UNIVERSITATEA BABEȘ-BOLYAI
CLUJ-NAPOCA
FACULTATEA DE ISTORIE ȘI FILOSOFIE
ȘCOALA DOCTORALĂ STUDII DE POPULAȚIE ȘI ISTORIA
MINORITĂȚILOR

Leisure – between coercion and social liberty – in Transylvania and Banat.
Comparative Approach: Sibiu and Timișoara before and during the First World War

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2020

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The doctoral dissertation entitled *Leisure in Transylvania and Banat – between coercion and social liberty – Comparative approach: Sibiu and Timişoara before and during the First World War* has as a main purpose to create a monographic, comprehensive view of leisure in Transylvania and Banat at the beginning of the twentieth century. The aim of the thesis was the radiography of leisure, interpreted in the key of the democratization of society and its foreshadowing, in a defining period of time for the destiny of Central and South-Eastern Europe. The beginning of the twentieth century coincided with a cultural-social period defined by diversity, multiculturalism and democratization. However, at political and economic level, the Austro-Hungarian Empire was undergoing radical changes, the Great War being the main event bringing the monarchy to its end. Some aspects of the transformation process of the society, seen from the leisure perspective are evident through the eyes of the written press.

At a conceptual level, the doctoral thesis consists of two parts, the theoretical and applied one. The first part is the result of the analysis of the western specialized literature, regarding the cultural, urban and social history, historical anthropology, sociology and philosophy. Among the theories applied by me in the thesis is the dialectic center-periphery, the definition of public space in the conception of Jürgen Habermas and Bourdieu's habitus. Moreover, to highlight the development of the public sphere - at the philosophical-conceptual level, we started from the Enlightenment philosophy to the contemporary one, to identify the way in which society metamorphoses and forms of entertainment were created. In an attempt to create a theoretical space in which to define my scientific research, I analyzed the history of everyday life in relation to the development of urban space, in which urban and social actors build their free time in relation to others, thus creating a public sphere, increasingly democratic, in which social behavior and etiquette play an important role.

Why a history of everyday life? The definition given by the German historian Alf Lüdtke is revealing in this sense, theorizing that everyday life revolves around the activities and sufferings of "common people". It is about work and its lack, described will be the home and its lack, clothing and emptiness, culinary habits and hunger, love and hate, quarrel and cooperation, memories, fears and expectations for the future of the social actors. The history of everyday life no longer focuses on the facts and events of the 'great' secular or ecclesiastical rulers; individual or collective life and living become more important for the historian, in order to observe the destinies of those who are often forgotten by the history. Leisure is a component part of the

everyday life of the individual or of a group, captioning their choices of free time activities and their entertainment. I believe that the European historiography has neglected to write a history of the everyday life of the German communities from Transylvania and Banat, thus emphasizing the need for such systematic research.

The second part of the doctoral thesis is the most complex one, analyzing the leisure and entertainment choices of the Transylvanian Saxons and the Danube Swabians, based on historical sources. The lower time limit chosen - 1900 - is conventional, but at the same time, it represents the moment when the European continent becomes the center of gravity of international relations, at the limit of influence between the Austro-Hungarian and Russian empires, where the Balkans represent the breaking point, that is the most sensitive of the balance between the great powers. Purpose of my research was to compare aspects of everyday life of the Germans during peace times with that during the war. The upper limit chosen coincides with the end of the war and the establishment of new systems of government, the year 1920 being a turning point in the political, economic, daily life of the Germans in Transylvania and Banat. The years 1918 - 1919 - 1920 can be seen as a whole temporal segment, in which many macrohistorical events take place, such as the signing of the armistice that ends the Great War, the Great Union of Transylvania, Bessarabia and Bukovina with the Kingdom of Romania, and later followed by the system of peace treaties at Versailles, which de jure sanctify the new borders of nation-states. This block of events is treated as a unit, as the changes produced in these times are closely connected with each other and the interwar period finds its roots directly from this series of decisions. Moreover, this is a period in which the nationalities of the former Austro-Hungarian Empire seek their place in the new states in which they will be incorporated, the borders becoming fluctuating until 1920, their status being defined as that of national minority, so reopening the question of loyalty. To whom will the minorities (former nationalities of the empire) be loyal after 1920?

The research questions are simple at a first glimpse: What were the leisure preferences of the Saxons and Swabians from Banat, how do they evolve at the beginning of the 20th century, respectively how are they influenced by the outbreak of the First World War? ? I was saying that the analyzed problem is a simple one at first sight, because during the research I realized that the leisure aspects metamorphose over time under the spectrum of war. The First World War influenced the whole society, from a demographic, economic, political and social

point of view. The doctoral thesis is subject to social and cultural history, at the confluence of historical anthropology and urban history. I set out to pay attention to social relations and the way in which social actors present themselves in the public space, either in the closed space of coffee houses, ballrooms, or in the open one, in spaces such as the promenade and parks. Moreover, interpreted in a social key, the urban space becomes the main arena for the development of the public sphere, allowing social actors to show themselves, to manifest their interests and to socialize. The way the city is built helps us to identify these social actors, to locate them in space and to draw a map of leisure at the beginning of the 20th century. The relations between the citizens of Sibiu and Timișoara, the social and urban life as well as the sociability are some of the aspects that allow us to consider our research project as part of the cultural, social and urban history.

I have chosen to be interested in this topic for several reasons, but mainly due to the fact that these issues have not been explored by research on German communities. In fact, I believe that the aspects of everyday life of ordinary people must be followed, to move away from the event history and to try to create images of the impact of war on privacy. I chose to follow the daily life of the urban population, observing the change in the behavior, the attitudes of the citizens in general, regarding the war, but also their involvement in it and the repercussions that occurred. The chosen cities, Sibiu and Timișoara, had as predominant population the Saxons, respectively the Swabians, in the period to which they refer. Sibiu was a city strategically positioned from a geographical and military point of view, located on the border with Romania, the repercussions of the war being greater for the population here. Timisoara, as the capital of historical Banat, played, not only throughout history, but especially during the period of Austro-Hungarian dualism, an important role in relations with Vienna and Budapest.

The choice of sources was a complex process, requiring the narrowing of historical sources, due to their multitude. The press is a very complex source, which transmits relevant data about the daily life of ordinary people, about their mentality and attitudes. The newspapers of the German communities in Sibiu and Timișoara were researched, especially *Siebenbürgisch-Deutsches Tageblatt, Hermannstädter Zeitung, Kalender des Siebenbürger Volksfreundes*, respectively *Temesvarer Zeitung, Von der Heide, Banater Zeitung*, for the everyday life of Timișoara. We considered the press to be relevant, as it is the best channel of communication

between the organizers of the public sphere and the social space and the public that takes part in leisure and entertainment activities. Through the multitude of newspaper articles, which present news about coffee houses, restaurants and hotels, dancing balls and parties, the dailies Siebenbürgisch-Deutsches Tageblatt and Temesvarer Zeitung allow us a quantitative analysis of the events organized. On the other hand, the ball chronicles give us fascinating information about the social etiquette, the costumes, the dresses which were worn, the crew and the organizing committees of the balls, which gives us a foray, through a qualitative analysis of information, into aspects of cultural and social history in Sibiu and Timisoara.

A third category of sources includes those published, either by various cultural, economic, tourism and sports associations, or documents published by the administration of Caesar-Christian cities or various cultural circles. To identify public places I used the address books (Adressbücher der kaiserlich-königlichen Stadt Temeswar und Hermannstadt), which were useful to me, as they are very detailed, precise, mentioning both the names of the places, their position in the city and the type of premises and the owner. For Timişoara I used the address books from the 1890s (Geschäftsadressenbuch von Süd-Ungarn, 1890), 1922 (Almanac of addresses, Timişoara. Nagy Cimtára, written by Fr. D. Vonica, 1922, Evfolyam), and for the case Sibiului, almanahurile din anii 1901 (Adressbuch der k. Freien Stadt Hermannstadt, herausgegeben vom Hermannstädter Bürger- und Gewerbe-Verein, bearbeitet von Magistrats - Obernotar Gustav Theis, Gewerbevereinssekretär, IX Jahrgang, Druck und Verlag W. , 1908 and 1911. Moreover, this kind of sources allowed me to recreate the evolution of public spaces and premises over the twenty years analyzed, highlighting through a comparative approach how the owners of these premises changed over time, but also their spatial distribution, starting from the city center towards their periphery.

Although I did not intend to analyze the social life of the associations, the research guided me in this direction, since, especially for the Saxon space, the role of music associations, mountaineering, tourism was one of organizing, to a large extent, of the leisure activities in the urban space. The yearbooks of the associations revealed valuable information about the Zeitgeist / spirit of the age preserved in the cities of Timişoara and Sibiu. In addition to valuable data on the statutes of associations, members and executive committees, the yearbooks also reveal ways to involve members of associations in public life, measures taken by them to improve living

standards and beautify the urban landscape. Worth noting are the Association for the beautification of the city of Sibiu (Verein zur Verschönerung der Stadt Hermannstadt), the music associations Eintracht and Hermania (Musikvereine), the Transylvanian Carpathian Association (Siebenbürgische Karpathenverein), which organized parks, gardens, promenade and mountain resorts.

The last category of published sources are those of memorialistic order, researched especially for the period of the Great War. War diaries, memories of the time, notes on the front, although subjective, provided inside information about lived acts, deeds, but also attitudes, opinions about the various decisions taken by the "big ones". At the Teutsch House, in Sibiu, but also at the Institut für donauschwäbische Geschichte und Landeskunde, in Tübingen, we managed to identify several such memorial sources, published during war time or in the interwar period. The journal notes of the mayor of the city, Albert Doerr (Hermannstadt zwischen zwei Fronten. Kriegserinnerungen nach Tagebuchaufzeichnungen, ed. Josef Borschner, Hermannstadt / Sibiu, 1926), those of the chaplain of the city on Cibin, Tiborg F. Rejuter Sch (Düert Tagebuchaufzeichnungen vom 28. August zum 1. Oktober 1916, Druck der Buchdruckerei Georg Kaiser, Hermannstadt, 1916), and of Captain W. Petricek (Um Hermannstadt. Ein Zeitbild aus der rumänischen Invasion, Druck und Verlag von Jos. Drotleff, Hermannstadt, 1917) allowed us to sketch a picture of the city during the Great War.

The five chapters of the thesis are interdependent, being drawn so as to present the macrohistorical image of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy, then descending into the urban sphere of the analyzed cities, then delving into the microhistory of leisure of the analyzed communities. The first chapter is entitled The Double Monarchy between modernization and challenge. The adaptation of the Transylvanian Saxons to the new realities, aiming to introduce the reader to the imperial realities from the time of the establishment of the dualist regime, until the collapse of the empire. Starting from the new direction in the research of empires - New Imperial History - the first chapter is intended for political, economic, cultural and social metamorphoses of the double monarchy. Based on sources from the English and German historiography, the challenges of establishing the Austro-Hungarian regime for the German population in Transylvania were highlighted. On the one hand, modernization was a constant reality of changes in the empire, but on the other hand it was a challenge. The issue of nationalities became more and more acute, which led to their uneasiness and fears, as the nationalities of

Transleithania were challenged to readjust and reinvent themselves. From this point of view, the attitude of the elites of the Transylvanian Saxons is revealing regarding the Hungarization policy pursued by Budapest. Another challenge of the early twentieth century is the Great War, which transformed Transylvanian society and beyond, to the deepest layers.

The second chapter deals with issues related to urbanism and urbanity, based on the hypothesis that the urban space specific to a region radically influences free time. In the first phase are described the transformations that the two cities, Sibiu and Timişoara, go through, under architectural and historical-spatial aspects. The nineteenth century brings with it changes in the way the mayors and architects of the cities of the Habsburg Empire perceive urban space and its use. Medieval fortifications are beginning to show their uselessness, enclosing the urban space, being ineffective in front of modernized armament, which could be seen during the Revolution of 1848. For this reason, the old fortifications, defense towers and gateways to the city will be removed. The urban history of Sibiu deserves a systematic research, being a city that over the centuries has played important roles at administrative, political, cultural, military level, having complex networks between different social classes over the centuries. I noticed that the prefigurations of the XVIII-XIX centuries facilitated the creation of an urban setting of a city, which allowed public representation, to a certain extent comparable to that of other cities of the same size in the Habsburg Empire. The reason why we considered it necessary to insist on the appearance of the streets, of the urban fabric, of the facades of the buildings is synonymous with the desire to penetrate the urban image of the time. The visual sources complete the picture and allow us to enter a territory often visited by foreign travelers, where life unfolded calmly, reckoned and settled, like the imaginary identity of the Transylvanian Saxons.

Looking in depth, the City is a conglomeration of social and cultural dynamics usually practiced at the regional level. It gathers between the walls, on its streets and boulevards heterogeneous elements of different cultures, indicating through the variety of stylistic forms the way of life of the society (or societies) of the urban space. Cities in Southeast Europe were central to the social and cultural processes formed over time on the one hand, and on the other, they were of political importance to the region. The breakdown in the key of diversity and multiethnicity, respectively of the urban identity is useful for us to capture the social and cultural substrata of the Timişoara society from the end of the 19th century. At the same time, the city can be a space where popular cultural practices develop (especially in the 19th century) colored

in smooth chords of music, entertainment, entertainment or even a space of war, siege, famine, destruction. The questions we start from refer exactly to the ways in which the urban space in Banat was conceived, what were the cultural tendencies and models to which the social actors referred and how exactly the concepts of 'ethnicity' vs. 'Multiethnicity' and 'diversity' in the city once known as Little Vienna. The 19th century is characterized by the expansion of cities worldwide, this being observable in the Habsburg Monarchy, later Austria-Hungary. The cities in the monarchy will acquire an eclectic air, more and more cosmopolitan, with wide boulevards and imposing buildings, the pace of construction of public buildings and houses accelerating more and more.

The third chapter of the thesis, entitled *Free time in the coffee house. Code of behavior and social etiquette* analyzes the institution of the coffee house as a space of sociability. To complete this chapter, I created a list of all coffee houses and restaurants in Sibiu and Timisoara. The purpose of this chapter was to research the way in which cafes are developed in the Transylvanian and Banat area, analyzing especially the growing presence of urban actors in these spaces of sociability. In addition to drinking coffee and tea, the coffee house offered the opportunity to discuss, read the press and develop a specific sense of belonging. Activities that express sociability and entertainment, the so-called collective performances specific to both the general public and exclusively the elite, have begun to be marketed, so we see the commercialization of leisure. On the one hand, there are performances dedicated to the elite, such as opera, ballet, symphonic concerts, visiting museums, etc., which are characterized by indicating a social and cultural status through clothing, dress codes and behavior in high society. Shows of this kind require knowledge of a behavioral code, socially accepted. On the other hand, we notice another category of entertainment, spent in a more democratic environment, such as ballrooms, salons, restaurants. In these spaces for leisure, social etiquette plays an important role, but the behavioral code is different from that of the elite, given that we can talk about popular culture. In a separate subchapter we included the ritual of the promenade and its social function. Boulevards, promenades and parks were open public spaces, often frequented by urban actors in order to see and be seen. Moreover, the strong polarization noticed through the thick description, offers the reader an interesting foray into the leisure dominated by social etiquette of the nineteenth century.

The fourth chapter is dedicated to Belle Époque balls and dance parties in the cities of Sibiu and Timisoara. The balls of the nineteenth century in the double monarchy can be interpreted in the key to the democratization of society and the participation of a wide range of citizens in them. Of course, at the Viennese court, the balls had different forms of manifestation than in the other cities of the monarchy, but we consider that the fashion and, implicitly, the spirit of the ball started from Vienna. The balls could be public or private, in the ideal recipe of such a social event being noticed the code of conduct, music, the organizing committee, couples dressed in elegant outfits, dance, entertainment, and specific accessories: dance order, ball card, etiquette . Not wishing to be an exhaustive research, the subject analyzed in this chapter focuses on public balls, widely announced in the German-language press in Transylvania and Banat, which indicates, first of all, the appetite and wide participation of urban actors in such manifestations.

In Transylvania and Banat in the 20th century, most public balls were planned by associations, the organizing committees being often mentioned by the press. The ball arrangement committee took care of sending invitations to the media, arranging the hall, lighting, purchasing drinks and food, music, and sometimes the dance order. The officers played an important role in Sibiu and Timişoara, both cities having garrisons. They were not only involved in organizing balls, but also eagerly participating in those planned by the associations. We often meet the military fanfares in the balls of the associations, the military music being appreciated at the time. The Carnival period is metaphorized in the German-language press, with the appearance of the Prince Carnival, who brought goodwill and fun to the townspeople. The period of the carnival was the busiest for social events of the year, starting after the New Year and extending until the end of February, when the Carnival Prince is described as a dying corpse.

The last chapter is dedicated to the Great War and leisure in times of war. The First World War was called as the Great War, because it was a destructive one, not only of human lives and destinies, but also of empires, visions and social classes. The Great War fundamentally shook the European order, the world waking up after more than four years, not knowing which way to take it. A Bolshevik regime was established in Russia, the white aristocracy being not only fundamentally shaken, but completely overthrown. The social pyramid known until then by the whole of humanity turned 180 degrees, which produced metamorphoses in all areas of economic, cultural, demographic, social life. In the heart of the European continent, the Austro-

Hungarian multiethnic and multinational construct was shattered, the Habsburg legacy losing its brilliance for hundreds of years. The idea of nation and wholeness became a long-awaited reality for many of the empire's nationalities, which will call into question the idea of loyalty in times of war.

In our analysis we looked at war from a different perspective, less common in historiography, wondering how leisure changed during the war. For this we focused on the perception of free time in wartime on the cold front. We were interested to see what difficulties those left at home, the elderly, women, children, were facing and what measures were taken to get through the whirlwinds of the war, which seemed to never end. Although we started from the premise that free time probably no longer manifests itself in public space, the research has directed us in other directions. Both in Timișoara and in Sibiu, the leisure of those left on the cold front will still take place in public representation, but to a lesser extent. The population was financially difficult, food requisitions and rationalizations were made, luxury products were subject to excise duties, but we still notice the presence of the urban population in the cafe, for example. The opening hours of the coffee houses were reduced, for the safety of the public, and the right of people to walk the streets at night was restricted, but we understand this aspect by the need to ensure civil security by the administration. However, the press was bidding to send us information about some citizens who do not comply with the rules, staying in the cafe and restaurant until after 12 o'clock at night.