

Egress from the crisis

First years of the recovery of Transylvanian Hungarian Culture (1918-1923)

On 1st of December 1918 in the Gyulafehérvár Declaration, Transylvanian Romanians have expressed the affiliation of Transylvania, Bánát, Partium and Máramaros to the Romanian Kingdom.

This was the end of a historical period of the Romanian effort, which aimed to unify the Romanians into a monarchy and at the same time it meant the beginning a new historical way: searching way and answers of national minorities in remarkable number of Hungarians in a historical situation: how is it possible to live in minority in a new country after the lost war?

Transylvanian Hungarian Culture had looked a new situation to face, to be able from self-effort for recovery and battle for their freedom and independence. Political, economic and social situation of Romania made nearly impossible to achieve this aim. Coalition government of Agrarian Party (Partidul Tărănesc) and National Party (Partidul Național) lead by Averescu aimed with their entire endeavour to raise difficulties of realisation the civil rights of minorities for freedom. National Liberal Party (Partidul Național-Liberal) came into power in 1922 and have practiced non secret policy against minorities, but the new constitution coming into effect in 1923 have somewhat improved the former political situation.

At the beginning of the 1920 is before signing the peace contract there has not been any agreement about the Union between Transylvania and the Roman Kingdom. After the turnaround of the country (getting Transylvania was not projected by a closer connection with the Austrian-Hungarian Monarchy, but by the establishment a separate Romania) National Party (Partidul Național) lead by Iuliu Maniu have not assisted the accession to the Romanian Kingdom, but the formation of a separate Transylvania. One of the powerful reasons of it is that among Romanian territories, as Bukovina, Dobruzsza and Besszarábia, Transylvania had the most developed social and political and

intellectual culture, so by right it was considered, that by unification of those territories the development would be stopped. However the unsatisfied desire for unification of the Romanian territories has been incarnated in 1918 by the occupation of these territories. After all an unsatisfied desire came true for the 19th century Roman territories by the occupation of Transylvania and other territories.

After 1918, behind the invader Romanian army (Hungarian soldiers capitulated) Romanian administration has been initiated too: Hungarian leaders were cleared away from the administration of Transylvania (except small townships, where people did not speak Romanian, for a time the takeover of Romanian power was carried out in Hungarian language), officers, employees and leaders at Hungarian institutions. Important scenes of culture became victims of Romanization, as education (from primary degree to university) Hungarian theatre life and Hungarian churches.

These circumstances made impossible to stay at home for thousands of Hungarians: repatriating trains started towards Hungary, where the Transylvanian intellectual life (teachers, priests, writers, actors, scientists etc.) and clerks of administration, officers (policemen, rail men etc.) left the country, their place has been filled by people, coming from old Romania, number of them can reach ten thousands and between them there were significant number of people without any education.

Hungarians staying at home in this very adverse situation had to create themselves the intellectual life, in which the 20th century Transylvanian Hungarian cultures could be made.

In years of 20-s high numbers of journals has been published, but the majority of them were short, after all it showed the claim of the society for the culture. Culture organizing activity of journals (keeping parties, where among literary readings, concerts took places) cohered closely with the same aims of the Hungarian churches. Hungarian book publishing has been recovered too. Book and journal publisher companies have been formed with the aim of publishing the classic and contemporary Hungarian literary and scientific results.

Romanian authorities tried to break these efforts: they were exposed of vexations by Siguranta and censorship. Constitution of 1923 has declared citizen folk rights, including the press, dictum, sight, conscience and religion, but among equals the Romanians were more equal which was not kept secret by the government parties.

After first world war, as it was called great war, not only the looser countries had very severe and long crisis, not only in the economics, but sociologically and in the aspect of morality and ethic too. Mankind had to get rid of these, had to stand up in very hard circumstances. In retrospect it can be found that Transylvanian Hungarians had done their best for the subsistence of their culture but colligation either with each other or with the Romanian culture could not be realized, after all they succeeded in producing an intellectual life with the members – growing up to the task – establishing the independent individual valuable Transylvanian Hungarian culture.