

SOURCE: *Magyar Statisztikai Évkönyv*, new ser., vol. 8 (Budapest, 1901), 29.

annual percentage of interdenominational marriages from 9.1% between 1891 and 1895 to 11.1% in the last 5 years of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The additional two percentage points reflect the consequences of the legislative amendments introduced by the Hungarian state in 1895, when marital records were transferred to the lay authorities. This law, which replaced the Church with the state in terms of the control over the essential moments in one's life (birth marriage, death), also led to this "liberalization" of interdenominational marriages.<sup>8</sup> After 1895, the Church had to become more flexible on interdenominational marriages, lest it should lose those members unhappy with the intransigence of their spiritual leaders. Furthermore, slight changes also occurred in the mentality of the various ethnic groups that lived in Hungary at that time, as they became more open to the idea of a mixed marriage (interdenominational first and foremost, but also from an ethnic point of view).

Tables 4 and 5 can lead to interesting conclusions regarding the situation of interdenominational marriages in the whole of Hungary in two separate years of the last decade of the 19<sup>th</sup> century (1892 and 1900). Thus, we see that those of the Mosaic faith (Jews) were less willing to enter mixed marriages, displaying the lowest conjugal mobility (exogamy) outside their ethnic group. At the opposite end we find the Unitarians, relatively few in number (approximately 65,000 people in the whole of Transylvania in 1900),<sup>9</sup> who were most willing



TABLE 4. MIXED MARRIAGES IN HUNGARY IN 1892

Religion of the bride	Religion of the groom							Of which mixed marriages		
	RC	GC	O	EA	ER	U	M	TOTAL	No.	%
RC	62,231	1,002	267	1,216	2,105	65	—	66,886	4,655	6.9
GC	1,053	14,921	775	79	269	10	—	17,107	2,186	12.8
O	154	813	18,294	33	49	4	—	19,347	1,053	5.4
EA	1,128	63	37	9,018	464	14	—	10,724	1,706	15.9
ER	1,848	334	78	404	17,750	114	—	20,528	2,778	13.5
U	67	15	9	13	120	454	—	678	224	33
M	—	—	—	—	—	—	5,789	5,789	—	—
TOTAL	66,481	17,148	19,460	10,763	20,757	661	5,789	141,059	12,602	8.9
Of which mixed marriages	4,250	2,227	1,166	1,745	3,007	207	—	12,602	—	—
%	6.4	13	6	16.2	14.5	31.3	—	8.9	—	—

LEGEND: Roman-Catholic (RC); Greek-Catholic (GC); Orthodox (O); Evangelical Augustan (EA); Evangelical Reformed (ER); Unitarian (U); Mosaic (M).

SOURCE: *Magyar Statisztikai Évkönyv*, new ser., vol. 2 (Budapest, 1895), 47.

TABLE 5. MIXED MARRIAGES IN HUNGARY IN 1900

Religion of the bride	Religion of the groom										Of which mixed marriages	
	RC	GC	O	EA	ER	U	M	OR	RW	TOTAL	No.	%
RC	67,107	1,189	423	1,538	2,956	67	150	5	9	73,444	6,337	8.6
GC	1,179	13,406	1,019	60	400	7	3	2	-	16,706	2,670	16.6
O	183	935	17,512	29	112	5	4	-	-	18,780	1,268	6.7
EA	1,366	44	39	9,505	566	11	14	-	2	11,547	2,042	17.6
ER	2,618	382	143	538	17,668	141	24	-	2	21,516	3,848	17.8
U	64	11	9	4	138	300	-	-	-	526	226	42.9
M	140	5	11	20	30	-	6,492	-	4	6,702	210	3.1
OR	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	2	-	3	1	33.3
RW	4	-	-	-	4	-	6	-	21	35	14	40
TOTAL	72,661	15,972	19,156	11,691	21,875	531	6,693	9	38	148,629	16,616	11.2
Of which mixed marriages	5,554	2,566	1,644	2,189	4,207	231	201	7	17	16,616	-	-
%	7.6	16.1	8.6	18.7	19.2	43.5	3	77.8	44.7	11.2	-	-

LEGEND: Roman-Catholic (RC); Greek-Catholic (GC); Orthodox (O); Evangelical Augustan (EA); Evangelical Reformed (ER); Unitarian (U); Mosiac (M); Other religions (OR); Religion withheld (RW).  
 SOURCE: *Magyar Statisztikai Évkönyv*, new ser., 8: 29.

to conclude exogamous marriages: of the Unitarians, 33% in 1892 and circa 43% in 1900 married members of other denominations, chiefly favoring the Reformed Evangelicals and the Roman-Catholics.

The two tables above show no striking differences in behavior between the men and the women of the investigated denominations when it comes to mixed marriages, despite the presence of certain variations. Thus, Roman-Catholic grooms are between 0.5 and 1% below the percentage of women of the same denomination who concluded mixed marriages, and the Greek-Catholic grooms are 0.2% more in 1892 and 0.5% fewer in 1900 than the Greek-Catholic women who married outside their denomination. The situation within the Orthodox denomination is the precise opposite of the latter, with the men more willing to take a spouse from among the members of another denomination: in 1892, 6% as opposed to 5.4% Orthodox brides, and in 1900 the difference increased to 8.6% as compared to 6.7%. The same situation appears with the Evangelical Augustan and with the Evangelical Reformed denominations, where men surpassed women by as few percentage points when it came to marrying outside their denomination.

Based on the data in Table 6, we can assess the matrimonial behavior of the inhabitants of 5 counties and of 5 major Transylvanian cities in what concerns the attitudes towards mixed marriages. Beyond the interdenominational aspect, we shall also try to estimate the approximate number of ethnically mixed marriages.

We have grouped the denominations so as to indicate the manner in which the Romanians were or were not willing to take Hungarian or German spouses, as well as the extent to which the latter were willing to marry a Romanian. Thus, we considered that the Orthodox and the Greek-Catholics roughly represented the Romanian population (with a small margin or error), and that the Roman-Catholics, the Reformed and Augustan Evangelicals, as well as the Unitarians were Hungarians and Germans. Thus, we notice that the 27.7% of the Roman-Catholic Hungarian and German men took Romanian (Orthodox or Greek-Catholic) brides, as opposed to only 17.4% and 16.8% of the Reformed and Evangelical men (with the Unitarians, the percentage is even smaller, given the fact that this denomination was present chiefly in the Szekler area, which had a smaller Romanian presence). When it comes to Romanian men, however, they showed more openness in this respect, and 30.2% of the Greek-Catholic men and 28.5% of the Orthodox men married outside their ethnic group. This investigated sample confirms the conclusions of Gheorghe Şişeştean regarding mixed marriages in another geographic area of Transylvania. More precisely, he argued that in the second part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century the ethnic criterion “surpassed the religious one and became dominant in the definition of marital behavior.”<sup>10</sup>

TABLE 6. PERCENTAGE OF INTERDENOMINATIONAL MARRIAGES  
IN THE STUDIED SAMPLE IN 1877, 1880, AND 1885

Religion of the groom	Religion of the bride	Type of administrative unit					
		County (Cojocna, Mureș–Turda, Bihar, Arad, Timiș)		City (Cluj, Târgu-Mureș, Oradea, Arad, Timișoara)		TOTAL	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
RC	GC, O	198	32	76	20.5	274	27.7
	EA, ER, U	421	68	294	79.5	715	72.3
	TOTAL	619	100	370	100	989	100
GC	O	612	76.1	13	14.1	625	69.8
	RC, EA, ER, U	192	23.9	79	85.9	271	30.2
	TOTAL	804	100	92	100	896	100
O	GC	649	80.6	25	18.2	674	71.5
	RC, EA, ER, U	156	19.4	112	81.8	268	28.5
	TOTAL	805	100	137	100	942	100
EA	O, GC	43	29.9	5	3.8	48	17.4
	RC, ER, U	101	70.1	126	96.2	227	82.6
	TOTAL	144	100	131	100	275	100
ER	O, GC	111	19.8	38	11.6	149	16.8
	RC, EA, U	448	80.2	290	88.4	738	83.2
	TOTAL	559	100	328	100	887	100
U	O, GC	9	10.5	1	2.6	10	8.1
	RC, EA, ER	77	89.5	37	97.4	114	91.9
	TOTAL	86	100	38	100	124	100

LEGEND: Roman-Catholic (RC); Greek-Catholic (GC); Orthodox (O); Evangelical Augustan (EA); Evangelical Reformed (ER); Unitarian (U).

SOURCE: *Magyar Statisztikai Évkönyv*, vols. 7, 10, 15 (Budapest, 1879, 1882, 1889).

Of course, an analysis of mixed marriages, of denominational and especially of ethnic exogamy, we must consider, beyond the existing prejudice, the magnitude of the ethnic mix in the respective places, the local matrimonial market, etc., as well as the dispositions of canon law and the religious practices of the main Transylvanian denominations in regard to marriage. At any rate, the evidence suggests that towards the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, as states turned secular and the Church began to lose its influence, mutations occurred in the attitude shown by the various denominations in Transylvania on the matter of mixed marriages, and people became more willing to marry outside their ethnic or religious group. The modernization of society, the industrialization and the urbanization that accompanied the development of the province in the last decades prior to World War I increased the mobility within the population, mostly in the case of men, who were presently more willing to seek employ-

ment outside the traditional community. More often than not, this meant completely moving to another place and marrying a woman from another religious or ethnic group.<sup>11</sup> The manifest regional variations require a further horizontal investigation of the dynamics of mixed marriages in Transylvania, as well as comprehensive case studies applied to urban and rural samples, this being the only method likely to accurately piece together a such a comprehensive social and cultural phenomenon.

## Conclusions

**A**T THE end of this study concerning some of the more important aspects pertaining to the population of Transylvania over nearly a millennium of history, we could easily conclude, as brilliantly indicated by an expert in the history of the province, that

*along the centuries Transylvania was not a purely Dacian-Roman or Romanian country, and it could not be that, given its wealth and its location on the route of various armies. It always saw the sometimes peaceful, sometimes violent settlement of various peoples—Scythians, Celts, Sarmatians, Romans, Goths, Huns, Gepidae, Avars, Slavs, Bulgarians, Hungarians, Pechenegs, Udae, Cumans, Szeklers, Saxons, Teutonic Knights, other Germanic peoples, Jews, Gypsies, Serbs, Croats, Ruthenians, Armenians, etc.—but over nearly two thousand years the Roman legacy and the Romanian population defined its distinct personality and fundamentally shaped its destiny.*<sup>12</sup>

Until the 1918 union between Transylvania and Romania, the Hungarian kings, the Habsburg emperors, and the various governments in Budapest tried to alter its dominantly Orthodox and Romanian character. They partially succeeded, as in the Middle Ages a sizable part of the Romanian noble elites embraced first the Roman-Catholic and then the Reformed Calvinist faiths; after 1700, when some of the Romanian Orthodox united with the Church of Rome, the denominational composition of Transylvania became even more complex. The settlement of colonists, from the Middle Ages to the Modern Era, failed to eliminate the Romanian ethnic majority, but managed to decrease the percentage of Romanians in the province—never, however, under 53%. Indeed, what occurred on 1 December 1918 in Alba Iulia, namely, the democratic implementation of the right to national self-determination by the majority population in Transylvania, rendered this union stable and legitimate. The decision of the Paris Peace Conference to officially and internationally recognize the union between

Transylvania and the Romanian state involved first and foremost the acceptance of a geopolitical reality based on the clear demographic majority of the Romanians in the territories that had decided their fate by way of a plebiscite.

In what concerns interethnic relations in Transylvania after 1918, their tortuous fate was also affected by the presence in the previous century of authoritarian and totalitarian regimes and by the Second World War, which meant a step backwards in Romanian-Hungarian relations. The violence and the destruction of those years negatively affected the collective memory, and it took decades and a return to democracy before the two nations recovered their mutual trust and went back to peacefully living together. Today, things are moving in a positive direction, as indicated by the gradual increase in the number of mixed marriages in Transylvania.<sup>13</sup> We believe that this historical-demographic study, as well as other similar analyses, should offer both politicians and regular citizens of this country information and solutions for the present day. In this 21<sup>st</sup> century, in Romania and elsewhere, we need to shift the focus of tolerance from the social and political realm towards the field of human relations, because in the 21<sup>st</sup> century the concept of tolerance seems to be insufficient and limited. Thus, we need to move from a tolerant co-existence to an active collaboration (the most significant mutation should involve the replacement of “I tolerate” by “I respect”). First and foremost, this requires good knowledge of the past, and only then concrete practical and pragmatic actions. Of course, under these circumstances the education of both young people and adults plays a crucial role, as the majority must truly understand the problems of the minorities and accept and support the manifestation of their ethnic identity, by protecting their culture, religion, education, and languages. Therefore, both the authorities and the civil society must become involved in fighting discrimination and in the elimination of any form of extremism, chauvinism, anti-Semitism or territorial separatism, in supporting cultural diversity and in encouraging interethnic dialogue, in the development of civic multiculturalism as a part of the European identity. It is just as true, however, that the members of the minority groups must be willing to accept and strengthen multicultural diversity, respect the majority population alongside which they live, and be loyal to the state whose citizens they are.

□

## Notes

1. Ioan Slavici, *Proză: Povești. Nuvele. Mara*, ed. D. Vatamaniuc, vol. 2 (Bucharest, 1979), 345.

2. Ioan Slavici, *Lumea prin care am trecut: Memorialistică. Publicistică*, ed. Constantin Mohanu (Bucharest, 2004), 112.
3. Lily Rain, *Familia etnică mixtă: Județul Covasna* (Sfântu Gheorghe, 2001), 16–17.
4. Sorina Paula Bolovan, *Familia în satul românesc din Transilvania: A doua jumătate a secolului al XIX-lea și începutul secolului XX* (Cluj-Napoca, 1999), 151.
5. Gheorghe Șișeștean, *Etnie, confesiune și căsătorie în nord-vestul Transilvaniei* (Zalău, 2002), 68.
6. Ibid.
7. For an interesting interdisciplinary perspective on these cities which could be the starting point for such an explanatory approach see Sorina Voiculescu, *Orașele din Câmpia de Vest: Structuri și funcționalități urbane* (Timișoara, 2004).
8. Ioan Bolovan and Sorina Paula Bolovan, “From Tradition to Modernization: Church and the Transylvanian Romanian Family in the Modern Era,” *Journal for the Study of Religions & Ideologies* 7, 20 (Summer 2008): 113.
9. S. P. Bolovan, 57.
10. Șișeștean, 84.
11. Ibid., 89.
12. Ioan-Aurel Pop, *Românii și maghiarii în secolele IX–XIV: Geneza statului medieval în Transilvania*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition (Cluj-Napoca, 2003), 16.
13. Horváth István, “Căsătorii mixte româno-maghiare în Transilvania în perioada 1992–2002,” in *Căsătorii mixte în Transilvania, secolul al XIX-lea și începutul secolului XX*, eds. Corneliu Pădurean and Ioan Bolovan (Arad, 2005), 285 sqq.

## Abstract

### Transylvania Until World War I: Demographic Opportunities and Vulnerabilities (III)

For centuries, the diversity of traditions and cultures has been one of the major assets of both Europe and Romania. The study examines, in a broad historical perspective, the demographic situation of Transylvania, a multiethnic and multilingual territory. Attention is given to population structure and to the status of the various ethnic groups in the statistical era, between 1850 and 1910. An interesting insight into the demographic and psychological behavior in Transylvania in the decades prior to World War I is offered by the matter of religiously and ethnically mixed marriages. We believe that this historical-demographic study, as well as other similar analyses, should offer both politicians and regular citizens of this country information and solutions for the present day.

## Keywords

historical demography, Transylvania, ethnic minorities, mixed marriages