

**Transylvanianism and Interculturality in Review Discourse  
(Early 20<sup>th</sup> Century)  
– Contributions –**

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**Abstract.** Transylvanianism, interculturality and cultural dialogue have been some of the recurrent topics of multilingual cultural reviews in Transylvania at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, as reflections on the formation of consciousness of the self, diversity and difference. The paper proposes to offer certain perspectives on the self-discourse of multicultural Transylvanian society by the analysis of the vocabulary of interculturality and Transylvanianism in the reviews *Cultura* (Culture, Cluj, 1924), *Aurora* (Aurora, Oradea, 1922–1923), *Culisele – A kulissza* (Backstage, 1923), *Banatul* (The Banat, Timișoara, 1926), and *Klingsor* (Brașov, 1924–1939).

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*Transylvanianism* and interculturality and their content, scope and articulations have been a primary interest of several cultural reviews of inter-war Transylvania. The common denominator of these reviews is the articles dedicated to the subject of cultural identity and profile of a multiethnic region with strongly loaded history and identity. This research focuses on some of the most representative multi- or intercultural reviews, such as *Cultura* (Culture, Cluj, 1924), *Aurora* (Aurora, Oradea, 1922–1923), *Culisele – A kulissza* (Backstage, 1923), *Banatul* (The Banat, Timișoara, 1926), and *Klingsor* (Brașov, 1924–1939).

Published in Cluj in 1924, the review *Cultura* was a core project of inter-war Transylvanian multiculturalism, comprising articles written in Romanian, Hungarian, German and French. The director of the periodical was Sextil Pușcariu, and the editors were Yves Auger for the French, Lucian Blaga for the Romanian, György Kristóf for the Hungarian, and Oskar Netoliczka for the German part. The editorial of the first issue sets forth the role that the review *Cultura* undertook in the intellectual debates on multiculturalism in the period following the Great Union; this role can be grasped by the analysis of the main ideas of this editorial.

The editorial revolves around some semantic antinomies, which counterpose *isolation as a state of fact* between Transylvanian intellectuals of different ethnicity and *the initiative of cultural approach* promoted by *Cultura*. According to the author, the previous attempts of approach have not been founded on a “seriously established system of relations” but on particularities and fragmentary interests: “The previous connections

between intellectuals in Romania belonging to various races [ethnicities] was primarily due to individual sympathies rather than a seriously established system of relations. The consequence is that we do not know each other. This persistent isolation has of course no advantages for any of the sides. The initiative of more efficient contact imposes itself.”<sup>1</sup>



**Teodora Cosman, “Friendship between Nations”**

50cm x 70cm, gouache on tissue

As an “organ of intellectual contact”, the review intended to settle divergences due to “different kinds of ethnic consciousness” on the basis of “numerous and noble common interests”, as a dialogue on common ideas between Romanian, Hungarian and German intellectuals, transcending and harmonizing the differences: “Our review is established by an agreement between several Romanian, Hungarian and German scholars and men of letters, and it is meant to create a treaty of union for three ethnic consciousnesses different in their intimate essence but united by numerous and noble common interests”.<sup>2</sup>

The *Cultura* review proposed the cultivation of a set of values, such as: depoliticization, courage of opinion, impartiality, mutual respect, overriding identity and communication barriers, solidarity based on friendship. All these values build up a true *ethos of multiculturalism* under the motto of “Culture”, incorporating specific actions and attitudes converted into a symbol of coexistence: “Far from any political influence, we

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<sup>1</sup> *Cultura* 1 (January 1924), 1.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

will have the courage for our opinions, keeping our impartiality which obliges us to be respectful with one another. We start off with the hope to increase the number of those who stretch out their hands with a friendly gesture, above short-lived barriers, following the motto of CULTURE”.<sup>1</sup>

Another inter-war Transylvanian review centred on the subject of multiculturalism and cultural dialogue is *Aurora*, published in Romanian and Hungarian in Oradea in 1922–1923. Its editorial is built up upon some semantic reference points, outlining a multilayered interaction: a *cognitive* one, by “knowing each other”, an *axiological*, by cultivating some mutually “unquestionable values”, and a *social*: “This way [by translations, a.n.] the two nationalities will very soon get to know each other. For two nations who have lived together for so many centuries, it would be a shame not to know each other better at least from now on, as both have unquestionable values [...]. In addition, our review also deals with social life, seeking to offer better and more relaxed guidance in the new society of our state by writings of people most competent.” Mediation and the knowledge of the other was supposed to be achieved by “selected translations from Romanian literature to Hungarian, and vice-versa”, and the modelling of social consciousness by “the writings of people most competent”.<sup>2</sup>

The editorial of the bilingual (Romanian-Hungarian) review *Culisele – A kulissza* (Backstage), published by Leonard Paukerow in Cluj in 1923, starts in the same tone, possibly with an added hint of extra festivity. The editorial points out the discourses of certain writers at the dinner party of the Romanian Writers’ Society in Cluj, constructed on expressions and keywords such as “cooperation”, “honest approach”, “development of collective culture and of the entire mankind”, and “social and political harmony”. Two of the personalities whose discourses were discussed in the programme article of *Culisele – A kulissza* were Corneliu Moldovanu, President of the Romanian Writers’ Society in Cluj, and Jenő Janovics, Director of the Hungarian Theatre of Cluj. A recurring concern in the discourses of both of them was the reiteration of the importance of high culture, universal culture, which can only be reached by corroborating its particular elements, in this case Romanian and Hungarian culture. Corneliu Moldovanu claims in this respect: “It is only by the cooperation between different cultures that the great culture of mankind can be attained”; Jenő Janovics also states: “It pleases us to see you beside us, serving the culture of the entire mankind.”<sup>3</sup>

Unlike *Aurora* which declared the intention of harmonizing social life by the contribution of the “most competent” people, *Culisele – A kulissza* emphasizes more the principles leading to “social and political harmony” and the need to apply these: “In their well-behaved and productive strata, these nations realize that, on the contrary, they *have to* [author’s emphasis] live and progress in complete social and political harmony”. To continue, Jenő Janovics’s discourse claims the same thing, namely that cooperation is a must: “The phalanx of the fierce supporters of a policy of agreement and of an encompassing community culture *has to* [author’s emphasis] become even larger”.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid.

<sup>2</sup> George Bacaloglu, “Programul nostru” (Our programme), *Aurora* 1 (24 December 1924), 1.

<sup>3</sup> Leonard Paukerow, “Apropiere prin cultură” (Approaching through culture), *Culisele – A kulissza* 6–7 (April–May 1923), 1.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

The discourse on the need for intercultural dialogue is also prevalent in the Romanian-German bilingual review *Banatul* (The Banat) published in Timișoara between 1926 and 1928 and in 1930. The Romanian-language editorial of the review states that multiculturalism is a defining element for the historical region of the Banat, accounting for its specificity within the cultural landscape of the country, as well as the wider European context. In this sense the editor emphasizes the intention to grasp “the strange and Baroque – as Mr Blaga calls it – physiognomy of a corner of the Country where so many varieties clash and so many cultures blend.”<sup>1</sup> The review takes a stand against intentions of regionalism (as its title might suggest) in the sense of isolation; it wants to promote the particularities of a region and a positive image of a Baroque ethno-linguistic physiognomy: “Our purpose is only to show the world a precious stone which decorates the crown of our entire Romanian Culture.”<sup>2</sup>

The ideas formulated in the German-language editorial written by Sim. Sam. Moldovan added up to the primary editorial directions for promoting interculturalism as signalled in the Romanian editorial of the *Banatul*. Moldovan lists some of the greatest qualities of the province from the perspective of multiethnic coexistence, the variety of its geographic resources and the artistic and cultural life of great value with echoes reaching even as far as Paris: “if they knew... that we have here literates who write things that are read in Paris or Berlin, if they knew all this, then Banat would be known everywhere in words and images, in its overall, as well as particular facet.”<sup>3</sup> The discourse of the German editorial does not only point out multiculturalism as the defining element of this region, but also its Europeanism, which it repeatedly mentions, claiming that the region has a rich and significant multicultural heritage that should be better promoted abroad and should be integrated into “das große Mosaikbild Europa”.<sup>4</sup>

Transylvanianism as a particular expression of multiculturalism is also discussed in the review *Klingsor* published in Brașov by Heinrich Zillich between 1924 and 1939. In addition to promoting “best quality Transylvanian culture and literature”, the review also intended “to support especially the German world and the coexistence of peoples in this region”.<sup>5</sup> The intercultural dialogue meant the translation of works of Romanian and Hungarian authors into German and several articles treating the notion of Transylvanianism in its various uses: *spiritual* (“the Transylvanian spirit”), *geographical* (“the Transylvanian landscape”), *ethnic* and *super-ethnic* (“Transylvanian nation”), *social* and *communitarian* (“Transylvanian community”), and even *cosmic* (“the Transylvanian cosmos”). Transylvanianism as an expression of multiculturalism as

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<sup>1</sup> “Editorial”, *Banatul* 1 (1926), 1.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Sim. Sam. Moldovan, “Blätter des Herausgebers”, *Banatul* 1 (1926), 55-56: “Wenn man es wissen würde ... daß wir Literaten haben, die hier schreiben was auch Paris und Berlin liest, wenn man all dies wüßte, so würde Banat in Wort und Bild, im allgemeinen und im speziellen überall bekannt sein”.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., 56.

<sup>5</sup> Walter Myß, *Fazit nach Achthundert Jahren. Geistesleben der Siebenbürger Sachsen im Spiegel der Zeitschrift Klingsor 1924–1939* (München: Südostdeutschen Kulturwerk, 1968), 33. Cf. also Michael Kroner, Elisabeta Dinu, “Die Bemühungen der Zeitschrift Klingsor um einen rumänisch-deutschen Dialog”, in *Interferenzen. Rumänisch-ungarisch-deutsche Kulturbeziehungen in Siebenbürgen*, ed. Michael Kroner (Cluj-Napoca: Dacia, 1973), 219-225.

reflected in review *Klingsor* sums up the spatial (landscape, geography), spiritual (spirit, culture), political and communitarian (community, nation) coordinates that have shaped the intercultural profile and physiognomy of Transylvania in the course of centuries.<sup>1</sup>

Before pinpointing the main channels of multiculturalism discourse in inter-war Transylvanian reviews, one must proceed by a brief analysis of some **theoretical considerations** around this notion. Multiculturalism is the expression of a history and reality that can be grasped by cultural actions and attitudes. In this perspective, *multiculturalism* is *interculturalism* in its phenomenology. The notion of *acculturation* can also be placed in the semantic series of multiculturalism and interculturalism. It “notes the transformations that take place in cultures that influence each other, and it always indicates a longer or shorter historical process that originates in a so-called contact situation.”<sup>2</sup>

Another notion in the semantic field of multiculturalism is *transculturalism*, which emphasizes the symmetry of the contact, or borrowings and influences between diverse cultures.<sup>3</sup>

The volume *Interculturalitate. Cercetări și perspective românești* (Interculturalism. Romanian research and perspectives)<sup>4</sup> edited by Rudolf Poledna, François Ruegg and Călin Rus presents another theoretical perspective on interculturalism. In his article entitled “De la criza reprezentărilor la triumful prefixurilor” (From the crisis of representations to the triumph of prefixes), Christian Giordano briefly summarizes the previous attempts to define culture, culminating with the so-called “representation crisis” in social sciences. A first, “classical” definition of culture considered the individual a consumer of culture, a more or less passive element which follows cultural norms and patterns imposed by society. In the same manner, another “classical” approach considered culture as a fixed and isolated entity.

A new interpretive approach proposed by the author suggests to “think about culture as something changing, procedural and relational, produced by individuals and communities on the basis of permanent interactions, transactions, negotiations, changes, tensions, and last but not least, tragic and very painful conflicts. Studying cultural complexity means to relate culturally defined differences without denying the frontiers that social groups themselves image, construct, and consequently essentialize.”<sup>5</sup>

In order to somewhat clarify the terminological variety, the author also draws together some of the prevalent approaches, and notes the many prefixes attached to the notion of culture: *multi-*, *inter-*, *trans-*. These prefixes render some extra connotations to

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<sup>1</sup> Egon Hajek, “Vom siebenbürgischen Menschen”, *Klingsor* 4 (1936), 137-139. Cf. also Friedrich Müller-Langenthal, “Die siebenbürgische Seele”, *Klingsor* 7 (1926), 252-257. Cf. also Otto Folberth, “Der siebenbürgische Kosmos”, *Klingsor* 3 (1928), 86-88. Cf. also Otto Folberth, “Die drei Durchbrüche. Eine Vision der siebenbürgischen Landschaft”, *Klingsor* 9 (1929), 321-327.

<sup>2</sup> Ernő Gáll, *Dimensiunile conviețuirii* (Dimensions of coexistence) (Bucharest: Kriterion, 1978), 180.

<sup>3</sup> Bronislaw Malinowski, *The Dynamics of Culture Change. An Inquiry into Race Relations in Africa* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1945), 14-27.

<sup>4</sup> Rudolf Poledna, François Ruegg, Călin Rus, eds., *Interculturalitate. Cercetări și perspective românești* (Interculturalism. Romanian research and perspectives) (Cluj-Napoca: Presa Universitară Clujeană, 2002).

<sup>5</sup> Christian Giordano, “De la criza reprezentărilor la triumful prefixelor”, *Interculturalitate*, ed. Poledna, 37-38.

the notion of culture: prefix *multi-* defines a state of fact, therefore it is a term which can designate, as a statement, the coexistence in one space of, for example, certain ethnic and cultural minorities and majorities; prefix *inter-* is more relevant for the present paper, as it primarily implies dynamics, the meeting and interaction of cultures conceived as a relation, a process of interaction and implicitly of cultural immersion.<sup>1</sup>

Seen from this theoretical framework, the publication of multilingual newspapers can be considered first of all a **relational process**, an **intercultural process** where intercultural dynamics and exchange have the primary role. The publication of reviews *Cultura* (Cluj, 1924), *Aurora* (Oradea, 1922–1923), *Culisele – A kulissza* (1923), *Banatul* (Timișoara, 1926) and *Klingsor* (Brașov, 1924–1939) triggered a new discourse of self-identification of the multicultural Transylvanian society, and new definitions and self-definitions of the ethnic and cultural constitution of Transylvania. All that the multicultural society of Transylvania had to gain from this discourse can be grasped by the specific vocabulary that reveals these gains and transformations. At the same time, these also work as a support for the comparison of contemporary semantic variations of multiculturalism and interculturality. Acquiring self-consciousness as a consciousness of diversity and difference can be seen as a great cognitive and communicational mutation of the self-definition discourse of Transylvanian society.<sup>2</sup>

After the Great Union of 1918, a new discourse gained ground in Transylvanian society, which cultivated ethnic and cultural variety, reminiscent of the democratic

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid., 38.

<sup>2</sup> Ute Daniel, *Kompendium Kulturgeschichte. Theorien, Praxis, Schlüsselwörter* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 2004). Cf. also Joachim Wittstock and Stefan Siennerth, eds., *Die deutsche Literatur Siebenbürgens, von den Anfängen bis 1848* (München: Südostdeutsches Kulturwerk, 1999). Cf. also Peter Motzan and Stefan Siennerth, eds., *Die deutschen Regionalliteraturen in Rumänien (1918–1944)* (München: Südostdeutsches Kulturwerk, 1997). Cf. also Anton Schwob and Brigitte Tontsch, eds., *Die siebenbürgisch deutsche Literatur als Beispiel einer Regionalliteratur* (Köln, Weimar, Wien: Böhlau, 1993). Cf. also Michael Kroner, eds., *Interferenzen. Rumänisch-ungarisch-deutsche Kulturbeziehungen in Siebenbürgen* (Cluj-Napoca: Dacia, 1973). Cf. also Köllő Károlyi, *Confluente literare. Studii de literatură comparată româno-maghiară* (Literary confluences. Studies in Romanian-Hungarian comparative literature) (Bucharest: Kriterion, 1993). Cf. also Heinz Dietrich Löwe, Günther H. Tontsch and Stefan Troebst, eds., *Minderheiten, Regionalbewußtsein und Zentralismus in Ostmitteleuropa* (Köln, Weimar, Wien: Böhlau, 2000). Cf. also Phillip Ther and Holm Sundhaussen, eds., *Regionale Bewegungen und Regionalismen in europäischen Zwischenräumen seit der Mitte des 19. Jahrhunderts* (Marburg: Herder Institut, 2003). Cf. also Walter König, ed., *Siebenbürgen zwischen den beiden Weltkriegen* (Köln, Weimar, Wien: Böhlau, 1994). Cf. also Horst Schuller Anger, *Kontakt und Wirkung. Literarische Tendenzen in der siebenbürgischen Kulturzeitschrift „Klingsor“* (Bucharest: Kriterion, 1994). Cf. also Zsolt Lengyel, *Auf der Suche nach dem Kompromiss. Ursprünge und Gestalten des frühen Transsilvanismus 1918–1928* (München: Verlag Ungarisches Institut, 1993). Cf. also Zeno Millea, “*Chestiunea transilvaniei*” versus “*Problema transilvană*” (“The issue of Transylvania” vs. “The Transylvanian problem”) (Bucharest: Ed. România Pur și Simplu, 2004). Cf. also Sorin Mitu, *Die ethnische Identität der Siebenbürger Rumänen. Eine Entstehungsgeschichte* (Köln, Weimar, Wien: Böhlau, 2003). Cf. also Sorin Mitu, Gábor Barta, eds., *Interethnische und Zivilisationsbeziehungen im siebenbürgischen Raum. Historische Studien* (Cluj-Napoca: Verein der Historiker aus Siebenbürgen und dem Banat, 1996).

foundations of the programme of the Great National Assembly of Alba Iulia. The discovery of the *self-consciousness* of multicultural Transylvanian society is in fact the *discovery of diversity*. In other words, the self-consciousness of Transylvanianism is in fact the consciousness of *respectful difference* that must be cultivated in the public, cultural and political space of Transylvania. This establishes modernity and democracy in the Romanian state founded after 1918 and ultimately represents a current of ideas and attitudes which were partially applied and partially supported by cultural projects such as the reviews *Cultura*, *Aurora*, *Culisele – A kulissza*, *Banatul*, *Klingsor* and others.

The **vocabulary of multiculturality**, Transylvanianism and interculturality can be recovered and reconstructed by extracting certain recurrent words and expressions from the articles published in these reviews. This vocabulary can be analyzed on the basis of various elements or levels of meaning which illustrate the complexity of the discourse of Transylvanianism and also stand as a concrete example for the debate on multiculturalism which often remained declarative and therefore superficial.

The first element of the vocabulary of multiculturalism is dedicated to the **cognitive** level of meaning. This cognitive level can be revealed by expressions or quotations which convey the imperative of, or achievements connected to, mutual knowledge, or literary translations from each other's language. In line with these, the editorial of review *Aurora* on 24 December 1922 claims the need for mutual translation from Romanian and Hungarian literature in order for Romanians and Hungarians to know each other better: "Aurora ... will publish as much selected translations as possible from Romanian literature in Hungarian and vice versa. This way the two nationalities will very soon get to know each other."<sup>1</sup>

In addition to knowing each other as a result of translations, the need for multilingual expression is also one of the intentions formulated in the discourse of reviews, as a means to enlarge the horizon of communication for literates, men of culture and researchers: "With regard to literature, we shall only publish translations of well appreciated works in order to contribute to the popularization of Romanian writers. In these times of crisis, when it is difficult to be published, the researchers of the three races [ethnicities] will be able to publish their researches on our pages, in one of the four languages: Romanian, German, Hungarian, French."<sup>2</sup>

Multiculturalism as interculturality, as its phenomenal side, from the perspective of mutual knowledge of two or more peoples may display various degrees of knowledge and communication belonging to various creative fields or literary genres. Among these genres, poetry is considered the most direct and expressive level for knowing a nation's spirit. Poetry transposes through suggestive and essential metaphors the deepest values or a nation's identity and sensitivity. This *cognitive poetic* level is often mentioned and used in review *Cultura* as a means for Romanians and Hungarians to mutually know each other: "Ady with his powerful personality is infixed ever deeper in the

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<sup>1</sup> George Bacaloglu, "Programul nostru" (Our programme), *Aurora* 1 (24 December 1922), 1.

<sup>2</sup> *Cultura* 1 (January 1924), 1. Original: "En fait de littérature nous nous bornerons à publier des traductions d'oeuvres appréciées, pour contribuer ainsi à faire connaître les écrivains de Roumanie. Par ces temps de crise, qui rendent difficile d'imprimer, les hommes de science des trois races pourront publier leurs recherches dans nos collones, dans une des quatres langues suivantes: roumain, allemand, hongrois, français".

consciousness of the Hungarian people and the translation of his poetry is a necessity for all who want to penetrate the intimate fibres of this neighbouring nation”.<sup>1</sup>

The review discourse centred on multiculturalism and interculturalism as it is promoted by *Cultura* often exceeds the scope of multiethnic vernacular Transylvania and engages a wider, more comprehensive approach that stresses the mutual, traditional, historical influences between two peoples. These influences are always emphasized in the writings published in the review and can be foundations for optimizing the knowledge that two cultures or peoples have of each other and for approaching them. In other words, the intercultural relations between two peoples may consolidate a process or programme of intellectual approach between two peoples. This generous project of inter-war Romania was an exemplary way of proving, by the publication of reviews which cultivated multiculturalism and interculturalism, an aspect which can serve even today as an example and a standard for new developments and applications of cultural and intellectual ecumenism. “There are some reviews which have as their main purpose to create mutual and productive influences between Romanian culture and that of other peoples. This way, *Roma* (Bucharest) through Mr. Ortiz and other editors highlight the intellectual relations between Romania and Italy, *Luteția* (Iași) aligns to the same purpose with respect to France. *Aurora* (Oradea) appears in Romanian and Hungarian. Its purpose is the intellectual approach of the two peoples.”<sup>2</sup>

The subject of multicultural dialogue as a producer of mutual knowledge and the understanding of a nation’s spirit is most often present in the literary works of great writers translated into other cultures. The review *Hímök* (Herald) “published translations especially of Eftimiu, Brătescu-Voinești and Delavrancea made by Dénes Jáklovsky and Árpád Bitay and also contributed to familiarizing the Hungarian public with some of the most important representatives of modern Hungarian literature.”<sup>3</sup>

Multiculturalism as a cognitive expression is sometimes converted into systematic actions that can be assigned to a true pedagogy of interculturalism. A revealing example of this pedagogy or intercultural educational strategy is the programme of the Hungarian Theatre of Cluj in the period, staging Romanian drama: “The Hungarian Theatre of Cluj has some Romanian plays translated each year which it stages with special care for the Hungarian public who thus learns to know and love the Romanian writers.”<sup>4</sup>

It can be said, in conclusion, that the first recurrent notion of the vocabulary of multiculturalism is that of *mutual knowledge*, which establishes the *cognitive meanings* of the intercultural discourse which can be reconstructed and revealed by the quotations and examples presented above.

The second level of meanings in the vocabulary of multiculturalism is the **historical** one, which can be recognized in formulas such as “common traditions”, “common relations”, “cohabitation”, “common past”. In other words, the historical past can be the foundation of the uses and applications of a multicultural vocabulary,

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<sup>1</sup> Octavian Goga, “Andrei Ady”, *Cultura* 1 (January 1924), 27.

<sup>2</sup> Nicolae Georgescu-Tistu, “Les revues littéraires roumaines”, *Cultura* 1 (January 1924), 84.

<sup>3</sup> Lajos György, “Les revues littéraires de langue hongroise”, *Cultura* 1 (January 1924), 84.

<sup>4</sup> Eugène Janovics (Jenő Janovics), “Théâtres hongroises en Roumanie”, *Cultura* 1 (January 1924), 89.



repeatedly revealed in the content of the review discourse. The hierarchy of “indisputable values”, constructed by “living together for so many centuries” directs the discourse towards the future, for mutually knowing each other “at least from now on”.<sup>1</sup> Another example taken from the discourse is a historical commonplace, Suceava, which reveals “its important role in the history of the relations between Romanians and Hungarians”.<sup>2</sup> The historical level of the discourse focalizes thus a historical process constructed in the *longue durée* of both the coexistence “for so many centuries together”, and the immediate, the event, the place, like Suceava.

Another level of meaning of the review discourse is the **ethical** one, completing the historical level, meaning that an ethical behaviour based on values like harmony or tolerance cannot be built upon facts that have already happened. The ethical side of cohabitation, harmonious relations and stability must not abuse the past events with all their conflicts but convert them into cooperation and solidarity: “All nations are noble and worthy of living, holding dear their capital of heroic or obscure deeds. Only one thing cannot be allowed for them: that on the grounds of past deeds or the force of the present they ridicule, hate and oppress other peoples. Harmony must be reached, based on mutual concession and the lack of national mockery.”<sup>3</sup>

The **religious topic** of the vocabulary of multiculturalism in *Cultura* is obvious both in case of confessional ecumenism, as an important event in the multicultural society of inter-war Romania, and as an appeal to Christian values the foremost of which is the love of one’s neighbours, as a basis to build interethnic coexistence on. In this respect, at the meeting of representatives of Christian confessions from Romania on 25 October 1923, Miron Cristea, Metropolitan Bishop of Bucharest, stated: “Mistrust, intolerance and hatred have spread among the people. They should fight against these, Christianity having a role in this, as it professes the love of one’s neighbours.”<sup>4</sup> The expression “the love of one’s neighbour” is an invitation in the vocabulary of multiculturalism to shape behaviours and lay the theoretical foundations of intercultural projects and programmes.

The **ethnic** level of the vocabulary of multiculturalism, more precisely the awareness of ethnic differences in Transylvanian culture and the formulation of this awareness can be discerned by recurrent phrases such as “ethnic differences in their intimate essence”, “race differences”, etc. The recognition of ethnic differences in multicultural discourse adds up, however, with commonplaces and the converging points that fuel the construction of interculturality. The dynamics of the relation of (*ethnic*) difference – (*ethical*) convergence defines the phenomenon of multiculturalism on a cultural, as well as political, economic and social level. To put it differently, the awareness of differences adds up to the awareness of common interests: “Our review has been created by an agreement between several Romanian, Hungarian and German men of science and researchers, and it is meant to create a close connection bridge between

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<sup>1</sup> George Bacaloglu, “Programul nostru”, *Aurora* 1 (24 December 1922), 1.

<sup>2</sup> Bitay Árpád, “A Suceava”, *Cultura* 4 (July 1924), 389.

<sup>3</sup> George Vâlsan, “Menirea etnografiei în România” (The role of ethnography in Romania), *Cultura* 2 (March 1924), 105.

<sup>4</sup> Rudolf Honigberger, “Die erste Sitzung des Rumänischen Komitees des Weltbundes für Freundschaftsarbeit der Kirchen”, *Cultura* 4 (July 1924), 370.

three ethnic consciousnesses different in their inner essence but joined together by many common and noble interests”.<sup>1</sup>

While in the aforementioned case ethnicity is toned down by common extra-ethnic interests, in other cases it is tempered by the biological, genetic, or racial convergences within an ethnicity due to the cohabitation and mixture of populations: “Our serological researches seem to prove that the Romanians and Hungarians in the same region often developed from common autochthonous elements [...]. But such results which prove differences in race within the same people and similarities between the nationalities of the same regions are meant to help the demolition of walls raised by the problem of nationalities and the approaching of peoples.”<sup>2</sup>

In other words, the ethnic meanings of the vocabulary of multiculturalism are based on a duality or polarity which can be recognized in the expressions: *ethnic differences – common interests*, *racial differences – similarities between nationalities*.

Another element of the vocabulary of multiculturalism involves **harmonized alterities**, in which ethnic and cultural identities are defined by “being close” and calling for “connections as close as possible between the nationalities of Transylvania”, phrases that cover a process of optimizing knowledge and communication. Harmonization is primarily achieved through communication, involving the knowledge of all languages used in Transylvania, as put forth by reviews like *Aurora*, published in 1922: “Any grievances of the Hungarian from Transylvania may find their place in columns of this review, and we shall bring in the answers of important Romanian personalities regarding these. This is the opportunity, undoubtedly, for Hungarians to expose in Romanian, the language of the State, their wishes, and for the representatives of Romanian culture to answer them in Hungarian in order to be understood by all their Hungarian brothers.”<sup>3</sup>

The mechanisms of harmonized alterity also imply “the objective study of the peoples who live with the Romanians and their civilization”, which will ultimately “contribute to establishing connections as close as possible between the nationalities of Transylvania”.<sup>4</sup> Harmonization appears primarily through intellectual cooperations which tone down “racial fights”.<sup>5</sup>

The entire process of harmonizing alterities can be constructed by **socialization** strategies or actions of Romanians and the national minorities happening through repeated cultural actions which construe the meanings of multiculturalism. The socializing meanings of the vocabulary of multiculturalism can be found in words such as “cooperation”, “brotherhood”, “approaching/closeness”. These actions of socialization are meant to create nuclei of Romanian-Hungarian-German solidarity which would later

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<sup>1</sup> *Cultura* 1 (January 1924), 1. Original: „Notre revue est née d’un accord entre plusieurs savants et lettrés roumains, hongrois et allemands et elle est destinée à créer un trait d’union entre trois consciences ethniques différentes dans leur essence intime, mais unies par de nombreux et nobles intérêts communs”.

<sup>2</sup> Gheorghe Popoviciu, “Diferențe și asemănări în structura biologică de rasă a popoarelor României” (Differences and similarities in the racial biological structure of peoples of Romania), *Cultura* 3 (May 1924), 234.

<sup>3</sup> “Editorial”, *Aurora* 4 (14 January 1923), 1.

<sup>4</sup> “Le Musée ethnographique transylvain”, *Cultura* 1 (January 1924), 96.

<sup>5</sup> Árpád Bitay, “Á Suceava”, *Cultura* 4 (July 1924), 389.

contribute by the power of their example and by their actions to the construction of efficient interculturality. Several examples can be found for constructing such solidarities in the review discourse: “As an action of bringing close, we made a society in Cluj in which the collectors of antiquities, Romanians or Hungarians, are joined in a brotherhood. Also in Cluj, thanks to a fortunate idea, a society named “Ronsard” was founded, in which, mediated by the French language and literature, Romanian and Hungarian intellectuals are engaged into a cultural cooperation”;<sup>1</sup> “Enescu’s concert was an exceptional event, for the second time in Transylvania and acclaimed by a huge audience, regardless of nationality”;<sup>2</sup> “We observe that the Hungarian audience takes part in ever greater numbers at these concerts, while the Romanian audience does not cease to applaud the Hungarian artists”.<sup>3</sup>

Consequently this repertoire of expressions articulated by a series of levels of meaning (cognitive, historical, ethical, ethnic, religious, of harmonization of alterity, of socialization) deconstruct the complexity of multiculturalism and, to the same extent, also its forms of emphasis and expression in review discourse.

Not far from the vocabulary of multiculturalism, the vocabulary of Transylvanianism also lends itself to scrutiny, by setting multiculturalism and interculturality in a spatial and temporal framework. Transylvanianism can be reconstructed as a spiritual, cultural and behavioural hallmark of the society in this part of Europe. It is the hallmark of the entire multiethnic Transylvanian society, but it can also be revealed by its distribution to all nations existing in Transylvania: Transylvanian Romanians, Transylvanian Hungarians, Saxons (Transylvanian Germans). Beyond the physical, unchangeable features of the Transylvanian spirit conveyed by the space (geography) and time (history) that had forged it, there are also some new focuses rendered by the three large ethnicities of Transylvania.

Firstly, there is a **historicist focus** of Transylvanianism for Romanians from Transylvania who define themselves as the most ancient and conservative Romanians of the entire Romanian territory, preserving the purest ethnicity as descendants of the Roman colonizers of Dacia Felix. This Roman genealogy had converted into a mysticism of Latinity understood as a standard-bearer of the fight for national and political rights. The Roman origin and the Roman period of the history of Transylvanian Romanians is the period of ideal freedom which, in the course of time, the Romanians have always tried to regain. This Roman freedom of times past had been usurped and the entire ensuing historical evolution is nothing else than a continuous fight to regain the lost freedom. From this point of view the entire history of Romanians from Transylvania is markedly *conservationist*, that is to say, meant to preserve and regain the lost freedom,<sup>4</sup> and *conservative*, inasmuch as Romanians from Transylvania are the reservoirs and preservers of unaltered Romanianness. This aspect of Transylvanianism sets apart Romanians from Transylvania both from Hungarian and Germans of this region and from Romanians from Wallachia and Moldavia.

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<sup>1</sup> Fragment from the letter of Ernő Ligeti, *Aurora* 7 (4 February 1923).

<sup>2</sup> A. Voileanu, “La vie musicale à Cluj”, *Cultura* 2 (March 1924), 196.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 197.

<sup>4</sup> Dan Botta, *Limite și alte eseuri* (Limits and other essays) (Bucharest: Crater, 1996), 265–268.

Secondly, there is an **ethnicist focus** for Hungarians from Transylvania, who, beginning with the 16<sup>th</sup> century, after the defeat of the Hungarians by the Turks at Mohács in 1526, became the preservers of Hungarian ethnicity and state in the frameworks of the Principality of Transylvania. The ethnicist Hungarian Transylvanianism targeted exclusiveness, in that it wanted to recover ethnic integration in 1848 by the union of Transylvania with Hungary, and in 1867 by Austro-Hungarian duality. In other words, this ethnicist focus evolves to integrative forms of an ethnicity divided along the centuries by political frontiers. The ethnicist side of Hungarian Transylvanianism appears through the unconfessed tendency to revive in a long lost historical and political framework. There are a number of analyses which confer the hallmark of a “special Transylvanian psyche” to this ethnic Hungarian Transylvanianism, a hallmark that can be a basis for the unification of the other two nations as well, the Romanian and the Hungarian.

According to other views, Transylvanianism has fuelled the psychic and spiritual forces of the Hungarian population to resist in the course of history, but just as much, Transylvanianism has also produced “the manifestation of the Hungarian soul balanced amidst contradictions”.<sup>1</sup>

Thirdly, there is an **affective focus** of Transylvanianism for the German, Saxon population, meaning that the land of Transylvania is regarded by Saxon colonists as a generous adoptive homeland, found, regained, protective, maternal. “Sweet Transylvanian homeland” is the expression used in the heritage discourse of all Saxons (the handmade kitchen wall covers of Saxon kitchens bear the inscription “sweet Transylvania”), often calling the adoptive country “geliebte siebenbürgische Heimat”.<sup>2</sup>

The vocabulary of Transylvanianism as a particular field of multiculturalism can be emphasized by the descriptive deconstruction of its *typology*. In the decade following the Great Union (1918), there were opinions in various intellectual debates that claimed that there was a “Transylvanian type” and a “Transylvanian soul”. At a first sight, this could be due to a natural, unchangeable fact that lends a metaphysical aspect to Transylvanianism: the landscape, the climate, and especially “the same cultural and political influences”.<sup>3</sup>

The hallmark of Transylvanianism is eventually also reflected in *collective mentalities and attitudes*. There are however some dominant sides to these mentalities and attitudes shaped by mutual, but also one-sided influences of ethnic communities in Transylvania. The collective attitudes of the population of this region are influenced primarily by the German, Saxon spirit which was responsible for introducing “honesty, industry, integrity” to the entire population.<sup>4</sup>

Moreover, the hallmark of Transylvanianism also lies in the *specific differences* of the spirit or historical, cultural and political values which describe the three ethnicities of Transylvania. Saxons are thus characterized by the “great freedom of mobility and development they possessed”, the Hungarians by “a certain immoderation” in their

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<sup>1</sup> Ernő Gáll, *Dimensiunile*, 106–107.

<sup>2</sup> Konrad Nussbächer, “Kultur Chronik“, *Cultura* 3 (May 1924), 288.

<sup>3</sup> Ioan Lemeny, “Die Persönlichkeit Siebenbürgens“, *Klingsor* 6 (1926), 221.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 221.

historical progress and attitude, and Romanians by “the persevering spirit of adversity and resistance”.<sup>1</sup>

Starting from the dominant features of the Transylvanian spirit, in this case the German influence over the other ethnicities, the *Saxon element of Transylvanianism* enjoyed a series of analyses which screened and interpreted Transylvanianism in its ethnic German focus. The Saxons’ definition and self-definition of the Saxons in relation to the Germans of the motherland, of Austria, or Germany in general has brought upon critical remarks, claiming that the Saxons have a *frustrated identity*: “A Saxon can be German only to the extent of not being a Transylvanian, and a Transylvanian only to the extent of not being German. This is of course not to say that, on this account, he has to be Romanian or Hungarian.”<sup>2</sup>

Another criticism is the observation of an *identity incongruence* meaning that the nature and landscape of Transylvania is incongruous with German identity: “Very rarely can I withhold a smile when I see Saxon young men in the mountains dressed like German boy scouts. My aesthetic instinct tells me that this does not fit into this landscape and calls for another natural framework, which breathes a German spirit from all its pores.”<sup>3</sup>

The Saxon identity is a *negotiated* identity to its core, it is an *intermediary* or *interval* identity, meaning that the Saxons define themselves as living in a permanent duplicity. At the same time, the Saxon displays or hides his German identity and claims his Transylvanian identity. In other words, the Transylvanian identity of the Saxons is a twofold, negotiated identity, which presents the Transylvanianism of the Saxons as a doubled or *dissimulated* identity. The emphatic declaration of their Germanity leads to something unnatural, incredible. The frequent and insistent repetition of their Germanness expresses in fact the lack of a German soul. The Saxons’ true identity is deeply, spiritually experienced, and is incongruous with their declared, German identity. This identity is specific to Transylvanian identity traits: “When someone keeps on saying: I am German! And my culture is German culture! So that in the end the listener begins to suspect that, deep down in his soul, not even the speaker believes what he says, and that, on the contrary, there is something non-German about him that he wishes to hide through too much emphasis. And this non-German something in this case is the other soul in his Saxon chest – the Transylvanian soul.”<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid.

<sup>2</sup> Erwin Reisner, “Die nationalen Fehler der Siebenbürger Sachsen, wie sie der Binnendeutsche steht“, *Klingsor* 8 (1924), 294. Original: “Der Sachse kann eigentlich Deutscher sein nur, sofern er nicht Siebenbürger, und Siebenbürger nur, sofern er nicht Deutscher ist. Womit natürlich nicht gesagt sein will, daß er deshalb Rumäne oder Magyare sein müßte”.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid, 295. Original: “Ich kann mich oft eines leisen Lächelns nicht enthalten, wenn ich junge sächsische Burschen und Mädchen nach Art der deutschen Wandervögel mit Lauten usw. ins Gebirge ziehen sehe. Mein ästhetischer Instinkt sagt mir: Das alles paßt nicht in diese Landschaft, dazu gehört ein Boden, der aus jeder Ackerfurche deutsche Seele atmet”.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. Original: “Wenn einer unaufhörlich sagt: Ich bin ein Deutscher! und: ich habe deutsche Kultur! So argwöhnt man schließlich nicht ganz ohne Grund, daß der Betreffende an seine Behauptung im Tiefsten selbst nicht recht glaubt, daß in ihm irgend ein Undeutsches ist, das durch die oftmalige Betonung niedergehalten werden soll. Und dieses Undeutsche ist im konkreten Fall eben die andere Seele in der sächsischen Brust, die siebenbürgische Seele”.

Some analyses and opinions establish Transylvanianism within the context of the unitary national Romanian state, comparing it with the spirit and mentality of the Old Kingdom of Romania (Wallachia and Moldavia). One such opinion was triggered by a critical and polemical discussion connected to the national graduation exam from 1925 which was failed by several students of the Transylvanian minorities. This analysis draws a clear distinction between the cultural spirit of Transylvania and the Old Kingdom, highlighting the identity traits of Transylvanian culture and schooling. Transylvanian spirituality and culture is the result of a *paideia*-type process of instruction and education taking place in the context of a well controlled and established school discipline: the boarding school. This is also the space, in addition to school and social discipline, of a live, pragmatic cultural pattern open to social needs, known as the Transylvanian pattern. This pattern differs from the one in the Old Kingdom, of French type, which cultivates cultural training as an end in itself, and which, to the same extent, lacks critical spirit.

The Transylvanian spirit is a social, communitarian, solidary spirit constructed on discipline and collective harmony, while the spirit of the Old Kingdom is the “overestimation of the self”,<sup>1</sup> the ego.

Another characteristic of Transylvanian identity and Transylvanianism is their being ineffable, detected in the Transylvanian spirit on a *historical* and *supra-ethnic* level: “there is a Transylvanian language not in an articulate and spoken form but as a spiritual centre which penetrates like a treasure the soul of every person who has their roots in this land. The Transylvanian spirit is a historical fact established by the participation of all the inhabitants of this land.”<sup>2</sup>

The *referentiality* of the Transylvanian spirit is outlined by: landscape, the climate as a geographic entity specific to Transylvania, the structure of the highly multiethnic habitat of Transylvania where the western type Saxon burg exists alongside Romanian villages and Sekler insular settlement patterns: “the Saxon town, the Sekler marketplace and the Romanian village build up together, never separated, the grand Transylvanian landscape.”<sup>3</sup>

The Transylvanian identity can also be defined in a *racial perspective*, meaning that Saxons, Seklers and Romanians cannot be the products of pure, only mixed, genealogy, so that Saxons from Transylvania are genetically, biologically and racially closer to Romanians and Seklers than to peasants from northern Germany or Bavaria. The cultural identity of Transylvania began to take shape in the 16<sup>th</sup> century based on a

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<sup>1</sup> Heinrich Zillich, “Bakkalaureat und Presse”, *Klingsor* 9 (1925), 353.

<sup>2</sup> Egon Hajek, “Vom siebenbürgischen Menschen”, 137. Original: “es gibt eine siebenbürgische Sprache, nicht in Form von Lauten die als artikuliertes, geregeltes Wortgefüge an unser Ohr dringen, sondern als seelisches Zentrum, wie es sich jedem, der einmal den Wurzeln dieses Landes nachgegraben hat, als selbstverständlicher Schatz in den Schoß fällt. Denn die siebenbürgische Seele ist eine historisch gewordene Tatsache an der alle Bewohner dieses Bodens gleicherweise Anteil haben”.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., 138. Original: “die sächsische Stadt, der Szeklerflecken und das rumänische Dorf gemeinsam, niemals getrennt, die große siebenbürgische Landschaft ergeben”.

written, vernacular culture, which developed until the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and since then unified in a common cultural programme based on the “European *Zeitstimmung*.”<sup>1</sup>

Multiethnic diversity and Transylvanian-type multiculturalism were unified not only because of the challenges of 19<sup>th</sup> century European spirit, but also thanks to the natural, immanent and strong tendency of this multiethnic culture to pull back and refocus in the framework of a joint defence strategy of common cultural goods.<sup>2</sup>

The expressions used in the debates on Transylvanianism often make use of *literary reconstruction*, capturing Transylvanian multicultural identity in an affective-poetical discourse, presenting the distinctive features of Romanian, Hungarian and German settlements placed in a natural and symbolic environment which marks and emphasizes the ethnic differences of the habitat: “how dear is to me this country with its haughty crests and vast hilly landscape, with its massive oak forests, the resistant fortified churches of the Saxons, the acacia scented Hungarian villages and the tall pine woods, in which rules the flute-playing Romanian, herding his sheep.”<sup>3</sup>

The vocabulary of Transylvanianism reconstructed on the basis of attributes of the Transylvanian spirit (ineffable, dissimulated, disciplined, pragmatic, solidary) as well as through descriptions and phrases or metaphorical and poetic formulations may outline the frameworks of a profound analysis of multiculturalism and its historical evolution. While it existed as a reality with alternating periods of parallel discourses of cultural and ethnic identities and intercultural cooperation and consolidation, the mission of multiculturalism was consciously formulated as an important intellectual debate only after the Great Union of 1918. Beyond being a simple intellectual experiment or exercise, it was for the first time that the great debate on Transylvanian multiculturalism was embedded into a democratic political formation, fixed by programme and constitution in the documents of the Great National Assembly of Alba Iulia on 1 December 1918. The democratic political context of Great Romania enhanced these multicultural programmes, projects and debates which have turned, even if only temporarily and partially, into initiatives and actions which could not be traced before 1918.

Translated by Emese Czintos

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid., 139.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Ernst Jekelius, “Siebenbürger Rumänen”, *Klingsor* 5 (1926), 183. Original: “Wie lieb ist mir die Heimat mit den erhabenen Kämmen und weiten Hügellandschaften, ihren wuchtigen Eichenwäldern, den festgefühten Kirchenburgen der Sachsen, dem Akazienduft ungarischer Dörfer und dem Reiche hochstämmiger Tannen, in dem der Flöte spielende Rumäne, Schafherden weidend, herrscht”.