

**„BABEȘ-BOLYAI” UNIVERSITY OF CLUJ-NAPOCA
FACULTY OF HISTORY AND PHILOSOPHY**

**THESIS
ZARAND COUNTY (1861-1876)
SUMMARY**

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Synthesis:

The paper entitled "Zarand County (1861-1876)" aims to contribute to the study of the modern history of Zarand Romanians, a complex but little researched area to date, if compared with Transylvania and other Romanian regions. In preparing this paper we have started from a desire to return and enter new information regarding "Zarand Land" to the scientific circuit.

Addressing this regional history topic concerns the historical reconstruction of important institutions for the Romanian community in Hungary, based, firstly, on historical investigation in order to discover and analyse novel archival information, and restoration of institutional organization as well as of how central and local institutions in Zarand County area operated during Romanian administration (1861-1876). The county institution is also found in Nasaud, Fagaras and Severin, but we consider that in Zarand area the institution profile overlaps a large Romanian community with enhanced self-awareness.

The paper proposes a regional history topic, the historical reconstruction taking into consideration the integration of this subject into the history of both Transylvanian Romanians and Romanians living beyond Transylvania borders.

Based on archival information, news and bibliographical sources, the paper frames a reconstruction and analysis of facts on a ground of political confrontations in a Romanian county, Zarand, during 1861-1876, within the Hungarian state borders. This paper proposes a monographic approach of this county, during Romanian administration, in a thematic structure.

The onset of the liberal regime meant - for the Austrian Empire provinces - the restoration of the old autonomies prior to 1848, adapted to the times. In this context, the involvement of Transylvanian Romanians in the national rights movement took place together with the Hungarians and Transylvanian Saxons, so as to achieve the status to which they were entitled due to their number and historical background. The legal provisions under which the new institutional framework was created were the Diploma of October 20, 1860 and Patent of February 26, 1861. The context favoured the establishment of Zarand County under Romanian administration. Unfortunately, and against the natural course of events, following the Imperial Decision of December 27, 1860, the

Partium (Crasna, Middle Solnoc, Zarand counties, Zalău town and Chioar district) was incorporated into Hungary, in the spring of 1861.¹

To understand Zarand situation during the Romanian administration (1861-1876) we have discussed the historical and territorial development, population structures so as to identify the historical and ethnic frame. The statistics of the time, mentioned in sources, show that this county's population is predominantly Romanian. According to the sources studied, it follows that Zarand did not suffer any territorial assignation, maintaining its structure from 1861 until 1876.

To write about Zarand County we have resorted primarily to a historiography dealing with the modern era, which can be attributed to undertakings related to the general presentation of the period. Secondly, there is a historiography of the particular case, with direct reference to Zarand County, this historiography from general to particular, together with archival sources, being presented thematically in the first chapter of the thesis, entitled *Research Stage on Zarand County History (1861 - 1876). Historiographical Reference Points*, and throughout the paper under each topic addressed. From this historiographical analysis it follows that there is a shortage of papers to cover monographically the Romanian administration of Zarand County and the implications this period has had on the population.

Chapter II of the paper deals with *The Territorial and Historical Evolution of Zarand County* and includes the following: geographical characteristics (with reference to geographical boundaries and landforms), historical and territorial evolution of Zarand County, and the implications of Zarand inhabitants in national historical events up to mid-nineteenth century.

In terms of how Zarand inhabitants lived, we find a constant interaction between the population living here and the relief forms. Depending on the geographical characteristics of Zarand area, occupations grow and a way of life crystallizes. Two relief forms are distinguished here reflected on the occupations and settlements: the mountain and the meadow. The mountain side is covered with oak and beech forests (with rich grass lands) with rich fodder meadows and important deposits of precious minerals (gold, silver, iron, copper, coal) offering favourable conditions for the development of crafts, timber processing, shepherding and stock farming, respectively mining. The meadow of the Crisul Alb River, with fertile ground, is favourable for intensive agriculture and

¹ Ioan Bolovan, *Transylvania between the Revolution of 1848 and Unification of 1918. Demographic Contributions*, Cluj-Napoca, 2000, p. 29.

large cattle farming. But most of Zarand County is mountainous, with clay-limestone soil, so there is no plentiful harvest even in rainy years. Being forced to adapt to such environmental factors, Zarand inhabitants built settlements whose main source of livelihood was the craft they practised.

In terms of historical and territorial development of Zarand, we note that according to the historical context, Zarand County was subject to territorial assignation, even abolished in 1784, and reinstated in 1790. The historical development of the territory, over its history, helps us analyse the Romanian administration from a different perspective. The harsh life conditions of Zarand people, presented in this chapter, explain why this area, Zarand, was the centre of historical events of national resonance and beyond, such as: *the Revolt of Horea, Closca and Crisan* and *the Revolution of 1848 -1849*, events whose development, for Zarand area, has been treated in this chapter.

Chapter III of the paper deals with *The Administrative Organization of Zarand County (1861-1876)*. County organization after 1861, efficiency of institutions, election of county officials, Romanian administration of the county, elections of deputies for the Diet, administrative division of Zarand are aspects reconstructed with the help of archive funds and publications on the subject.

In this context, the external and home events taking place in mid nineteenth century provided a framework for establishing Zarand County. The external defeats suffered by the Austrian Empire and appeals made by the nationality movements, the unification of Italy and the Danubian principalities, the creation of new national states within the empire borders, the collaboration with nationality opposition, forced the monarchy to reconsider their political orientation giving up the absolutist system and putting in charge a liberal one. The 1860 legislation gave the monarchy a liberal Constitution. The Diploma recognized the historical-political individualities of the countries and provinces of the empire and allowed them the home organization autonomy they had before 1848.

These political changes triggered a strong rebound of national movements in the Habsburg Empire. Every nation sought to defend the autonomy they had before the establishment of absolutism. Maintaining Transylvania's autonomy is counteracted by incorporating the other Romanian territories, which did not have such a historical-state tradition, to Hungary. On December 27, 1860 the four Romanian counties in western Transylvania - Crasna, Middle Solnoc, Chioar and Zarand - were annexed to Hungary. Zarand will be part of Hungary until 1876, when it is abolished. In this

context, Zarand County, by choosing Romanian administration, will achieve many benefits for the Romanian population in the area.

As far as the county administrative organization and evolution are concerned - aspects detailed in this chapter - they were achieved through the implementation of the 1860 laws, which triggers competition at the level of local administrative units: counties, districts, chairs, municipalities and townships. Thus, in March 1861, Zarand County is established, with Baia de Cris as the capital. This county, during its operation, provides legal and administrative framework for the efficiency of institutions, especially for developing local communities. Imposing the Romanian language in the county, involving the administration in local community development helped unite the county, but maintained the diversity of communities, especially in promoting a type of economic activity specific to the community. In this privileged political context, it is no wonder that we speak of confessional primary and then secondary education, of increasing the role of the church in the Romanian communities, or of setting up a hospital in Baia de Cris. All these authorities operate as part of an organized administration, involved in the affairs of the community it represents.

The administrative organization of Zarand County for 1861-1876 showed us the work done by political leaders to preserve their identity in a favourable political context.

As follows from the sources analysed, the local governing bodies have an important role in the process of administrative organization of the county.

In the period studied (1861-1876), county administration is Romanian, which makes sense given that most of the county population is Romanian, which was clearly proven by the statistics of the time. Changing the supreme county head or appointing other Hungarian county officials influence little the Romanian character of the county administration. The true leader of Zarand County during 1861-1876 was Iosif Hodoş, vice county head of this political-administrative entity. Local and Diet elections observe clearly the participation of Romanians to the political life of the empire and to leading the county.

The county administration achievements were many, first being worth mentioning the results regarding imposing Romanian as the official language of county administration. The actions of the local elite were significant in this respect. Romanian, thanks to the efforts of the local elite, remains

the official language of county administration until the county is abolished, although starting with 1869-1872 the tendencies to impose Hungarian as the official language increase.

The historians' research turned to the study of general phenomena with less emphasis on the efficiency of local communities, so the *achievements of Zarand administration in the field of public administration* during 1861-1876 can be reconstructed using archival documents at Hunedoara County Department of National Archives, fund, *Zarand County*, research contained in Chapter IV of the paper. We believe that the achievements of the Romanian administration can be seen from virtually every chapter treated in the paper, on distinct fields of course, but together forming a whole, based largely on the following elements: administration – society – school – church. In this chapter we went through the duties of the local administrative institutions, as well as the revenues and expenditures of Zarand communities. We considered those achievements based on the contribution of citizens in each community.

The difficult financial situation of Zarand County did not prevent the public administration officials from being concerned with the proper administration of all areas of public life, taking into account both the material and spiritual situation. Thus, here have been treated issues concerning the sanitary condition and public security or aspects related to forest and road management.

The material elements created special social relationships. The sense of belonging to a community, to a whole, determined compliance with and commitment to the rules imposed by it, for the greater good. The new regulations imposed at county level generated a complex of attitudes, in which each component had serving the common good as the final goal. The important role of the church, of faith, which defined the population's sense of belonging to the Romanian people, also contributed to this.

Chapter V analyzes the *Rural Habitat and Demographic Evolution of Zarand*, taking into account issues such as: village number and size (the classification of settlements on types of villages by number of inhabitants is taken into consideration), types of settlements and inhabitants' occupations, and demographic issues in Zarand's historical evolution. Also, starting from statistical data, the ethnic structure of the population in each community of the county is analysed. Starting from the sources mentioned, the *natural population movement* is another aspect of research, taking into account the analysis of birth rate, death rate, marriage in the communities of Zarand county, or even socio-professional structure of the community residents of this administrative-territorial unit.

From the demographic point of view, the analysis of Zarand's population evolution helps us understand better certain developments, and properly assign political, socio-economic, cultural and mental developments. We can therefore establish the relation between population and the factors influencing its evolution or involution. The natural growth influenced by the new development conditions was recorded here as well. But there were also times when the upward curve was interrupted by a number of factors which the community members, given those conditions, were unable to prevent: epidemics – namely cholera, or unfavourable environmental conditions. Overall, there is positive natural growth, which is part of the general trend of the period.

The monographic treatment of Zarand County involves researching issues concerning *Zarand County Elites and the National Movement*, given that in 1860 Zarand was annexed by Hungary, research which is part of Chapter VI.

Zarand Romanians participate through their representatives in the Parliament of Pest during 1865-1875. Zarand was represented in this institution by Iosif Hodoş and Sigismund Borlea, leading intellectuals, who will defend the interests of the Romanians in the county and those of all Romanians in general, the participation of Romanians in the Parliament of Pest confirming their ascendancy in the political life of the empire.

Besides the participation of Romanians in the Pest Diet, petitioning was another way of defending Romanian interests and national rights. The county elite address memoires both to Hungarian political and religious forums. Sometimes they advocate their cause even in newspaper articles: so as to maintain the county's Romanian leadership, to maintain Romanian as the official language of the county administration, to maintain this Romanian county. We can see the modernization of the Romanian political action in accordance with liberal principles; the 1848 revolutionary formula is given up and replaced by legalistic and elitist action, based on the local elite structures.

From the above one can notice the strong involvement of the county elites in the national movement, which was characterized by intertwining the general interests of Romanians with the particular ones, specific to Zarand County.

The source analysis shows that this county, Zarand, defined its features related to the use of the Romanian language in administration, officials' election - most of whom Romanian, fostering and expressing the sense of belonging to a structure that provided a special status.

The monographic treatment of Zarand during 1861-1876, i.e. during Romanian administration, involves also researching aspects of *school* and *church*. We could not be exhaustive, but we propose an agreeable reading, along many other possible ones, on subjects such as Zarand's church and school during Romanian administration.

After a long absence from the landscape of Romanian historiography, the ecclesiastical history creates great genuine interest among specialists and the general public alike.

The scientific concerns in this area attract topics such as: institutional organization of the Romanian Church, status and condition of the priesthood, aspects regarding the religious feeling as a result of the rediscovery and recovery of the rich documentary source referring to the evolution of Romanian church history, especially during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries; in the last decade one could notice the publication of a large number of articles and books dedicated to the issue mentioned above. However, we are still far from having a complete overview on Romanian ecclesiastical history.

Thus, Chapter VII of the paper is dedicated to the *Eastern Greek and Greek Catholic Church*. Church history involves the institutional as research area, namely the institution of the church, clergy, parish, community of faith.

In this chapter we have considered of great importance the analysis of church evolution in the county before 1861. Consequently, we have focused on the evolution of this institution in the more remote past, on its organization and operation and on its relations with other central or local church structures, starting with deaneries and ending with the diocese. In the subchapter entitled *The Role and Financial Situation of Priests in Zarand County. Church Organization*, we tried to recreate the territorial network - Orthodox and Greek Catholic deaneries and parishes operating in Zarand County, also considering the role and condition of the priest, which is important if we take into consideration the contribution of the clergy to the creation of the Romanian elite. We have also paid attention to the issue of the priests' intellectual training, while the sources examined provide little information in the matter. Moreover, we have referred to the community's involvement in building churches and providing for them. The church institution has been approached also from the perspective of the interconfessional relations between the Orthodox and Greek Catholic parish, to the extent allowed by existing sources. Note however, that in 1869, in a period of demographic

development, from the confessional point of view Zarand population was structured as follows: 95,73% Orthodox, 1,21% Greek Catholics, 2,06% Roman Catholics, 0,72 % Protestants, 0,23% Israelites, the other religions representing less than 1% of the population.

The evolution of confessional education has been analyzed mainly based on information provided by the two archival funds: *the Orthodox Deanery of Brad* and *the Greek Catholic Deanery of Hălmagiu*, plus *Zarand County* fund and *Hodoș Iosif* fund, aspect treated in chapter VIII.

The research tries to highlight the role the county administration and local communities play in supporting churches and schools; in fact, the financial situation of these communities influences the evolution of the two Romanian institutions.

There have been significant achievements in education, increasing the number of Romanian confessional schools being due largely to the efforts of county administration. As far as education is concerned, county administration worked with the clergy to support and develop the confessional education in the national language. This reveals the interdependence between school and the socio-economic, national and political reality at county level. By training the new officials, school influences the Romanian social strata and categories, while education, language and the church were key factors in maintaining the Romanian nationality.

Schools are the creation of village communities who ultimately decide their operation, and support by themselves the entire material burden of training, starting with building the school and ending with paying the teacher, using either a source of the whole community or the compulsory contribution of its members. The church claims the moral patronage of education, but it is far from assuming its material duties.

During the dissolution of Zarand County, there were only eight townships without school buildings among the communities belonging to the Orthodox Deanery of Brad: Blăjeni, După Piatră, Luncoiu de Sus, Podele, Mihăileni, Peștera, Potingani and Prihodiște, but there was no township without school education, and together at the same school were the communities of Țebea, Rișca and Căraciu, Bucureșci and Rovina, Prihodiște and Tătărești.²

²SJANH, *Orthodox Deanery of Brad* Fund, d. 2/1879, f .10.

With the establishment of Brad gymnasium, the Romanians in Transylvania had four theoretical high schools (two - and the oldest - Greek Catholic, in Blaj and Beius; an Orthodox one in Brasov, a border guard Romanian national one in Nasaud) and an Orthodox gymnasium, approved to operate as a high school - the one in Brad.³

In conclusion, we can say that the activity of the confessional school in Zarand county took place in difficult conditions, especially from the socio-economic point of view, yet the process of society modernization cannot be ignored, even in the difficult context of the Austro-Hungarian duality, at the same time with the policy of ethnic uniformity, in the attempt to form a Hungarian national state. The plans of the Hungarian authorities were to subordinate the institutions controlled by the nationalities, namely the church and school, in the broader context of the Magyarization policy. The Romanian confessional school, made up of the Orthodox and Greek Catholic schools of the two Orthodox deaneries of Brad and Hălmagiu and the Greek-Catholic deanery of Hălmagiu, was always considered by the Hungarian authorities as a factor of Romanian conservation. The solidarity attitude of the communities in favour of the school and Orthodox religion, Greek Catholic respectively, ultimately led to an increased national consciousness of the Romanians in Transylvania, helped by the national movement represented by the county's Romanian elites.

The paper addresses a topic of regional history, the historical reconstruction trying the integration into the history of nineteenth century Transylvania. The topics tackled have tried to capture the particular characteristics of the period (1861-1876), beneficial to Zarand county administration and especially to its inhabitants.

The current research focuses on the church and school, analyzed from the same perspective of local history, taking into account the particularities of each historical region, and framing the information in the general context of the period. With the present research we intend to contribute to the discovery and capitalization of new documentary sources referring to the most important aspects in the life of a people, a region, 98 communities that formed Zarand County during 1861 to 1876, with Baia de Cris as its capital.

The analysis of Zarand County, its evolution and period of existence, 1861-1876, enables the establishment of the distinct features of this Romanian administrative entity. The defining elements arise from the analysis of components on which research was conducted. In this respect, the

³ Nestor Lupei, Romulus Neagu, *Monography of "Avram Iancu" High School of Brad (1869-1969)*, p. 22.

following have been distinguished: historical and territorial development, socio-economic life, functioning and achievements of the Romanian administration, Zarand inhabitants' involvement in supporting the national movement, church and school functioning in Zarand area.

All in all, we can say that this period of Romanian administration was a beneficial one for Zarand County, with Romanian majority. These achievements have not disappeared with the abolition of this administrative-territorial unit, what is important, however, is that the positive effects of these achievements have been passed on to future generations, creating the basis for sustainable development, be it lifestyle, occupation, school or church. It should be noted that for the period under discussion, the county boundaries remain unchanged and correspond to those in 1861. All the measures taken by the Hungarian authorities have failed to change the Romanian character of this county. The climax of the measures taken by the ruling authority is the abolition of this political-administrative entity in 1876.

Starting from archival information, news and bibliographic sources, we have attempted a reconstruction of events of political confrontations in this Romanian county, Zarand, which during 1861-1876 was within the Hungarian state borders. This paper proposes the monographic treatment of this Romanian county, in a thematic structure, based on major political, ethnic, social and economic aspects.

Key words: County,
Zarand,
Romanian administration,
Romanian language,
Demographic configuration,
Church,
Confessional schools.

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