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**How to cite:**

CERCEL, CRISTIAN,ALEXANDRU (2012) *Philo-Germanism without Germans. Memory, Identity, and Otherness in Post-1989 Romania*, Durham theses, Durham University. Available at Durham E-Theses Online: http://etheses.dur.ac.uk/4925/

# Philo-Germanism without Germans. Memory, Identity, and Otherness in Post-1989 Romania

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2012

# Abstract

The recent history of the German minority in Romania is marked by its mass migration from Romania to Germany, starting roughly in the immediate aftermath of the Second World War and reaching its climax in the early 1990s, following the fall of Communism. Against this background, the present thesis investigates a phenomenon that can be termed "philo-Germanism without Germans", arguing that the way the German minority in Romania is represented in a wide array of discourses is best comprehended if placed in a theoretical framework in which concepts such as "self-Orientalism", "intimate colonization" and other related ones play a key role.

This dissertation departs from the existence of predominantly positive representations of Germanness in Romanian society. Furthermore, by examining a series of post-1989 Romanian identification/memory discourses, originating from three different discursive fields (politics, mass-media, historiography), it argues that the underlying reasons for this prestige are strongly connected with Romanian Europeanizing endeavours. In other words, the dissertation maintains that "loving the Germans" in post-1989 Romania is strongly connected with the production and reproduction of symbolic geographies aiming to discursively insert Romania into what is perceived to be the "civilized" Western/European World. Thus, Germans in Romania, former 12$^{th}$ and 18$^{th}$ century colonists, become actually a resource for Europeanness, a way of emphasizing Romania's European belonging. They are "cultural Others", possessing "all that we lack", embraced in Romania with "love, ardour, and desire", a clear case of discursive "self-colonization".

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# Acknowledgments

My primary supervisor, Dr. Ruth Wittlinger, deserves my deepest gratitude for her ongoing intellectual, academic, and personal support during my doctoral studies. Without her, producing this dissertation would have surely taken much longer. My second supervisor, Dr. Stephen Welch, was kind enough to assist me through my theoretical, linguistic and presentational meanderings. I immensely thank him for that. I feel obliged to emphasize that the financial support granted by the University of Durham through the Durham Doctoral Fellowship Scheme provided me with the lack of financial constraints needed in order to undertake the research for this thesis.

In part or as a whole, drafts of this dissertation have been read by several people, whose feedback was more than welcome. I therefore have to thank first and foremost Annemarie Weber, and Gruia Bădescu, but also James Koranyi, John Gledhill, Alex Drace-Francis, and Natalia Bănulescu-Bogdan for their time and suggestions. Their input has been highly appreciated and has hopefully led to an improvement of this dissertation. Of course, its failures and shortcomings, hopefully not many, are my fault only.

Georg Aescht, Hannelore Baier, Paul Philippi, Paul-Jürgen Porr, and Wolfgang Wittstock have been more than ready to help with hints, suggestions, and insights from within the Romanian German community: *Vielen Dank dafür*. A special thanks should go to Gerald Volkmer, for his readiness to suggest a map of former German settlements in Romania. Lucy Abbott, Mathias Beer, Dario Brentin, Emanuela Grama-Neamțu, Konrad Gündisch, Henio Hoyo, Kristel Kaljund, Anca Militaru, Klaus Richter, Monica Stroe, Tibor Toro, and Smaranda Vultur made my research easier by helping me to get access to various studies and articles, often on very short notice. Some of them are good friends of mine, some I don't actually know, yet all of them have been eager to help. I highly regard their intellectual comradeship.

Writing this dissertation would not have been possible without the help of my parents, Nicoleta and Vasile Cercel. They should be thanked not only for their support during these years, but for so much more: for having confidence in me, for constantly finding how to nourish this confidence, and,

last but not least, for pushing me to learn German when I was a child who was far from finding this language in any way attractive.

My deepest and warmest thanks go to Raluca, for constantly being next to me, in all possible and impossible ways, although I very well know how difficult this was at times. *Mulțumesc din suflet, frumusețe!*

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# 1. Introduction

In October 2009, Mircea Cărtărescu, a well-known Romanian writer, whose propensity for political commentary was nurtured by a weekly rostrum in the popular daily *Evenimentul zilei*, published a piece about the upcoming presidential elections, to take place by the end of the same year. Presumably like many other Romanians, he did not know whom to vote for. Cărtărescu did not appear satisfied with what the existing candidates for Romania's highest political office had to offer. Yet there was someone who, in his view, was undoubtedly worthy of Romania's presidency. This someone was the mayor of the Transylvanian town of Sibiu since 2000, Klaus Johannis, president of the Democratic Forum of Germans in Romania.

What were Cărtărescu's arguments in favour of Klaus Johannis, who was not even a candidate for the presidential office? His words say it better than any paraphrasing: "I want Klaus Johannis, the one who transformed Sibiu into a town worthy of Tyrol or Bavaria. I honestly believe that, following King Carol, only another German can shake us a little bit from our eternal boycotting of history."[1] In just three lines, Cărtărescu directly and indirectly touched upon the interlinked issues constituting the crux of the present dissertation: Romanian identity, memory, Germanness, and Europeanness.

Klaus Johannis, Cărtărescu's preferred candidate, is a member of the once thriving German minority in Romania. According to the preliminary results of the census conducted in 2011, there are only about 30.000 ethnic Germans in Romania, an incredibly small figure compared to the approximately 800.000 ethnic Germans living in Romania in the 1930s. Although boasting a historical presence in the contemporary Western and Central regions of the country ever since the 12th century, Germans in Transylvania and Banat moved *en masse* in the second half of the 20th century to their imagined homeland, the Federal Republic of Germany. Johannis is

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[1] Mircea Cărtărescu, "Cine-o să iasă?" *Evenimentul zilei*, October 9, 2009, http://www.evz.ro/detalii/stiri/senatul-evz-cine-o-sa-iasa-870920.html (accessed December 7, 2011). All translations from languages other than English were made by the author of this thesis.

one of the very few who remained in Romania. Yet despite the physical absence of Germans, a large majority of the inhabitants of Sibiu, or "Hermannstadt" in German, elected the representative of the Democratic Forum of Germans in Romania as mayor three times in a row, starting with the year 2000. Johannis' ethnicity, his belonging to the Transylvanian Saxon community, played an important role in determining the choices of the inhabitants of Sibiu.[2]

In his article, Cărtărescu operated with two different comparisons. Firstly, he glorified Sibiu under the administration of Klaus Johannis to a town "worthy of Tyrol or Bavaria". He could have praised Sibiu as a town worthy of Romania or of Transylvania, yet he did not do that: his main benchmark is not at home, but abroad, in "Tyrol" and "Bavaria". Such comparisons are constantly found in Romanian cultural history: a well-known theatre play studied in secondary school, *Alexandru Lăpușneanu* by Costache Negruzzi, is a Romanian *Hamlet*, whilst Bucharest is "Little Paris", typical subaltern/peripheral views whose points of reference are always elsewhere, in imagined or real "centres". In the 1990s, Timothy Garton Ash described Sibiu (incorrectly and annoyingly named "Șibiu") with the following words: "now a Romanian town in Romania, but it used to be a German town in Hungary".[3] When Cărtărescu called it a town "worthy of Tyrol or Bavaria" in 2009, this implicitly made visible the cultural transformation (read: Germanization) taking place since the 2000s.

Secondly, Cărtărescu went even further, straightforwardly acknowledging his view of German ethnicity as a quality in itself. By referring to Carol I of Romania - the Prussian prince who became Romania's leader in 1866 at the age of 25 and ruled the country until 1914 - he elicited an entire set of historical representations according to which the monarch, a member of the Sigmaringen branch of the Hohenzollern family, was the one who transformed Romania into a true modern, European country. Cărtărescu's strong belief, that "only another German" can "shake" Romanians from their "boycotting of history" reinforced two sets of images and ideas with a distinct

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[2] Monica Stroe, "Heterorepresentations of Saxonness and Their Political Meanings in Transylvania," in *European, National and Regional Identity: Proceedings of the International Conference "European, National and Regional Identity", organized in Oradea, 24-26 March 2011, in the Frame of Research Project HURO/0801/180*, ed. Brigitta Balogh et al. (Oradea: Ed. Universității din Oradea, 2011), 195-209.

[3] Timothy Garton Ash, *History of the Present: Essays, Sketches and Despatches from Europe in the 1990s* (London: Allen Lane, The Penguin Press, 1999), 284.

tradition in Romanian cultural history: on the one hand, the representation of the paternalist German/European "other", modernizing and providing cultural and civilizational models worthy of emulation for the rather underdeveloped autochthonous population; and on the other hand, an idea with an older tradition in Romanian cultural history: the depiction of the Romanian people as ahistorical and apolitical.

The short excerpt from Cărtărescu's article is a perfect illustration of the prestige associated with German ethnicity and with "our Germans" in contemporary Romania. It is also symptomatic of how this prestige is tightly linked with tensions surrounding Romanian self-identification discourses and of how a positive view of Germanness and of German ethnicity is accompanied by a self-disparaging view of Romanianness and of who "we", Romanians, are. Furthermore, as this dissertation also confirms by bringing to the fore a plethora of other examples, Cărtărescu's stance with respect to Germans is not a *sui generis* case in Romania.

In this context, this thesis investigates what can be called "philo-Germanism without Germans" in Romania, an interesting and apparently peculiar case of praising the "Other". Consequently, it explores the connections between these particular positive representations of German otherness and Romanian memory and identity discourses after 1989. It examines the way this prestige is represented in Romanian discourses touching upon the German minority, investigating when it comes to the surface and when it recedes into the background, and it considers the symbolic value of such representations.

The main argument presented throughout the present work is that the aforementioned "philo-Germanism without Germans" is strongly connected with Romanian aspirations towards Europeanization, influencing identity and memory discourses, as expressed in a variety of fields. By making use of concepts such as "Orientalism", "self-orientalization" and "intimate colonization", this dissertation explicates the existing connections between representations of otherness, more precisely Germanness, and Romanian memory and identity discourses. It does that by looking at three different fields, namely politics, print media, and historiography, each of them extremely relevant in the shaping of identity and memory discourses

following the fall of the Communist regime in Romania and the associated political and ideological reordering.

The expression "philo-Germanism without Germans" is both a pastiche and a copycat. It parallels the better known "anti-Semitism without Jews", first used by Paul Lendvai to describe the situation in several Eastern European countries at the end of the 1960s and beginning of the 1970s.[4] Subsequently, the expression was employed by Michael Shafir, in his analysis of Romanian anti-Semitism in the early 1990s.[5] The similarities between "philo-Germanism without Germans" and "anti-Semitism without Jews" stem from the fact that they both refer to a set of representations about a specific ethnic group in a setting in which the said group is largely absent - though in both cases the group historically existed in much larger numbers.

The expression is a copycat because in a different form it was already used by Monica Stroe, who referred to a phenomenon she called "philo-Saxonism without Saxons". She thus described the reasons for the electoral success of Klaus Johannis in Sibiu and the subsequent "Saxon" cultural branding of the town despite the tiny number of ethnic Germans (Transylvanian Saxons) currently inhabiting it. Furthermore, another similar expression, namely "Germanicity without Germans", was employed in order to describe the underlying tenets of the social and cultural processes currently promoted in a top-down manner in villages formerly inhabited by a majority of Transylvanian Saxons.[6]

Nonetheless, although I draw on these conceptualizations, my use of the expression "philo-Germanism without Germans" is slightly different as compared to the abovementioned "philo-Saxonism without Saxons" or "Germanicity without Germans". Both Stroe and Hughes, according to their own foci of investigation, looked at local instantiations and substantiations of the prestige of "Germanness"/"Saxonness", whereas my own research examines the phenomenon on a more general level, exploring discourses promoted in various circumstances by relevant political actors, disseminated via national newspapers, or expressed through historical writing produced

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[4] Paul Lendvai, *Antisemitism without Jews: Communist Eastern Europe* (Garden City: Doubleday, 1971).

[5] Michael Shafir, "Antisemitism without Jews in Romania," *Report on Eastern Europe*, June 28, 1991.

[6] Alina Hughes, "Germanicity without Germans and Beyond: Post-Saxon Rural Transylvania," (paper presented at the conference "The Flight and Expulsion of Germans in Contemporary German Culture," Nottingham Trent University, October 21, 2011).

under the aegis of national institutions such as the Romanian Academy. Furthermore, my work also parts on a theoretical level with the already existing studies on similar subject matters.

In this context, some pressing subquestions arise, including: which is the best conceptual and methodological way to approach the topic? What sort of a conceptual framework is appropriate in order to explicate the critical meanings of "philo-Germanism without Germans"? The second chapter of the dissertation provides an overview of the conceptual scaffolding employed in my analysis.

As I have already mentioned, German presence in Romania is mostly a thing of the past. Henceforth, critically addressing the issue of "memory" is a useful conceptual endeavour. Fundamentally, I argue that "social memory" is a concept with an all-encompassing significance related to the presence of the past into the present and that a theoretical discrimination between "social" and "collective memory" can be used in order to emphasize the all-permeating character of the "philo-Germanism without Germans". The second chapter then discusses the question of "identity" and underlines the fundamental equivalence of identity and memory politics, together with their being quintessentially linked with questions of legitimacy and power. Furthermore, it argues that questions related to identity are practically embedded in discourses on otherness: analyzing how the other is represented is in fact an illuminating way to discern ways in which the self is framed. Last, but definitely not least, the second chapter introduces literature on the "West"-"East" relationships, emphasizing its usefulness in analyzing the "liminal" case of the relationship between "Western" and "Eastern Europe". It suggests that the Romanian "philo-Germanism without Germans" is a case of praising a "Western" other in an "Eastern" setting. This particular apparatus will be then put to work in the empirical part of the dissertation.

After delineating the conceptual framework, I proceed to answer a series of contextual subquestions related to the research topic: who are the Germans in Romania? What is the historical background of the German presence in regions that are at present part of the Romanian state? At what point has it actually become meaningful to speak about "Romanian Germans" or about the "German minority in Romania"? Consequently, the third chapter provides an overview of the German minority in contemporary Romania and

of the historical and political background leading to its present state. It then addresses the existence of a variety of distinct groups bundled together under the umbrella terms "German minority in Romania" or "Romanian Germans". Drawing on a wide range of secondary literature, to a large extent focused on the case of Transylvanian Saxons, the best known and the most researched of the German-speaking groups living or having lived at one point on Romanian territory, the chapter also approaches questions related to Transylvanian Saxon self-identification discourses.

Having presented the conceptual apparatus used for the analysis of the representations of the German other in post-1989 Romania and having succinctly explained whom do we speak about when we speak about "Germans in Romania", other contextual subquestions arise. What were the Romanian-German relationships in Romania prior to 1989? Could we speak of a "philo-Germanism" before present times as well, and if yes, what were its tenets? Furthermore, has the image of the German minority in post-1989 Romania been in any way addressed by previous works and what are their assets and their shortcomings? Can existing secondary literature on representations of other ethnic groups in the Romanian setting be useful for the present research? Thus, the fourth chapter places the present dissertation in the context of various other works and studies, with different foci, yet relevant for my own investigation.

After setting the stage using several different points of view, the main questions related to the post-1989 "philo-Germanism without Germans" in Romania emerge. Politically, is it a matter of discourse, of legislative action, or of both? What do post-1989 Romanian political discourses about Germans and about the German past in Romania tell us? How can we interpret particular legislative issues directly or indirectly touching upon the German community in Romania? Is there anything to gain from a comparative perspective, i.e. from juxtaposing the discursive and/or legislative treatment of the Germans in post-1989 Romania with the same treatment of other minorities in the country, such as Hungarians or Roma? How is German cultural heritage framed and used in contemporary Romania?

*Mutatis mutandis*, similar questions can be asked in relationship to the print media. There is no concrete, legislative dimension in this case, yet the questions related to the discursive treatment of the Germans are

fundamentally similar. Others can be added: are there any recurrent tropes in the journalistic discourse about the Germans? And, maybe even more important, who is speaking about Germans in Romania? Last, but not least, considering the tight and intrinsic relationship between "memory" and "history", this dissertation also addresses questions related to historiography. How is the German past framed in post-1989 Romanian historiographic discourses? What sort of interpretive frameworks is it associated with?

Consequently, the next three chapters analyze concrete empirical material, in order to ascertain the validity of the phrase "philo-Germanism without Germans" in the post-1989 Romanian setting and to answer the abovementioned questions. The fifth chapter looks at a variety of sources from the Romanian political field, understood in a very broad manner, from legislation to memory discourses and to straightforward discourses about the "Germans". The sixth chapter adds to the empirical part of this dissertation, by looking at representations of the German minority in post-1989 Romanian print media, more precisely in six different publications, three dailies (*România liberă*, *Adevărul*, *Gândul*) and three weeklies (*Formula As*, *Dilema*, *Dilema veche*). The last empirical chapter deals with post-1989 Romanian historiography and the place of the "German" therein. Looking at a series of works belonging to post-1989 Romanian historiography, it explores the interpretations of the presence of the Germans (most often, Transylvanian Saxons) in the Romanian past or, more precisely, in the past of the Romanians. Finally, the eighth and last chapter sums up the arguments brought forth throughout the entire dissertation and the appertaining conclusions.

Through this complimentary analysis, the present dissertation sheds light upon a contemporary phenomenon taking place in Romania, unravelling some of the deeper meanings this phenomenon stands for. By looking at questions related to representations of otherness and to the relationship between the self and the other, it examines how these representations are linked with self-identification discourses, and how they can be discursively used in order to legitimize and substantiate particular claims related to the self. It explores the ways in which "West", "East", and akin concepts have informed Romanian social memory in general and mnemonic discourses on German otherness after 1989 in particular, thus providing a critique of such

discourses, whilst also showing that they are embedded on a social, political, and cultural level. Last but not least, it offers insights into the Romanian-German relationships following the fall of Communism, where "German" refers here both to *Rumäniendeutsche* (Romanian Germans) and to Germans from Germany.

## 2. Conceptual and Methodological Context

### 2.1. "Collective"/"Social Memory". Conceptual History and Distinctions

The present chapter starts with some brief considerations on the conceptual categorization of consequences of migrations from Eastern Europe, arguing that these consequences are analytically valid in the case of the German migration from Romania. It continues by critically discussing the concepts of "memory" and "identity" and the debates surrounding them. It makes a case for a distinction between "social" and "collective memory" and argues that post-1989 representations of the German other in Romania should be analyzed and evaluated in relationship to self-identification discourses and to other types of discourses related to the historical past. Furthermore, it argues for the use of a social memory studies perspective in order to address the question of how the German minority is discursively represented in contemporary Romania. Thus, it lays the basis for a better understanding of the empirical analysis undertaken at the later stages of this dissertation. The second half of the chapter contextualizes in a more specific manner the questions related to memory and identity discourses appertaining to the research focus of this thesis. It deals with literature on "Euro-Orientalism" and other related concepts, appropriate to explain the nature of the relationship between "Western" and "Eastern" Europe. On the heels of a wide range of analyses, it argues that this relationship has fundamentally been a hegemonic one, heavily informing self-identification discourses, and discourses on otherness. It then specifies the consequences of this relationship in the Romanian case, both in its historical and in its post-1989 dimension. In the final section, it comments upon the methodological issues linking memory studies and studies on representations of otherness, presenting the sources constituting the main research material of this dissertation.

"Memory" is a crucial concept for understanding a society's relationship with its own past, and in recent decades it has entered common parlance both inside and outside academia. However, the increasing interest and scholarship dedicated to "collective" and/or "social memory" has not been accompanied by a commonly shared and clear-cut working definition of

the term. Furthermore, there are many derivatives of the term, such as "collective memory", "social memory", or "cultural memory", to name only some of the most prevalent, which does not ease in any way the task of the researcher.

In an article on the effects of 20th century forced migrations from Eastern Europe, Ewa Morawska singled out, within so-called "sending societies", several consequences of the said phenomenon, related to a number of different societal fields.[7] Two of these consequences regard "self-perceptions and representations of others" and "collective memory and representations of history".[8]

Undoubtedly, it is a matter of debate whether the migration of the greatest part of the German community from Romania to Germany enters the category of "forced migrations". At first glance, the phenomenon is hardly comparable with the expulsions of Germans from Poland and Czechoslovakia, Hungary or Yugoslavia. Indeed, ethnic Germans from Romania fled to Austria and Germany, especially after August 23, 1944, when Romanian authorities suddenly changed sides, denouncing the alliance with the Axis. Nonetheless, this accounts only for a small part of the general migratory processes touching upon the community. To a much larger extent, the migration of Germans from Romania, coined in German as *Aussiedlung* (resettlement), took place in the last decades of the Communist regime, in the context of growing state-sponsored nationalism in Romania and of Romanian-German interstate agreements. Furthermore, the acme of this phenomenon was recorded after the fall of the Communist regime, in the early 1990s, when most of the Germans still living in Romania packed their suitcases for the Federal Republic of Germany. Thus, German migration from Romania is essentially understandable in the broader context of the Cold War and of its immediate aftermath, whereas the abovementioned coercive population transfers are first and foremost linked with the specific developments taking place towards the end of the Second World War. Nevertheless, identity discourses disseminated by Romanian German organizations sometimes make use of a paradoxical self-victimizing

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[7] Ewa Morawska, "Intended and Unintended Consequences of Forced Migrations: A Neglected Aspect of East Europe's Twentieth Century History," *International Migration Review* 34, no. 4 (Winter 2000): 1049-87.
[8] Ibid., 1053.

statement: *vertrieben, jedoch im Vertreibungsland zurückgehalten* (expelled, yet contained in the expelling country).[9]

Despite the question marks regarding the categorization of German migration from Romania to Germany as coercive or voluntary, Morawska's considerations, briefly presented above, open a space for analytically addressing some of the implicit and explicit consequences of the phenomenon. They imply that "collective memory" is one of the conceptual instruments necessary for the investigation of representations of ethnic otherness and their relationship with identity. Henceforth, a discussion of the said concept is appropriate, in order to concretely discern how it is best applicable in my analysis of the place of the German minority in post-1989 Romanian discourses.

The intellectual and scholarly investigation of memory is not new *per se*: the degree of novelty consists rather in the emphasis placed upon its social/collective character and on the upsurge of commemorations and top-down imposition of mnemonic acts. Nevertheless, terms such as "cultural memory", "social memory" or "collective memory" are often used interchangeably, hence enhancing the ambiguous character of the concept(s). "Memory" was called "the historical signature of our generation", that, wilfully or not, we are compelled to use, "just as we use words like love or hate without ever knowing their full or shared significance".[10]

Jeffrey K. Olick and Joyce Robbins emphasized the "relative disorganization" of social memory studies and also highlighted that these are a "nonparadigmatic, transdisciplinary, centerless enterprise".[11] In other words, the study of memory is not confined to the methodological and conceptual precincts of one discipline only. Moreover, just as the work coordinated by Pierre Nora, on French *lieux de mémoire* (realms/places/sites of memory), makes one wonder what could *not* qualify for being considered such a *lieu*, the hyperinflation of academic and non-academic uses of

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[9] Anneli Ute Gabanyi, "Geschichte der Deutschen in Rumänien," Siebenbürger.De Portal. Verband der Siebenbürger Sachsen, under "Der Anfang vom Ende: Krieg, Flucht, Verfolgung, Diskriminierung," http://www.siebenbuerger.de/portal/land-und-leute/siebenbuerger-sachsen/#a1 (accessed December 16, 2011).

[10] Jay Winter, "The Generation of Memory: Reflections on the 'Memory Boom' in Contemporary Historical Studies," *German Historical Institute Bulletin*, no. 27 (Fall 2000), under "The 'Cultural Turn' in Historical Studies," http://www.ghi-dc.org/publications/ghipubs/bu/027/b27winterframe.html (accessed December 16, 2011).

[11] Jeffrey K. Olick and Joyce Robbins, "Social Memory Studies: From 'Collective Memory' to the Historical Sociology of Mnemonic Practices," *Annual Review of Sociology* 24 (1998): 105.

"memory" makes one wonder what is *not* part of it.[12] Henceforth, taking into account both the broad use of the concept and its relative novelty in the world of social sciences, a concise review of the conceptual emergence and subsequent development of "memory" is appropriate.

The first use of the term "collective memory" has been traced all the way back to Austrian writer Hugo von Hofmannsthal, who allegedly made use of it in a speech held in 1902.[13] Nonetheless, the great majority of studies of collective memory do not usually track their intellectual lineage to Hofmannsthal, but to Maurice Halbwachs and his 1925 seminal work, *The Social Frameworks of Memory*.[14] Roughly in the same period, Aby Warburg spoke of *soziales Gedächtnis* (social memory),[15] although not consistently defining the term, whilst Frederick C. Bartlett published *Remembering*, a study on social cognition, also including an account of Halbwachs' views. Commenting on the latter's work, Bartlett interestingly remarked that he "is still treating only of memory *in* the group, and not of memory *of* the group".[16] Reviewing the contributions of these three pioneers of memory studies, Astrid Erll argued that Halbwachs and Bartlett linked the study of memory to "social and cognitive levels", whilst "Warburg's legacy" consists in addressing the study of memory by dint of material objects.[17] The distinction is apposite, as my own study, dealing in effect with the place of the German minority within contemporary social memory in Romania, does not look at physical objects, such as monuments for example, but rather at particular political and socio-cultural aspects, mirrored and (re)produced through the discourses disseminated in the appertaining discursive fields.

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[12] Pierre Nora (ed.), *Realms of Memory: The Construction of the French Past*, ed. Lawrence D. Kritzman, transl. Arthur Goldhammer, 3 vols., (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996-98); Jeffrey K. Olick, "Collective Memory: The Two Cultures," *Sociological Theory* 17, no. 3 (November 1999): 336.

[13] Olick and Robbins, "Social Memory Studies," 107.

[14] Maurice Halbwachs, "The Social Frameworks of Memory," in *On Collective Memory*, trans. and ed. Lewis A. Coser (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992), 37-189. Originally published as *Les cadres sociaux de la mémoire* (Paris: Félix Alcan, 1925), http://dx.doi.org/doi:10.1522/cla.ham.cad (accessed December 12, 2011).

[15] Alon Confino, "Collective Memory and Cultural History: Problems of Method," in *Germany as a Culture of Remembrance: Promises and Limits of Writing History* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2006), 170-87.

[16] Sir Frederic C. Bartlett, *Remembering* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1950), 294-96.

[17] Astrid Erll, "Cultural Memory Studies: An Introduction," in *Cultural Memory Studies. An International and Interdisciplinary Handbook*, ed. Astrid Erll and Ansgar Nünning, in collaboration with Sara B. Young (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2008), 9.

Despite acknowledging the fundamental differences between the views of the two scholars, Jan Assmann also posited that both Halbwachs and Warburg shared a dismissal of Jung's theory of archetypes and of the biology-indebted discourse on collective memory. Indeed, discarding psychoanalysis and biology as scholarly disciplines capable of addressing the issue of collective/social memory partially diminishes the danger of reifying memory. This is an intellectual peril that, in the terms of Brubaker and Cooper, leads to the confusion of categories of practice with categories of analysis.[18] Furthermore, Assmann distinctly placed Halbwachs' approach in a Durkheimian tradition, considering that the former was faithful to a specific understanding of the primacy of the social over the individual, henceforth in clear contradiction with the much more individualistic approach proposed by Henri Bergson in *Matter and Memory*.[19] Halbwachs was intellectually and personally close to the group of scholars around Durkheim, yet "his concern for statistics and his ethnographic perspective" were rather "at odds with Durkheimian orthodoxy".[20]

Following the abovementioned incipient interest for collective memory, the concept fell into the oblivion roughly up to the 1970s and 1980s. However, on the heels of scholars such as Lucien Febvre and Marc Bloch, the second half of the last century witnessed the boom of the *histoire des mentalités* (history of mentalities), promoted mainly by the French School of Annales. Representatives of its so-called "third generation", such as Philippe Ariès and Maurice Agulhon, were the first to focus their research, starting with the end of the 1970s, on commemorations, seen as an instrument for the creation and stabilization of "collective memory".[21]

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[18] Rogers Brubaker and Frederick Cooper, "Beyond 'Identity'," in Rogers Brubaker, *Ethnicity without Groups* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004), 28-63.

[19] Jan Assmann, "Collective Memory and Cultural Identity," transl. John Czaplicka, in "Cultural History/Cultural Studies," co-ed. John Czaplicka, *New German Critique*, no. 65 (Spring-Summer 1995): 125-33; Henri Bergson, *Matter and Memory*, transl. Nancy Margaret Paul and W. Scott Palmer (London: George Allen; New York: MacMillan, 1911). For an analysis of Bergson's elaborations on memory, see Keith Ansell-Pearson, "Bergson on Memory," in *Memory: Histories, Theories, Debates*, ed. Susannah Radstone and Bill Schwarz (New York: Fordham University Press, 2010), 61-76.

[20] Erika Apfelbaum, "Halbwachs and the Social Properties of Memory," in Radstone and Schwarz, *Memory: Histories*, 79.

[21] Patrick H. Hutton, *History as an Art of Memory* (Hanover, NH: University Press of New England, 1995), 2-4.

To a large extent, the "new history of memory" and what used to be called "the history of collective mentality" shared a series of commonalities.[22] Roger Chartier suggested that the study of mentalities looks into "the 'unthought' and internalized conditionings that cause a group or society to share, without need to make them explicit, a system of representations and a system of values".[23] The conceptual similarity between "culture" and "mentalities" and, respectively, between cultural history and the history of mentalities was already noticed in a period when the latter discipline was in effect enjoying a quite successful career, mostly in the French-speaking academia.[24]

"Cultural memory", as defined by Jan Assmann, can also be related to the conceptual and analytical developments proposed by the members of the Annales School and their research program. According to Assmann, "cultural memory" stands for

> a collective concept for all knowledge that directs behavior and experience in the interactive framework of a society and one that obtains through generations in repeated societal practice and initiation.[25]

More recently, Aleida Assmann proposed a distinction between "four formats of memory", in which "social memory" stands alongside "cultural memory".[26] Notwithstanding the degree of sophistication involved in various conceptual distinctions, the relevance of social practice and habit in the transmission of "images of the past" is beyond doubt.[27] In other words, there is a performative character of memory, inscribed in speech, gestures, art, or even bodily forms.[28] In a similar vein, Carole L. Crumley referred to "social

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[22] Confino, "Collective Memory," 172.

[23] Roger Chartier, "Intellectual History or Socio-Cultural History? The French Trajectories," in *Modern European Intellectual History*, ed. Dominick LaCapra and Steven L. Kaplan (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1982), 23.

[24] Patrick H. Hutton, "The History of Mentalities: The New Map of Cultural History," *History and Theory. Studies in the Philosophy of History* 20, no. 3 (October 1981): 237; also Peter Burke, *What is Cultural History?* (Malden: Polity Press, 2008), 67-9.

[25] Jan Assmann, "Collective Memory," 126.

[26] Aleida Assmann, "Memory, Individual and Collective," in *The Oxford Handbook of Contextual Political Analysis*, ed. Robert E. Goodin and Charles Tilly (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 210-24.

[27] Paul Connerton, *How Societies Remember* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 70-3.

[28] Jay Winter, "The Performance of the Past: Memory, History, Identity," in *Performing the Past: Memory, History, and Identity in Modern Europe*, ed. Karin Tilmans, Frank van Vree and Jay Winter (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2010), 12.

memory" as "the means by which information is transmitted among individuals and groups and from one generation to another."[29]

As already suggested, the salient denotative closeness with terms and concepts such as "culture" or "mentalities" has the potential of weakening the theoretical foundations of the use of "collective memory" or of any other memory-related term. Precisely on these grounds, "memory" has also been an object of critique. For example, David Berliner distinctly argued against Crumley's use of the term, noticing its similarity with "culture", as defined in 1952 by Kluckhohn and Kroeber.[30] Noa Gedi and Yigal Elam argued that "collective memory" unnecessarily aims to replace more appropriate concepts.[31] According to them, the term is an unhappy replacement for others already at hand, such as "myth" or "stereotypes". "Collective memory" has also been seen as a "misleading metaphor", with "memory" existing only at an individual level.[32] Other concepts, such as "social imaginary" for example, seem to refer to the same aspects of social life as "memory" in its collective dimension purports to do. According to Bronisław Baczko, "social imaginary" stands for "the production of global representations of society and of all that refers to it", acting as specific *points de repère* in the elaboration of collective identity and self-representations by a community.[33]

Social psychologists also produced conceptualizations displaying similarities with "memory", the theory of social representations being one of the most influential. According to Serge Moscovici, social representations are "a specific way of understanding, and communicating, what we know already".[34] Moreover, they are "dynamic structures, operating on an assembly of relations and of behaviours which appear and disappear together with

[29] Carole L. Crumley, "Exploring Venues of Social Memory,' in *Social Memory and History: Anthropological Perspectives*, ed. Jacob J. Climo and Maria G. Cattell (Walnut Creek: Altamira Press, 2002), 39.

[30] David Berliner, "The Abuses of Memory: Reflections on the Memory Boom in Anthropology," *Anthropological Quarterly* 78, no. 1 (Winter 2005): 197-211.

[31] Noa Gedi and Yigal Elam, "Collective Memory – What Is It?" *History and Memory. Studies in Representation of the Past* 8, no. 1 (Spring-Summer 1996): 30-47.

[32] Jerzy Jedlicki, "East European Historical Bequest en Route to an Integrated Europe," in *Collective Memory and European Identity: The Effects of Integration and Enlargement*, ed. Klaus Eder and Willfried Spohn (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005), 37.

[33] Bronisław Baczko, *Les imaginaires sociaux. Mémoires et espoirs collectifs* (Paris: Payot, 1984), 31-2.

[34] Serge Moscovici, "The Phenomenon of Social Representations," transl. Sacha Rabinovitch, in *Social Representations*, ed. Robert M. Farr and Serge Moscovici (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press; Paris: Éditions de la Maison des Sciences de l'Homme, 1984), 31.

their representations".[35] Henceforth, social representations are a social reality *sui generis*,[36] with a double function:

> ...they establish *an order* which enables individuals to orientate themselves in their material and social world and to master it, and secondly, they enable communication to take place among members of a community by providing them with *a code* for social exchange and a code for naming and classifying unambiguously the various aspects of their world and their individual and group history.[37]

Social representations are therefore shared by members of a society; they are a way of organizing and structuring "collective ideation", and, as Gerard Duveen argued, in their capacity of "organization and structure" (or, as previously stated, *order* and *code*) they are "shaped by the communicative influences at work in society", serving at the same time "to make communication possible".[38] They produce and shape reality, but at the same time they emerge as a response to stimuli coming from the social environment and contribute to turning the unfamiliar into familiar.[39] Moscovici's classical example is that of psychoanalysis and of the way it "entered into the life, thoughts, behaviour, habits and the world of the *conversations* of a great number of individuals", or, in other words, the way it became socialized.[40]

Social representations emphasize the symbolic character of the construction of social objects. Their symbolic dimension is critical to understanding "how people express identity, develop patterns of behaviour and engage with significant others".[41] Nonetheless, despite a programmatic openness towards the use of various methods, research on social representations relies mostly on methodological instruments pertaining to sociology and social psychology, and thus sheds light upon a dimension that does not constitute the focus of my research. Looking at representations of

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[35] Ibid., 32.

[36] Ibid., 13.

[37] J. Jaspars and C. Fraser, "Attitudes and Social Representations," in Farr and Moscovici, *Social Representations*, 102.

[38] Gerard Duveen, "Introduction: The Power of Ideas," in Serge Moscovici, *Social Representations: Explorations in Social Psychology*, ed. Gerard Duveen (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2000), 13.

[39] Moscovici, "The Phenomenon of Social Representations," 24.

[40] Serge Moscovici, preliminary remarks to *Psychoanalysis: Its Image and Its Public*, transl. David Macey, ed. Gerard Duveen (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2008), xxv.

[41] Wolfgang Wagner et al., "Theory and Method of Social Representations," *Asian Journal of Social Psychology* 2, no. 1 (April 1999): 104.

otherness from a memory studies perspective makes it easier to address questions related to politics, political discourses and the historical past.

One conclusion arising from these considerations is that even though the "memory wave" is an academic reality of the past two decades, the focus of its research is, at least in part, not totally new. From one point of view, the study of memory as the study of collective ideas and representations transmitted from the past to the present and reproducing specific group identifications is essentially synonymous with the history of mentalities and with cultural history, yet also overlaps with other fields of research.

There are also other possible ways of addressing the issue of memory, emphasizing to a larger extent the implicit or explicit agency related to it. The vast body of literature dedicated to nationalism and identity underlines the political character of the nation-building and/or identity-building processes. The corpus of literature dedicated to nationalism is too broad to succinctly summarize it, yet it has to be emphasized that theories of nationalism and of nation-building are roughly divided along three main lines, the "primordialist" one, the "ethno-symbolist" one and the "modernist"/"constructivist" one. The main distinctions between these three currents of thought in nationalism studies have been aptly summed up by Ümüt Ozkırımlı:

> The common denominator of the modernists is their conviction in the modernity of nations and nationalism; that of the ethnosymbolists is the stress they lay in their explanations on ethnic pasts and cultures; finally, that of the primordialists is their belief in the antiquity and naturalness of nations.[42]

Studies approaching nationalism and of nation-building from one or the other of the three aforementioned perspectives are clearly mutually communicating, yet at the same time representatives of the three camps have put critical effort in dismissing the theoretical tenets of the others. The "modernist" strand as such appeared as a reaction to the old-school type of primordialism, in many ways deconstructing the latter's principles and understanding them as discursive means towards nation-building rather than as analytical devices. As its name makes it visible, modernism strongly believes in the tight connection between modernity and the emergence of nations and of nationalism. It can be argued that the modernist school is

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[42] Ümüt Ozkırımlı, *Theories of Nationalism: A Critical Introduction* (Basingstoke: MacMillan, 2000), 64.

nowadays the most influential when it comes to the study of nationalism. The latter's political outgrowth in modernity is hardly contradicted by representatives of the other schools, yet the constructivist view on the emergence of nations in history is the main trademark of the modernist school.

For modernists, communities are "imagined", traditions are "invented", and national/ethnic allegiances are "built".[43] These theoretical tenets underlie my own understanding of the concepts and phenomena investigated in this dissertation. Similarly, and standing in close relationship with the aformentioned processes, memories are "produced", as they become the stake of the so-called "politics of memory". Unlike the history of mentalities understood as cultural history or as the history of the patterns in which ordinary people used to think, the study of the "politics of memory" focuses on the top-down acts of memorization, usually endorsed by the authorities of the state or by various political entrepreneurs, taking place in a multitude of political settings and aimed at the stabilization of collective identities.[44] Nonetheless, as already pointed out, historians of mentalities were actually the first to concentrate their attention on anniversaries and commemorations, a quintessential aspect of all types of memory politics.

The main premise of this approach towards memory is aptly summed up by Richard Ned Lebow, who poignantly affirmed that, "the construction of memory is infused by politics".[45] Consequently, the study of memory is bound to look at politics of memory, and also at its links with a variety of discourses disseminated through other channels in society. Worded differently, such an investigation focuses on how the past and specific events in the past are framed and presented and on the contemporary role played by these framings and presentations. It does not deal only with commemorations, although these and other similar top-down events are amongst the main features of the politics of memory, yet it can and should

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[43] Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1991); Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger (ed.), *The Invention of Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983); Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1988).
[44] Aleida Assmann, "Memory, Individual", 215.
[45] Richard Ned Lebow, "The Memory of Politics in Postwar Europe," in *The Politics of Memory in Postwar Europe*, ed. Richard Ned Lebow, Wulf Kansteiner and Claudio Fogu (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2006), 4.

also investigate discourses, policies, legislative frameworks, mass-media products, and historical narratives.

Recent elaborations on the relationship between collective/social memory and the individual emphasize the need to bridge the analysis of the "process design", specific to the politics of memory, and the way it is eventually received by its addressees.[46] Furthermore, since there is a "peculiar synergy" between memory and the nation,[47] and in effect between memory and any type of group whatsoever, the relationship between so-called "memory workers" or "memory activists",[48] i.e. the social and political actors involved in conflicts over memory and aiming to disseminate specific understandings of the past, most often tightly related to interests in the present, and the individuals who form a group is not simply unidirectional. Many of the theoretical and methodological difficulties related to the study of the politics of memory fundamentally stem from this multidirectional relationship.

The complex nature of the links existing between the individual and the group, together with the key role played by memory in the processual development of these relationships, have already been emphasized by Halbwachs. Among other elaborations, Halbwachs singled out two key aspects of memory: firstly, that there is no individual memory *per se*, as one always remembers things within a social framework; and secondly, that we are members of a variety of groups and hence we have a variety of collective memories at hand.[49]

The way in which individual and collective memories are framed and (re-)constructed makes very much use of cognitive categories derived from our social environment. The patterns of recall are "socially structured", the act of remembering takes place by means of cultural/social constructions (e.g.:

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[46] William Hirst and David Manier, "Towards a Psychology of Collective Memory," in "From Individual to Collective Memory: Theoretical and Empirical Perspectives," ed. Amanda J. Barnier and John Sutton, *Memory* 16, no. 3 (2008): 183-200; Wulf Kansteiner, "Finding Meaning in Memory: A Methodological Critique of Collective Memory Studies," in *In Pursuit of German Memory: History, Television, and Politics after Auschwitz* (Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 2006), 11-27.

[47] Jeffrey K. Olick, "Introduction," in *States of Memory: Continuities, Conflicts, and Transformations in National Retrospection*, ed. Jeffrey K. Olick (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2003), 2.

[48] The former term is borrowed from Iwona Irwin-Zarecka, *Frames of Remembrance: The Dynamics of Collective Memory* (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 1994). The latter is taken from Kansteiner, "Finding Meaning".

[49] Maurice Halbwachs, *La mémoire collective*, 2nd revised and augmented edition (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1968).

language), memories are usually prompted within specific social environments.[50] At the same time, on a different level, the "politics of memory", aiming implicitly at a top-down production and reproduction of identities and hierarchies within a given group, influences the way members of the group identify themselves, and also the way they relate to the "other". Consequently, it influences (social) memory and memories as well.

"Social memory" is therefore a process and not a thing,[51] taking place within "the liminal space" "between identity and its transformation or 're-membering'",[52] at best described by the metaphor of the ship navigating into a harbour.[53] The act of navigation is a process that occurs only through the complex interactions among all members of the crew: similarly, "social memory" is a process that happens through the complex and pluridirectional interactions of social institutions, political actors, cultural elites and individuals. In this context, Wulf Kansteiner noted: "We have to further collective memory studies by focusing on the communications among memory makers, memory users, and the visual and discursive objects and traditions of representations."[54]

The present study dealing with the place of the Germans in post-1989 Romanian discourses grants attention to specific ways of top-down memorization, i.e. what Hirst and Manier called "the design processes",[55] and also to the transmission/communication of meanings through various channels, connecting these meanings to broader traditions of representations in Romanian society and culture and henceforth emphasizing the construction, out of both new and old mould, of German otherness in Romania. My research looks only tangentially at the addressees and their interaction with the representations being disseminated. It is fundamentally a study of textual discourses and of transmitted discursive knowledge and it aims to shed light upon what specific discourses stand for in particular contexts.

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[50] Michael Schudson, "Dynamics of Distortion in Collective Memory," in *Memory Distortion: How Minds, Brains, and Societies Reconstruct the Past*, ed. Daniel L. Schacter (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1995), 347.
[51] Olick and Robbins, "Social Memory Studies," 122.
[52] Susannah Radstone, "Working with Memory: an Introduction," in *Memory and Methodology*, ed. Susannah Radstone (Oxford: Berg Publishers, 2000), 12.
[53] Hirst and Manier, "Towards a Psychology," 195.
[54] Kansteiner, "Finding Meaning," 27.
[55] Hirst and Manier, "Towards a Psychology," 189.

At this point, some lexical observations should be made. Agreeing that the study of "memory" is an epistemologically legitimate endeavour, researchers and scholars see themselves entangled in a myriad of related terms. The growing interest in memory and remembering as identity-forming processes brought forth a proliferation of the terms aiming to categorize an intricate phenomenon and the multitude of its instantiations. In this context, there are writers who "stick with one of these terms or draw distinctions among two or more of them", whereas others see them as defining more or less the same thing and therefore being interchangeable.[56] Practically, there is an impressive array of terms related to the *genus proximum* "memory". One of the enumerations found in studies dealing with the topic lists: "cultural memory, historical memory, local memory, official memory, popular memory, shared memory, social memory, custom, heritage, myth, roots, tradition".[57] The enumeration is definitely not complete, as one can also refer to urban memory, rural memory, traumatic memory, repressed memory, national memory, ethnic memory, memorials etc. Furthermore, researchers have also spoken of "collective remembrance", implicitly or explicitly distinguishing it from "collective memory".[58]

Perhaps the most important distinction to be addressed is between "social memory" and "collective memory". The two terms are often used synonymously in scholarly literature. Drawing on elaborations from the theory of social representations, it should be remarked that Serge Moscovici encountered a similar problem, due to the apparent synonymous nature of "social" and "collective", originating in the work of Émile Durkheim. Nonetheless, Moscovici's preference for the term "social" is based on a specific distancing from any type of collectivist/aggregative understanding of social life:

> I prefer, however, to use only "social" because it refers to a clear notion, that of society, to an idea of differentiation, of networks of people and of their interactions. In the nineteenth century the word "collective" was more usual, suggesting the image of a

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[56] Maria G. Cattell and Jacob Climo, "Introduction. Meaning in Social Memory and History: Anthropological Perspectives," in Climo and Cattell, *Social Memory and History*, 4.

[57] Ibid.; see also Kansteiner, "Finding Meaning," 12-15.

[58] Jay Winter and Emanuel Sivan, "Setting the Framework," in *War and Remembrance in the Twentieth Century*, ed. Jay Winter and Emanuel Sivan (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 6-39; Chiara Bottici, "European Identity and the Politics of Remembrance," in Tilmans, van Vree, and Winter, *Performing the Past*, 342.

> heap of people, an aggregate of similar individuals forming a whole.[59]

Moscovici's argumentation can also be employed in order to support the use of "social" over "collective memory". Furthermore, several other researchers argued consistently on behalf of the former term. James Fentress and Chris Wickham defined it "as an expression of collective experience", whilst at the same time establishing the existence of a crucial relationship, namely that between memory and identity.[60] Olick stated that "social memory studies" would be a more suitable term for grasping the intricate nature of the process, as it "does not raise confusions about its objects of reference", being "presuppositionally open to a variety of phenomena", semantic features that "collective memory" does not display.[61] Astrid Erll drew a distinction between historical memory studies and social memory studies, although the two can be converging.[62]

For Geoffrey Cubitt there is a conceptual differentiation between "social" and "collective memory". According to his elaborations, the former stands for the set of processes existing in a community, which give birth to a variety of pasts, and also of understandings and representations of these pasts, whereas the latter stands for an ideological fiction born through the aforementioned processes,

> ...which presents particular social entities as the possessors of a stable mnemonic capacity that is collectively exercised, and that presents particular views or representations of a supposedly collective past as the natural expressions of such a collective mnemonic capacity.[63]

In other words, whereas "social memory" is a concept encompassing the multiplicity of societal relationships and interactions related to the past and to the relevance of the past in the present, "collective memory" is, in Cubitt's view, one of the ideological results of these processes. To simplify and illustrate this argument: particular "Romanian" discourses on the German past in the country (disseminated for example by various "ethnopolitical

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[59] Serge Moscovici and Ivana Marková, "Ideas and Development: A Dialogue between Serge Moscovici and Ivana Marková," in Moscovici, *Social Representations*, 256.

[60] James Fentress and Chris Wickham, *Social Memory* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1992), 25-6.

[61] Olick, "Collective Memory," 346.

[62] Astrid Erll, *Memory in Culture*, trans. Sara B. Young (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 38-61.

[63] Geoffrey Cubitt, *History and Memory* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2007), 18.

entreneurs")[64] are "collective memory", whereas "social memory" stands for the entirety of such discourses, their implicit and explicit meanings, but also the politics of memory accompanying them, and all other types of representations of the past into the present.

Cubitt's conceptual delimitation is welcome in a field of studies often characterized by conceptual vagueness. I thus conceive "social memory" to imply the varied character of the processes involving past, present, history, and identity and the relationships between them, processes which take place on multiple levels, between social institutions, individuals, political actors and cultural elites. "Collective memory" refers to ideological discourses, which always play a key role in these processes, without determining them on their own. My research looks at representations of and discourses about the "German" past in Romania in three different fields, namely politics, print media, and historiography. Consequently, by looking at several "collective memory" discourses, and by finding similarities and distinctions between them, I also elaborate on the place of the "German" within Romanian "social memory", understood as an all-encompassing concept regarding the presence of the past in the present.

## 2.2.    Memory, Identity, and Otherness

It might be something of a truism, yet it has to be emphasized that "memory" and "identity" are two tightly interlinked concepts.[65] Since my research looks at post-1989 Romanian representations of the "German", an ethnic category, it follows naturally that a concept such as "identity", also strongly connected with ethnicity, should be theoretically addressed. Just like "memory", "identity" has emerged rather recently unto the academic landscape, as it only began to be used systematically starting with the second half of the 20th century. The questions concerning it are not new, but the whole identity-related discourse as a landmark in the history of social sciences and in

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[64] I am borrowing the term "ethnopolitical entrepreneurs" from Rogers Brubaker, and hence see them as "specialists in ethnicity", who "may well live 'off' as well as 'for' ethnicity". One of the main instruments they are using is that of "reifying ethnic groups", through their management of ethnic politics on the one hand and through the fundamental role they play in the production and reproduction of ethnic identity discourses. See Rogers Brubaker, "Ethnicity without Groups," in Brubaker, *Ethnicity without Groups*, 7-27.

[65] Olick and Robbins, "Social Memory Studies," 122-26.

political history is definitely of recent date. The all-encompassing semantic capacities of the concept, although they can be a real analytical hindrance, suggest the existence of various possible approaches, under the umbrella of methodological and conceptual frameworks developed by various disciplines.

The conceptual and empirical links between "memory" and "identity" practically inform any substantial analysis thereof. Jan Assmann called "memory" "knowledge with an identity-index".[66] Scholars remarked the *de facto* equivalence of "politics of memory" and "politics of identity".[67] Furthermore, "memory, almost by definition, is integral to cultural identity, and the cultivation of shared memories is essential to the survival and destiny of such collective identities."[68] Eviatar Zerubavel noted the relevance of the identification with a collective past in the process of acquisition of a social identity.[69] Coupling memory and identity is therefore not a daring undertaking, yet something "banal enough".[70] "Imagined communities", an expression coined by modernist scholar of nationalism, Benedict Anderson, depend upon representations of a shared common past and of common aspirations towards the future.[71] Their imagined communitization, an endowment of modernity tightly linked with the emergence of print, media, and henceforth the development of local vernaculars, relies very much on the construction of a common identity, by means of which individuals who have never seen each other share feelings and cognitions of common belonging.

As "a part of the shared body of social knowledge" defining a community, memory is part of its identity.[72] Case studies also show that self-representations are tightly linked with representations of the past.[73] Consequently, "memory" and "identity" are intrinsically related and

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[66] Jan Assmann, "Globalization, Universalism, and the Erosion of Cultural Memory," in *Memory in a Global Age: Discourses, Practices and Trajectories*, ed. Aleida Assmann and Sebastian Conrad (Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan, 2010), 123.

[67] Confino, "Collective Memory," 176.

[68] Anthony Smith, *Myths and Memories of the Nation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 10.

[69] Eviatar Zerubavel, *Social Mindscape: An Invitation to Cognitive Sociology* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1997), 91; Eviatar Zerubavel, *Time Maps: Collective Memory and the Social Shape of the Past* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003), 3.

[70] Maria Todorova, "Learning Memory, Remembering Identity," in *Balkan Identities: Nation and Memory*, ed. Maria Todorova (London: Hurst, 2004), 2.

[71] Anderson, *Imagined Communities*.

[72] George Schöpflin, *Nations, Identity, Power: The New Politics of Europe* (London: Hurst, 2000), 260.

[73] Steven J. Zipperstein, *Imagining Russian Jewry: Memory, History, Identity* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1999).

reciprocally informed. The fundament of their relationship is their being shaped out of specific understandings of the past.

In a similar vein, John R. Gillis argued that "the core meaning of any individual or group identity, namely, a sense of sameness over time and space, is sustained by remembering; and what is remembered is defined by the assumed identity."[74] He also emphasized another key aspect related to memory and identity, namely not only that they support one another, but "they also sustain certain subjective positions, social boundaries, and, of course, power".[75] Considering the constructed character of both identities and memories, the task and responsibility of the researcher becomes therefore "to decode them in order to discover the relationships they create and sustain".[76] Memory can be used for hegemonic purposes, and for raising awareness about particular interpretations of the past.[77] So can identity.

Such observations match perfectly to the main objective of my research. Even if the present considerations are about "identity", whilst my research looks fundamentally into questions related to otherness, the two are actually two sides of the same coin, as I show throughout this dissertation. Representations of otherness say much more about whoever produces the discourses they are part of than about their objects and thus, despite the apparent paradox, they can also be regarded as being actually part of identity discourses or at least as being significantly informed by these.

However, just like "memory", "identity" is a term extensively used in recent academic and non-academic literature. The ways it is employed range from a highly enthusiastic and almost normative embrace of the term to a rejection of it, on the basis of its overburdened denotative character, which make it mean everything and nothing at the same time.[78] Noticing the proliferation of "identities", due to the predominantly constructivist approach in social sciences, Brubaker and Cooper boldly stated: "If identity is everywhere, it is nowhere."[79] The two academics then continued by

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[74] John R. Gillis, "Memory and Identity: The History of a Relationship," in *Commemorations: The Politics of National Identity*, ed. John R. Gillis (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), 3.

[75] Ibid., 4.

[76] Ibid.

[77] Lorraine Ryan, "Memory, Power and Resistance: The Anatomy of a Tripartite Relationship," *Memory Studies* 4, no. 2 (April 2011): 155.

[78] Brubaker and Cooper, "Beyond 'Identity'"; see also Siniša Malešević, *Identity as Ideology: Understanding Ethnicity and Nationalism* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2006), 13-36.

[79] Brubaker and Cooper, "Beyond 'Identity'".

emphasizing the multiple usages of the term, which "point in sharply differing directions".[80] Consequently, in order to escape the ambiguity produced by this entanglement of heterogeneous and sometimes contrasting meanings, Brubaker and Cooper proposed several alternative terms, to be used in different analytical contexts, such as "identification", "self-understanding", or "groupness".[81]

The said article eventually gave birth to a fruitful intellectual debate. Craig Calhoun extensively contended against the dismissal of the term "identity", considering that Brubaker and Cooper do not pay enough attention to the common culture giving birth to solidarities and to the frequent impossibility to escape the external ascription of identities.[82] Nevertheless, fundamentally both Calhoun and Brubaker argued against essentialist understandings of identity and ethnicity, making a plea for grasping social reality in its dynamic and processual character. Calhoun also strongly emphasized the role played by culture. Consequently, for him ethnicity/identity stands for "a commonality of understanding, access to the world, and mode of action that facilitates the construction of social relationships and provides a common rhetoric even to competition and quarrels".[83]

Cultural reproduction, possible through the existence of common culture, is thus quintessential for the production and reproduction of groups.[84] Schöpflin also considers that "ethnically motivated behavior is fully rational by the criterion of cultural reproduction".[85] The "perceived cultural commonality",[86] i.e. the cultural membership leading to specific attachments in detriment of other possible attachments, even when this membership might entail negative costs,[87] enables the possibility to continue researching practices of identity. In other words, despite Brubaker's persuasive argumentation regarding the semantically misleading overuse of "identity", completely

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[80] Ibid., 35.
[81] Ibid., 41-48.
[82] Craig Calhoun, "'Belonging' in the Cosmopolitan Imaginary," *Ethnicities* 3, no. 4 (December 2003): 531-53; Rogers Brubaker, "Neither Individualism nor 'Groupism': A Reply to Craig Calhoun," *Ethnicities* 3, no. 4 (December 2003): 553-57; Craig Calhoun, "The Variability of Belonging: A Reply to Rogers Brubaker," *Ethnicities* 3, no. 4 (December 2003): 558-68.
[83] Calhoun, "The Variability," 560.
[84] Ibid., 561-63.
[85] Schöpflin, *Nations, Identity*, 15.
[86] Calhoun, "The Variability," 563.
[87] Will Kymlicka, *Liberalism, Community, and Culture* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989), 175-77.

dismissing the term would deprive researchers of a useful conceptual instrument. "Identity" as such might not exist, yet its being imagined as real by both in- and out-groups and the concrete consequences of this process of imagination are sufficient arguments against completely discarding the term. In other words, "collective identity" stands for an "added value" as it provides "an analytical means for understanding and grasping the necessary illusion of a shared social space of communication where no social interaction takes place".[88]

Considering the focus of my research, I pay attention to the relationship between identity and otherness, between in-group and out-group identification. Ethno-cultural identities shape themselves first and foremost by reference to the out-group, by establishing markers of delimitation and differentiation. Undoubtedly, the borders are contextual and fluid and can at times be crossed, with or without impunity. Nonetheless they *are* part of the processes and common understandings that quintessentially produce and reproduce ethnicity and identity. Differences are created through interaction with others, as Fredrik Barth has argued in his classical *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries*.[89] Summing up Barth's view, Siniša Malešević stated:

> He defined and explained ethnicity from the outside in: it is not the "possession" of cultural characteristics that makes social groups distinct but rather it is the social interaction with other groups that makes that difference possible, visible and socially meaningful.[90]

Therefore, one should consistently analyze identity practices and discourses and, I add, representations of otherness in connection with the social and cultural ecology and external definitions.

Brubaker's attempt to treat groups and identities as categories of practice instead of categories of analysis is devised on the heels of Barth's processual approach towards ethnic identity. Its theoretical underpinnings are conducive to fruitful means of investigating inter-group relationships, but also in-group and out-group representations. His analytical elaborations persuasively show that ethnicity is fundamentally nothing else but cognition,

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[88] Klaus Eder, "Remembering National Memories Together: The Formation of a Transnational Identity in Europe," in Eder and Spohn, *Collective Memory and European Identity*, 204.
[89] Fredrik Barth, "Introduction," in *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries*, ed. Fredrik Barth (Bergen: Universitetsforleget; London: George Allen & Unwin, 1969), 9-38.
[90] Siniša Malešević, *The Sociology of Ethnicity* (London: SAGE Publications, 2004), 3.

i.e. a way of understanding the world, but definitely not the only one and not always the most relevant one.[91]

Despite Brubaker's persuasive plea that essentializing identities can be a counterproductive intellectual endeavour, his research agenda might content sociologists and social psychologists, yet is not completely satisfactory for the scholar of politics. Another way out of the intellectual intricacies provided by a concept such as "identity" has been suggested by Siniša Malešević. In his theorization of "identity", Malešević brought to the foreground of the debate an apparently forgotten concept, that of "ideology", specifically attempting to rehabilitate it. More precisely, he conceptualized identity *as* ideology, trying to shift the focus of its study from structure to agency and from function to content.[92] In his view, the analysis of identity as ideology should concentrate on "statements and practices" related to the four main fields he sees as "vital for the functioning of any society", namely economy, politics, culture and the nation.[93]

By referring to Malešević's contributions and his revisiting of "ideology", I do not aim to theoretically overburden this thesis with another concept. Fundamentally, I draw on Calhoun's abovementioned considerations on why "identity" is still a useful analytical concept to consider. At the same time, I emphasize that Malešević's elaborations, although suggesting a conceptual shift, from "identity" to "ideology", persuasively show that it is both possible and worthy to continue speaking of what I continue to call "identity" and the related politics of identity, relating them to the broader social, political and cultural frameworks and mechanisms they are bound to interact with.

The main authors I refer to in this section share the view that "identity" should not be reified, whilst similar arguments have also been brought forth with regard to "memory". Yet merely speaking of "identity" does not suffice for its unwanted reification, but rather acknowledges that there are top-down processes representing identity as "real", and henceforth worthy of being investigated. Therefore, even if "identity" is a contested concept, identity and

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[91] Rogers Brubaker, Mara Loveman, and Peter Stamatov, "Ethnicity as Cognition," in Brubaker, *Ethnicity without Groups*, 64-87. For a concrete case study analysis departing from Brubaker's theoretical elaborations, see Rogers Brubaker et al., *Nationalist Politics and Everyday Ethnicity in a Transylvanian Town* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006).
[92] Malešević, *Identity as Ideology*, 72.
[93] Ibid., 75-76.

memory politics, identity and memory discourses do exist and studying them can unravel wider political and cultural aims, discursive patterns and even patterns of thought.

Furthermore, although at first glance my analysis deals not with identity, but with a specific case of representing otherness, namely the German minority in post-1989 Romania, it should be once again underlined that investigating how alterity is represented within a specific context is bound to unravel much more about the forces, processes and relationships at play inside the said context than about the respective other as such. The present research makes use of social memory and of related discourses as a locus in which German otherness is conceptualized, always in implicit or explicit relationship with broader Romanian and German self-identification issues.

## 2.3. Western Representations of Eastern Europe. Romanian Identity and the Quest for "Europe"

The ensuing general argument of this dissertation is that the place of the Germans in Romanian social memory is best comprehended if analyzed within a framework assessing the broader East-West relationships in Europe and their relevance in the specific Romanian context. In the following pages, I look into this issue and explicate both its broader links with "identity" and "memory" and the way it can contribute to my analysis of how the German minority is represented in post-1989 Romania.

Larry Wolff argued that the concept of "Eastern Europe" was concocted during the age of Enlightenment, as the "Other" in relationship to the "civilized Western Europe". The paternalist view developed by philosophers such as Voltaire or Rousseau implied the representation of an ambiguous, backward, underdeveloped part of the world, being both inside and outside the continent. Wolff distinctly stated his intellectual indebtedness to and methodological entanglement with Said's *Orientalism*. Consequently, Wolff suggested, "Eastern Europe" and the "Orient" share the same maker, namely the reasoning power of the Enlightenment, by dint of its hegemonic

discourses, constantly produced and reproduced ever since, notwithstanding the slight changes and deviations from the original.[94]

Wolff's book has been the target of a number of well-founded criticisms. For example, Michael Confino, whilst distinctly reprehending Wolff's argument and theoretical tenets, also remarked that in reality the authors Wolff cited did not use the term "Eastern Europe" as such.[95] More recently, Ezequiel Adamovsky rebuked Wolff's methodologically fragile use of Said's "Orientalist" framework. He stated:

> As Said has shown, a discourse is composed not by words alone, but by a whole set of tacit and interconnected assumptions and representations able to condition our behaviour. These are to some extent independent from individual authors and can reproduce themselves through social practices.[96]

Despite the substantial critical points raised by the aforementioned scholars, some of Wolff's elaborations are definitely relevant for the researchers of societies in the former Socialist bloc. The details of the unequal relationship between "Western" and "Eastern" Europe are open to debate, yet Wolff was right in pinpointing the existence of such a relationship, imbuing a wide range of political, cultural, and social discourses. Following on his footsteps, Maria Todorova discussed the process of "imagining the Balkans", the liminal territory being neither East, nor West, neither Occidental, nor Oriental, but somewhere in-between, whilst Vesna Goldsworthy critically looked at the way in which the Balkans have been imagined in British literary products.[97] Indeed, liminality, i.e. being paradoxically situated both inside and outside Europe, like an "inside other" with an unclear status, has been singled out as the most important characteristic of "Balkanism", a discourse related to, yet structurally different from the Saidian "Orientalist" one.[98] Furthermore, precisely this liminality differentiates the inner European

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[94] Larry Wolff, *Inventing Eastern Europe: The Map of Civilization on the Mind of the Enlightenment* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994); Edward W. Said, *Orientalism* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1978).

[95] Michael Confino, "Re-Inventing the Enlightenment: Western Images of Eastern Realities in the Eighteenth Century," *Canadian Slavonic Papers* 36, no. 3-4 (September-December 1994): 505-23.

[96] Ezequiel Adamovsky, "Euro-Orientalism and the Making of the Concept of Eastern Europe in France, 1810-1880," *Journal of Modern History* 77, no. 3 (September 2005): 594

[97] Maria Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997); Vesna Goldsworthy, *Inventing Ruritania: The Imperialism of the Imagination* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998).

[98] K. E. Fleming, "*Orientalism*, the Balkans, and Balkan Historiography," *American Historical Review* 105, no. 4 (October 2000): 1218-33.

variants of "Orientalism" from "Occidentalism", a concept used most often in order to analytically address essentialized images of the "West" created in non-European settings or, on a different note, the backlash of "Western" politics in such settings leading to a series of negative, anti-colonial representations.[99]

Borrowing a term first used by Csaba Dupcsik, Adamovsky defined the West-East relationship in the European context as "Euro-Orientalism". The former's intellectual indebtedness to the postcolonial paradigm is explicit, and has also been made visible elsewhere.[100] In a contribution from 2001, Dupcsik highlighted one of the main features of Euro-Orientalism, namely that of "Western superiority" and the related idea that the emulation of Western patterns is fundamentally positive. Adamovsky then also used the term, focusing on a series of binary constructions upon which it is based, such as "civilization" versus "barbarity" or "modernity" versus "traditionalism".[101]

One of the consequences of the existence of historically and politically constructed categories such as "Eastern Europe" or "Balkans" is the enabling of Western-led social and political action upon countries in the region thus construed. Attila Melegh sees in a so-called "East-West slope" a trope informing East-West relationships, closely linked to "coloniality", i.e. a form of domination and a hierarchization of populations, according to which the "West" stands for superior civilization as compared to the "East".[102] This slope has significant implications upon "the articulation of identities and political programs" in the context of the relationships between "West" and "East".[103] Melegh's theorizations are very much related to the concept of "nesting orientalisms", developed by Milica Bakić-Hayden in an analysis of the Yugoslav case. Bakić-Hayden spoke about a "gradation of Orients", i.e. a

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[99] See for example James Carrier (ed.), *Occidentalism: Images of the West* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995). With one exception, the texts included in the book deal with images of the West in non-European countries or with the relationship between the "West" and such non-European settings. For "Occidentalism" as "anti-Westernism" see Ian Buruma and Avishai Margalit (ed.), *Occidentalism: A Short History of Anti-Westernism* (London: Atlantic, 2004).

[100] Csaba Dupcsik, "The West, the East, and the Border-Lining," *Newsletter Social Science in Eastern Europe*, special edition (2001): 31-9, http://www.gesis.org/fileadmin/upload/dienstleistung/fachinformationen/newsletter_ssee/dokumente/archiv/nl2001_s.pdf (accessed, November 4, 2011); Csaba Dupcsik, "Postcolonial Studies and the Inventing of Eastern Europe," *East Central Europe/L'Europe du Centre-Est. Eine wissenschaftliche Zeitschrift* 26, no. 1 (1999): 1-14.

[101] Adamovsky, "Euro-Orientalism and the Making".

[102] Attila Melegh, *On the East-West Slope: Globalization, Nationalism, Racism and Discourses on Central and Eastern Europe* (Budapest: Central European University Press, 2006). I am grateful to Margit Feischmidt for drawing my attention to this study.

[103] Ibid., 189.

pattern of reproduction of the East-West dichotomy also present within Eastern European cultures and societies. In the case of former Yugoslavia, this reproduction entailed a prevalent "Western" self-identification in the regions having formerly belonged mostly to the Habsburg Empire, doubled by an "Orientalist" representation of the regions having belonged most of the time to the Ottoman Empire.[104]

Diana Mishkova also granted attention to the multiple facets of the relationship between the Balkans and Western Europe, highlighting its pluridirectionality and the importance of local and regional dynamics in the creation of representations of self and of otherness.[105] Elsewhere, it has been argued that the appropriation of specific external representations has been conducive to the internalization and reproduction of the East-West dichotomy within the societies that were the object of the Occidental gaze, societies thus often prone to self-stigmatization.[106] In effect, the hegemonic influence of the "West" upon the East also informs the construction of local, "Eastern" discourses on the Self and on the Other: the relationship thereby ensued between "Western" and "Eastern" discourses is pluridirectional, the latter being not simply a mirroring of the former, but in many ways a mirroring doubled by an act of reconstruction.

The dichotomization of "West" and "East", of "Western Europe" and "Eastern Europe", of civilized Europe on the one hand and a liminal territory being neither properly inside, nor properly outside of the continent on the other hand has been amplified during the Cold War. The fall of the Berlin Wall and of the Communist regimes in the Soviet-controlled part of the Iron Curtain led to hopes and desires related to a professed "return to Europe" of the former Communist countries and thus to a proliferation of identity and memory discourses emphasizing their true belonging to the family of civilized countries and/or the need for political, cultural, and moral reforms in order to be accepted in the big European family.[107]

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[104] Milica Bakić-Hayden, "Nesting Orientalisms: The Case of Former Yugoslavia," *Slavic Review* 54, no. 4 (Winter 1995): 917-31.

[105] Diana Mishkova, "Symbolic Geographies and Visions of Identity: A Balkan Perspective," *European Journal of Social Theory* 11, no. 2 (May 2008): 237-56.

[106] Wendy Bracewell, "Balkan Travel Writing: Points of Departure," in *Balkan Departures: Travel Writing from Southeastern Europe*, ed. Wendy Bracewell and Alex Drace-Francis (New York: Berghahn Books, 2009), 1-24.

[107] Ramona Arfire, "The Moral Regulation of the Second Europe: Transition, Europeanization, and the Romanians," *Critical Sociology* 37, no. 6 (November 2011): 853-70.

"Europe" has thus become one of the most used commonplaces in the post-Communist *newspeak*, standing simultaneously for a stereotypical panacea, a symbolic desire and a proud self-assertion of countries formerly in the Soviet-controlled part of the world. After 1989, this was translated in a swift and highly uncritical embrace of the idea of joining the European Union, seen on the one hand as a political, economic, and social standard to be attained and on the other hand as a legitimization of cultural belonging. Henceforth, following the fall of the Communist regime it can be argued that joining the EU has become in many ways widely understood as synonymous with the much more indistinct wish present in Eastern European societies, to "return to Europe". Nonetheless, researchers of the various aspects implied by European enlargement have showed that the process highlighted the "post-colonial condition of the European polity".[108]

"Euro-Orientalism" has been a discourse valid after the fall of Communism, often in the name of a "return to normalcy". Practically, the enthusiasm surrounding the demise of the communist regimes in Eastern Europe swiftly made place for the reproduction of older representations, with the West playing a key role in the making and remaking of the region, from both a political and cultural point of view.[109] In effect, a discourse emphasizing the difference between Europe proper and Eastern Europe, with the latter having to emulate the other, has underpinned EU and NATO enlargement. During this process, othering discourses were reproduced within Eastern Europe, namely Bakić-Hayden's already mentioned "nesting orientalisms".[110]

Although the internalization of Western assumptions about the "East" is not necessarily a simple and straightforward process, but rather a complex phenomenon where a series of interests, agencies and discourses intersect, the power relationships between the two parts of the continent have essentially been, both before and especially after the fall of Communism, of hegemonic nature. This hegemonic nature partially stems from, yet also has consequences upon the dominant images and representations circulating

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[108] Ibid.; Enrica Rigo, "Citizenship at Europe's Borders: Some Reflections on the Post-Colonial Condition in the Context of EU Enlargement," *Citizenship Studies* 9, no. 1 (February 2005): 3-22.

[109] Adam Burgess, *Divided Europe: The New Domination of the East* (London: Pluto Press, 1997).

[110] Merje Kuus, "Europe's Eastern Expansion and the Reinscription of Otherness in East-Central Europe," *Progress in Human Geography* 28, no. 4 (August 2004): 472-89.

within the region, Romania making no exception. Ovidiu Țichindeleanu spoke about "self-orientalization" and "internalization" of inferiority complexes, a phenomenon he called "intimate colonization", which reduces the "meaning of 'civilization' to Western civilization".[111]

The concept of "self-orientalization" is in many ways closely related to the "self-colonizing cultures" Alexander Kiossev referred to.[112] For Kiossev, "self-colonization" is capable of explaining the Eastern European relationship to the West not only after the fall of Communism, but on a much wider scale, in modernity. He described "self-colonizing cultures" as cultures of absence, i.e. cultures in which the perception that the Others (Europe, the civilized world) "possess all that we lack" is widespread.[113] On the other hand, Russia and, by extension, Eastern Europe have constantly been and still are analyzed and seen by "Western" observers in terms of the features they allegedly do not possess, in part or completely, i.e. a middle class, liberal capitalism, civil society, freedom etc.. The approach was subsequently also embraced by researchers in the region, thus illustrating the perception of "Western Europe" as the model to be emulated and the standard to be reached.[114] Henceforth, Eastern European cultures can be understood as "self-colonizing cultures", tending to embrace foreign ("Western") models with "love, ardour, and desire", and rarely showing signs of resistance.[115]

Furthermore, the post-1989 transition of Eastern European countries towards neo-liberal democracy was bound to take place against a background in which not only the Communist past was at stake within memory and identity discourses, but also other, more distant pasts, and also promises of future.[116] Processes of collective remembrance in post-1989 Eastern European states have been bound to take place in the context of a symbolic opening

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[111] Ovidiu Țichindeleanu, "The Modernity of Post-Communism," in *Genealogies of Post-Communism*, ed. Adrian T. Sîrbu and Alexandru Polgár (Cluj-Napoca: Idea Design & Print, 2009), 135.

[112] Alexander Kiossev, "Notes on Self-Colonising Cultures," in *Art and Culture in Post-Communist Europe*, ed. Bojana Pejić and David Elliott (Stockholm: Moderna Museet / Modern Museum, 1999), 114-17.

[113] Ibid., 115.

[114] Ezequiel Adamovsky, *Euro-Orientalism: Liberal Ideology and the Image of Russia in France (c. 1740-1880)* (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2006).

[115] Kiossev, "Notes," 115. I would add nonetheless that when self-colonizing cultures do show signs of resistance, such resistance tends to be expressed in the name of rigid parochialism, and not by means of a proper critique from modernist positions.

[116] Tony Judt, "The Past Is Another Country: Myth and Memory in Postwar Europe," in "Immobile Democracy?" *Daedalus. Journal of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences* 121, no. 4 (Fall 1992): 83-118.

towards the West and of political European integration of the respective states. Despite the general absence of programmatic EU intervention as regards "memory work" in the former Communist states, "Europe" has been both a discursive trope and, more importantly, an institutional actor, although on an *ad hoc* basis, in this domain.[117]

The Romanian case fits very well in this picture. "Romanianness" as being caught between the Orient and the Occident has been, ever since the 18th century emergence of a Romanian national consciousness under the influence of Enlightenment thought, a recurrent fad and obsession impregnating discourses and institutions, representations of the self and of the other. One of the traits of modern Romanian political and cultural history is the almost intrinsic attempt to cope with the tensions arising between structural constraints, geographical location, desired self-images and external, ascribed identities. Romanian elite discourses on national identity/consciousness have been constantly imbued with questions related to cultural belonging. Furthermore, in many ways the analysis of these discourses also reinforced these questions, rather than critically deconstructing them.[118] Monica Spiridon investigated some of the dilemmatic manifestations of these tensions, focusing mainly on literary products and the way they mirror the inferiority complexes associated with Romanian identity, together with the constant quest for "Europe". She also emphasized the stress brought forth within Romanian identity discourses by the dichotomy between the "Occident" and the "Orient".[119]

Undoubtedly, there is a wide range of discourses competing for the privilege of essentializing Romanian identity, on both a spatial level (geographical differences) and a temporal level. However, the relevant

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[117] John Gledhill, "Integrating the Past: Regional Integration and Historical Reckoning in Central and Eastern Europe," *Nationalities Papers. The Journal of Nationalism and Ethnicity* 39, no. 4 (July 2011): 481-506.

[118] Neagu Djuvara, *Le Pays Roumain entre Orient et Occident. Les Principautés danubiennes au début du XIXe siècle* (n.p.: Publications Orientalistes de France, 1989); Keith Hitchins, *Rumania 1866-1947* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994), 292-334; Keith Hitchins, *The Romanians, 1774-1866* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996); Sorin Antohi, "Cioran și stigmatul românesc. Mecanisme identitare și definiții radicale ale etnicității," in *Civitas imaginalis. Istorie și utopie în cultura română*, 2nd revised edition (Iași: Polirom, 1999), 235-324; Sorin Mitu, *National Identity of Romanians in Transylvania*, transl. Sorana Corneanu (Budapest: Central European University Press, 2001); Adrian Cioroianu, "The Impossible Escape: Romanians and the Balkans," in *Balkan as Metaphor: Between Globalization and Fragmentation*, ed. Dušan I. Bjelić and Obrad Savić (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2002), 209-33.

[119] Monica Spiridon, *Les dilemmes de l'identité aux confins de l'Europe: le cas roumain* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2004).

phenomenon considering the context of this research is the constant, implicit or explicit, reference to "Europe" or to other concepts with related denotations, i.e. "West" or "civilization" and, in some instances, even to more particularly located ones. For example, Spiridon drew attention upon two such synecdochical uses of the expression *țara nemțească* ("the German country"), in 19th and 20th century Romanian culture.[120]

Furthermore, Romanian cultural and political history has seen the development of a broad gamut of radical and xenophobic nationalistic discourses. Yet even some of the most intellectually exaggerated tend to function as nationalistic discursive units only with overt references to Europe. The theories on an ancient "Dacian civilization" acknowledge "Europe" as the contemporary standard of civilization, appropriating it and then tracing the genealogy of this civilization to the Dacians, and therefrom to the Romanians. According to these views, Europe started to exist on the contemporary territory of Romania and Dacians spoke Latin or a very similar language long time before the Romans.[121] It is therefore not a rejection of Europe, but rather an attempt to intellectually annex it. Without addressing in depth the discussion related to Romania's "Eastern" or "Western" cultural belonging, the argument I bring forth is that what Sorin Antohi called "habits of the mind" have constantly functioned and continue to function within Romanian identity discourses as a way of producing and reproducing "symbolic geographies", with the "civilized West" (or "civilized Europe") as a constant benchmark.[122]

After 1989, the professed "return to Europe" was a discourse embraced by a multitude of actors, with extremely divergent views and goals. For example, notoriously extremist politicians active on the Romanian political scene in the immediate aftermath of 1989, although they were, at that time, displaying overt signs of anti-Westernism, were also making use of the symbol "Europe". One of the fiercely anti-Semitic weeklies published at the beginning of the 1990s was named *Europa*. "Europe" aptly functions as a versatile legitimizing tool.

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[120] Ibid., 29.

[121] Napoleon Săvescu, "Poporul carpato-dunărean, cel mai vechi din Europa," *Dacologica*, http://studiidacologice.com/atitudini-si-optiuni/napoleon-savescu-%E2%80%9Epoporul-carpato-dunarean-cel-mai-vechi-din-europa%E2%80%9C/ (accessed December 12, 2011).

[122] Sorin Antohi, "Habits of the Mind: Europe's Post-1989 Symbolic Geographies," in *Between Past and Future. The Revolutions of 1989 and Their Aftermath*, ed. Sorin Antohi and Vladimir Tismăneanu (Budapest: Central European University Press, 2000), 61-77.

The first signs of post-1989 political developments in Eastern European countries showed an apparent recrudescence of nationalism rather than a straightforward embrace of the path to "Western"/"European" democratization. In the early 1990s, Katherine Verdery documented the forms and instantiations of national sentiment in Romania, persuasively explaining the persistence (what others erroneously registered as a presumed rebirth) of nationalistic feelings after the fall of Communism. To bear in mind is especially one of the explanations she gave to the apparently resurgent nationalist feeling in the early 1990s in Romania. More precisely, she spoke of a substitution of the "us" versus "them" dichotomy, typical of communism, with a similarly framed dichotomy, yet in effect closer to the one theorized by Barth with respect to the establishment of group boundaries and the production and reproduction of identities as differences.[123]

Verdery showed that post-1989 nationalistic sentiments and discourses had their origins in pre-1989 rhetoric and attitudes. At the same time, she underlined the tensions existing within the various political forces, especially inside the so-called "anti-Communist opposition", related precisely to this "national sentiment" and different (pragmatic or ideological) understandings of it. More recently, Marius Babias stated that the "cultural mechanism" dominant within post-communist Romania is that of the "anti-modernism" embedded in national discourse.[124] Although his argumentation has at times an *outré* rationale, Babias raised a relevant issue, namely that of a substantial persistence, even though accompanied by a formal change, of national(istic) discourses in Romania. Such discourses persist notwithstanding the philo-Europeanism overtly displayed within all relevant political strands, including the radical ones. This issue cannot be discussed in depth in the pages of this dissertation, yet my main goal is to emphasize the apparent persistence of nationalistic sentiments in post-1989 Romania, paradoxically coexisting with a professed philo-Europeanism. Although seemingly contradictory, both types of discourses, nationalistic and philo-European, have constantly cut across the political landscape, emerging in various contexts. One of the Romanian post-

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[123] Katherine Verdery, "Nationalism and National Sentiment in Postsocialist Romania," in *What Was Socialism, and What Comes Next?* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996), 83-103; Barth, "Introduction".
[124] Marius Babias, "The Euro-Self and the Europenism: How the Communist National Discourse Acquires a New Face, that of the Postcommunist Anti-Modernism – the Romanian Case," trans. Alex Moldovan, *Idea artă + societate*, no. 24 (2006): 218-28.

1989 specificities is the general equation of the nebulous socio-cultural "returning to Europe" with the imperative of political accession to the European Union (and NATO, for that matter), visible especially after 1996. At the same time, as I have already emphasized beforehand, the "European" aspirations as present in Romanian intellectual, cultural and even political discourses have a much longer tradition. Thus, the post-1989 "return to Europe" discourse also stood for an attempt to discursively reconnect Romanian identity to a putative European identity, in the footsteps of a usually pre-Communist tradition. In this context, the half a century of Soviet-imposed Communist rule was interpreted as an unwanted decoupling from "European civilization".

Within this general setting, characterized by the latent or overt persistence of nationalistic feelings, the implicit or explicit consideration of the West as a civilizational benchmark and a self-orientalizing gaze bound to impregnate representations of the self and of the other, post-1989 Romania seems to be the host of an apparently peculiar phenomenon: the existence of a widespread positive image of its once numerous German minority. The phenomenon is at first glance peculiar, especially if one takes into account the prevailing negative representations of the internal "others" within cultural or political discourses in Romania. Lucian Boia emphasized the existence of "three sensitive files" belonging to what he calls "Romanian consciousness", namely "the Gypsies, the Hungarians, and the Jews", often represented in Romania through a xenophobic lens.[125] However, as this dissertation explicates, the "philo-Germanism without Germans" is not so peculiar if one considers the "return-to-Europe" frenzy, typical for countries in the Eastern part of the continent and for Romania as well, oscillating between clumsy unwieldiness and proud self-assertion.

This dissertation grants attention to the symbolic dimensions of positive representations of the German minority in Romania. As Verdery argued, with reference to the post-1989 Romanian case, images of ethnic groups are "important symbols for discussing particular kinds of social dislocation attendant on the exit from socialism".[126] Further on, she

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[125] Lucian Boia, *History and Myth in Romanian Consciousness*, transl. James Christian Brown (Budapest: Central European University Press, 2001), 170-4.
[126] Verdery, "Nationalism and National Sentiment," 97.

commented on the xenophobic sentiment directed against Jews and Roma at the beginning of the 1990s:

> Whereas intolerance of Gypsies suggests problems related specifically to the market, anti-Semitism suggests a broader hostility to things of "the West," including democracy and private property, as well as markets; and it embraces themes of concern to a broad array of groups, distressed either at past injustices under socialism or at present dislocations. To say that one dislikes Jews is easier and less revealing than to say one dislikes democracy or international lending institutions. One can make this statement employing Jews as a symbol even if there are few actual Jews around.[127]

If anti-Roma feeling stood for an uneasy relationship with the market economy and anti-Semitism suggested a general hostility towards things associated with the West, my argument is that post-1989 Romanian philo-Germanism calls forth the opposite, namely a rather uncritical embrace of things Western, a way of entering the select European club through the appropriation of the "German" as a symbol, through making the "German" "ours". Consequently, the aim of this dissertation is to find out why, how and when does this happen, which are the images and representations this philo-Germanism works with and instrumentalizes and what do they say about Romanian self-identification discourses.

## 2.4.  Linking Memory Studies and Studies on Otherness. Methodology and Sources

The variety of approaches that can be intellectually integrated under the umbrella term "memory studies" mirrors the absence of consequential debates and conceptualizations regarding the methodological issues associated with research on "memory". Effort has been put in distinguishing memory from history and consequently memory studies from historical studies. Nonetheless, as it has been noticed, "an analysis of how memory studies should be conducted and what they can offer the social sciences over and above historical research has been lacking."[128] In other words, memory studies as a field of research are rather devoid of a structured and consistent methodological tradition. In lieu thereof, studies on social memory deploy a

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[127] Ibid., 99.
[128] Emily Keightley, "Remembering Research: Memory and Methodology in the Social Sciences," *International Journal of Social Research Methodology* 13, no. 1 (February 2010): 55.

multitude of methodological instruments, according to their particular focus. Oral history interviews, historical digging for sources, analysis of film and literary products, political research, discourse analysis, focus groups - they have been all used for the study of social memory. "Memory work" has even been conceptualized as a method as such, used in small groups.[129] To a large extent, a similar argumentative thread can be brought forward as regards studies of representations of otherness. The materials such studies research and the analytical instruments they employ are also extremely varied, from travel accounts to sociological surveys.

An attempt to theoretically unify the study of social memory and the research of images and representations of ethnic alterity would lie outside the scope of this dissertation. Nonetheless, precisely the possibility to approach both research objects from a variety of angles suggests that common denominators can be found in order to analyze together social memory and representations of otherness. Furthermore, studies connecting research on social memory and collective memory discourses on the one hand and the construction of ethnic otherness on the other hand have already been undertaken. The ways other authors have approached topics related to my own can constitute useful material for a methodological framing of the present investigation. In the following pages, I will elaborate departing from two sets of studies dealing with a different geographical zone (Poland, on the one hand, and Estonia on the other hand), yet whose research foci, i.e. representations of otherness and social memory, are quintessentially related to mine. Investigations of representations of the Jewish other in the former case and of the Swedish and German other in the latter display a wide range of similarities with my own research, both in terms of methodological approach and underlying arguments.

For example, the analysis of various processes by means of which the "memory void" surrounding the Jewish community in Poland started to be filled up in the 1980s fundamentally focused on the political aspects connected with the phenomenon, as they implied the construction of memory.[130] In the investigation of the construction of memory and at the same

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[129] Mariette Clare and Richard Johnson, "Method in Our Madness? Identity and Power in a Memory Work Method," in *Memory and Methodology*, ed. Susannah Radstone (Oxford: Berg, 2000), 197-224.

[130] Irwin-Zarecka, *Neutralizing Memory*.

time of the relationship between the existence of a "Jewish memory project" and Polish identification discourses, a "layer-by-layer intepretive approach"[131] has been used. This entailed looking at a number of different sources, from official state discourses on the Jews to cultural products, art exhibitions, or media articles. Iwona Irwin-Zarecka persuasively showed that representations of otherness are strongly and almost intrinsically connected with politics and with the way the past is perceived. Furthermore, her research is an excellent illustration of how to interconnect the study of images of alterity and the study of memory. Her book intended to provide an answer to the question: "what does it *mean* to remember the Jews, in Poland, today?".[132] *Mutatis mutandis* (replacing "Jews" with "Germans" and "Poland" with "Romania"), a similar interrogation underlies my own research.

Irwin Zarecka's work and approach have significantly informed my own research steps toward discerning and investigating representations of the German minority in post-Communist Romania. Her theoretical and methodological tenets are apt to be partially employed in the current dissertation. I take from her the focus on the so-called "memory workers", the recognition of the links between representations of otherness and memory/identity discourses and, last but not least, the attention paid to a wide range of sources, from different, yet interrelated fields. At the same time, it is undoubtedly worth mentioning that the same topic can also be analyzed from a different perspective and within a wider temporal frame. In this context, Joanna Beata Michlic traced the emergence, the development and the recycling of specific anti-Semitic tropes in Poland, from the 19th century onwards.[133] The main focus of her study is the image of the Jew in Polish political culture; more specifically, she the representation of the Jew as the "threatening other". One conclusion to be drawn from both studies I referred to has to do with the relationship between the framing of Polish national identity and the appertaining politics of identity on the one hand and the representations of the Jewish alterity on the other hand, both before and after the fall of Communism. The Polish case shows how a specific ethno-nationalist vision persists despite particular inclusive transformations and

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[131] Ibid., 2.

[132] Irwin-Zarecka, *Neutralizing Memory*, 3.

[133] Joanna Beata Michlic, *Poland's Threatening Other: The Image of the Jew from 1880 to the Present* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2006).

changes in the understanding of Polish memory and identity, visible from the late 80s onwards, but on a much larger scale following the fall of the Communist regime. As such, it has its similarities with the Romanian case, as it will become visible throughout the dissertation.

As already stated, another interesting approach to the relationship between memory, production/reproduction of identities and production/reproduction of otherness is offered by the Estonian case following the dismantlement of the Soviet Union. At the crux of questions related to memory and ethnic otherness lie a series of interethnic relationships: Germans, Russians, and Swedes play an important role in a number of interpretations of the Estonian past and present. In a study set in Noarootsi (Swedish: Nuckö) parish, once largely inhabited by members of the Swedish minority, who then left the country in the 1940s, questions related to past and present, perceptions of Estonianness and Swedishness, identity and otherness have been analyzed. Interestingly and at first glance surprisingly, following the demise of the Communist regime in Estonia a revival of Swedish heritage can be noticed, a "restoration of Swedishness" with a double purpose: "providing an alternative identity after the rupture from the Soviet past (when the remaining Swedes had become almost completely assimilated)" and, at the same time, "attracting aid and interest from Sweden in order to build an economic future for the area."[134] The multilateral relationship between Estonian identity, Swedish heritage and memory within the post-Communist setting elucidates the appeal of Westernness and Europeanness. Consequently, the paradoxical appropriation of Swedishness and the assertion of a bereft Swedish past in a forlorn Estonian village is explicated by means of anthropological fieldwork.

Not only the Swedish other casts light upon the relevance of constructing memory for understanding contemporary interests and contemporary Estonian identification discourses. In the same vein, the memory and the contemporary construction of both the Russian and the German other amongst Estonians are quintessential. A thorough analysis of the stereotypic images associated with Germany and the Germans in Estonia, leads to the conclusion that their contemporary positive character is very

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[134] Sigrid Rausing, *History, Memory, and Identity in Post-Soviet Estonia: The End of a Collective Farm* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 26.

much linked to the implicit and explicit comparison with the Russians, represented as a threatening other.[135] Such findings, conjoined with Rausing's, enable the possibility to draw Romanian-Estonian comparisons regarding the contemporary relationship between representations of "Western" Others, as present in memory and identity discourses and the construction of the self.

In many aspects, the four studies I referred to in the previous pages are complimentary to my own research. Furthermore, the Polish and the Estonian cases suggest that the places occupied by various ethnic others within memory and identity discourses can be fruitfully compared and that process and phenomena taking place in various geographical settings are not necessarily limited to those, if one makes abstraction of the various contextual specificities. At the same time, the studies on Poland and Estonia illustrate the possibility to address the links between social memory and representations of otherness within several methodological paradigms, most often of a qualitative, interpretive nature.

As emphasized, the literature I refered to shows that representations of otherness can be analyzed from a variety of angles (cultural history, memory studies, anthropology, intercultural communication). Yet the tight and unbreakable relationship between alterity and identity and even the all-permeating character of social memory underlie this multitude of possible perspectives. This recognition permeates my work and my own approach to the question of why are Germans represented in specific ways in post-1989 Romania.

In the following pages, I present the sources analyzed in the three empirical chapters of this dissertation. As already stated in the introduction, in order to delineate the place of the German in Romanian social memory and in collective memory discourses, or, worded differently, the representations of the German minority in post-1989 Romania, I resort to the analysis of three different fields: politics, print media, and historiography. Each of the three fields comes with a different set of sources, all assessed in a qualitative manner: conjoining them allows me to reach comprehensive findings. This conjoining enables the possibility to make comparative considerations between strategies and mechanisms of constructing otherness. Furthermore,

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[135] Kristel Kaljund, "Zur Rolle des stereotypisierenden Deutschenbildes der Esten in Geschichte und Gegenwart," (PhD diss., Ludwig Maximilians University Munich, 2006).

the way the German minority is represented in the discourses disseminated through these specific fields has not been analyzed as such. The qualitative, interpretive approach implied by this particular research path also provides the means for judicious, albeit marginal, reflections regarding the *longue durée* value of the Romanian "philo-Germanism". Although the chronological focus of my research refers strictly to what has been happening after 1989, I will also refer, though succinctly, to a longer tradition of appreciating the German in Romanian cultural and political discourses. The main analytical body of the dissertation, dedicated to the three aforementioned fields, allows to establish connections with this tradition. At the same time, the theoretical framework employed, where concepts such as "Orientalism", "self-orientalization" and "social memory" play a key role, also requests for a qualitative, interpretive approach of discourses and written products. Politics, mass-media, and historiography are amongst the main channels through which memory and identity are being created and invested.

The political field involves looking at two different levels: the discursive and the legislative one. Addressing the two levels together is sensible on two grounds: first, the development of post-1989 interstate Romanian-German relationships had a series of memory challenges at its core, related to the recent past of the German minority in Romania.[136] The relevance of these challenges has been very much visible on both levels. Second, it is pertinent to investigate whether there is a representational match between the two levels of politics. Can we speak of a "philo-Germanism without Germans" expressed in discourses about Germans *and* in legislative actions? Or are there differences between the two? If there are, what are the causes and mechanisms of production of the "philo-Germanism without Germans": when does it appear and when does it not? In order to address these questions, I look at political discourses related to the German minority and to its past in Romania, at legislative issues touching upon "German" interests in the context of post-1989 transitional justice in Romania, an element strongly linked with politics of memory, and last but not least, I touch upon questions related to German heritage in Romania, another issue connected with social memory.

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[136] Pierre de Trégomain, "'Normales'? Les relations germano-roumaines avant et après la chute du Mur," *Allemagne d'aujourd'hui*, no. 182 (2007): 81-9.

Furthermore, the relationship between journalism, memory and otherness is of key importance within this study. Scholars of memory approached their objects of research by using as sources mass media products, such as television shows, television series, movies, and, more recently, Internet forums. Drawing on the work done by Henry Rousso, addressing the French memory of the Vichy government, Nancy Wood contributed to coining the term "vectors of memory", with which she referred to cultural practices "charged with 'anchorage' and representing and transmitting a society's relationship to its past".[137] Mass media products are such vectors of memory.

Nonetheless, although it is a quintessential part of contemporary "media culture",[138] journalism as such has only recently been straightforwardly acknowledged as "one of contemporary society's main institutions of recording and remembering" and, consequently, as an object of research for scholars of memory studies.[139] In analyzing the relationship between journalism and memory, the former should be placed into the latter, in other words that journalism be recognized the place it has within the "intertextuality" of social memory.[140] Since social memory stands for the multitude of processes and understandings connected with the presence of the past into the present, then journalism in general and the discourses it produces in particular both inform and are informed by these processes. Understanding journalism simply as being shaped by having the piece of news at the core of its reason to exist is a faulty approach, leading to a conceptual *cul-de-sac*. Considering its in many ways past-related content, the important role journalism plays in the shaping and stabilization of identity discourses, and the multitude of processes, interests and agencies determining how journalism frames the present, "journalism is worth taking seriously" in memory studies because, eventually, it lies somewhere "*inside* memory", being one of its vital organs.[141] As Eyal Zandberg put it:

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[137] Nancy Wood, *Vectors of Memory: Legacies of Trauma in Postwar Europe* (Oxford: Berg, 1999), 5; Henry Rousso, *The Vichy Syndrome: History and Memory in France since 1944*, transl. Arthur Goldhammer (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1991).

[138] Douglas Kellner, *Media Culture: Cultural Studies, Identity and Politics between the Modern and the Postmodern* (London: Routledge, 1995)

[139] Barbie Zelizer, "Why Memory's Work on Journalism Does Not Reflect Journalism's Work on Memory," *Memory Studies* 1, no. 1 (January 2008): 79-87.

[140] Carolyn Kitch, "Placing Journalism inside Memory - and Memory Studies," *Memory Studies* 1, no. 3 (September 2008): 311-20.

[141] Ibid., 318.

> Media research acknowledges the similarity between the process of shaping collective memory and journalistic practice. Journalists choose which stories or facts have importance. They select facts, construct them into cultural-interpretative frames, and thus give them meaning. In summary, journalists "lean" on the past in order to give meaning to the present. Similarly, journalism and narration are linked closely together in regard to social memory.[142]

Henceforth, looking at the way the image of the German minority is constructed in post-1989 Romanian media discourses and connecting this image with the concept of "social memory" is an appropriate intellectual endeavour. Conjoined with the entailments derived from the other fields of research looked upon in this dissertation, the investigation of texts appearing in print media is meant to contribute to the shaping of a comprehensive perspective on representations of the Germans in post-1989 Romania and the related identity and memory discourses.

In this context, one of the apparently most difficult questions emerging regards the particular products to investigate. My analysis focuses only on the print media, leaving aside the discourses disseminated via the audiovisual. The latter have proven to be a fruitful object of analysis for scholars of memory.[143] Nonetheless, although to a smaller extent, a similar argument can be made as regards print media products: Barbie Zelizer's study on journalism and the memory surrounding Kennedy's assassination in the United States of America is a classic in this respect.[144]

In my case, the choice to investigate print media products has been fundamentally dictated by the fact that looking at newspaper articles implies first and foremost an analysis of the written word, methodologically and conceptually related to the investigation of political speeches and utterances and of other written texts. An analysis of audiovisual productions would necessitate a particular methodological and conceptual equipment, as the audiovisual "texts" include moving images and sounds. Furthermore, I argue

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[142] Eyal Zandberg, "The Right to Tell the (Right) Story: Journalism, Authority and Memory," *Media, Culture & Society* 32, no. 1 (January 2010): 5-24.

[143] Kansteiner, *In Pursuit of*; Avner Ben-Amos and Jérôme Bourdon, "Life History and National Memory: the Israeli Television Program *Such a Life*, 1972-2001," in *On Media Memory. Collective Memory in a New Media Age*, ed. Motti Neiger, Oren Meyers, and Eyal Zandberg (Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan, 2011), 132-144; José Carlos Rueda Laffond, "Televising the Sixties in Spain: Memories and Historical Constructions," in Neiger, Meyers and Zandberg, *On Collective Memory*, 174-86.

[144] Barbie Zelizer, *Covering the Body: The Kennedy Assassination, the Media, and the Shaping of Collective Memory* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1992).

that at least in the context of the early 1990s, print media offers one a more balanced view of the social, cultural and political landscape in Romania than television, limited until the mid-1990s at only one, state-controlled, channel.

The sources used in my research consist of the collections of six different mass-media products, more precisely three daily newspapers and three weeklies. The daily newspapers I looked at are *România liberă*, *Adevărul* and *Gândul*, whilst the weekly publications chosen for perusal were *Formula As*, *Dilema* and *Dilema veche*. I investigated these publications over a period of almost twenty years, from 1990 to 2009, in an essentially qualitative approach: looking for specific recurrent themes and tropes, and then using them in order to describe and analyze the manner in which "our Germans" are represented.

Last but not least, I grant attention to historiography, a more academic field of knowledge, paradigmatically linked with memory and with the construction of national identity and its relationship to ethnic otherness. It goes without saying that the body of literature dealing with the relationship between memory and history is immense, its arguments being in many ways contradictory.[145]

According to Pierre Nora, who made famous the now widely used term *lieux de mémoire* in his eponymous work, memory as such no longer exists, as it has been completely supplanted by history. Behind the radical statement, one can read its argumentative underpinnings: the disappearance of peasant culture, main carrier of memory, the dissolution of traditions as a result of the advent of postmodernism, the replacement of the "nation" by "society" are all factors having contributed to the imposition of history in the detriment of memory. Therefore, Nora argues, *lieux de mémoire* exist, because the *milieux de mémoire* (landscapes of memory) disappeared. He argued that artificiality replaced the natural character of memory as a social practice.[146]

However, the representation of a vanishing memory is far from being unanimously and unequivocally shared. History is a science, "unusual, but fundamental",[147] whereas memory is, in a way, its "raw material".[148] Its critical character, its capacity to critically test testimonies and documents, in the

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[145] Cubitt, *History and Memory*, 26-65.
[146] Pierre Nora (coord.), "Between Memory and History," in *Realms of Memory*, 1:1-20.
[147] Jacques Le Goff, *History and Memory*, transl. Stevan Rendall and Elizabeth Claman (New York: Columbia University Press, 1992), 105.
[148] Ibid., xi.

broadest understanding of the term, specifies history.[149] Memory, on the other hand, seems to lack critical underpinnings: it tends to be self-sufficient and self-explanatory. In its ideal form, memory is believed, by dint of its functioning as a social factor of cohesion, whereas history aims to be believed on the basis of its scientific/professional character.

Nora's account regarding the disappearance of memory stands out through its radicalism: the image of memory having vanished in the turmoil of the emergence of postmodernity seems to carry the seeds for indulging into real nostalgia.[150] In effect, Nora circles around an issue specific to modernity and postmodernity, without actually putting his finger on it. Memory has not disappeared, but it has entered a dialectical relationship with history or, widening the perspective, into a triangular relationship with history and politics. It has been noticed that "the practice of historical reconstruction can in important ways receive a guiding impetus from, and can in turn give significant shape to, the memory of social groups."[151] History and memory are rather mutually communicating, at times also overlapping. They are no "adversarial and separate concepts".[152] The former was even conceptualized "as social memory".[153]

In other words, memory is very much influenced by history and politics. Moreover, it has turned into one of the objects of politics and of top-down imposed policies seeking for legitimacy or aiming to create legitimacy. Benedict Anderson's "imagined communities", an apparent endowment of modernity, can also be regarded as "mnemonic communities", since identity-building processes, typical of modern nation-states, imply the production and reproduction of memories.[154] Anderson himself noted the creation of a common memory (and forgetting) as playing a quintessential role in the shaping and persistence of "imagined communities".[155] Contemporary traditions might be invented, but the mere act of their invention does not

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[149] Paul Ricoeur, *Memory, History, Forgetting*, transl. Kathleen Blamey and David Pellauer (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2004), 171.

[150] Steven Englund, "The Ghost of Nation Past," *Journal of Modern History* 64, no. 2 (June 1992): 299-320.

[151] Connerton, *How Societies Remember*, 14.

[152] Jay Winter, "Sites of Memory," in Radstone and Schwarz, *Memory*, 315.

[153] Peter Burke, "History as Social Memory," in *Memory: History, Culture, and the Mind*, ed. Thomas Butler (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1989), 97-113.

[154] Barbara A. Misztal, *Theories of Social Remembering* (Maidenhead: Open University Press, 2003).

[155] Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 187-206.

make them less relevant. The relevance is given by their social significance. The memory Nora speaks about has not been wholly supplanted by history. It still exists, only that it exists in a world where history and politics aim at influencing it. This is why Paul Ricoeur spoke of an "imposed memory", armed with "the official history, the history that is publicly learned and celebrated", whilst David Lowenthal stated that "history extends and elaborates memory".[156]

This is not to say that attempts at imposing memory, at top-down production and reproduction of memory are, through their mere act of being, successful. Counter-memories exist, and the groups identifying with them normally try to push them into the foreground of society and politics. Still, history and memory are in a relationship of mutual interdependence: the former nurtures the latter, but at the same time the latter is one of the objects of the former. Starting with the nineteenth century, "a historical culture" has been diffused among the masses.[157] On the basis of this diffusion, history and memory started and are still pursuing their intricate relationship. Considering the understanding of "social memory" as the multitude of processes and actions related to the past and leading to knowledge about the past, an understanding influenced by the conceptual delimitation proposed by Geoffrey Cubitt, I argue, together with Cubitt, that history is a constitutive part of "social memory".[158] The various historiographic discourses at hand in a specific environment are examples of "collective memory" discourses vying for legitimacy and preeminence.

In order to be able to purposefully speak about the representations of the German minority in post-1989 Romanian historiography, the first question arising is what exactly can qualify as a historiographic product to be investigated. An excellent source in this respect is the immense work *Bibliografia istorică a României* (Historical Bibliography of Romania), whose eighth to twelfth volumes cover the period between 1989 and 2008.[159]

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[156] Ricoeur, *History, Memory, Forgetting*, 85; David Lowenthal, *The Past is a Foreign Country* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 210.

[157] Le Goff, *History and Memory*, 152; also Bogdan Murgescu, *A fi istoric în anul 2000* (Bucharest: Ed. All Educaţional, 2000).

[158] Cubitt, *History and Memory*, 26.

[159] Gheorghe Hristodol (ed.), *Bibliographia Historica Romaniae. Bibliografia istorică a României. Vol. VIII: 1989-1994* (Bucharest: Ed. Academiei Române, 1996); Gheorghe Hristodol (ed.), *Bibliografia istorică a României. Vol. IX: 1994-1999* (Bucharest: Ed. Academiei Române, 2000); Gheorghe Hristodol (ed.), *Bibliografia istorică a României. Vol. X: 1999-2004* (Bucharest: Ed. Academiei Române, 2005); Stelian Mândruţ (ed.), *Bibliografia istorică a României. Vol. XI: 2004-*

Published under the aegis of the Romanian Academy, it aims to list all historiographic publications in Romanian and also all foreign language publications on Romania-related topics. The listed works are ordered according to several big topics, many of them subsequently divided again according to other sub-categorizations. For example, the eleventh volume was divided as follows: general problems (historiography and historians, history in relationship to other sciences, bibliographies, dictionaries, encyclopaedias, historical sources, auxiliary sciences), Romanian history (syntheses, prehistory and antiquity, Middle Ages, modern era, contemporary history, local history, minorities, Romanians outside the borders of Romania, culture, science and civilization), and universal history (general topics, historiography, scientific manifestations, institutions - archives, libraries, museums -, syntheses, ancient times, Middle Ages, modern era, contemporary era, culture, science, and civilization, Church and religion, personalities).

In order to choose the materials for my research, I looked at general syntheses of Romanian history and at works dealing with minorities, more precisely with the German minority. Out of those, I selected only books, eliminating articles published in journals. Further on, I eliminated works translated from other languages into Romanian, works published in Romanian, but outside Romania, and reissues of works initially published before 1989. I left aside works published *in honorem* and collections of conference papers and also works dealing with topics in which it would have been improbable to expect the German minority to be present (works on geopolitics, diplomacy, histories of Romanian regions where the Germans were a marginal presence etc.). Moreover, I also consulted *Bibliografia cărților apărute în limbile minorităților naționale și despre minoritățile naționale în perioada 1990-2001* (Bibliography of Books Published in the Languages of National Minorities and about National Minorities between 1990-2001).[160] The pages dedicated to the German minority include a series of monographs of various localities in Transylvania and Banat, whose investigation would have widened too much the intellectual horizon of this thesis, as well as plenty of works dealing only marginally, if at all, with Saxons, Swabians and other

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*2006* (Bucharest: Ed. Academiei Române, 2007); Stelian Mândruț (ed.), *Bibliografia istorică a României. Vol. XII, partea I: 2007-2008* (Bucharest: Ed. Academiei Române, 2009).
[160] Ministerul Informațiilor Publice, *Bibliografia cărților apărute în limbile minorităților naționale și despre minoritățile naționale* (Bucharest: Hasefer, 2003).

German-speaking groups in Romania. Nevertheless, *Bibliografia cărților* was a useful source for detecting some extremely relevant volumes, for example *Germanii din România* (Germans in Romania), by Sorina Paula Bolovan and Ioan Bolovan, surprisingly not included in *Bibliografia istorică*.[161]

The main problem connected with *Bibliografia istorică* is the absence of a value criterion associated with it. In effect, next to scholarly studies published under the aegis of recognized institutions and next to works authored by researchers and academics from the main university centres in Romania, *Bibliografia istorică* includes works of a much more modest or dubious pedigree: high-school teachers aiming to reveal "historical truths", devotees of nationalism, anti-Semitism and/or Dacomania, no-names without any presentation whatsoever. Their studies are all listed in the aforementioned work, thus making the task of the researcher aiming to separate serious intellectual publications from amateurish and often aberrant historiographic attempts quite complicated.

Nonetheless, considering this state of facts and the comprehensive objectives of this thesis, my research did not consider only academic works, although they represent a large share of the investigated material. Taking into account that nowadays historical knowledge is disseminated amongst a large part of society, and that history has turned into a component of mass culture,[162] and arguing that this observation is very much compatible with the Romanian case, I also looked at how Germans are represented in post-1989 history works authored by non-historians or by historians with dubious credentials. Analyzing such texts can eventually turn into a bridge towards a further grassroots analysis of the image of the German minority in the wider Romanian society. Thus, the present research does not investigate only elite discourses, be they political or academic, or mass-media representations of the Germans, but also sheds light upon some of the more obscure views and images thereof, aiming to explicate them as well and showing their compatibilities or incompatibilities with the former.

Furthermore, I have included in my analysis post-1989 history textbooks, and, for a comprehensive understanding of the historiography dealing with the Communist regime, the works published by the Civic

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[161] Sorina Paula Bolovan and Ioan Bolovan, *Germanii din România. Perspective istorice și demografice* (Cluj-Napoca: Centrul de Studii Transilvane, 2000).
[162] Le Goff, *Memory and History*; Murgescu, *A fi istoric*.

Academy Foundation in its series "Analele Sighet" and other significant Romanian studies on the history of the autochthonous Communist regime. After the fall of Ceaușescu's regime, the Civic Academy Foundation, run by writers Ana Blandiana and Romulus Rusan, has been the most active promoter of the need for a Communist-related *Vergangenheitsbewältigung* (coming to terms with the past) and of a memorialization of Communism, whose main result is the Memorial of the Victims of Communism and of the Resistance in Sighetu Marmației, the site of one of the most infamous Communist prisons in the country. Alongside managing the Memorial, the Foundation also organises a series of other projects, including annual conferences, summer schools. The series "Analele Sighet" includes ten volumes of conference proceedings, dealing with the Communist regime from its beginnings in the immediate aftermath of the Second World War to its demise in 1989. It does not include only works by Romanian authors, but it is definitely symptomatic for the anti-Communist axiomatic paradigm of thought informing the intellectual debates on recent Romanian history.

## 3. Germans in Romania. Historical and Political Context

### 3.1. Taxonomy and Lexical Complexity

The present chapter starts with a descriptive enumeration of the various groups constituting the German minority in Romania, emphasizing the differences in their social and political profiles. It continues by addressing the lexical complexity due to the existence of several linguistic referents associated with "Germans" and the "German minority in Romania". Further on, it presents the historical background, together with the most relevant identification issues related to "Romanian Germans", more precisely to Transylvanian Saxons, the main object of interest of both academics and non-academics. It first looks at the aforementioned questions before 1918 and then grants more attention to minority politics and to the presence of German communities in the enlarged Romanian state. Its underlying rationale is that in order to make sense out of the contemporary representations of the "German minority" and of Germanness within Romanian society, a general and concise outlook of the historical background of the German presence on modern Romanian territory is appropriate. Furthermore, addressing general questions related to self-identification discourses contributes to the better contextualization of the research matter, whilst also drawing attention upon some of the main issues with consequences on German-Romanian relationships in Romania.

Eminently overreductionist, the terms "Romanian Germans" and "German minority in Romania" often refer only to the two best known German-speaking groups in Romania, namely Transylvanian Saxons and Banat Swabians. This is visible for example if one considers the omission of the historical presence of other groups of ethnic Germans in some accounts about the "Romanian Germans".[163] Indeed, from a historical, cultural and political perspective it can be argued that the two communities are the most relevant amongst the several ethnic groups constituting or having constituted the German minority in Romania.

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[163] See for example Richard Wagner, "Ethnic Germans in Romania," in *German Minorities in Europe: Ethnic Identity and Cultural Belonging*, ed. Stefan Wolff (New York: Berghahn Books, 2000), 135-42.

However, taking into account only Transylvanian Saxons and Banat Swabians definitely simplifies a much more varied picture. Traditionally, the German minority in Romania consisted *in toto* of several groups. Amongst these, Transylvanian Saxons and Banat Swabians are the oldest and the most numerous. Scholarship differs in the way it categorizes the ethnic branches constituting the overall group of Germans in Romania. William Totok pinpointed that there are Germans living in the Satu Mare region (Satu Mare Swabians), around Vișeu (Zipser), and also in Bukovina and Dobruja.[164] Georges Castellan mentioned seven different areas in which Romanian Germans were distributed in the interwar period: "Transylvania, Banat, Sathmar, Bukovina, Bessarabia, and Dobruja, plus some small isolated groups in the 'Old Kingdom' (Regat)".[165] In a short study published in Romania during the Cold War, Monica Barcan and Adalbert Millitz referred to eleven German-speaking groups living in the country. They named some of the groups previously mentioned in this chapter, i.e. the Transylvanian Saxons and Banat Swabians, the Satu Mare Swabians, the Zipser and the Bukovina Germans. Furthermore, without any mentioning whatsoever of the Dobruja Germans, they cited the Durlacher, settled down around 1743 in the region around Sebeș, the Bohemian Germans living in the Semenic mountains, the Styrians living around Reșița, the Timișoara Germans, of Austrian origin, who had arrived to Banat before the Swabian colonization waves, the Landler who came in the 18th century in three villages in Transylvania and the Swabians living in the Transylvanian villages Aurel Vlaicu (formerly known as Binținți) and Batiz.[166]

In a 1979 collectively authored opus dedicated to the "history of the Germans on Romania's territories" until 1848, the focus was essentially on Transylvanian Saxons and Banat Swabians; nonetheless, observations on Satu Mare Swabians, Maramureș Zipser and Bukovina Germans were introduced.[167] Nowadays, the site of the German Embassy in Bucharest refers to twelve groups of German-speaking settlers who were living on Romanian

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[164] William Totok, *Die Zwänge der Erinnerung. Aufzeichungen aus Rumänien* (Hamburg: Junius Verlag, 1988), 7.

[165] Georges Castellan, "The Germans of Rumania," in "Nationalism and Separatism," *Journal of Contemporary History* 6, no. 1 (1971): 52.

[166] Monica Barcan and Adalbert Millitz, *The German Nationality in Romania*, transl. Anda Teodorescu-Bantaș (Bucharest: Meridiane, 1978), 39-43.

[167] Carl Göllner (ed.), *Geschichte der Deutschen auf dem Gebiete Rumäniens. 12. Jahrhundert bis 1848* (Bucharest: Kriterion Verlag, 1979).

territory in 1918, when the unification of Greater Romania took place, focusing its short presentation on the Transylvanian Saxons and Banat Swabians. The other ten groups mentioned on the site are: Satu Mare Swabians, Bessarabia Germans, Bukovina Germans, Dobruja Germans, Landler, Durlacher, Bohemian Germans, Styrians, Timișoara Germans, and Zipser.[168]

The differences in terms of categorization visible in the texts I mentioned confirm that "identities" are in many ways constructed, depending on both internal and external definitions and ascriptions. Most often, studies on Germans in Romania look at specific groups rather than attempt to integrate these various histories into a coherent whole, an endeavour that would actually be counterproductive in its own right. At the same time, this is also very much telling of the constructed and actually novel character of the ethnic categorization "Germans in Romania", which is essentially a post-1918 integrative patchwork. There are several conditions of possibility enabling the creation of the category "Germans in Romania", amongst them the existence of a unified German state since 1871, often acting as a kin-state in relationship to the various German-speaking communities in Central- and Eastern Europe. Yet perhaps the most relevant such conditions of possibility are the external identification through Romanian state authorities of members of these groups as "Germans", and the post-1918 politics of identity promoted by various ethnopolitical entrepreneurs within these groups.

At this stage, some lexical observations should be inserted. I have suggested that the use of the expression "German minority in Romania" is actually meaningful only for the period after the First World War. Furthermore, until now I have already made use of a series of different, yet related terms; next to the one mentioned above, I spoke about "Romanian Germans", "Germans in Romania", or even "Germanness". I argue that "Germanness" is to be understood as the imagined element constituting the virtual glue enabling the existence of a Pan-German "imagined community" for both internal and external observers. It goes without saying that the

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[168] "Ausführliche Information zur Geschichte der deutschen Minderheit in Rumänien," Deutsche Botschaft Bukarest, http://www.bukarest.diplo.de/Vertretung/bukarest/de/06/seite__minderheiten.html (accessed December 13, 2011).

discursive features of this element depend on the producers of the respective discourse.

Furthermore, the semantic landscape revolving around the term "German" (Romanian: *german*) is quite complex. First of all, its connotations are far from straightforward. It can refer to German citizens and, during the Cold War, it referred to citizens of both the Federal Republic of Germany and the German Democratic Republic. At the same time, it can and does refer to members of the German-speaking groups who have lived, for longer or shorter periods of time, on Romanian territory, the "German minority in Romania".

It also ought to be mentioned that Romanian language has two synonyms translatable, in English, with the word "German": *german*, of Latin origin, and *neamț*, of Slavic origin.[169] The existence of supplementary words denominating the various German-speaking groups in Romania, such as *sas* (Saxon) or *șvab* (Swabian) makes the semantic landscape even more complicated. Historically, *german* or *neamț* also referred to things pertaining to the Habsburg Empire. For example, in the 19th century, in the principalities of Moldova and Wallachia, *austriac* (Austrian) and *german* were used indistinctly.[170] In his study on the image of the "Germanic populations" in the work of Gheorghe Șincai, an 18th century Romanian historian and philologist from Transylvania, Marian Zăloagă remarked that the latter used *german* and *neamț* even when referring to Germanic migrations from the beginning of the Middle Ages. At the same time, Șincai did not seem to equate *sas* with *german* or *neamț*.[171]

Dumitru Hîncu also noticed that representations of the German and of Germanness have been constantly associated with several referents:

> The image of the foreigners of German origin in Romanian territories had several instantiations in the 19th and at the beginning of the 20th century, depending on the group upon which the observations were projected. In other words, according to the circumstance whether they referred to Saxons in

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[169] Ion Bogdan Lefter, "Imaginea germanului în civilizația românească și în literatura română," *România literară*, October 25, 1995.

[170] Stela Mărieș, "Das Fremdenbild im rumänischen Raum in der Mitte des XIX. Jahrhunderts," in *Identitate și alteritate în spațiul cultural românesc*, ed. Alexandru Zub (Iași: Ed. Universității Alexandru Ioan Cuza, 1996), 207.

[171] Marian Zăloagă, "Imaginea Celuilalt în Chronica românilor. Viziunea șincaiană asupra populațiilor germanice din Transilvania," *Biblioteca Județeană Mureș*, http://www.bjmures.ro/publicatii/anuare/Anuarul%20III-2004/LucrZaloaga.htm (accessed December 13, 2011).

Transylvania, to Swabian colonists in Banat, to those in Bukovina, to Habsburg representatives of the bureaucracy, of the military or of the educational system, or, for example, to the Germans settled down in this period on the other side of the Carpathians.[172]

Hîncu's observation, also confirmed by other studies, highlights the intricacies and complexities surrounding representations of the German minority in Romanian society and culture. Valeriu Leu drew similar conclusions following his research of the representations of the "German" in the notes found in old Romanian books in Banat:

Speaking sometimes about the "German", sometimes about the "German king" and sometimes about the "German empire", the notes conserve the account of a collective term, that nonetheless was not referring to the German population of Banat, but to the authorities, to the lordship, to the administration, simply to the state! All these at once and at the same time![173]

In another study, the same author drew similar conclusions with respect to representations of Germanness in Banat at the end of the 18th century and the beginning of the 19th century, emphasizing the perception of the Habsburg Empire as a "German one".[174] Daniel Eiwen also commented upon this complexity ensued from the multiple valences of what "German" can stand for in the Romanian context:

In opposition with the image of the French or of the Italian, in Romania there is no unitary image of the German, because the German is *par excellence* represented twofold in Romanian writings: on the one hand, as an inhabitant of the German-speaking space, and on the other hand as a member of the German population in Romania. Two images of the German are thus born, each showing specific traits and constantly influencing each other, both positively and negatively.[175]

All these observations address one of the main issues of interest considering the objective of this thesis, namely the constant reciprocal informing of the various imagined referents of the several terms related to "Germans in

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[172] Dumitru Hîncu, *"Noi" și germanii "noștri" 1800-1914. Un studiu imagologic urmat de Tablouri dintr-o lume care a fost* (Bucharest: Univers, 1998), 79.

[173] Valeriu Leu, "Imaginea 'neamțului' în însemnările de pe cărțile vechi românești din Banat," in Zub, *Identitate și alteritate*, 241.

[174] Valeriu Leu, "Imaginea germanului la românii din Banat," in *Germanii din Banat prin povestirile lor*, ed. Smaranda Vultur (Bucharest: Paideia, 2000), 38.

[175] Daniel Eiwen, "Das Bild der Siebenbürger Deutschen im rumänischen Schrifttum. Momentaufnahmen aus seiner Entstehung und Entwicklung," in *Das Bild des Anderen in Siebenbürgen*, ed. Konrad Gündisch, Wolfgang Höpken and Michael Markel (Cologne: Böhlau Verlag, 1998), 264.

Romania". Consequently, the analysis of the way in which the "German minority in Romania" is represented within Romanian memory and identity discourses should take these intricacies into account and explain them whenever necessary.

As suggested, on political and cultural grounds, references to "Romanian Germans" are often bound to set in motion an entire set of implicit or explicit representations and associations with the German state. Other historical facts enhance the complexity of the lexical and semantic landscape under discussion. The most salient amongst them is the fact that between 1866 and 1947, the Romanian royal family was of German origin, namely the Sigmaringen branch of the Hohenzollern family. It is widely considered that Carol I, who ruled the country between 1866 and 1914, transformed Romania into a modern, truly European country.

## 3.2. Before 1918: "Loose" Germans

In this context, I now present the most relevant groups constituting (or having constituted) the "German minority" in Romania, first focusing on the period before 1918 and then on the period after the First World War. The geographical dispersion of these groups in Romania is also linked to different historical backgrounds. Chronologically, Transylvanian Saxons were the first group to settle on contemporary Romanian territory. It is considered that they came to the region in the 12th century, at the behest of Hungarian King Géza II (1141-1162), in order to colonize the Transylvanian territory, at the time newly conquered by the Hungarian Crown. Saxon migration to Eastern Europe has been read as part of the larger historical phenomenon called *Deutsche Ostsiedlung* (German colonization towards East). Apparently, settlers arrived to Transylvania from different regions, such as the Mosel region, Flanders and Luxembourg.[176]

Transylvanian Saxons were colonizers in a scarcely populated region: their being invited in the "land beyond the forests" was meant on the one

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[176] Charles Higounet, *Les Allemands en Europe centrale et orientale au Moyen Age* (Paris: Aubier, 1989); Thomas Nägler, *Die Ansiedlung der Siebenbürger Sachsen*, 2nd edition (Bucharest: Kriterion, 1992). A good overview of Transylvanian Saxon history: Konrad Gündisch, with the collaboration of Mathias Beer, *Siebenbürgen und die Siebenbürger Sachsen* (Munich: Langen Müller, 1998).

hand to support its economic enhancement and consequently that of the Hungarian Kingdom and on the other hand to defend the latter's borders, on the Carpathian Mountains. The settlers were enticed to Transylvania through the granting of an autonomy status. The autonomy regarded administrative, jurisdictional and cultural-religious matters.

In time, mostly on the basis of this autonomous status within the Transylvanian region, the group developed a specific self-consciousness, as the settlers and their descendants perceived themselves and were perceived by external observers as *saxones* (Transylvanian Saxons), one of the three legally recognized corporative "nations" in Transylvania, alongside Hungarians and Szeklers, a system excluding the Romanian population from political matters. Both *de facto* and *de jure* a "Saxon" group emerged after the arrival in Transylvania. This distinct group identity emerged from the 16th century onwards, under the influence of the cultural elite and mainly on the basis of the autonomous jurisdictional system.[177] The Hungarian Crown did not invite "Saxons" or "Germans" in Transylvania; rather the descendants of the settlers developed a group identity, which then gained an ethnic orientation as well.

 The identity management within the Saxon community, together with the maintenance of group boundaries, was done by dint of particular institutions, such as *Nationsuniversität* (Saxon University), whose leader was the Saxon *Komes* (Count), and, starting with the second half of the 16th century, by the Lutheran Church as well. Although Saxons were mostly engaged in agriculture, their presence in Transylvania is also strongly linked with the urban development of the region. A significant urban elite was active in trade and later in industry, as the historical development of towns such as Sibiu and Brașov shows. Considering this privileged status and the partially urban profile of the community, Saxon history in Transylvania is often represented as a success story.[178]

Furthermore, it should be emphasized that nourishing constant cultural relationships with the German linguistic world was another key element for Transylvanian Saxon identity, contributing to the emergence and

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[177] Gündisch, *Siebenbürgen und die Siebenbürger Sachsen*, 89-91.
[178] James Thomas Koranyi, "Between East and West: Romanian German Identities since 1945," (PhD diss., University of Exeter, 2008), 63.

stabilization of a "dual ethnic identity of the Transylvanian Saxons".[179] A symbol of this connection with the German cultural space was their being called *germanissimi germanorum*, a tag apparently used by Silesian poet and traveller Martin Opitz in the first half of the 17th century, roughly translatable as the most German of all Germans, a remark that would be later used and reused in order to convey a feeling of superiority and to mould a specific type of German identification in Eastern Europe, consequential on the long term.[180]

The advent of Enlightenment and modernity led to significant changes in the institutional life of the Transylvanian Saxons. In the second half of the 17th century, Hungary and Transylvania became part of the Habsburg Empire. Nonetheless, despite the presumed linguistic and cultural affinities with the authorities in Vienna, the religious cleavage (Catholic vs. Lutheran) and the Catholicization tendencies of the Habsburg emperors led to frictions. Furthermore, following the Josephinian reforms of late 18th century and the imposition of the Austro-Hungarian Dualism in 1867, Transylvanian Saxons lost the greatest part of their traditional autonomy. Their status was in practice downgraded to that of an ethnic minority in the Hungarian part of the Habsburg Empire. Joseph II (1780-1790) allowed members of other ethnic groups to settle on Saxon lands, granting them full equality. In many ways, this event represents the beginning of modern history for Transylvanian Saxons, since it put an end to the medieval privileges assigned to them centuries before, having constituted the crux of Saxon identity.[181] The other severe blow bearing upon the Saxon attempts to maintain a specific *status quo* was the imposition of the Austro-Hungarian Dualism. The incorporation of Transylvania in the Hungarian part of the empire was conducive to Magyarization pressures in general, and to the disbandment of the Saxon University in particular. Consequently, the Lutheran Church in Transylvania remained the main community institution managing the production and reproduction of Transylvanian Saxon identity.[182]

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[179] Glynn Custred, "Dual Ethnic Identity of the Transylvanian Saxons," *East European Quarterly* 25, no. 4 (Winter 1991): 483-91.

[180] R. J. W. Evans, "Transylvanian Saxons," in *Austria, Hungary and the Habsburgs: Essays on Central Europe c. 1683-1867* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 209-27; Katherine Verdery, "The Unmaking of an Ethnic Collectivity: Transylvania's Germans," *American Ethnologist* 12, no. 1 (1985): 62-83.

[181] Paul Philippi, "Nation und Nationalgefühl der Siebenbürger Sachsen," in *Die Siebenbürger Sachsen in der Geschichte und Gegenwart*, ed. Hans Rothe (Cologne: Böhlau Verlag, 1994), 69.

[182] Ludwig Binder, "Die Evangelische Kirche 1849-1914," in *Die Siebenbürger Sachsen in den Jahren 1849-1918*, ed. Carl Göllner (Cologne: Böhlau Verlag, 1988), 227-42.

In the second half of the 19th century, disappointed by the central authorities in Vienna and at the same time perked up by the military and political successes of Bismarck's Germany, a significant part of the Transylvanian Saxon elite started to be growingly influenced, in both cultural and political issues, by the latter. The cultural relationships with the German-speaking world had always been a reality, yet their politically ethnicized overtones started to surge in this period, and would eventually reach their culmination after Hitler's rise to power in Germany, in 1933.[183]

18th century Habsburg modernizing endeavours were also consequential for Banat, a region currently divided between Romania, Serbia and Hungary. Following its acquisition after a conflict with the Ottoman Empire, the need arose to populate and transform the deserted region into one economically viable for the Habsburgs. Consequently, the Austrian emperors invited colonists from various parts of Europe (mostly German-speaking, but not only) into the newly acquired territory. There were three main migration waves, under Charles VI (1722-1726), Maria Theresa (1763-1771), and Joseph II (1784-1787).[184] Although the German-speaking migrants did not come from the Swabian region, the denomination "Swabians" took root. Most of them lived in rural areas, being engaged first and foremost in agriculture. Their presence in Banat has been often framed within a discourse centred on victimhood, emphasizing the numerous difficulties associated with their settlement in the region and the putatively tremendous efforts done to overcome them.[185] Following the 19th century industrialization of the region, Swabians also found occupations connected therewith. Furthermore, unlike Saxons who were in an overwhelming majority Lutheran, most Banat Swabians were Catholic and thus more prone to Magyarization attempts perpetuated through the Catholic Church. The religious cleavage is an important aspect of Saxon-Swabian reciprocal representations and identification discourses. At the same time, it should also be emphasized that the colonizing feature characterizing both the settlement of Transylvanian

[183] Custred, "Dual Ethnic Identity"; Weber et al., "Die Siebenbürger Sachsen"; Cristian Cercel, "The Relationship between Religious and National Identity in the Case of Transylvanian Saxons (1933-1944)," *Nationalities Papers. The Journal of Nationalism and Ethnicity* 39, no. 2 (March 2011): 161-80.

[184] Rudolf Gräf, "Germanii din Banat sau istoria între două emigrări. Cercul care s-a închis," in *Germanii din Banat prin povestirile lor*, ed. Smaranda Vultur (Bucharest: Paideia, 2000), 13-32; Ingomar Senz, *Die Donauschwaben* (Munich: Langen Müller, 1994).

[185] Koranyi, "Between East and West".

Saxons and of Banat Swabians is of high importance for their self-representations and for the way these groups have been perceived by the other populations living in the respective regions.

Further on, one has to refer to the Germans in Bukovina, dominion of the Habsburg Empire from 1771, and nowadays a province divided between Ukraine and Romania. Germans came to Bukovina attracted by the economic opportunities in the Habsburg region. Their *de facto* privileged position was based on sharing the same idiom with the official language of the Habsburg Empire. Bukovina Germans were very active in agriculture and industry and were also part of the state apparatus in Bukovina or engaged in liberal professions. Unlike in the case of Transylvanian and Banat Germans, the imposition of the Austro-Hungarian Dualism had no direct impact upon them, as Bukovina remained in the Austrian-ruled part of the Empire.[186]

Notwithstanding contemporary geopolitical landscape and identity disputes, interactions of the Romanian/Moldovan-speaking and German-speaking populations in Bessarabia (currently part of the Republic of Moldova) should be taken into account when outlining the historical background of the representations of the German minority within Romanian society. Germans settled between 1812 and 1842 in the province, at that time newly acquired by the Tsarist Empire from the Ottomans, allured by the privileges granted by the Russian authorities, eager to transform Bessarabia into an agriculturally productive region.[187] In search of better agricultural conditions and attracted this time by promises made by the Ottomans, part of the German-speaking population in Bessarabia moved after 1841 further south, to Dobruja.

More peculiar is the extremely small group of the Landler, German-speaking Lutherans forcefully exiled to Transylvania during the reign of Maria Theresa and having settled down in three villages around the city of Sibiu (Turnişor, Cristian, Apoldu de Sus). Within the Habsburg Empire, they were considered to be transmigrants.[188] Notwithstanding their small number and their proximity to the Saxon environment, specific Landler identification

[186] Sophie A. Welisch, "The Bukovina-Germans during the Habsburg Period: Settlement, Ethnic Interaction, Contributions," *Immigrants & Minorities* 5, no. 1 (1986): 73-106.

[187] Ute Schmidt, *Bessarabien. Deutsche Kolonisten am Schwarzen Meer* (Potsdam: Deutsches Kulturforum östliches Europa, 2008).

[188] Mathias Beer, "Die Landler. Versuch eines geschichtlichen Überblicks," in *Die Siebenbürgischen Landler. Eine Spurensicherung*, ed. Martin Bottesch, Franz Grieshofer, and Wilfried Schabus (Vienna: Böhlau Verlag, 2002), 1:23-80.

discourses still exist, based upon boundaries with respect to Saxon identification.[189] However, this type of differentiation is functional as such only within the larger Romanian German group, being rather absent when it comes to the way members of these sub-groups are perceived by Romanians.[190]

Satu Mare Swabians should also be presented. Their ancestors came to the region around Satu Mare, currently in the North-Western part of Romania, as agricultural workers/colonists, in the early 1700s, at the behest of a Hungarian landowner named Károlyi. Throughout history, Satu Mare Swabians were confronted with heavy Magyarization pressures, especially between 1867 and 1918. One of the long-time consequences of this type of politics is their peculiar status: often, members of the group perceive themselves as ethnic Germans with Hungarian as a mother tongue, a *sui generis* case of a "dual identity".[191]

Finally, I refer to the Zipser in Maramureş. Their name comes from the region Spiš in contemporary Slovakia. Towards the end of the 19th century, some of the Zipser left the region bound for Maramureş and, although in small numbers, they still constitute an ethnic community, especially in the small locality Vişeu de Sus. Amongst all the German-speaking groups I referred to above, they are probably the least researched one.

This extremely varied picture and the multitude of identification issues related to these groups show that their "Germanness" had been in many ways a rather loose identification. This is even more conspicuous if one considers that "Germanness" as such was a rather loose concept in the absence of a political centre, at least until the 19th century, Vienna assuming this role only in part. The straightforward "Germanization" of Saxons, Swabians and the other ethnic groups I referred to gained momentum from the second half of the 19th century onwards, a process of cultural and political coagulation and of imagined "communitization" surpassing in both quantity and quality the lax "German" affiliation prevalent in the preceding centuries.

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[189] Martin Bottesch, "Identität und Ethnizität der Landler," in Bottesch, Grieshofer, and Schabus, *Die siebenbürgischen Landler*, 1:155-77.
[190] Ibid., 162.
[191] Johann Forstenheizler, "Identität und Identitätssuche der Sathmarschwaben," in *Einblick & Ausblick. 15 Jahre Demokratisches Forum der Deutschen in Rumänien*, ed. Demokratisches Forum der Deutschen in Rumänien (Sibiu: Honterus Verlag, 2004), 87-97.
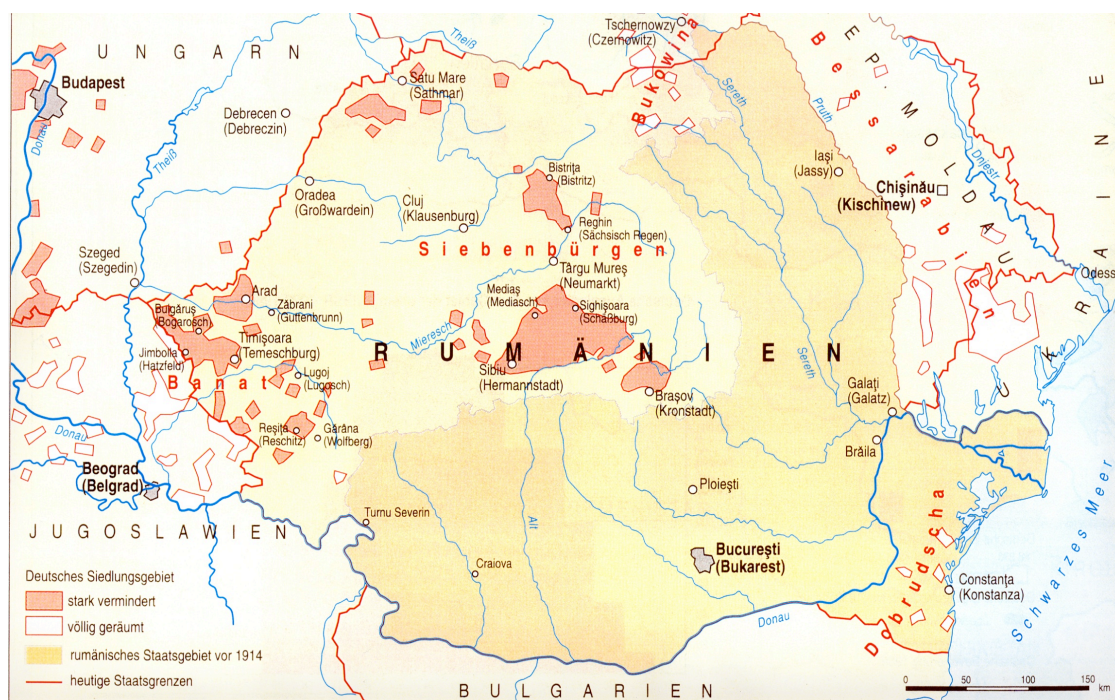
Map of German Settlements in Romania[192]

## 3.3. Germans in Romania. History, Memory, and Identification Discourses

Discursively merging Transylvanian Saxons, Banat Swabians and the other German-speaking groups in Romania into the "German minority in Romania" is a political phenomenon belonging to recent history, institutionalized through Romanian state policies from 1918 onwards. The incorporation of Transylvania and Banat into Greater Romania, which took place at the end of the First World War suddenly transformed the Transylvanian Saxons and the Banat Swabians, together with the other German-speaking groups in the newly acquired provinces (Bukovina, Bessarabia), in a minority group within a new state. *Stricto sensu*, only from this moment can we refer to "Romanian Germans" or "Germans in Romania". Before 1918, only small numbers of "Germans", including German-speaking communities in Dobruja, lived within the borders of the Romanian state, marginal both in terms of

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[192] Map from 2000, taken from *Informationen zur Politischen Bildung* 267 (2000), Kartenbeilage (map supplement) IV. Map legend translates as follows: "Deutsches Siedlungsgebiet" - Territory of German Settlements; "stark vermindert" - heavily diminished; "völlig geräumt" - totally emptied; "rumänisches Staatsgebiet vor 1914" - Romanian state territory before 1914; "heutige Staatsgrenzen" - current state borders.

geography and of their presence in public discourse, yet seemingly well integrated in the society.[193]

Interwar Romania was a country where about one third of the population were not ethnic Romanians. Most often, it is acknowledged that the administrative foreign model embraced by Romanian authorities was the model of the French unitary and centralized state. *De facto*, Romanian authorities recognized the existence of minority groups in the country and administered a political system in which ethnic identity was not obscured by citizenship, as in France, but rather played a key role in the shaping of policies, on both the central and a local levels. However, this did not entail an absence of ethnic and ethnicized conflicts between Romanian authorities and representatives of the various minority groups living in the country.

Although they perceived Greater Romania as the long-awaited for embodiment of a centuries-old dream of the Romanian people, central authorities in Bucharest were compelled to operate in a multinational environment. In this context, the rejection of regionalist tendencies was shaped according to a French pattern, yet the leaning towards treating the members of minority groups as second class citizens is more easily inscribable in a logic closer to the German idea of nationhood.[194] Thus, rather than blindly following a putative French model, interwar Romanian authorities devised their own treatment of minorities, in reality acknowledging the existence of minority groups, but at the same time implicitly aiming on the long run towards assimilation or exclusion. For several reasons, social and cultural integration of minority groups in the newly enlarged state was more of a failure than a success.[195] Amongst these reasons, one of the most important is linked to what Mariana Hausleitner called the Romanian *nationalstaatlicher Anspruch* (claim to a nation-state).[196]

For the would-be Germans in Romania, the emergence of the new political setting implied a major socio-political shift, due to the incorporation

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[193] Stoica Lascu, "Integrarea germanilor dobrogeni în societatea românească modernă (1878-1916) - între tradiţii proprii şi realităţi ponto-dunărene," in *Germanii dobrogeni: istorie şi civilizaţie*, ed. Valentin Ciorbea (Constanţa: Muntenia, 2006), 51-84.

[194] Rogers Brubaker, *Citizenship and Nationhood in France and Germany* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1992).

[195] Irina Livezeanu, *Cultural Politics in Greater Romania: Regionalism, Nation Building and Ethnic Struggle, 1918-1930* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1995).

[196] Mariana Hausleitner, *Die Rumänisierung der Bukowina. Die Durchsetzung des nationalstaatlichen Anspruchs Grossrumäniens* (Munich: Oldenbourg Wissenschaftsverlag, 2001).

to Romania of regions with a different political culture and with a heterogeneous ethnic population. Tellingly, memory politics was one of the fields in which the failure of the integration of minority groups was most visible. It is rarely brought forth that between 1916 and 1918 Transylvanian Saxons and Banat Swabians actually fought against the Romanian army: when entering Transylvania, Romanian soldiers were seen by the German-speaking population in the region as invaders.[197] These feelings were left aside at the end of the conflagration when, very pragmatically, Transylvanian Saxon and Banat Swabian representatives consented to the unification of the respective regions with Romania.

Nonetheless, Romanian and Saxon/Swabian memories of the First World War and its subsequent commemorations differed in both substance and practice. Transylvanian Saxon memories of the First World War proved to be more deeply related to the German ones, as the war monuments and memorials erected on a local level prove.[198] At the same time, Romanian framing of First World War memory offered little, if any, possibility of integration for the German community or for the other minority groups in the country.[199]

Furthermore, Transylvanian Saxon self-understanding was bound to entail identity clashes, considering the associated representations of the Romanian state and of the Romanian population, especially those living in Wallachia and Moldavia. In order to stress out the common Transylvanian Saxon self-view, nourished by the elite, and the associated paternalist condescending Transylvanian Saxon view of Romanians and of the Balkans/Orient, one can recur to some of the meaningful modern Transylvanian Saxon historiographical products. A most relevant example, in order to grasp the way Romanian-Saxon relationships were traditionally perceived within the Saxon community and, more precisely, by Saxon elites, is given by Friedrich Teutsch, historian and Lutheran Bishop. In 1916, he published the first edition of a work called *Die Siebenbürger Sachsen in Vergangenheit und Gegenwart* (Transylvanian Saxons in the Past and in the

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[197] Bernhard Böttcher, "Kontinuität des Ersten Weltkrieges im Frieden? Kriegerdenkmäler und Heldenkult bei den Siebenbürger Sachsen nach 1918," in *Der Einfluss von Faschismus und Nationalsozialismus auf Minderheiten in Ostmittel- und Südosteuropa*, ed. Mariana Hausleitner and Harald Roth (Munich: IKGS Verlag, 2006), 60.

[198] Ibid., 62-71.

[199] Maria Bucur, *Heroes and Victims: Remembering War in Twentieth-Century Romania* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2009).

Present), aimed at a *Binnendeutsch* (German from Germany) readership. Starting from the foreword, Teutsch punctuated a series of positive Transylvanian Saxon self-stereotypes: a "people of colonists", "conveyer of high culture" and "educator of the environment", compelled to cope with the difficulties of a harsh and unfriendly ambience.[200] Analyzing Teutsch's writing in depth would unnecessarily go beyond the scope of this section, yet referring to his work contributes to understanding the cultural jerk implied by Transylvania's incorporation into Romania in Transylvanian Saxon view.

Teutsch predominantly presented the history of the German-speaking group in Transylvania as a history under the threat of the Turkish/Ottoman danger coming from the Orient:

> They could not recognize the dual danger, that in those times was coming from the Orient: to begin with, the Romanians (Walachians) settling down at the borders of the Saxon region, against whose unculture Saxons first defended themselves with fire and sword; and the Turks, who would be a scourge for the country for three hundred years.[201]

Coming closer to the time when he was writing the piece, the Bishop-historian recognized the danger implied by the high birth rate and the migration of the Romanian population to Transylvanian Saxon localities, in the detriment of the Transylvanian Saxon population.[202] The former subjects, representatives of an uncultured population, yet ungrateful pupils of the Transylvanian Saxon instructorship, were now starting to outnumber the descendants of the former colonists, a phenomenon also observed with unhidden satisfaction, by Romanian historian Nicolae Iorga.[203]

Henceforth, in the case of Transylvanian Saxons, politically the most active of the several German-speaking groups in the country, their self-representation as a "bastion of the West", tightly linked to the prevalent representation of Romanians and of the Romanian state as not belonging to Western culture, was in effect clashing with the new political realities.[204]

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[200] Friedrich Teutsch, foreword to *Die Siebenbürger Sachsen in Vergangenheit und Gegenwart* (Leipzig: Verlag von K. F. Koehler, 1916), IX-XI.

[201] Ibid., 35.

[202] Teutsch, *Die Siebenbürger Sachsen*, 1916, 296-97.

[203] Nicolae Iorga, *Pagini alese din însemnările de călătorie prin Ardeal și Banat*, 2 vols., ed. Lucian Cursaru (Bucharest: Minerva, 1977).

[204] Sacha Davis, "East-West Discourses in Transylvania: Transitional *Erdély*, German-Western *Siebenbürgen* or Latin-Western *Ardeal*?" in *The East-West Discourse: Symbolic Geography and Its Consequences*, ed. Alexander Maxwell (Bern: Peter Lang, 2011), 127-54; Koranyi, "Between East and West".

Against the background of the disillusion brought forth by the treatment of the minorities in Greater Romania and of the appealing message conveyed by Nazi Germany, the German-speaking groups in Romania drew nearer to the Third Reich and to the identity models promoted by it, on both a political and cultural level. An emphasis on "Germanness" gained preeminence over regional "Saxon" and "Swabian" identifications.[205]

However, the history of the German minority in Romania following the unification of 1918 is not unitary. National-Socialist policies concerning the *Volksdeutsche* (ethnic Germans abroad), together with the border changes brought forth by the Ribbentrop-Molotov pact led to the efficaciousness of the *heim ins Reich* (home to the Reich) program, whose aim was to "Germanize" the Eastern territories conquered by Nazi Germany. One of its consequences was that German-speaking groups in Bukovina, Bessarabia, and Dobruja were resettled from these regions to the expanding German Reich.[206] Yet the attempt to relocate ethnic Germans from Eastern Europe to the territories newly conquered by the Third Reich did not touch upon the fate of Transylvanian Saxons, or Banat Swabians. Nevertheless, these groups were, in their own right, prey of Nazi ideology. If at the zenith of Nazi power and influence in Europe, they were granted autonomy under the leadership of a newly founded institution, the German Ethnic Group in Romania (November 1940), the later mass incorporation into SS and Wehrmacht units led to long-term tribulations following the German defeat in the conflagration.[207]

In the immediate aftermath of the Second World War, against the backdrop of the instalment of a Soviet-backed Communist regime in

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[205] Wolfgang Miege, *Das Dritte Reich und die Deutsche Volksgruppe in Rumänien 1933-38: Ein Beitrag zur nationalsozialistischen Volkstumspolitik* (Bern: Herbert & Peter Lang, 1972); Johann Böhm, *Das Nationalsozialistische Deutschland und die Deutsche Volksgruppe in Rumänien 1936-1944: Das Verhältnis der Deutschen Volksgruppe zum Dritten Reich und zum rumänischen Staat sowie der interne Widerstreit zwischen den politischen Gruppen* (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 1985); Johann Böhm, *Nationalsozialistische Indoktrination der Deutschen in Rumänien 1932-1944* (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 2008); Sacha E. Davis, "Maintaining a 'German' Home in Southeast Europe: Transylvanian Saxon Nationalism and the Metropolitan Model of the Family, 1918-1933," *History of the Family: An International Quarterly* 14, no. 4 (October 26, 2009): 386-401; Cercel, "The Relationship"; Stephan Olaf Schüller, *Für Glaube, Führer, Volk, Vater- oder Mutterland? Die Kämpfe um die deutsche Jugend im rumänischen Banat (1918-1944)* (Berlin: LIT Verlag, 2009).

[206] Dirk Jachomowski, *Die Umsiedlung der Bessarabien-, Bukowina- und Dobrudschadeutschen. Von der Volksgruppe in Rumänien zur "Siedlungsbrücke" an der Reichsgrenze* (Munich: R. Oldenbourg Verlag, 1984).

[207] Paul Milata, *Zwischen Hitler, Stalin und Antonescu. Rumäniendeutsche in der Waffen-SS* (Cologne: Böhlau Verlag, 2007); Dumitru Șandru, "Germanii din România în perioada guvernării mareșalului Ion Antonescu," in Ciorbea, *Germanii dobrogeni*, 345-87.

Romania, Germans living in the country and German identity were excluded from any type of integrative measures, being subjected to a series of discriminatory measures. The German community was seen almost in its entirety as guilty for having sided with Hitler during the Second World War. Consequently, all German adults were deported to the Soviet Union, for the reconstruction of the country, a severe blow to the community. Furthermore, the very first measures of agricultural reform were explicitly directed against the German population, and in 1945 Germans were deprived of citizen rights.[208] Only from 1948 onwards, would these discriminatory measures be gradually lifted. A large part of those deported to the Soviet Union returned by 1950. Yet actions perceived as anti-German would recurrently take place during the Communist regime in Romania, culminating in the "human trafficking" that had become a trademark of Romanian minority politics during the Cold War.[209]

Neither historiography, nor public memory in Communist Romania acknowledged the traumatic and clearly discriminatory character of the post-war treatment of the German minority. Furthermore, the subsequent policies of the Romanian state directly contributed to the migration of Romania's ethnic Germans to the Federal Republic of Germany, as one of the most relevant push factors. Paradoxically, neither of the three Constitutions drafted between 1945 and 1989 called Romania a "national state", but in many

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[208] Mathias Beer, "Der Zweite Weltkrieg und die Nachkriegszeit," in Konrad Gündisch, with the collaboration of Mathias Beer, *Siebenbürgen und die Siebenbürger Sachsen* (Munich: Langen Müller, 1998), 223-26; Mathias Beer, "Rumänien: Regionale Spezifika des Umgangs mit deutschen Minderheiten am Ende des Zweiten Weltkriegs in Südosteuropa," in *Deutschsein als Grenzerfahrung: Minderheitenpolitik in Europa zwischen 1914 und 1950*, ed. Mathias Beer, Dietrich Beyrau and Cornelia Rauh (Essen: Klartext, 2009), 279-303; Dumitru Șandru, *Reforma agrară din 1945 și țărănimea germană din România* (Bucharest: Institutul Național pentru Studiul Totalitarismului, 2009).

[209] Two of the trials hitting directly Romanian German elites in the 1950s were the "writers' trial", when five Transylvanian Saxon writers were sentenced to 95 years in prison and the "Black Church trial". For the former, see Peter Motzan and Stefan Sienerth (ed.), *Worte als Gefahr und Gefährdung: fünf deutsche Schriftsteller vor Gericht (15. September 1959 - Kronstadt); Zusammenhänge und Hintergründe. Selbstzeugnisse und Dokumente* (Munich: Südostdeutsches Kulturwerk, 1993). For the latter, see Corneliu Pintilescu, *Procesul Biserica Neagră 1958* (Brașov: Aldus; Heidelberg: Arbeitskreis für Siebenbürgische Landeskunde, 2008). A recently edited collection of documents dealing with German migration from Romania during Communism is Florica Dobre et al., *Acțiunea "Recuperarea". Securitatea și emigrarea germanilor din România (1962-1989)* (Bucharest: Ed. Enciclopedică, 2011).

respects state politics continued to aim at the assimilation of minorities, thus in some cases indirectly pushing them towards migration.[210]

Scholars emphasized the ethnically nationalist character of Romanian Communism, especially under Ceaușescu's rule.[211] Particularly after 1971, the year of Ceaușescu's consequential visits to China and North Korea, politics, discourse and policies implicitly and explicitly aimed at the "homogenization" of Romanian society, which in effect also meant ethnic homogenization. Henceforth, with the exception of state-sponsored folkloristic approaches, there was no proper place for a real and substantial integration of Transylvanian Saxon or Banat Swabian memories and identities within official Romanian memory, let alone of other, smaller, German-speaking groups.

Furthermore, the policies of the Federal Republic of Germany also played a key role in deciding the fate of the German community in Romania. Internal lobbying, a legislative framework equating being "German" with ethnicity (*ius sanguinis*), the acknowledgment of the responsibility of the German state for the traumatic events in the recent history of the German communities in Central- and Eastern Europe led to the exertion of pressures so that ethnic Germans in this region be allowed to return "home".[212] Germans in Romania, the largest German-speaking community in the region (Soviet Union excluded) during the Cold War were amongst the main beneficiaries of German legislation. The phenomenon known as *Freikauf* (ransom) of Romanian Germans practically started in the 1960s and became institutionalized in the 1970s.[213]

In Rogers Brubaker's terms, the German migration from Romania to Germany has been one "of ethnic unmixing".[214] This also leads to the significant question of who was/is German in Romania, from a formal-legal

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[210] Zsolt K. Lengyel, "Politisches System und Minderheiten in Rumänien 1918-1989. Abriß über die inneren Integrationsprobleme des zentralistischen Einheitsstaates am Beispiel der Deutschen und der Magyaren," *Zeitschrift für siebenbürgische Landeskunde* 24 (2001): 190-212.

[211] Katherine Verdery, *National Ideology under Socialism: Identity and Cultural Politics in Ceaușescu's Romania* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991); Vladimir Tismăneanu, *Stalinism for All Seasons: A Political History of Romanian Communism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003), 187-232.

[212] James Koranyi and Ruth Wittlinger, "From Diaspora to Diaspora: the Case of Transylvanian Saxons in Romania and Germany," in "Diaspora and Citizenship," ed. Elena Barabantseva and Claire Sutherland, special issue, *Nationalism and Ethnic Politics* 17, no. 1 (January 2011): 96-115.

[213] Dobre et al., *Acțiunea "Recuperarea"*.

[214] Rogers Brubaker, "Migrations of Ethnic Unmixing in the 'New Europe'," *International Migration Review* 32, no. 4 (Winter 1998): 1047-65.

point of view. Germanness in post-1918 Romania has been for Romanian authorities fundamentally an identity marked by language: in other words, Germans were those who declared themselves as Germans, which usually meant those whose mother tongue was German. In some cases, this could entail particular difficulties: for example, Bukovina Jews tended to use German as their mother tongue, whilst due to pressures towards Magyarization Satu Mare Swabians would declare their mother tongue as Hungarian. In the latter case, Romanian authorities partially acted towards a "Germanization" of the respective population, since that contributed to the weakening of the Hungarian element in the region, politically perceived as more dangerous. Alongside state actors, other institutions were also directly involved in the identity management of the "Germans" in Romania, such as the Lutheran and the Catholic Churches, or various local and national organizations.

Following the 1918 unification of Greater Romania, an umbrella-organization was founded, aiming to politically represent Germans in Romania as a whole, the *Verband der Deutschen in Rumänien* (Association of the Germans in Romania), with various local branches. This institution was then transformed into the *Deutsche Volksgemeinschaft in Rumänien* (German Ethnic Community in Romania), in 1935, and subsequently into the *Nationalsozialistische Partei der Deutschen Volksgruppe in Rumänien* (National-Socialist Party of the German Ethnic Group in Romania), in 1940.[215] The transformations illustrate the gradual *Gleichschaltung* (bringing into line) with the political processes taking place in Nazi Germany.

The German Ethnic Group aimed to be a Nazi-type institution including all ethnic Germans in Romania and made specific pressures in this respect. Consequently, the 1945 deportation of ethnic Germans from Romania to the Soviet Union was also made possible by the existence of membership lists drafted by the Ethnic Group, thus facilitating the distinction between Germans and non-Germans. After 1945, all institutions officially responsible for the ethnic management of the minority groups, with the partial exception of the Churches, were subordinated to the Communist party. Within the German community, since emigration was a possibility constantly envisaged

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[215] Karl M. Reinerth, "Zu den innenpolitischen Auseinandersetzungen unter den Deutschen in Rumänien zwischen den beiden Weltkriegen," in *Siebenbürgen zwischen den beiden Weltkriegen*, ed. Walter König (Cologne: Böhlau Verlag, 1994), 149-66.

by a large part of the German community in Romania, markers of German ethnicity, such as the command of *hochdeutsch* (High German) were distinctly maintained in order to facilitate a potential smooth future integration in the society of the Federal Republic of Germany.[216] The influence of Germany and of internal German legislation was paradoxically consequential also upon German identification in Romania. Attending a German-language school, being baptized in a Lutheran church (in the Transylvanian case), having been deported to the Soviet Union on the basis of German ethnicity were all *de facto* markers of Germanness, which could be transformed into *de jure* assets for obtaining German citizenship. Romanian authorities acknowledged the existence of a German "coinhabiting nationality" and hence administered German-language schools, publications, theatres, departments of publishing houses etc. For the Romanian state, "Germans" were those who declared themselves as such (or, for all that matters, as "Saxons" or "Swabians"). Those who did that did it mostly on the basis of their mother tongue or on the basis of (re)discovered German ancestry, presumably also in view of a potential migration to Germany.

In practice, from this point of view the situation did not change in the aftermath of 1989: declaring one's ethnicity as "German" at the official censuses qualifies one as a "German". Nonetheless, after 1989, a peculiar phenomenon is more conspicuous than before. The German-language school network significantly diminished, due to German migration to Germany and the absence of qualified teachers and instructors, yet it still exists. There are prestigious public German-language high-schools in towns such as Sibiu, Brașov, Timișoara, Bucharest. Nonetheless, in a great majority, the pupils attending these institutions are not ethnic Germans, but Romanians, Hungarians, or Roma, who thus are educated in German, according to a curriculum theoretically devised for the needs and specificities of the German minority in the country.

Constantly nurtured during the Cold War, the envisaged possibility and desire to migrate to Germany also led to specific ways of representing realities in the potential new state. This was then conducive to a situation in which ethnic Germans in Romania imagined their ideal German homeland in

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[216] Verdery, "The Unmaking"; Marilyn McArthur, "The Politics of Identity: Transylvanian Saxons in Socialist Romania," (PhD diss., University of Massachusetts, 1981).

often naive terms, an imagination nourished by classical literature, an emphasis on German victimhood and a sense of belonging to a Pan-German "imagined community".[217]

Researching the German-speaking press in Romania during the first half of Communist rule, Annemarie Weber posited that the fixation of identity discourses about *Rumäniendeutsche* was a consequence of the creation of the term *rumäniendeutsche Literatur* (Romanian German literature) by literary critics and historians.[218] In effect, Weber's argument implies that the identity stakes within the German-speaking community in Romania should not be understood only in respect to the envisaged migration. Identity conflicts within the community took place on several levels. In Romania, they involved young, anti-Fascist intellectual elites and their parents' generation, accused of having been too close to Nazism.[219] In Germany the conflicts, on different grounds, took place between the *Landsmannschaften* (homeland associations) and the organizations closer to the Lutheran Church, all of them founded by grouplets of Saxons (and Swabians) living in Germany since the 1940s. The former were making pressures for the facilitation of German migration from Romania, seen as the only instrument of salvation for a discriminated and victimized minority group, whereas the latter were advocating that a Romanian German or, more precisely, a Transylvanian Saxon community could exist as such only in Romania.[220]

These conflicts notwithstanding, German migration took place rather unabated in the last decades of Communist rule, when around 10.000 Germans a year left Romania for Germany. The phenomenon then exploded in the immediate aftermath of 1989. In the early 1990s, around 200.000 ethnic Germans left Romania in order to become citizens of the Federal Republic of Germany. Narrating the past of the German minority in Romania means in effect narrating its abandoning the country: from around 800.000 Germans in the interwar period, to about 500.000 in the 1950s, then to slightly more than 100.000 in 1992, to less than 60.000 according to the census conducted in 2002,

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[217] Koranyi, "Between East and West".

[218] Annemarie Weber, *Rumäniendeutsche? Diskurse zur Gruppenidentität einer Minderheit (1944-1971)* (Cologne: Böhlau Verlag, 2010).

[219] Richard Wagner, "Cărțile 'pline' și cerul 'gol'," interview by Rodica Binder, *Observator cultural*, April 20, 2006.

[220] Georg Weber et al., "Bleiben oder Gehen - tertium non datur? Eine empirische Studie zum Auswanderungskonflikt unter den Siebenbürger Sachsen nach dem 2. Weltkrieg," in *Emigration der Siebenbürger Sachsen*, 517-625.

and finally to about 30.000 according to the preliminary results of the 2011 census.[221]

## 3.4. Conclusions

This chapter provided an overview of the German presence in Romania, meant on the one hand to contribute to the better contextualization of the research focus, and on the other hand to address some of the tensions and interrogations related to the "German" identification of Transylvanian Saxons, Banat Swabians and to a smaller extent also of the other German-speaking groups in Romania. I argued that roughly until the second half of the 19th century, the "German" cultural belonging of these groups was a rather loose cultural affiliation, to a large extent devoid of nationally-oriented connotations. I also emphasized that the German-speaking community in the country has historically been much more heterogeneous than the simple phrase "German minority in Romania" makes it appear.

Focusing on the case of Transylvanian Saxons, this chapter showed that self-identification discourses nurtured by their elites were bound to be at odds with the post-1918 political realities. More precisely, discourses emphasizing the Saxon presence in Transylvania understood as a Western bulwark clashed with the incorporation of the region into a country presumably belonging to the "non-Western" world. The growing emphasis on "Germanness", reaching its climax during the Second World War, would then be consequential on the long term, as it directly contributed to the subsequent mass migration of the German-speaking population from Romania to Germany.

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[221] For official German numbers on German migration from Eastern Europe to Germany, from the 1950s to 2000, divided by countries, see Daniel Levy, "Integrating Ethnic Germans in West Germany: The Early Postwar Period," in *Coming Home to Germany? The Integration of Ethnic Germans from Central and Eastern Europe in the Federal Republic*, ed. David Rock and Stefan Wolff (New York: Berghahn Books, 2002), 33-4, tables 1.3. and 1.4.

# 4. Research Context

## 4.1. A Romanian Tradition of Appreciating the Germans. German and Saxon Views of the East and of Romanianness

In order to situate my research question both topically and methodologically, a recourse to a broad body of literature is useful. In this chapter I first devote attention to the existence of a "tradition of appreciating the Germans", emphasizing the presence of positive representations of Germanness in Romanian cultural history, albeit in contexts different as compared to the contemporary one. I do that by referring to both primary and secondary sources. I continue by commenting upon the already existing scholarship on images and representations of the Germans in Romania, distinguishing its main findings, but also singling out the gaps to be filled and thus showing where my own research stands in relationship to the already existing studies. In a direct link with some of the elaborations in the previous chapter, I touch upon the apparent counterpart of Romanian representations of Germanness and of the German minority, namely German and Romanian German representations of Romanianness and of Romania, focusing on the Transylvanian Saxon case, once again the most eloquent. Last, but not least, I introduce literature on representations and perceptions of other ethnic minorities within Romanian society, as my own research is meant to enrich the body of knowledge in the field. A comparative approach, even if it only lingers in the background of the investigation, can definitely contribute to a better understanding of the research matter.

My own investigation does not fall on infertile ground: previous studies have addressed questions and issues akin to the specific interests laid down in this thesis. Consequently, the existence of several enquiries, with slightly different methods and foci, yet all related to the image of the German minority in Romania enables me to situate the present research against a wider, more general background. In the following pages, I will comment upon these secondary sources, whilst also introducing a succinct chronological presentation of views of Romanian intellectuals regarding Germans in Romania, based upon primary sources.

From a methodological point of view, the greatest part of the already existing studies dealing with how Germans have been represented in Romanian society and culture are tributary to the so-called "imagology", the study of the "image of the other" and of representations of the "national character", scholarly discipline derived from comparative literature.[222] The interconnections of imagology and other disciplines, such as history, have already been highlighted.[223] An important asset of such studies is that they enable situating the post-1989 analysis of representations of the German minority in Romanian society in a broader chronological framework.

One of the most important such works, dealing with the image of the German in Romanian literature has been produced by Daniel Eiwen, in a rarely quoted doctoral dissertation from 1988. Some of its findings were then presented in a condensed manner in an article published in 1998. Eiwen managed to set a historical perspective on the image of the German in Romanian culture.[224] He emphasized the importance of the political context in the development and stabilization of representations of Germanness, both before and after 1945. His journey through Romanian literature underlined various ways of representing the Germans in Transylvania: from the very positive remarks on Saxon civilization made by Dinicu Golescu, to the multifaceted representations in interwar Romanian literature and to the often caricaturized and politically influenced representations of Saxons after the imposition of Communist rule in Romania. The results of Eiwen's research look very much like an inventory, dauntingly comprehensive, of Romanian language writers and literary works dealing one way or another with Germans, both from Romania and Germany, and with Germany. Taking this into account, together with the period under focus, which ends in the 1980s, Eiwen's research constitutes in effect a good starting point for investigating further questions related to the image of the German in Romanian culture and

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[222] William L. Chew III, "What's in a National Stereotype? An Introduction to Imagology at the Threshold of the 21st Century," *Language and Intercultural Communication* 6, no. 3-4 (2006): 179-87; Joep Leerssen, "Imagology: History and Method," in *Imagology: the Cultural Construction and Literary Representation of National Characters. A Critical Survey*, ed. Manfred Beller and Joep Leerssen (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2007), 17-32.

[223] Sorin Mitu, *Transilvania mea. Istorii, mentalități, identități* (Iași: Polirom, 2006), 44-85.

[224] Daniel Eiwen, "Das Bild Deutschlands und des Deutschen in der rumänischen Literatur," (PhD diss., University of Cologne, 1988); Daniel Eiwen, "Das Bild der Siebenbürger Deutschen im rumänischen Schrifttum. Momentaufnahmen aus seiner Entstehung und Entwicklung," in *Das Bild des Anderen in Siebenbürgen*, ed. Konrad Gündisch, Wolfgang Höpken and Michael Markel (Cologne: Böhlau Verlag, 1998), 263-84.

society in a deeper manner. In other words, Eiwen's findings constitute a background source for my research.

I have mentioned above Dinicu Golescu, the 19th century Wallachian boyar wearing an "Oriental" attire whilst discovering the backwardness of his own country through his travels in the West. The publication Eiwen referred to, which secured Golescu's place in Romanian cultural and literary history, is an account of his journey of discovery, from Wallachia to "Europe", taking place in the 1820s. Golescu practically used his astonishment in front of European civilization in order to emphasize what he started to perceive as shortcomings and backwardness of his own country. Thus, it is a paramount example attesting the intrinsic relationships between discourses on otherness and self-identification discourses. Alex Drace-Francis referred to Golescu's work as "Eurotopia as manifesto", pinpointing on the one hand the visible fascination with "Europe" expressed by the 19th century boyar and on the other hand the political character of his work.[225]

Golescu's journey passes through Brașov and Țara Bârsei, actually the first town and region he encountered after crossing the border from Wallachia to Transylvania. There, he praised Saxon diligence and order, remarking that "a stranger, as soon as he enters their villages, would recognize their industriousness and the rightful character of their laws, for the happiness of the nation".[226] Nonetheless, as Drace-Francis noted, despite his overall positive assessment of Saxon and also Hungarian localities, Golescu did not describe anything as "European" "until at least halfway through his description of Vienna".[227] In this context, two things can be inferred. Firstly, the prestige associated with Transylvanian Saxons and Banat Swabians, is seen as a counterpart to the poor economic and cultural state in Golescu's native Wallachia. Secondly, the unclear status of Transylvania in Golescu's view, fundamentally different from his home country, yet not necessarily straightforwardly "European", is anticipatory of subsequent identification debates regarding the cultural belonging of Romania's different regions and is

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[225] Alex Drace-Francis, "Dinicu Golescu's *Account of My Travels* (1826): Eurotopia as Manifesto," in *Balkan Departures. Travel Writing from Southeastern Europe*, ed. Wendy Bracewell and Alex Drace-Francis (New York: Berghahn Books, 2009), 47-73.
[226] Dinicu Golescu, "Însemnare a călătoriii mele Constandin Radovici din Golești făcută în anul 1824, 1825, 1826," in *Scrieri*, ed. Mircea Anghelescu (Bucharest: Minerva, 1990), 5-6. Originally published in 1826.
[227] Drace-Francis, "Dinicu Golescu's Account," 61.

illustrating the "liminality" present in symbolic geographies aiming to describe regions or countries in "Eastern Europe".

Although Eiwen did not mention him, it is definitely worth referring to Ioan Pop Reteganul, Romanian pedagogue in Transylvania, who gathered a collection of moralistic examples for the "people", at the beginning of the 1900s.[228] Herein, the Saxons in Transylvania enjoyed an extremely laudatory account, as they were considered to be a model worthy of emulation, in a section with a telling title, "Să luăm pildă" (Let's Take Example). According to Pop Reteganul, one could see "wonders" in their villages, their gardens were "heaven on earth". Consequently, Romanians could learn a lot from Saxons. At the same time, the latter were portrayed as victims of the Jews, who allegedly had "caught too deep roots amongst them".[229] The existence of a fundamentally hierarchical relationship between Saxons and Romanians in Transylvania is crystal-clear in Pop Reteganul's text. Interestingly, this representation seems to easily coexist with xenophobic views of other ethnic or religious groups.

In a different setting and with a much wider intellectual breadth, historian Nicolae Iorga also emphasized the civilizing role of the Transylvanian Saxons in Transylvania and their influence as models for ethnic Romanians. The passage below is often quoted in texts on and by Transylvanian Saxons, as it has easily turned into an important self-identification marker within the Saxon community:

> ...to have brought superior culture, to have founded urban life on both sides of the Carpathians, to have definitively settled the life of the entire Transylvania in fixed forms, to have connected West and East all the way to the Danube and to the far-away "Tartar", Greek and Turkish countries, by means of commercial relationships, to have fruitfully exerted Western influences upon the oldest Orientally colored Romanian art, to have helped the success of Romanian national language upon the medieval cultural form of Slavonian language...[230]

The Oriental versus Occidental dichotomy is conspicuous and the entire text by Iorga is readable as a praise of Saxon influence upon Romanian culture in

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[228] Ioan Pop Reteganul, *Pilde și sfaturi pentru popor* (Gherla: Edit. proprietatea și tiparul Tipografiei "Aurora" A. Todoran, 1900).

[229] Ibid., 18-22.

[230] Nicolae Iorga, "Prefață," in *Ce sînt și ce vor sașii din Ardeal. Expunere din izvor competent* (Bucharest: Tipografia "Cultura Neamului Românesc", 1919), 4-5.

Transylvania. Although representative of the conservative, ethno-nationalist cultural current called *sămănătorism*, Iorga attributed to Transylvanian Saxons an educational role as regards their relationship to the Romanian population. He understood the historical Saxon-Romanian relationships in Transylvania as fundamentally unequal, with the former being representatives of a higher culture, and disseminating it to the latter. He posited that the Saxon input in Romanian culture consists mainly in their influence towards the acclimatization of a series of traits which are in effect symptoms of modernization: urbanization, social and institutional stabilization, contribution to the development of the Romanian vernacular.

In a more neutral tone, yet acknowledging the positive influences of the German colonists, together with their industriousness, order, zealousness for work and hence economic wellbeing, Liviu Marian, Romanian MP in Bessarabia and the son of ethnographer Simion Florea Marian, dedicated in 1920 a succinct brochure to the Germans in this region.[231]

As regards the Banat Swabians, Ioan Slavici made remarks of a similar kind in his memoirs, noticing their being "better-off, better dressed, culturally superior", with "blossoming villages, cattle and horses of the best breed, well settled churches and schools".[232] Eiwen commented upon Slavici's complex depiction of Romanian-Swabian relationships in his well known novel, *Mara*, a love story between a Romanian girl and a Swabian boy: cultural conflict, economic frictions, existing alongside economic partnership, German education as a means for social advancement are all elements in the novel.[233] In one of his interwar xenophobic rants, Mircea Eliade singled out "Swabians" as the only "allies" of Romanians amongst the several other "foreign" ethnic groups in the country.[234] Emil Cioran, from the same intellectual generation as Eliade, and sharing with the latter the right-oriented views and the destiny of living in exile since the early 1940s, was deploring in his personal

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[231] Liviu Marian, *Coloniștii nemți din Basarabia. Considerații istorice, politice și etnografice* (Bucharest: Tipografia "Providența", 1920).

[232] Ioan Slavici, "Lumea prin care am trecut," in *Amintiri. Lumea prin care am trecut*, ed. Constantin Mohanu (Bucharest: Minerva, 1994), 222. Originally published posthumously, in 1930.

[233] Eiwen, "Das Bild Deutschlands," 50-3.

[234] Leon Volovici, *Nationalist Ideology and Antisemitism: The Case of Romanian Intellectuals in the 1930s*, transl. Charles Kormos (Oxford: Pergamon Press, 1991), 123.

correspondence from the 1980s the Saxon migration from Romania. He saw in the Saxon population "a moral oasis in the Balkans".[235]

Alongside Eiwen's work, referred to previously, there are a series of other approaches to the question of Romanian representations of Germanness and of the German-speaking populations in Transylvania, Banat and other regions. For example, Adolf Armbruster looked at bilateral Romanian-Saxon representations from medieval chronicles up to 18th century Enlightenment thinkers.[236] The distinct ethnic framing of the historical documents Armbruster worked with has its shortcomings, as it derives from a nationally-oriented interpretation. In other words, as in many other similar studies, the danger of ascribing *post factum* identities and of instrumentalizing ethnicity as a heuristic device in order to study a period when it was not developed on the same terms as in recent history, is not consistently eschewed. "Ethnic identities" in the 15th century had a totally different relevance, scope and consequences than in modernity. Nonetheless, Armbruster's excavation for references to Saxons in medieval "Romanian" chronicles has the merit of showing that geographical proximity led to intellectual contact and reciprocal influences.

At the same time, worth mentioning is the attention Armbruster granted to the Transylvanian School, an 18th century movement with a quintessential role in the development of Romanian national identity, and its concern for Saxon presence in Transylvania. In his study on "our Germans" in Romanian culture, Dumitru Hîncu also remarked the civilizational prestige associated with Transylvanian Saxons in the works of one of the main representatives of the Transylvanian School, Ioan Budai-Deleanu, who considered that Saxons stand highest amongst the peoples in Transylvania on the cultural ladder.[237] Zăloagă commented upon Gheorghe Șincai's representation of the Saxon population, emphasizing three main coordinates considered to define it: vassalage to the Hungarian Crown, privileged burghers, active traders.[238]

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[235] E. M. Cioran, *Scrisori către cei de-acasă*, ed. Dan C. Mihăilescu, trans. Tania Radu (Bucharest: Humanitas, 1995), 268.
[236] Adolf Armbruster, *Dacoromano-saxonica* (Bucharest: Editura Științifică și Enciclopedică, 1980).
[237] Hîncu, *Noi și germanii noștri*, 81.
[238] Zăloagă, "Imaginea Celuilalt".

Undoubtedly, the national movement kindled through the programmatic efforts of the representatives of the Transylvanian School has not shown an exaggerated interest for the Saxons, yet in its obsession with Romanian national identity it dealt extensively and critically with the other "others" of Romanianness, mainly Hungarians and Slavs. It rejected their influence upon Romanian identity, at the same time strongly emphasizing the Roman origin of the latter. It is significant that the most important members of the Transylvanian School have studied, for shorter or longer periods of their life, in Vienna, at the time capital of the Habsburg Empire.[239] The influential role of a German cultural model in their case is a fact that can hardly be contradicted.

Furthermore, various other studies, directly or only tangentially linked with representations of the German minority within Romanian memory and identity discourses have produced arguments going in the same direction. In a short article published in 1974, Hans von Diplich commented upon the fuzzy and unstable character of the image of the German as an "enemy" in Romanian culture and politics, opposed to the much more stable and better fixed image of the German as a "friend". In his own words: "Romanians had no compact enemy-image of the Germans. Their respect for them persisted, and with it the friend-image up to our days."[240] Furthermore, although Bessarabia was part of Romania only for a short period of time, between 1918 and 1940, at first glance it appears that positive representations of Germans in the region are strikingly similar to the ones in Romania.[241]

More recently, Lucian Boia published a study on the Wilhelmian Reich-friendly attitudes of a series of Romanian politicians, journalists and intellectuals during the First World War, going counter the common knowledge that there was a national consensus in favour of the alliance with the Triple Entente.[242] On a different note, Dragoș Petrescu argued that during Communism ordinary Romanians developed a real fascination with West

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[239] Keith Hitchins, *The Rumanian National Movement in Transylvania, 1780-1849* (Harvard: Harvard University Press, 1969), 58-111.

[240] Hans von Diplich, "Das Bild des Deutschen im Blickfeld der Rumänen," *Südostdeutsche Vierteljahresblätter* 23, no. 2 (1974): 88-95.

[241] Stelian Dumistrăcel, "Germanul în mentalul rural românesc", in Zub, *Identitate și alteritate*, 221-39.

[242] Lucian Boia, *Germanofilii. Elita intelectuală românească în anii Primului Război Mondial* (Bucharest: Humanitas, 2009).

Germany, a symbol of capitalist luxury disseminated through unexpected means, such as Neckermann catalogues.[243]

Looking for images and representations of Germanness, Romanian scholarship has also tried to use sayings and proverbs in order to discover the way the Germans have been perceived by Romanians. However, the particular results of such an investigation are tenuous and lack substance. In clumsy English, Dumitru Stanciu attempted to undertake a study of the sort, yet its results are nothing but an extensive enumeration of contradicting traits and features associated with Germanness in Romanian "popular wisdom", without any critical examination thereof.[244]

In order to have a comprehensive picture of the Romanian-German relationships and reciprocal perceptions, considerations on the "German" (i.e. from Germany) view of Romanianness and of the Romanians have to be added. I have shown in the previous chapter that Saxon elites tended to view Romanians and the Romanian state as part of an underdeveloped, "Balkan" world. Such views seemed to communicate directly with the broader German representations of Romanianness and of the East.

The paradigmatic study on the German view of Romanians and of the Romanian principalities was undertaken by Klaus Heitmann. *Das Rumänenbild im deutschen Sprachraum* (The Image of the Romanians in the German Language Space) is an enlightening read on the way Romanians were perceived within the German-speaking world between 1775 and 1918.[245] Heitmann's investigation has an instructive and broadening upshot, as it suggests that a comparative study would probably lead to the conclusion that the German image of the Romanians was part and parcel of a larger complex of representations, namely that of the underdeveloped Eastern Europe.[246] Conjoining his findings to more recent studies seems to prove him right.

Vejas Gabriel Liulevicius analyzed what he called a German "myth" of the East, emerging at the beginning of the 19th century, and pointed out its

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[243] Dragoș Petrescu, "Conflicting Perceptions of (Western) Europe: The Case of Communist Romania, 1958-1989," in *Europa im Ostblock. Vorstellungen und Diskurse (1945-1991) / Europe in the Eastern Bloc: Imaginations and Discourses (1945-1991)*, ed. José M. Faraldo, Paulina Gulińska-Jurgiel and Christian Domnitz (Cologne: Böhlau Verlag, 2008), 215-17.

[244] Dumitru Stanciu, "The Germans in the Romanian Proverbs," *Anuarul Institutului de Istorie și Arheologie A. D. Xenopol* 19 (1982): 95-103.

[245] Klaus Heitmann, *Das Rumänenbild im deutschen Sprachraum, 1775-1918. Eine imagologische Studie* (Cologne: Böhlau Verlag, 1985).

[246] Ibid., 299-300.

main themes: "an intrinsic eastern disorder, disease, dirt, a deep incapacity for self-rule, which was expressed in the allied phenomena of despotism and slavery; sympathetic encounters; and the assertion of a particular German national calling or mission."[247] Recently, David Hamlin looked into the discursive constructions of the German "encounter" with Romania and with Romanians during the First World War, underlining the "Euro-Orientalist" frame of reference most suitable for comprehending these constructions.[248]

It is a matter of debate whether the Transylvanian Saxon views of Romanians can be fully integrated into the broader "German" views. Armbruster produced a series of studies emphasizing that Saxon historiography was very much aware of the "Latin/Roman character" of the Romanian population, a fashionable topic during the Communist regime. Furthermore, his social history studies also focused on the positive character of Saxon-Romanian human relationships, especially between the 16th and the 18th centuries.[249]

Nonetheless, also building on the bibliographical references used in the previous chapter, I argue that conservative Transylvanian Saxon elites fundamentally tended to view Romanians and Romanian institutions, especially the ones on the other side of the Carpathians, according to a pattern of a similar nature, a mixture of condescending and empathetic views, an "ugly caricature".[250] Integrative attempts usually regarded the potential development of "Transylvanism", thus showing a potential distinct openness towards Transylvanian Romanians, which was not doubled by the same kind of openness towards Romanians in Wallachia or Moldavia.[251] The constant cultural rapprochement towards the German space doubled, from the end of the 19th century onwards, by a political rapprochement towards the German state as such, went hand in hand with a specific self-image, whose main traits were connected with the civilizing role, the "calling" or the "mission" of the

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[247] Vejas Gabriel Liulevicius, *The German Myth of the East: 1800 to the Present* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 48.
[248] David D. Hamlin, "'Wo sind wir?' Orientalism, Gender and War in the German Encounter with Romania," *German History* 28, no. 4 (December 2010): 424-52; for the concept of "Euro-Orientalism" see Ezequiel Adamovsky, *Euro-Orientalism: Liberal Ideology and the Image of Russia in France (c. 1740-1880)* (Bern: Peter Lang, 2006).
[249] Armbruster, *Dacoromano-saxonica*; Adolf Armbruster, *Auf die Spuren der eigenen Identität* (Bucharest: Ed. Enciclopedică, 1991).
[250] Heitmann, *Das Rumänenbild*.
[251] Sacha Davis, "East-West Discourses in Transylvania: Transitional *Erdély*, German-Western *Siebenbürgen* or Latin-Western *Ardeal*?" in *The East-West Discourse: Symbolic Geography and its Consequences*, ed. Alexander Maxwell (Bern: Peter Lang, 2011), 127-54.

Transylvanian Saxons in Eastern Europe. On this grounding, Transylvanian Saxon values and identity discourses were forged in accordance to "Western" values and identities.[252] At the same time, in the terms of Benedict Anderson, this process can also be seen as part of a broader phenomenon leading to the emergence of a Pan-German "imagined community". This phenomenon had quintessential consequences on the long term, on the one hand as regards the self-identification of German-speaking groups in Central- and Eastern Europe, and on the other hand as regards the relationships of these groups with the other ethnicities living in the same regions.

The "Western" self-understanding, also valid in the cases of the other German-speaking ethnic groups in the region, such as the one of Banat Swabians, was bound to be at odds with the understanding of the Romanian state and of the world on the other side of the Carpathians as "Eastern" or as belonging to the "Balkan" region. At the same time, it is fundamental to take it into account whenever analyzing the way Saxons, Swabians and even Germans in general are represented in Romanian discourses. Self- and heterorepresentations are constantly informing and communicating with each other.

## 4.2. Representing the Germans in Romania after 1989. Physical Absence and Mnemonic Presence

In the recent past, several studies dealing directly or tangentially with Germans in Romania, and also with the way they are represented in post-1989 Romanian society have been produced. Their foci and findings definitely need to be addressed in the pages of this dissertation. My own research communicates directly with these studies, building on some of their findings, yet also emphasizing some of their critical points. Without exception, these works suggest that Germans are particularly positively regarded in Romanian society, on both the grassroots and the broader societal level.

In Transylvania and Banat, regions where traditionally there has been an important concentration of ethnic Germans, a conspicuous phenomenon of cultural (re-)branding is taking place, emphasizing their former presence in

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[252] Ibid.; also Harald Roth, "Autostereotype als Identifikationsmuster. Zum Selbstbild der Siebenbürger Sachsen," in Gündisch, Höpken and Markel, *Das Bild des Anderen*, 178-91.

the region. The phenomenon has been analyzed by a series of researchers,[253] confirming the existence of a "privileged Romanian-German relationship".[254] The prestige of the German population and of a "German identity model" in the eyes of the other inhabitants of various localities has also been documented by several studies conducted in both Transylvania and Banat and using a variety of methods.[255] Furthermore, the results of the national survey on inter-ethnic relations in Romania, conducted in 2002, are illustrative, as the existing "hetero-images" regarding the Germans, proved to be predominantly positive. Comparing them to other previous surveys with the same focus, Aurora Liiceanu remarked that the Romanian respect for the German population seems to remain constant.[256]

To a large extent, similar conclusions can be inferred from Cosmin Budeancă's doctoral dissertation, in which he attempted to investigate the way ethnic Germans are seen and remembered in localities in three Transylvanian counties. Budeancă saw his own research as falling under the category of "imagology". Nonetheless, its title, "Imaginea etnicilor germani la românii din Transilvania după 1918" (The Transylvanian Romanian Image of the Ethnic Germans after 1918), is misleading. Budeancă used extensively and exclusively an oral history methodology. Out of post-1989 oral history interviews one can at the most find the image of the Germans as reflected in

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[253] For the case of Banat see Judy Batt, "Reinventing Banat," *Regional and Federal Studies* 12, no. 2 (Summer 2002): 178-202; Bianca Botea, "'Valoare colectivă' şi discurs performativ asupra interculturalităţii: o abordare a noilor procese de dezvoltare la Jimbolia,' in *Banatul din memorie. Studii de caz*, ed. Smaranda Vultur (Timişoara: Marineasa, 2008), 223-46; James Koranyi, "Reinventing the Banat: Cosmopolitanism as a German Cultural Export," in "German Politics and Society from a Cosmopolitan Perspective," ed. Claire Sutherland, special issue, *German Politics and Society* 29, no. 3 (Autumn 2011): 97-112. For case studies in Transylvania see Claudia Nicoleta Câmpeanu, "Material Desires: Cultural Production, Post-Socialist Transformations, and Heritage Tourism in a Transylvanian Town," (PhD diss., University of Texas at Austin, 2008); Monica Stroe, "Sibiu European Capital of Culture 2007: Saxonness as a Romanian Cultural Brand," in *Every Day's a Festival! Diversity on Show*, ed. Susanne Küchler, László Kürti and Hisham Elkadi (Wantage: Sean Kingston Publishing, 2011), 83-112.

[254] Alin Gavreliuc, *Mentalitate şi societate. Cartografii ale imaginarului identitar în Banatul contemporan* (Timişoara: Editura Universităţii de Vest, 2003), 285-87.

[255] Liviu Chelcea and Puiu Lăţea, *România profundă în comunism. Dileme identitare, istorie locală şi economie secundară în Sântana* (Bucharest: Nemira, 2000), 63-86; Harald Heppner, with the collaboration of Gloria Man et al. (ed.), *Das Dorf im Kopf. Erinnerungen aus dem rumänischen Banat* (Munich: IKGS Verlag, 2009), 157-78; Roland Girtler (ed.), *Die Letzten der Verbannten. Der Untergang der altösterreichischen Landler in Siebenbürgen/Rumänien* (Vienna: Böhlau Verlag, 1997); Roland Girtler (ed.), *Das letzte Lied vor Hermannstadt. Das Verklingen einer deutschen Bauernkultur in Rumänien* (Cologne: Böhlau Verlag, 2007).

[256] Aurora Liiceanu, "Alteritate etnică şi imaginar colectiv," in *Barometrul relaţiilor etnice 1994-2002. O perspectivă asupra climatului interetnic din România*, ed. Gabriel Bădescu, Mircea Kivu and Monica Robotin (Cluj-Napoca: Centrul de Resurse pentru Diversitate Etnoculturală, 2005), 61.

contemporary social memory, personal remembrances being one of the devices enabling and being enabled by social memory. Furthermore, Budeancă ignored a good part of the literature dealing with Romanian-German relationships in Transylvania. Henceforth his study is short of theoretical breadth, being rather a collection of quotes of his interviewees than a critical analysis of the material gathered through interviews.[257]

A slightly different and theoretically more consistent approach is the one offered by Monica Stroe, who discussed the symbolic capital associated with Saxonness and its role in the case of the 2004 re-election of the mayor of Sibiu, Klaus Johannis. In a short article, Stroe commented upon the existence of a historically rooted "Saxon myth", despite the significant numerical dwindling of the Transylvanian Saxon population in the region. Johannis builds a significant part of his political capital on the basis of this myth. Furthermore, Stroe argued that the existence of representations of a Transylvanian Saxon prestige is best coined by the expression "philo-Saxonism without Saxons", at one point also presented as "Saxonness without Saxons".[258]

Another recent research on Romanian Germans was undertaken by James Koranyi, who focused on the entire post-1945 period, granting a significant amount of attention to post-1989 developments. Koranyi analyzed memory cultures of Transylvanian Saxons and Banat Swabians. Methodologically, he made extensive use of oral history interviews, just like Cosmin Budeancă, yet unlike the latter's, Koranyi's dissertation has a much broader stake than mere recording testimonies. Interviews were used together with a series of other secondary and primary sources. Examining changes in Saxon and Swabian identification discourses, also against the background of external pressures, Koranyi argued that together with the process of European integration a "West Europeanisation of memory" took place in regions such as Transylvania and Banat. As his research focused on what type of stories Saxons and Swabians say about themselves, it also addressed the

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[257] Florin Cosmin Budeancă, "Imaginea etnicilor germani la românii din Transilvania după 1918. Studiu de caz: județele Hunedoara, Alba, Sibiu," (PhD diss., Babeş-Bolyai University Cluj-Napoca, 2007).

[258] Monica Stroe, "Heterorepresentations of Saxonness and Their Political Meanings in Transylvania," in *European, National and Regional Identity: Proceedings of the International Conference "European, National and Regional Identity", Organized in Oradea, 24-26 March 2011, in the Frame of Research Project HURO/0801/180*, ed. Brigitta Balogh et al. (Oradea: Ed. Universității din Oradea, 2011), 195-209.

paternalism and "demi-orientalism" informing their relationship with the Romanian population, on both a discursive and attitudinal level, and also its mirroring in specific Romanian discourses on Romania's relationship to Europe. Furthermore, considering the alleged superior status of German culture in Romania, Koranyi also pinpointed that EU enlargement could be discursively instrumentalized in order to reinforce the presumed "Europeanness" of Saxon and Swabian cultural feats. Interestingly, the same Saxon and Swabian "Europeanness" was (and is) used in a Romanian setting in order to assert Romania's own European belonging, a somewhat paradoxical phenomenon.[259]

The selection of my sources and of my research strategies has been fundamentally dictated in view of these already existing studies and works dealing directly or tangentially with representations of the German minority in post-1989 Romania. In other words, I have chosen a novel research strategy as compared to the previous works, presented in the previous pages. I argue that the main novelty and at the same time the main strength of the research path I pursued are related to the central point occupied by theoretical concepts such as "self-orientalization" and "social memory", used in order to analyze and explain the "philo-Germanism without Germans". My research concentrates on the contemporary period, looking at discourses and actions of political actors instead of the literary sources and oral history interviews constituting the main point of interest for students of imagology, and already used, for example in Budeancă's dissertation, quoted above. Fundamentally, my work is related to Monica Stroe's research, yet much wider in scope and looking at a variety of different sources.

Conjoining three different sets of sources, from three different discursive fields (politics, mass-media, historiography) is also one of the most substantial inputs my work brings forth. Previous works, both those with a contemporary focus, such as the studies by Budeancă and Stroe, and those with a more historical perspective, did not make use of such a vast corpus of sources. My preference for an essentially qualitative approach of discursive material has also been dictated by the fact that sociological investigations of representations of otherness in post-1989 have recurrently taken place: hence I

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[259] James Thomas Koranyi, "Between East and West: Romanian German Identities since 1945," (PhD diss., University of Exeter, 2008).

chose a research path prone to bring forth substantive novelties both in terms of methodology and of sources.

At the same time, my analysis confirms Koranyi's findings, especially as regards the "Europeanization" of memory and the reinforcement of paternalistic German-Romanian relationships against the background of EU enlargement. Yet as compared to Koranyi's, my research very much turns upside down the perspective: I look at Romanian memory and identity discourses and at the place "Germans" have therein. Henceforth, my own investigation provides substantial space to the relationship between Romanian self-identification discourses and implicit or explicit discourses on German otherness. In effect, it addresses the former through a critical investigation of the latter.

## 4.3. A Wider Network of Representations. Other "Others" in Romania

Analyzing representations of the German "other" and the place Germans appear to have within Romanian social memory and within collective memory and identity discourses seems in many ways a self-sufficient endeavour. Nonetheless, situating it within a wider network of representations of ethnic otherness enables subsequent comparative observations, thus bringing an added value to the arguments presented throughout this dissertation. Furthermore, looking at representations of other others shows, through contradistinction, the peculiarity of the German case in the Romanian setting. Thus, it anticipates the analytical gains to be derived out of the juxtaposition of representations of the German minority and of perceptions regarding the other ethnic groups in Romania's past and present.

When thinking of images of otherness in Romanian culture and society, many would probably consider Andrei Oișteanu's *Inventing the Jew*, an erudite work of cultural anthropology on the historical representations of the Jewish population in Romanian culture, against a wider Central-European backdrop, the most representative example of a study on the subject.[260]

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[260] Andrei Oișteanu, *Inventing the Jew: Antisemitic Stereotypes in Romanian and Other Central East-European Cultures*, transl. Mirela Adăscăliței (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2009).

Unearthing stereotypes and *clichés* associated with Jewishness in the said socio-cultural setting, Oișteanu produced a comprehensive inventory of perceived Jewish traits and features, emphasizing their paradoxes, and also their contemporary echoes.

The often negative social and cultural representations associated with the geographically most proximate ethnic groups are documented by several sources, both on a historical and on a contemporary level. Oișteanu's analysis of the image of the Jew is only one of the studies using such sources and framing them appropriately. Leonte Ivanov aimed to delineate the main elements of the image of the Russian and of Russia in Romanian literature between 1840 and 1948.[261] The methodology and the selection of authors whose works are put under spotlight were not properly explicated. Nevertheless, some of Ivanov's concrete observations suggest the existence of specific negative representations of Russia and the Russians in Romanian literature, closely linked on a causal level with the political context.

Sorin Mitu noticed the absence of comprehensive studies regarding representations of Hungarians within the Romanian-speaking world.[262] However, in his succinct observations on the emergence in the past two centuries of an image of the aforementioned ethnic group, he underlined it as being one "of a permanent confrontation between Romanians and Hungarians, seen as a main element of their history."[263] Ambrus Miskolczy also made brief observations on the reciprocal antagonistic images in the Romanian and Hungarian societies.[264]

Maria Nicoleta Turliuc attempted to offer a more general view of the image of the foreigner in Romania.[265] In the development of her methodological framework, she referred to the likes of Gilbert Durand, Cornelius Castoriadis, and Serge Moscovici. Her study is rich in theoretical considerations, granting comparatively less attention to the empirical case studies. Furthermore, she presented the image of the Jew in modern

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[261] Leonte Ivanov, *Imaginea rusului și a Rusiei în literatura română: 1840-1948* (Chișinău: Cartier, 2004).

[262] Mitu, *Transilvania mea*, 229-239.

[263] Ibid., 239.

[264] Ambrus Miskolczy, "Das Bild vom Anderen in Siebenbürgen," in *Das Bild vom Anderen. Identitäten, Mentalitäten, Mythen und Stereotypen in multiethnischen europäischen Regionen*, 2nd revised edition, ed. Valeria Heuberger, Arnold Suppan and Elisabeth Vyslonzil (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 1999), 169-75.

[265] Maria Nicoleta Turliuc, *Imaginar, identitate și reprezentări sociale. Imaginea elementului alogen în mentalul colectiv românesc* (Iași: Ed. Universității Al. Ioan Cuza, 2004).

Romanian culture in the second half of the 19ᵗʰ century, yet without any reference whatsoever to Oișteanu's magisterial work, published in Romanian in 2001. Turliuc's investigation is flawed at times by superficial accounts: according to her, Yiddish is an "altered version of German", whilst in-group Jewish favouritism allegedly functioned "perfectly, if not excessively". Nonetheless, Turliuc's study brings forth a structured image of the Jew, shaped out of several literary, historical or philosophical books from the end of the 19ᵗʰ century and the beginning of the 20th.[266] The xenophobic character of representations of Jews and of Jewishness in the investigated texts is visible. The remaining body of analysis of social representations of foreigners in Romanian society is based upon a series of questionnaires, whose respondents were students from the University of Iași. The very positive attitudes and representations regarding Germans are confirmed therein.[267]

Specific post-1989 accounts also established the existence of negative or neutral representations and attitudes with respect to Hungarians, Jews and Roma. Monica Grancea and Adrian Ciobanu commented on post-1989 xenophobic feeling in Romania, directed mostly against Russians, Jews, Hungarians and Roma.[268] Monitoring some of the most important national weeklies and dailies between October 1996 and March 1997, Vera Cîmpeanu showed the distinctive xenophobic approach implied by the way the abovementioned ethnic groups were represented in mass-media.[269] Iulia Hasdeu analyzed representations of Roma in Romania disseminated by the Museum of the Romanian Peasant and via other channels and came up with a series of "semantic oppositions", stressing the perceived wild and uncivilized character of the Roma.[270] Furthermore, the specific case of the Roma and their place within Romanian self-identification discourses has been comprehensively researched by Shannon Woodcock, who sees in the Roma

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[266] Ibid., 155-182.

[267] Ibid., 183-226.

[268] Mihaela Grancea and Adrian Ciobanu, "Criza identitară românească. Discurs istoriografic și stereotipuri etnoculturale," in Bocșan, Mitu and Nicoară, *Identitate și alteritate* 3:365-67.

[269] Vera Cîmpeanu, "The Image of the National Minorities in the Romanian Press (October 1996 - March 1997)," *Balkan Neighbours Newsletter*, no. 5 (1997): 48-55.

[270] Iulia Hasdeu, "Imagining the Gypsy Woman," transl. Malcolm Scott, in "Picturing 'Gypsies': Interdisciplinary Approaches to Roma Representation," ed. Paloma Gay y Blasco and Dina Iordanova, special issue, *Third Text* 22, no. 3 (May 2008): 347-57.

population a "catalyst" for the antonymic framing of Romanian national identity discourses.[271]

As I show in the empirical chapters of this thesis, specific representations of otherness often make more sense not only if conjoined with self-identification discourses, but also if connected to representations of other others. The multiethnic Romanian setting and the existence of several historical encounters with a series of others, alongside the historical encounter with the "German", gave birth to a multitude of representations of alterity, which are in effect mutually communicating. Consequently, investigating particular images of the "German" in the Romanian context can only gain analytical depth, if implicitly or explicitly linked to other images present therein, of other "others".

## 4.4. Conclusions

The present chapter singled out on the one hand the main features of the already existing studies dealing with representations of the German minority in Romania, and on the other hand the existence of a much broader network of representations of otherness, in the Romanian context, but also in the wider regional one. It argued for the existence of an intellectual tradition of appreciating the German population in Transylvania, Banat, and even other Romanian regions. Furthermore, it reinforced some of the arguments from the previous chapter, regarding the Saxon (and German) views of Romanianness and of the East. The latter are in many ways part of an "Orientalizing" paradigm of thought.

I have suggested in this chapter that my research partly situates itself in the continuation of several other studies and investigations; its novelty is fundamentally the focus on Romanian discourses, and also the conceptual apparatus used to critically discuss them, explicated in the first chapter of this thesis. At the same time, by considering a variety of other researches and studies, dealing with German and Saxon representations of Romania and of Romanianness, but also with representations of other others, in the Romanian setting, this dissertation is structurally open towards comparative

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[271] Shannon Woodcock, "'The Țigan is not a Man': The Țigan Other as a Catalyst for Romanian Ethnonational Identity," (PhD diss., University of Sydney, 2005).

considerations. This chapter thus anticipates the subsequent implicit and explicit comparisons and hierarchizations of ethnic groups, made visible in the following three chapters, through an analysis of a wide range of empirical evidence.

## 5. Romanian Authorities and the German Minority after 1989. Memory Discourses and Minority Politics

### 5.1. Romanian Minority Politics after 1989

As I have stated beforehand, in order to delineate the place of the German in Romanian social memory and in collective memory discourses, or, worded differently, the representations of the German minority in post-1989 Romania, this dissertation analyzes three different fields: politics, print media, and historiography. The present chapter deals with the former of the three. It starts with a contextualizing overview of the overall Romanian minority politics after 1989. It then continues with a discussion of the formation and development of the Democratic Forum of Germans in Romania, the officially recognized ethnic organization representing the German minority in the country following the fall of Communism. The role of this section is to highlight the tensions within the German community and their links with and reverberations upon the relationship with Romanian authorities. The main analytical body of the chapter is dedicated to a series of memory and identity discourses, disseminated by relevant national Romanian political actors, in order to see how is the German minority talked about by Romanian political elites and in what contexts. Then, it addresses some legislative issues touching directly upon the post-1989 fate of the German minority in Romania, in order to establish whether there is a match or a mismatch between the discursive and legislative political levels. It distinctly looks at the stance of Romanian authorities with respect to the controversial 2001 Hungarian Status Law, comparing it to their position, or the absence of one, vis-à-vis legislative attempts of the German state to grant privileges to members of the German minority in Romania. Using mainly secondary sources, the final section of the chapter deals with the construction and reconstruction of memory as cultural heritage, more precisely with the "German" branding of Transylvanian and Banat localities historically inhabited by Saxons and Swabians, where nowadays only few Germans live. It discusses what this phenomenon can make one infer about "Romanian" identification discourses.

For a successful analysis, the larger legal framework, together with the political stances and debates concerning minority politics have to be considered, but also, more specifically, the fact that after 1989, the German minority-related Romanian relationships with the German state have been the locus of specific *enjeux mémoriels* (memory challenges).[272] Considering Rogers Brubaker's analytic triad, consisting of nationalizing states, national minorities and external homelands to which the latter belong on the basis of a construed common culture, the present chapter also grants attention to the role played by the German state as the external homeland of the German minority in Romania.[273]

Brubaker argued that in the case of the German minority in Eastern Europe, "the triangular relationship has a unique and largely nonconflictual configuration".[274] Although this statement is definitely debatable if one considers specific German-Polish and German-Czech frictions on politics of memory, intergovernmental cooperation has been largely successful in accommodating the needs of the German minorities in Eastern Europe, Romania included.[275] Furthermore, Brubaker's relational approach to the study of nationalism, politics of identity and minority politics emphasizes the interdependence of the fields constituting the above-mentioned triadic nexus. Nationalizing state, national minorities and external homelands are not understood as fixed, given entities, but as Bourdieuian political fields, consisting of various co-existing dynamic and mutually competing political stances. Taking this into consideration, alongside the high relevance of internal representations of external fields, Brubaker's relational nexus displays three important features: "the close interdependence of relations *within* and *between* fields", "the *responsive* and *interactive* character of the triadic relational interplay between the fields" and, last but not least, "the *mediated* character of this responsive interplay, the fact that responsive, interactive stance-taking is mediated by representations of stances in an

[272] Pierre de Trégomain, "'Normales'? Les relations germano-roumaines avant et après la chute du Mur," *Allemagne d'aujourd'hui*, no. 182 (2007): 81-9.

[273] Rogers Brubaker, *Nationalism Reframed: Nationhood and the National Question in the New Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 4.

[274] Ibid., 57.

[275] Stefan Wolff, "The Impact of Post-Communist Regime Change and European Integration on Ethnic Minorities: The 'Special' Case of Ethnic Germans in Eastern Europe," in *European Integration and the Nationalities Question*, ed. John McGarry and Michael Keating (London: Routledge, 2006), 139-68.

external field, representations that may be shaped by stances already provisionally held".[276] As it will become visible throughout the chapter, Brubaker's conceptual observations are extremely useful for analyzing the Romanian-German post-1989 relationships, on a discursive and legislative level. As I have already stressed out in the second chapter of this dissertation, looking at both levels is judicious in order to find out whether the "philo-Germanism without Germans" cuts across the varied possibilities of political expression.

Following the revolutionary turmoil of late 1989, the newly emerging Romanian authorities were compelled to cope with both the ideological and legislative legacy of communist rule and of Ceaușescu's personal dictatorship. At first glance, this was supposed to imply a new, reparatory type of positioning both as regards minority politics and the politics of identity/memory. The programmatic documents sketched during the days of December 1989 suggest the embrace of a novel approach in this respect. In the declaration read on state television on behalf of the National Salvation Front (NSF), on December 22, 1989, at Point 7, the "respect for the rights and liberties of national minorities and the guaranteeing of their full equality in rights with Romanians" was stated.[277] The same idea, in a boldly clear-cut manner, was reiterated in the NSF Declaration from January 5, 1990. Therein, the minority politics of the former regime were condemned, the intellectual indebtedness to the 1918 Declaration of Alba Iulia was asserted, and the individual and collective rights and liberties of national minorities were declaratively guaranteed. The Front proclaimed the further insertion into the subsequent new Constitution of a clause in this respect. Similarly, it announced the subsequent drafting of a minorities' law no later than six months after the validation of the Fundamental Law.[278]

Nonetheless, an investigation of the further unfolding of minority politics in Romania reveals fundamental similarities with the situation from 1918. At the end of 1989 the NSF promised the granting of collective rights to the minorities in Romania, a gesture of goodwill and repair following the heavily nationalistic ("homogenizing") policies having taken place during

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[276] Brubaker, *Nationalism Reframed*, 69.
[277] "Comunicatul către țară al Frontului Salvării Naționale," in *Monitorul Oficial al României. Comunicate, decrete-lege, decrete, hotărâri ale Guvernului și alte acte,* December 22, 1989.
[278] "Declarația Frontului Salvării Naționale cu privire la drepturile minorităților din România," *Adevărul*, January 6, 1990.

Ceaușescu's leadership. However, further developments dismissed any such possibility. On the issue of collective minority rights, the official position of the Romanian state has constantly remained one of rigid and stubborn rejection, in opposition with both the Declaration from December 1, 1918 (from 1990 onwards, celebrated each year as a National Holiday) and with the one from January 5, 1990. This paradox has never been addressed. Up until now, Romanian state politics take only individual rights into consideration, on the grounding that minority rights are nothing else but a subspecies of human rights, hence they refer to individuals and not to groups.[279]

Consequently, although the incipient measures announced at the end of 1989 and beginning of 1990 were distinctly well disposed to minorities and minority rights, the situation soon changed. A particular intertwining of a traditional "national discourse" and fear of the "irredentist Hungarian threat" was politically leveraged by some of the new elites. In this context, the existence of specific continuities between interwar Romania, Ceaușescu's Romania and post-1989 Romania, especially in terms of nationalism and minority politics, has been emphasized.[280] Researching the majority-minority division in Slovakia and Romania after 1989, Zsusza Csergő posited that "the post-Ceaușescu Romanian regime [...] continued a nation-state strategy inherited from the previous regime."[281]

The political landscape from the early 1990s is a proof in this respect. Katherine Verdery analyzed this resurgence of nationalism accompanying the incipient transition to capitalism and market democracy, showing that Communist party rule enhanced the national idea, which was afterwards appropriated by a variety of groups in different societal contexts.[282] Saliently provocative, the subtitle of Tom Gallagher's book, "the politics of intolerance", can be fittingly used in order to describe Romanian politics,

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[279] Bogdan Aurescu, "Drepturi individuale vs. drepturi colective," *Observator cultural*, July 31, 2008.

[280] Tom Gallagher, *Romania after Ceaușescu: The Politics of Intolerance* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1995); Cheng Chen, "The Roots of Illiberal Nationalism in Romania: A Historical Institutionalist Analysis of the Leninist Legacy," *East European Politics and Societies* 17, no. 2 (May 2003): 166-201; Radu Cinpoeș, *Nationalism and Identity in Romania: A History of Extreme Politics from the Birth of the State to EU Accession* (London: Tauris Academic Studies, 2010).

[281] Zsuzsa Csergő, "Beyond Ethnic Division: Majority-Minority Debate about the Postcommunist State in Romania and Slovakia," *East European Politics and Societies* 16, no. 1 (February 2002): 27.

[282] Katherine Verdery, "Nationalism and National Sentiment in Postsocialist Romania," in *What Was Socialism, and What Comes Next?* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996): 83-103.

especially in the early 1990s: the creation of the nationalistic movement Vatra Românească (The Romanian Hearth), the Romanian-Hungarian clashes taking place in Târgu Mureș, in March 1990 and the open support of extremist parties such as Greater Romania or the Party of the Unity of the Romanian Nation for the Văcăroiu government (1992-1996) bear proof of the high appeal of nationalism in the period. The widespread induced fear of a potential "Hungarian danger" or of "Hungarian separatism" with regard to Transylvania was disseminated through various channels. Racist views of Roma, perceived as "principal villains in the ongoing shortages in Romanian society", were common currency.[283] In the same vein, the "anti-Semitism without Jews" had found its way in Romanian mass media, but also on the political stage.[284] The intricacies and paradoxes of these phenomena are not to be investigated here, yet apprehending them is relevant, as they emphasize the peculiarity of the object of investigation of this thesis.

Nonetheless, under external pressures and following consecutive democratic transfers of power, Romanian authorities slowly started to meet specific minority demands. One of the most conspicuous changes was the cooptation into the government of the Democratic Alliance of Hungarians in Romania, a consequence of the 1996 elections, won by a reformist coalition. In various ways, Hungarian participation in government has become constant ever since. Undoubtedly, many of the democratic acquisitions in terms of accommodating demands of minority groups were potentiated through Romania's presumed structural need of joining the European concert.

In a 2004 account of Romanian minority politics, Ana Maria Dobre came up with a chronological divide, directly supporting the image of incipient nationalistic-oriented post-Communist authorities, then slowly moving towards the accommodation of minority demands and needs, under

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[283] Ibid. A multitude of other studies emphasize the growing nationalism following the fall of Communism: Katherine Verdery and Gail Kligman, "Romania after Ceaușescu: Post-Communist Communism?' in *Eastern Europe in Revolution*, ed. Ivo Banač (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1992); Alina Mungiu, *Românii după '89. Istoria unei neînțelegeri* (Bucharest: Humanitas, 1995); Vladimir Tismăneanu, *Fantasies of Salvation: Democracy, Nationalism, and Myth in Post-Communist Europe* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998); Gabriel Andreescu, *Ruleta. Români și maghiari, 1990-2000 - jurnal tematic* (Iași: Polirom, 2001); Cinpoeș, *Nationalism and Identity*.

[284] Michael Shafir, "Antisemitism without Jews in Romania," *Report on Eastern Europe*, June 28, 1991.

the impact of Europeanization.[285] Her persuasive perspective centring on EU conditionality and Romanian domestic government set forth the following analytic timeframe: a first period from 1989 to 1995, characterised through inertia, i.e. "lack of change or even resistance to EU required change", a second period, from 1996 to 2000, "characterised by a mixed nature of change and transformation according to the EU conditionality", and, finally, a third period, ranging from 2000 to 2002, which Dobre interpreted "as the beginning of a transformation within the political setting and its relevant policy choices".[286] It can be argued that the latter period can be extended until 2007, the year of Romania's official joining of the European Union, and beyond. It would be difficult to contest that the pressures and conditions associated with European integration in terms of minority rights have contributed to significant legislative and policy changes regarding conditions for development of minority identity.[287] Levente Salat stated that Romanian authorities issued a series of measures aiming at the integration of national minorities; nowadays, considering the complexity of these measures, Romania undoubtedly occupies a leading position on the international scene in this respect, Salat argued.[288] Nonetheless, despite these advancements in terms of minority rights, anti-Hungarian and anti-Roma discourses continue to recurrently come to the surface.

Romanian minority politics have constantly been dictated in view of Romanian-Hungarian developments and clashes of interests, both on an interstate level and on the internal interethnic level. In many ways, the general framework of Romanian minority politics has been shaped by the relationships, conditions, aspirations and contentious issues concerning the Hungarian population, but also concerning the Roma.[289] This situation is first

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[285] Ana Maria Dobre, "The Europeanisation of the Romanian Minority Rights Policy: Misfit, Change and Controversies," *Studia Politica. Romanian Political Science Review* 4, no. 3 (2004): 631-66.

[286] Ibid., 646.

[287] Melanie H. Ram, "Democratization through European Integration: The Case of Minority Rights in the Czech Republic and Romania," *Studies in Comparative International Development*, 38, no. 2 (June 2003): 28-56; Gwendolyn Sasse, "National Minorities and EU Enlargement: External or Domestic Incentives for Accommodation?' in McGarry and Keating, *European Integration*, 64-84.

[288] Levente Salat, "Regimul minorităților naționale din România și contextul internațional al acestuia," in *Politici de integrare a minorităților naționale din România. Aspecte legale și instituționale într-o perspectivă comparată*, ed. Levente Salat (Cluj-Napoca: Fundația CRDE, 2008), 9.

[289] Melanie H. Ram, "Romania: from Laggard to Leader?" in *Minority Rights in Central and Eastern Europe*, ed. Bernd Rechel (London: Routledge, 2009), 180-94.

and foremost linked with the numerical reality. Numbering around 1.200.000 according to the preliminary results of the 2011 census, the percentage of ethnic Hungarians in Romania lies at about 6.5 from the entire population of the country. Very well organized and politically disciplined, ethnic Hungarians have constantly sent representatives of the Democratic Alliance of Hungarians in Romania (DAHR) in the Parliament. Through ethnic voting, the Hungarian organization has recurrently managed to attain results over the minimum threshold for parliamentary representation of a party, being the only ethnic organization with results of the sort in Romania. Furthermore, as I have emphasized, starting with 1996, DAHR has constantly participated in government or, as was the case between 2000 and 2004, overtly supported the government, thus succeeding to push through specific ethnicity-based claims. It should also be noted that the other state-recognised minorities, Germans included, enjoy the constitutional right to send one representative in the Romanian Parliament, this provision being often a reason for self-boasting of Romanian authorities, no matter the political colour, as it is meant to disseminate the image of a state extremely friendly and well disposed to minorities.

After the Hungarian minority, the Roma population is the second largest minority group in Romania. For a variety of reasons, the situation of the Roma is fundamentally different from the one of other ethnic groups. Until the second half of the 19th century, they have been slaves, a situation having its similarities with the Afro-American situation in the USA. Furthermore, Roma lack a kin-state to lobby for their rights. With many of them living under the poverty threshold, the infelicitously called "Roma issue" is in many ways a social issue. Despite EU pressures and funding, Roma integration is in many ways more of a failure than a success in Romania.[290] Anti-Gypsism is an important social and even cultural problem in the country, with political attempts to change the situation being rather unsuccessful. The relevance of the negative stereotypes related to the "Ţigan Other" (Gypsy Other) for Romanian ethno-national identity has been persuasively showed by Shannon Woodcock.[291] All in all, the place occupied

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[290] Gábor Fleck and Cosima Rughiniş (ed.), *Come Closer: Inclusion and Exclusion of Roma in Present-Day Romanian Society* (Bucharest: Human Dynamics, 2008).
[291] Shannon Woodcock, "'The Ţigan Is Not a Man': the Ţigan Other as Catalyst for Romanian National Identity" (PhD diss., University of Sydney, 2005).

by other minorities, especially by Hungarians and Roma, in Romanian contemporary society and in the course of history, is relevant in order to better understand the positive representations of Germanness analyzed and referred to throughout this dissertation. The profound meaning of the latter comes more easily to the surface if they are placed in a comparative context. Representations of Germanness get endowed with specific values and significances often communicating directly not only with Romanian self-identification discourses, but also with social, cultural and even political images of other ethnic groups as present in Romanian society.

## 5.2. The German Minority and the Democratic Forum of Germans in Romania after the Fall of Communism

Alongside the interethnic Romanian-Hungarian tensions of the period, the early 1990s also witnessed the mass migration of Romania's Germans, in fact the climax of a social phenomenon that had started roughly during and after the Second World War. Against the background of civil unrest and nationalistic policies, the mass exodus of Romania's Germans in the early 1990s does not appear nowadays as extraordinarily surprising. Communism is usually held accountable for the induced decision of Romania's Germans to leave the country, yet in the first years of post-Communism around 130.000 ethnic Germans from Romania migrated to Germany, roughly as many as in the 1970s and 1980s.

Intellectually scrutinizing the situation from the end of 1989 and the beginning of 1990 provides a more nuanced perspective upon the decisions, but also upon the discourses regarding the fate of the German community in Romania. The often sadly trumpeted twilight of German culture and civilization in Transylvania and Banat took place against a background of mixed political decisions, feelings, emotions and perceptions. The dilemmatic question *bleiben oder gehen?* (to stay or to leave?), obsessively impregnated everything connected with Romanian Germans at the time. In *Hermannstädter Zeitung* and *Neuer Weg* (since 1993, renamed as *Allgemeine Deutsche Zeitung*), the two most important German-language periodicals in Romania, there are numerous texts dealing with this issue, especially in the early 1990s, the years with the highest numbers of German migrants from Romania to Germany.

The dissolution of the community seemed to be an unstoppable phenomenon: its multiple causes and explanations were linked first and foremost with the history of the German minority in Romania under Communism, but also with the poor performance of the first post-1989 Romanian governments.

In a move similar to the Hungarian one, German elites in Romania used the first signs of democracy and founded as early as December 23, 1989, an organization meant to represent the minority. The rapidity with which Germans in Romania, first and foremost Transylvanian Saxons, organized themselves, can be understood by the recourse to the rich political tradition of the pre-1945 history of the community. At the same time, taking into account the excessively Romanianizing policies carried out by Ceaușescu's Romania, the urge to create an ethnic organization meant to represent them can be seen as an attempt to overpower the ethnic nationalistic[292] tendencies imbuing a relevant part of the Romanian social and cultural life in the respective period.[293]

On December 23, 1989 several members of the German community in Sibiu gathered in Paul Philippi's house (but also in other localities in Transylvania and Banat), in order to discuss the future of the German minority in Romania "under the new political omens". On December 27, the German Forum in Sibiu was officially constituted. On the following day the German Forum in Romania was grounded in Sighișoara and two days later its delegates, Ingmar Brandsch, Michael Gross and Horst Schuller-Anger, read live on national television the message addressed to the Council of the NSF, thus establishing the first *de facto* communication with the new authorities.[294] The Forum offered its support for the NSF and drew attention to the numerical dwindling of the German community in the past quarter of a century. At the same time, it saluted point 7 in the NSF declaration of December 22, and it stated its willingness to provide a constructive

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[292] I use the term "ethnic nationalism" as opposed to "civic nationalism", the former being an exclusive ideology on the basis of ethnic origin, whereas the latter refers to a concept of nationhood based upon citizenship.

[293] Josef C. Karl, "Die Minderheitenorganisation Demokratisches Forum der Deutschen in Rumänien (DFDR)/ Forumul Democrat al Germanilor din România (F.D.G.R.) seit 1989: Politisches Subjekt oder Objekt," *Trans. Internet-Zeitschrift für Kulturwissenschaften*, no. 16 (May 2006), http://www.inst.at/trans/16Nr/14_6/karl16.htm (accessed March 9, 2012).

[294] Hannelore Baier, "In der Heimat Europa heimisch. Glanzlichter in der 20-jährigen Geschichte des Demokratischen Forums der Deutschen in Rumänien," *Deutsches Jahrbuch für Rumänien 2010* (Bucharest: ADZ Verlag, 2010), 27.

contribution to the development and stabilization of the society in Romania and to bring a new future to the centuries-old values of German past.[295]

Further on, the founding statements of the Forum were read in front of a wider audience on January 8, 1990, in Sibiu. Following the experiences of authoritarian governance under the Ceaușescu regime, the objectives were from the very beginning sharply summarized: "We want to take part in decision-making".[296] Looking back at the two decades' history of the German Forum, Paul Philippi, president of the Forum between 1992 and 1998 and currently honorary president of the organization, spoke in the same terms.[297] The propositions advanced by the Forum at the beginning of 1990 were aiming to countermand the nationalizing measures taken under Ceaușescu. Henceforth, the Forum was pleading for the right to self-determination in cultural matters, the right to say in matters regarding education, making the history of Germans in Romania a subject to study in German-speaking schools, making allowances for graduate study in German, setting up cultural institutes dedicated to the German minority in Sibiu and Timișoara, receiving subsidies from the state in order to maintain German culture and identity in Romania, the use of German toponymies in German-language media, the reintroduction of the German language programme on state television, the reselling of state-acquired properties of members of the German minority to their former owners.[298]

In practice, the main rationale behind the foundation of the Forum was the desire to attempt and overcome the effects of the state-sponsored nationalism under Ceaușescu, by means of identity politics and, as the last point in the enumeration above shows, also by means of transitional justice.[299] There lacks a full-fledged analysis of the social, political and cultural activities of the Forum in post-1989 Romania. Nonetheless, researchers can find useful information in the already quoted article by Josef Karl, in the various anniversary publications issued under the aegis of the Forum, in the bimonthly publication *Curier F.D.G.R.*, appearing between the end of 1998 and 2004, and also in the impressive chronology of the German minority

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[295] "Botschaft an den Rat der Front der Nationalen Rettung," *Zugänge* 14 (1993): 26-7.
[296] "Wir wollen selbst bestimmen können. Demokratisches Forum der Deutschen in Rumänien zur Verbesserung unserer Lage," *Hermannstädter Zeitung*, January 5, 1990.
[297] Dr. Paul Philippi, "Subjekt sein und mitbestimmen. Zwanzig Jahre Demokratisches Forum der Deutschen in Rumänien," in *Deutsches Jahrbuch 2010*, 23.
[298] "Wir wollen selbst bestimmen".
[299] Karl, "Die Minderheitenorganisation".

between 1989 and 2009, drafted by Vasile Ciobanu.[300] The most important dates in the development of the Forum can be found in the latter publication, yet Karl's text is the only one also attempting to provide an analytical interpretation. Despite some factual errors, the said account sketches the interplay of internal and external challenges in the history of the Democratic Forum of Germans in Romania. However, in Karl's text, the external factors are related only to Romanian authorities and to the Romanian political scene: comparatively, small interest is granted to the quintessential relationship of the Forum with the German state.

In effect, the fall of Communism also brought forth a salient political repositioning of the Federal Republic of Germany in its relationship with Romania and with the German community in the country, as the January 1990 visit of Hans-Dietrich Genscher, Minister of Foreign Affairs, distinctly showed. It was the second high-ranked state visit of a foreign official in Romania after the fall of the Ceaușescu regime. It is worth to note that the first two visits of high-ranked foreign officials in post-Communist Romania were the ones of the Hungarian (Gyula Horn) and German representatives, i.e. ministers of Foreign Affairs in the "external homelands" of the two most numerous minorities in Romania of the time, Roma excluded. The phenomenon can be seen as tightly connected with the extremely poor performance of the Romanian state during Communism in terms of human rights and minority rights protection.

The visit of Genscher stood for a key moment in the development of Romanian-German triangular relationships, including discussions with members of the government in Bucharest and also visits to Sibiu and Timișoara, the two most important towns for Transylvanian Saxons and Banat Swabians, accompanied by meetings with members of the German minority. During the Cold War, West German politics towards Romania meant first and foremost pushing for obtaining from the Romanian authorities the travel consent for as many Romanian Germans as possible. Following the Helsinki Accords of 1975 and the visit of Helmut Schmidt in Romania in 1978, the

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[300] Vasile Ciobanu, "Cronologia minorității germane (1989-2009)," Guvernul României. The Romanian Institute for Research on National Minorities, http://ispmn.gov.ro/eng/node/cronologia-minoritii-germane-1989-2009 (accessed December 15, 2011).

migration process significantly augmented.[301] In Germany, the Swabian and Saxon *Landsmannschaften* were lobbying for the migration of those still in Romania. Yet at least in theory, after the fall of the Communist regime, the alternative to support and sustain German life and German culture in Transylvania and Banat was stronger than before.

In his address to the crowd gathered in Sibiu on January 16, 1990, acknowledging the accountability of the German state for the situation of the German minority in Romania, Genscher also stated that the responsibility of the federal government was to make everything possible to improve the situation of those wishing to stay in Romania, and at the same time of those who decided to move to Germany. He averred that Germany's doors would always stay open for those wishing to emigrate, thus wrongly hoping to halt a presumed avalanche of resettlers from Romania.[302] However, many of those attending the meetings with Genscher were expecting the support of the German state for migration. Visitors of the Museum of the Lutheran Church in Sibiu can see a symbolic artefact used at the time, a banner with the inscription: *Unterstützt unsere Auswanderung* (Support our emigration). It does not seem that Romanian authorities perceived Genscher's stance in any way as a sort of interference in Romanian home affairs, although he was directly addressing to Romanian citizens on their potential out-migration.

At this point, the recourse to Brubaker's observations on the relationship between national minorities, nationalizing states and external homelands comes handy. Brubaker understands a national minority

> not as a fixed entity or a unitary group but rather in terms of the *field of differentiated and competitive positions or stances* adopted by different organizations, parties, movements, or individual political entrepreneurs, each seeking to "represent" the minority to its own putative members, to the host state, or to the outside world, each seeking to monopolize the legitimate representation of the group.[303]

Using this definition, one can better understand the plurality of options and visions regarding German future in Romania and the competing perspectives concerning the representation and the aims to be followed by and on behalf of the German community in Romania.

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[301] Florica Dobre et al. (ed.), *Acțiunea "Recuperarea". Securitatea și emigrarea germanilor din România (1962-1989)* (Bucharest: Ed. Enciclopedică, 2011).

[302] "Ansprache des Aussenministers," *Hermannstädter Zeitung*, January 19, 1990.

[303] Brubaker, *Nationalism Reframed*, 61.

In the Romanian German case, the competing perspectives were an inheritance of the conflicts already existing within the community from the second half of the 20th century onwards. Different and often clashing visions with respect to the aims to be striven towards blatantly existed since the Cold War. At the time, there was an overt conflict between the two main organizations of Transylvanian Saxons living in Germany, founded in the immediate aftermath of the Second World War, the *Landsmannschaft der Siebenbürger Sachsen* and the *Hilfskomitee der Siebenbürger Sachsen* (Aid Committee of the Transylvanian Saxons). The former renounced advocating in favour of the right of the Transylvanian Saxons living abroad to return to Romania, the so-called *Recht auf Heimat* (right to one's homeland), argued for in the 1950s, and started pleading for the migration to Germany. The latter considered that there could be no Transylvanian Saxon culture or identity outside Transylvania and saw Communism as one in a series of many historical challenges that the Transylvanian Saxon community could in fact cope with. Instead of pleading for migration to Germany, their efforts were directed towards an improvement of the situation in Romania.[304] After the fall of Ceaușescu, the German community in Romania continued to be essentially divided along the very same lines.

In this context, the question is whether the grounding of the Forum during the December events in Romania stood for a "perspective for the future" or for a "conjuration of the past": a clear-cut answer to this interrogation has not yet been given.[305] The German representatives gathered within the Forum were sustaining the "Romanian" alternative, i.e. supporting the development of Transylvanian Saxon and Banat Swabian culture in Romania, under the aegis of the newly acquired freedoms. From this point of view, their position was extremely delicate. The envisaged migration to Germany by a large part of the community posed pragmatic problems, as the representatives of the German minority in Romania were expected by the migration-ready members to make everything possible in order to facilitate migration. For these individuals, the Forum was in many ways a visa-

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[304] Georg Weber et al., "Bleiben oder Gehen - tertium non datur? Eine empirische Studie zum Auswanderungskonflikt unter den Siebenbürger Sachsen nach dem 2. Weltkrieg," in *Emigration der Siebenbürger Sachsen*, 517-625.
[305] Philippi, "Subjekt sein," 23.

facilitating institution.[306] On the other hand, for the Forum itself, the situation was spiny, as many of the individuals it wanted to represent seemed keen to leave Romania, a mass process which practically implied the Forum's own demise. Since any organization exists through its members and its sympathizers and since *grosso modo* both members and sympathizers of the Forum were ethnic Germans in Romania, by supporting migration the Forum would have supported in fact its own loss of membership and potential political electorate. The Forum was therefore, from the very start, an organization aiming first and foremost at creating incentives for those ethnic Germans wishing to stay in Romania, even if this meant putting itself in an awkward position. Furthermore, alongside the segmentation between those who wanted to continue living in Romania and those who wanted to migrate to Germany, there were also other grounds for division: the Forum was perceived first and foremost as a Saxon institution by Banat Swabians, thus reinforcing an older cleavage within the Romanian German community.[307]

As Brubaker noted, mobilizing a national minority (the German one in this case) by its leaders comes hand in hand with sustaining the vision of the host state (post-1989 Romania) as a nationally oppressive one. Once again, such an approach, if literally reinforced, would have been bound to cause great tensions in the case of the Romanian Germans, since the greatest dilemma in their case was whether to stay in the country or to leave for Germany. Furthermore, the vision of Romania as a nationally oppressive state was already sustained by the Munich-based homeland associations of the Transylvanian Saxons and Banat Swabians, traditionally pushing for migration. Had the Forum chosen to unflinchingly reinforce this perspective, it would have implied to be actually pushing towards the choice of the latter solution, i.e. migrating to Germany. Since this was in direct contradiction with the position of some of the German leaders in Romania and with the institutional survival of the Forum as a minority organization, an ambivalent game was to be played, which implied portraying the Romanian state as an oppressive, yet perfectible one ("critical loyalty"), hence the fight to improve the situation of the community in Romania, perceived as a feasible goal. The difficulty of keeping the balance due to these tensions is visible in the early

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[306] Bénédicte Michalon, "Migration des Saxons de Roumanie en Allemagne. Mythe, interdépendance et altérité dans le 'retour'," (PhD diss., University of Poitiers, 2003).
[307] Karl, "Die Minderheitenorganisation".

1990s. Consequently, Germans wishing to definitively leave Romania did not always perceive the Forum as an organization standing for their interests.[308]

Moreover, not only a huge number of Germans left the country in 1990 and 1991, but also the results obtained at the first election were under expectations. On the basis of the Romanian electoral system, the German minority was able to send a representative in the Parliament, Ingmar Brandsch, yet the results seem to show the lack of German political mobilization for the 1990 elections. Josef Karl also noted a series of other reasons which did not permit the Forum to fare well in the 1990s, amongst them the absence of a bureau in Bucharest, and the already mentioned lack of representativeness of the organization amongst Banat Swabians, who perceived the Forum as a "Saxon" institution.[309]

Nonetheless, there were attempts to counter the migration frenzy of the Germans. The 1990 visit of Hans-Dietrich Genscher was followed by the establishing of an *Immediatkommission* (a commission communicating directly with the head of government) in Sibiu, on January 24, 1990, meant to swiftly treat the issues related to the German minority in Romania on behalf of the German government.[310] At the same time, the post-Communist Romanian authorities declaratively showed their willingness to grant extensive attention to the issues related to the German minority: Prime Minister Petre Roman founded a governmental Commission for the Stabilization of the German minority in Romania, which was, though rather inefficient, active for two years.

Considering the numerous setbacks in terms of general minority politics of the time, neither the great part of the Germans in Romania, nor their representatives within the Forum, were displaying signs of enthusiasm. The murderous interethnic Romanian-Hungarian clashes that took place in Târgu Mureș in March 1990, anti-Roma violence, or the civil unrest connected to the violence perpetrated by the Valea Jiului miners in Bucharest in June of the same year, abruptly ending the two months-long anti-government protests taking place in the capital city, were signalizing Romania's penchant towards authoritarian, illiberal governing. Furthermore, the perpetual

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[308] Mathias Durst, "Initiativgruppe Auswanderer, gegründet am 15. Januar 1990 in Großscheuern," *Zugänge* 14 (1993): 43-5.
[309] Karl, "Die Minderheitenorganisation".
[310] Philippi, "Subjekt sein," 20.

postponing of discussing a minorities' law, the absence of a Commission meant to analyze the "human trafficking" having taken place during the Ceaușescu regime, the difficulties encountered in having the ethnic Germans qualify for the reparation measures undertaken by the Romanian authorities were all showing the great difference between expectations and reality on the ground. The exodus of the German minority from the early 1990s can and should also be understood in the context of the nationalistic atmosphere and xenophobic outbursts prevalent in Romania during those years. As early as May 1990, in the immediate aftermath of the first post-Communist elections, taking place in the same month, an official declaration of the Forum was issued, stating among other things: "we have to say that the expectations we were then [December 1989] nurturing were fulfilled only to a very small extent".[311]

In March 1991, Horst Weber highlighted all these problems regarding the German minority in the aftermath of the 1989 revolution, arguing that the equivocal discourses of Romanian authorities did not always coincide with the proper measures being taken. His conclusion was that the Germans were running the danger of being used only as a showcase towards the West in order to attract foreign capital.[312] The argument is indeed telling of a specific representation of the Germans in Romania, as usable in order to bring "Europe" or "the West", in form of capital and various aids, to the country as a whole.

Following the big waves of migration from the early 1990s, the situation of the Germans in Romania apparently stabilized. Simplifying the socio-cultural landscape, it can be argued that those keen on leaving had already left, whilst those willing to stay in or to return to Romania and continue under the new political circumstances were in fact doing exactly that. Bénédicte Michalon provided a more nuanced approach, emphasizing the interdependence existing in many cases, between migrants, returnees and

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[311] "Erklärung des Demokratischen Forums der Deutschen in Rumänien 9. Juli 1990," *Zugänge* 14 (1993): 46.
[312] Horst Weber, "Die Rumäniendeutschen - gestern, heute und vielleicht morgen," in *Nachdenken über die Zukunft. Aufsätze und Dokumente über die Rumäniendeutschen*, ed. Horst Weber (Sibiu: Im Selbstverlag des Demokratischen Forums der Deutschen in Rumänien, 1991), 18; also Horst Weber, "Minderheitenverständnis, Minderheitenrechte und Minderheitenschutz in Rumänien," *Zugänge* 14 (1993): 9.

those who had not left, also on the basis of temporary patterns of migration. Her demonstration is an illuminating read in this respect.[313]

After the first decade of post-Communism, the year 2000 brought forth the most significant change for the Romanian German community in general and for the Democratic Forum in particular. Josef Karl argued that starting from 2000 the Forum turned into a *de facto* political party. The surprising winner of the town hall elections taking place at the time in Sibiu, the traditional "capital" of the Transylvanian Saxon community, was Klaus Johannis, the candidate of the German Forum, a former physics teacher and school inspector. Furthermore, his success was doubled by the success of the German Forum as an organization in the Local Council. In order to understand how much of a surprise the electoral results in Sibiu were, even for the representatives of the organization themselves, one should consider the fact that although as a consequence of the number of votes it received the Forum was entitled to appoint seven local counsellors, it lost two of the places, since it had not placed enough people on the electoral roster.[314] Johannis' success can be partly explained through the high level of disillusion present within the Romanian electorate, disappointed by the performance of the main political forces. The Transylvanian Saxon mayor would then be re-elected in both 2004 and 2008, with an overwhelming majority of the votes. Furthermore, in 2004 and 2008 his success also entailed the success of the Democratic Forum at the level of the entire Sibiu County. Since 2004, the German organization has a majority in the Sibiu County Council. As Monica Stroe has shown, Johannis' political capital is very much built on a so-called "Saxon myth".[315] The capacity to successfully build upon such a "myth" proves that Romanian social memory, at least in the region of Sibiu, is very much inclusive of the German past.

The results of the Forum at the local elections in 2000 led to the augmentation of its visibility at a national level and also to an augmentation

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[313] Michalon, "Migration des Saxons".

[314] Dr. Hans Klein, "Zwanzig Jahre deutsches Forum Hermannstadt," in *Zwanzig Jahre Demokratisches Forum der Deutschen in Hermannstadt*, ed. Demokratisches Forum der Deutschen in Hermannstadt (Sibiu: Honterus Verlag, 2010), 12.

[315] Monica Stroe, "Heterorepresentations of Saxonness and Their Political Meanings in Transylvania," in *European, National and Regional Identity: Proceedings of the International Conference "European, National and Regional Identity", Organized in Oradea, 24-26 March 2011, in the Frame of Research Project HURO/0801/180*, ed. Brigitta Balogh et al. (Oradea: Ed. Universității din Oradea, 2011), 195-209.

of its political importance and influence, even if first and foremost at the town level in Sibiu. The now important place held by the German Forum there would lead to the signing of a protocol alliance in 2002 with the Social-Democratic Party, and, all in all, to it becoming a much more important actor on the political stage, being courted at times by the various political forces vying for power. The ever growing national salience of Sibiu and of the German minority there will culminate in it being named European Capital of Culture in 2007 and, two years later, in the attempt of a parliamentary alliance consisting of the National Liberal Party, the Social-Democratic Party and the Hungarian Democratic Alliance in Romania, to push for Johannis' appointment as prime minister, in late 2009.

## 5.3. Romanian Memory Discourses about the Germans. Acknowledging German Victimhood

In 1995, Romania was governed by a coalition of former Communist *apparatchiks* and recycled nationalists, tributary to a homogenizing understanding of Romanianness, very much specific to Ceaușescu's rule. There were probably around 100.000 ethnic Germans still living in Romania, following the big "exodus" in the immediate aftermath of the fall of Communism. A highly relevant moment for the Romanian German community and for the framing of collective memory discourses in its regard took place. More precisely, in January of the said year, when Germans in Romania commemorated 50 years from their temporary deportation into the Soviet Union, a series of events were organized in Brașov, under the title "In memoriam deportationis 1945-1995".

On this occasion, both President Iliescu and Prime Minister Nicolae Văcăroiu sent their messages to the survivors and to all those convened in Brașov. As Wolfgang Wittstock, at the time German representative in the Romanian Parliament, remembers, the leadership of the German Forum was hoping that Iliescu would officially apologize for the deportations, yet this did not happen as such.[316] Iliescu's message was eventually milder in tone than the German Forum actually hoped for.

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[316] Wolfgang Wittstock, interview by author, January 7, 2011, Brașov.

The Romanian President placed the "drama of the German minority" in a wider geopolitical context, not forgetting to refer to the cases of "numerous Romanian citizens, from all social, ethnic, and religious categories", who were the victims of unjust behaviour and abuses. Thus, Iliescu specifically acknowledged the existence of a "German" tragedy in the second half of the 20th century, culminating with the mass migration in the first post-revolutionary years. He also emphasized the "sympathy and cherishment of the Romanian people" for the "cultural traditions" of the German minority, for its "contribution to the general development of the Romanian society".[317]

Văcăroiu's letter to the participants at the commemoration directly blamed the "explicit order of Moscow", having forced the Romanian Government of the time to deport its adult German citizens to the Soviet Union, for the reconstruction of the latter country. Văcăroiu made a very interesting statement: "all this happened with the absurd imputation that they were of German origin, although they were Romanian citizens!". He called this a "collective incrimination" for an "imaginary guilt". Văcăroiu seemed to imply that the "German origin" incrimination was made absurd by the Romanian citizenship; in other words, "our Germans" could not be guilty. He finished his message with a recourse to the positive stereotypes Germans are associated with: "their seriousness, their giftedness, their industriousness".[318]

Although leaving place for interpretations, the messages transmitted by Romanian authorities suggested that there might be a place within Romanian collective memory discourses for German suffering. It was in effect the first time, after 1989, when central Romanian authorities straightforwardly averred something of the sort. The commemoration of 50 years since the 1945 events took place in a period when Ion Antonescu, the Romanian Fascist leader during the Second World War, was practically rehabilitated by members of the Romanian elites, and when there was barely place for any acknowledgment whatsoever of Romanian participation in the Holocaust. In

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[317] "Mesajul domnului Ion Iliescu, Președintele României, adresat participanților la manifestările comemorative prilejuite de împlinirea a 50 de ani de la deportarea în URSS a unor grupuri de etnici germani din România - Brașov, 14 ianuarie 1995 -," Președintele României, http://www.presidency.ro/pdf/date_arhiva/482_ro.pdf (accessed December 15, 2011).

[318] The text of Văcăroiu's message, in German: "Eine schreckliche Vergeltung. Brief des Premiers Văcăroiu an die Teilnehmer der Veranstaltung," *Allgemeine Deutsche Zeitung für Rumänien*, January 21, 1995.

this context, the messages of Iliescu and Văcăroiu seem to mirror the statement of Paul Philippi, president of the German Forum at the time, who argued on the same occasion that Germans were the only ethnic victims in Romanian history, obscuring the persecution of Jews and Roma before and during the Second World War. In this context, it is undoubtedly worth mentioning that a year after Iliescu's statement, in January 1996, Philippi sent an open letter to the then German president, Roman Herzog, arguing that Romanian Germans should also be considered "victims of National-Socialism".[319] Philippi, a historian and a theologian, was born in 1923, so his apparently not being aware at least of the Romanian state-sponsored anti-Semitism during the 1930s and the 1940s can hardly be attributable to lack of historical knowledge. The three statements, made by Iliescu, Văcăroiu, and Philippi seem to show a particular overlap between two retarded processes of coming to terms with the Fascist past, one of them Romanian and the other Romanian-German.

November 1996 marked a governmental change at the time generously hailed as fundamentally modifying the face of Romanian politics. A loose coalition of anti-Communists and Europhiles replaced the former communists-cum-nationalists one. One of the objectives of the new authorities was to speed up the negotiations for the accession to both NATO and the European Union, perceived as a sort of a joint venture, with the former bound to bring the latter. In this context, in April 1997, on the occasion of the visit of the German Minister of Foreign Affairs, Klaus Kinkel, in Romania, the Romanian government, through the voice of Kinkel's counterpart, Adrian Severin, officially expressed the deepest regret and apologized for the deportation of the Germans in the former Soviet Union and, later, during the Stalin-Tito conflict, in Bărăgan and also for their "selling" during the Ceaușescu regime.[320]

Several observations should be made regarding this declaration. The first one is of a conceptual nature and it departs from a distinction operationalized by Melissa Nobles. Nobles distinguished between two types of apologies: apologies made by governments and apologies made by heads

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[319] "Philippi schreibt Herzog. Auch Rußlanddeportierte sind Opfer des Nationalsozialismus," *Hermannstädter Zeitung*, February 2, 1996.
[320] "Declaraţie a ministrului de stat, ministrul afacerilor externe Adrian Severin," April 30, 1997. I am grateful to Hannelore Baier for providing me with a copy of this declaration.

of state. The former are usually "highly scripted affairs", i.e. the result of debates and "deliberative processes" and, even more important, often bring forth monetary compensations. Differently, the latter are "verbal utterances" or gestures of government officials, of a more spontaneous nature and rarely entailing financial requitals. The 1970 kneeling of German Chancellor Willy Brandt in Warsaw, in front of the monument of the Ghetto Uprising, is the best illustration of such a gesture.[321] Severin's declaration belongs to the second category, as his own *post factum* statements suggest.

The other observations to be made with reference to this statement regard nonetheless its contents and the subsequent explanations provided by Severin as to what made him utter it. Firstly, the declaration acknowledged the contribution of Romanian authorities to the deportation to the Soviet Union, "under the pressure of foreign occupation", a nuanced change with respect to the statements of Iliescu and Văcăroiu some two years earlier, on the same topic. The latter two considered the Soviet-influenced Allied Commission in Bucharest to be exclusively responsible for the deportations, also emphasizing the opposition of the Romanian government of the time.

Secondly, Severin's declaration referred to the resettlement of Swabians, from border localities in Banat, to the Bărăgan Plain in South Eastern Romania. Nonetheless, these measures, taking place during the Stalin-Tito conflict in the early 1950s, did not affect only Swabians, but other inhabitants of the border villages as well: ethnic Serbs, Romanians, Bulgarians, Hungarians, Roma etc. Adrian Severin did not refer to these events as having a specifically anti-German orientation, yet by disavowing them in a context of exculpatory attention granted to the German minority in Romania, he also indirectly established a hierarchy. Amongst the deportees, Swabians were the most important and the most worthy of receiving apologies. This is not necessarily a case of selective memory, but rather one of positive discrimination within official memory discourses. Last but not least, Severin referred to and apologized for the "selling" of Germans. Historian Radu Ioanid remarked that the Romanian state never did the same with respect to the case of the Jewish population, treated in a very similar way by

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[321] Melissa Nobles, *The Politics of Official Apologies* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 5-6.

Romania's Communist regime.[322] Jews and Roma had to wait longer in order for their suffering and abuses to be officially acknowledged, this acknowledgment being accompanied by a series of difficulties. Romania's Germans were the first ethnic group to be granted such exculpatory attention by both elected and appointed state officials.

After his governmental tenure, Severin offered some insights from his activity as a minister for Foreign Affairs, including interesting background information regarding his encounters with Klaus Kinkel. When referring to their first meeting, which took place in February 1997, in a semi-official setting, Severin delineated the arguments he laid down in front of Kinkel, in order to support Romania's plea for NATO accession. In Severin's view, joining NATO was part of the process of European unification, i.e. it was tightly related to Romania's Europeanizing endeavours. He called Romania "a country from the most Oriental part of Central Europe", thus being "the furthest zone of extension of German culture towards East".[323] The attempt to situate Romania on the border of "Central Europe" is practically a reproduction of an "Orientalist" discourse, a case of "nesting Orientalisms", as Bakić-Hayden would call it.[324] In her piece focusing on the Yugoslav case, Bakić-Hayden showed the complexity of the East-West relationships and the way the "Orient" as an other underlies identity discourses not only in Western Europe, but in Eastern Europe as well. The "Orient" as the "other" is used as a legitimization tool in identity discourses promoted by elites in Eastern European countries, stating their belonging to "European" culture and "Orientalizing" whatever lies more to the East of the respective countries.

Severin's discourse aimed practically to legitimize Romania's aspirations to NATO accession, on the basis of regional belonging and also on the basis of the inscription of a German past within Romanian social memory, thus showing that identity and memory are very much related to power, legitimacy and geopolitical aspirations. Placing Romania at the border of "Central Europe" practically de-"orientalizes" it, while at the same time it ascribes an "Oriental" identity to everything East and South of Romania.

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[322] Radu Ioanid, "Ceaușescu și Dej au vândut 250.000 de evrei," interview by Andrei Bădin, *Adevărul*, October 12, 2006, http://www.adevarul.ro/life/sanatate/Ceausescu-Dej-vandut-evrei_0_47395574.html (accessed November 23, 2011).

[323] Adrian Severin and Gabriel Andreescu, *Locurile unde se construiește Europa* (Iași: Polirom, 2000), 91.

[324] Milica Bakić-Hayden, "Nesting Orientalisms: The Case of Former Yugoslavia," *Slavic Review* 54, no. 4 (Winter 1995): 917-31.

Continuing in the same vein, Severin directly referred to Romanian-German cultural relationships, stating that "Romania has developed a great part of its culture under the influence and intimately connected with German culture".[325] The statement implicitly stands for a breach with the traditional common knowledge discourses emphasizing the Francophile character of Romanian culture. Of course, Severin was acting as a diplomat wanting to win Kinkel's support and goodwill. A Germanophile discourse is not surprising in this context. Yet his choice of arguments and his emphases are not arbitrary. Other discourses could have been imagined, other approaches could have been concocted. Nonetheless, Severin chose an identity- and memory-oriented discourse, defining Romania's European identity as also due to German culture. He distinctly referred to the German minority in Romania, trying to instrumentalize the status of Germany as its kin state: "I told him we have a German minority and, no matter how small, it definitely asks itself what will its country, of the same cultural origin, do so that it does not remain outside an enlarged Europe or outside an Europe secured through the enlargement of the Northern Atlantic Alliance."[326]

This first meeting laid the basis for Kinkel's subsequent visit to Bucharest, which took place in April 1997, when Severin officially apologized for the "selling" of Germans. Nonetheless, he emphasized that the decision was his own, and that he did not discuss the contents of the statement with President Constantinescu. He commented upon the negative reception of his gesture in the Romanian press, also underlining the opposition encountered after the event within his own coalition, especially from Ion Caramitru, then Minister of Culture. Still, reality is that Severin's gesture was the first official gesture by a high representative of the Romanian state recognizing the direct participation of Romanian authorities in the enactment of discriminative measures against an ethnic group. The official acknowledgment of the Romanian participation in the Holocaust, through the voice of President Emil Constantinescu, would first take place in September of the same year, and it would then be soon forgotten. President Iliescu's subsequent re-acknowledgment, from 2004, would get much more visibility, perhaps because it was also accompanied by the founding of an International

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[325] Severin and Andreescu, *Locurile unde se construieşte*, 91.
[326] Ibid.

Commission for the Study of the Holocaust in Romania, presided by Elie Wiesel. As regards Romanian state persecution against Roma, an integrative part of the Holocaust in Romania, only in October 2007 has President Traian Băsescu officially apologized to the Roma community.[327] The same Traian Băsescu would also officially condemn the Communist dictatorship in Romania in front of the Parliament, naming it "illegitimate and murderous".[328] In his condemnation, based upon an official report of a Presidential Commission for the Study of Communist Dictatorship in Romania, Băsescu enumerated the criminal actions mentioned in the official text, amongst them the persecution of minorities and the "chasing away and the 'selling' of Jews and Germans".[329]

There is a key difference between the two German-friendly sets of statements, Iliescu's and Văcăroiu's on the one hand, and Severin's on the other hand. The former were made in front of an internal German audience, unlike the latter. Iliescu and Văcăroiu were showing signs of goodwill towards Romanian Germans, a step towards internal appeasement of potential memory conflicts and at the same time a sign towards an incorporation of German suffering within Romanian memory discourses. Severin's stake was nonetheless much higher, as he was expressing his apologies in front of a representative of the kin-state of the German minority in Romania. Severin's apologies were clearly having a political goal, being part of the political efforts for EU and NATO accession, a sign that collective memory discourses and the place of the Germans therein can be instrumentally used for attaining a series of different objectives.

## 5.4. Political Discourses about "Germans"

In the immediate aftermath of the revolution of 1989, on January 8, 1990, an interview with the new *de facto* Romanian head of state, Ion Iliescu, was

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[327] "Comunicat de presă (22 octombrie 2007). REF: Ceremonie de decorare a etnicilor romi supraviețuitori ai Holocaustului," Președintele României, http://www.presidency.ro/?_RID=det&tb=date&id=9217&_PRID=ag (accessed December 15, 2011).
[328] "Discursul președintelui României Traian Băsescu, prilejuit de prezentarea Raportului Comisiei Prezidențiale pentru Analiza Dictaturii Comuniste din România (București, 18 decembrie 2006)," Președintele României, http://www.presidency.ro/?_RID=det&tb=date&id=8288&_PRID=ag (accessed November 19, 2010).
[329] Ibid.

published in the German newspaper *Die Welt*. The title is striking through its imperative-pleading character: "I ask the Germans: stay with us, in Romania!". The Romanian president stated the existence of personal good contacts with members of the German minority, from the period when he used to work in Timișoara, the unofficial capital of Banat and of the Swabian community. Furthermore, he expressed his wish that some of the Germans who already decided to leave the country would now change their mind and stay and, even more, that some of those who left would return.[330]

Looking back, it seems that Iliescu's statement showed a terrible lack of realism. The same Iliescu seemed quite confident in 1990 that Germans would be able to send their representatives in the Parliament without the "help" of the Electoral Law facilitating the parliamentary representation of ethnic minorities. In their attempt to provide possibilities of representation for all minorities in Romania, no matter how small, the law-makers in the Provisory Council for National Unity in the first months of 1990 stipulated the granting of a place in the Parliament for all recognized minority organizations, on the condition they attain a much smaller electoral threshold than the one generally needed for parliamentary representation. However, this measure was not considered to be potentially consequential for the Germans, as the stenographic transcription of the respective sitting of the Council shows. Ion Iliescu said to Florin Cioabă, representative of one Roma organization: "We are discussing art. 4 here, but this does not raise a problem for Roma, Hungarians and Germans...".[331]

The wish of a German remigration to Romania, discursively nurtured from time to time by members of the Romanian political elites, from almost all sides of the political spectrum, is telling of the high prestige enjoyed by the Germans in Romania, constantly reproduced on a declarative level. As Anneli Ute Gabanyi argued, quoting from the German press in Germany and Romania, Iliescu's statements were backed up by the attitude of the then head of government, Petre Roman.[332] Furthermore, the same Gabanyi quoted a declaration made by Adrian Severin, whose philo-German apologies I

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[330] Ion Iliescu, "Ich bitte die Deutschen: Bleibt bei uns in Rumänien," interview by Walter H. Rueb, *Die Welt*, January 8, 1990.

[331] "Sesiunea Consiliului Provizoriu de Uniune Națională din zilele de 9, 10, 13 și 14 martie 1990," in *Monitorul Oficial al României. Ședințele Consiliului Provizoriu de Uniune Națională*, March 16, 1990.

[332] Anneli Ute Gabanyi, "Bleiben, gehen, wiederkehren? Zur Lage der deutschen Minderheit in Rumänien," *Südosteuropa. Zeitschrift für Gegenwartsforschung*, 40 (1991): 505-6.

discussed above, stating in 1991 that the disappearance of the German minority from Romania would be a real catastrophe.[333]

The appreciation for things German in Romania was not a prerogative of those in power. Important political actors from the opposition parties of the early 1990s were also openly acknowledging their esteem for Saxons and Swabians. In an interview published in *Hermannstädter Zeitung*, Radu Câmpeanu, the Liberal candidate for presidency in May 1990, stated that the ancient Romanian-Hungarian skirmishes can be solved with wisdom and moderation, whilst referring to the continual draining of the German minority as a very sad thing, because the Germans had always had a civilizational influence upon Romanians.[334] Câmpeanu's statement openly implied a self-orientalizing view of one of the three candidates for Romanian presidency in the spring of 1990, at the time recently returned to Romania from a French exile. Similarly, the recurrent comparison, most often in the advantage of the Germans, with the Hungarian minority in Romania, must be noticed.[335] The Germans thus enter the role of the "good neighbour" and "positive other".

The third candidate at the 1990 elections, Ion Rațiu, was noting in his diary, following a visit to Sibiu:

> I want to serve Romania, not only the Romanian nation I come from. [...] I want to make all its citizens proud that they belong to this country. This is, probably, the influence of the many years I spent partly, yet regularly and frequently, in Switzerland. This is how we have to be. This is how many of our Saxons and Swabians will return to the country. To help us have a better local and central administration, more just, more full of love for the neighbour.[336]

Rațiu, also a prominent member of the Romanian diaspora during the Cold War, seemed to be nurturing the same type of wishful thinking as one of his main opponents, Ion Iliescu, quoted above. In accordance with the tradition of looking for European models to emulate, Rațiu placed his views on Saxons and Swabians into an "Europeanizing" framework, choosing Switzerland as the model-to-be-emulated, with a Saxon and Swabian return imagined as both

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[333] Ibid., 504.
[334] Radu Câmpeanu, "Rumänien im 4 Jahren ein Sozialstaat?" interview by Annemarie Schuller, *Hermannstädter Zeitung*, April 27, 1990.
[335] An inhabitant of Sibiu was telling me at one point that at one of the demonstrations taking place in Sibiu in the early 1990s, she saw a placard with the inscription: *Maghiari, învățați de la sași să fiți români* (Hungarians, learn from the Saxons how to be Romanians). *Se non è vero, è ben trovato.*
[336] Ion Rațiu, *Istoria unei candidaturi deturnate. Note zilnice. Ianuarie-Decembrie 1992* (Bucharest: Regent House Printing & Publishing, 2001).

a consequence of and a directly contribution to attaining the desired status. Nonetheless, in his official statements, Rațiu did not refer to the Swiss model: in the turbulent early 1990s, this would have easily brought grist to the mill of his nationalistic opponents, for whom the conception of the Romanian "national, unitary and indivisible state" was holier than anything else. Yet the recurrent, politically omnipresent dream of a German return to Romania, together with the "Europeanizing" or "civilizational" aspirations constantly included in references to the German minority should be noticed.

Teodor Meleșcanu, Minister of Foreign Affairs, between 1992 and 1996, and currently chief of the Foreign Intelligence Service, also referred to the German minority in Romania. In January 1996, he gave a speech in Bonn, within the precincts of the Konrad Adenauer Foundation, titled "Romania's Option for European and Atlantic Integration. The Significance of the Romanian-German Partnership".[337] The apparent novelty of Meleșcanu's approach is that his statements regarding the German minority in Romania are integrated into an argumentation whose aim is to show Romania's belonging to a region he called "Central Europe". A division between Central and Eastern Europe had started to regain visibility from the 1980s onwards, usually leaving Romania (with the exception of Transylvania and Banat at times) in the "more Oriental" side of the continent. Meleșcanu directly challenged this division in his speech, underlining that "Romanians consider that the Balkans are not a zone 'outside Central Europe', but a part of it."[338] Consequently, he managed to transform Romania into both a Balkan and a "*Central European country*",[339] pleading for the country's return to its alleged "traditional role", that of being *a bridge country in Central Europe*", a straightforward illustration of the "liminality" Todorova referred to in *Imagining the Balkans*.[340]

I have showed earlier that Meleșcanu's successor, Adrian Severin, also attempted to present Romania as a country in "Central Europe" in front of his German counterpart, thus emphasizing Romania's cultural belonging as non-Eastern European. Meleșcanu stated that "amongst many other possible

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[337] Teodor Meleșcanu, "Pilonul de rezistenţă al unui parteneriat durabil româno-german este bine fixat," in *Renașterea diplomaţiei românești 1994-1996* (Cluj-Napoca: Dacia, 2002), 248-59.

[338] Ibid., 253.

[339] Ibid., 254.

[340] Ibid., 255; Maria Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997).

arguments", he would like to draw the audience's attention "upon the existence of a valuable connection between Romania and Germany: the German community in Romania".[341] He did not refer to the Germans as a "minority", thus reasserting the majority-minority relationship, but as a "community", implying a level of equality. The continuation of his speech supports this reading:

> We have been sharing, for more than seven centuries, the ups and downs of a common destiny. Romanians owe very much, as regards culture and civilization, to their German fellow citizens. More than that, "our Germans", if I can say so, have substantially contributed to Romania's economic and political development. Many times, to its stability. This is yet another reason that makes us deplore the fact that in the last years many, too many Germans left Romania. However, steps have been made, by both our countries, in order to diminish this detrimental process.[342]

Following the governmental change taking place in 1996, the new coalition also showed discursive interest as regards Romanian Germans, through the voices of a series of officials, such as President Emil Constantinescu, Prime Minister Victor Ciorbea or Radu Boroianu, Minister of Public Information. In an interview granted to the German weekly *Focus Magazin*, Constantinescu stated that the "return of Romanian Germans is an

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[341] Meleșcanu, "Pilonul de rezistență," 256.

[342] Ibid., 256-257. In 2000, Meleșcanu reaffirmed his appreciation of the German minority, this time juxtaposing the Romanian-German relationships to the Romanian-Roma relationships (after some unusually flattering comments regarding the Hungarian minority and the political role of the DAHR): "As regards the relations with the German minority in Romania, things seem much better settled and there are no grounds for susceptibility that could lead to conflicts. Moreover, this year we witnessed an event that is worth highlighting. At the local elections in an important town - Sibiu - the elected mayor is a representative of the German ethnic group, who - had he been voted only by his co-ethnics - would not even have become a councillor in the Town Hall. There is a phenomenon that needs to be explained, though it is very simple. It is a fact that one of the not so numerous ethnic groups managed to establish a very stable relationship with the majority. As regards the German Government's policy in the issue of its co-ethnics living in other countries, this is the most correct at European level, in my opinion. The German state does not assist German minorities living outside Germany: the German state supports all the communities that host representatives of the German ethnic communities. This is why the inhabitants of Sibiu, by electing a German mayor, hope to benefit not only from his personal qualities, but also from the support that they may obtain for the development of their city, especially as regards the inclusion of their city in the tourist circuit that it deserves, which will yield prosperity." See Teodor Meleșcanu, "Romania within the Balkan Area facing European Integration," in *Interethnic Relations in Post-Communist Romania. Proceedings of the Conference "The Romanian Model of Ethnic Relations. The Last Ten Years, the Next Ten Years": Bucharest, 7-8th July 2000*, ed. Lucian Năstasă and Levente Salat, transl. Mária Kovács (Cluj-Napoca: Fundația CRDE, 2000).

important objective" for the new Romanian authorities,[343] whilst Ciorbea and Boroianu also asserted the Romanian interest for and willingness towards a German return, reemphasizing the fact that German out-migration was a great loss for the country.[344] Nonetheless, it seems that the generous statements were hardly doubled by any concrete measures aimed to facilitate the potential return.

Mircea Geoană, Minister of Foreign Affairs between 2000 and 2004, followed the path established by his predecessors in extolling the merits of the German minority in Romania in suitable Romanian-German contexts. In his address on the occasion of the opening of the forum "Germany, Romania's Partner on Its Way to Europe", a title illustrating Romania's geopolitical and cultural aspirations, he referred to the role of the ethnic Germans in the furtherance of the Romanian-German relationships, "both the role of those who continue to live in Romania and of those who in time settled down in Germany".[345] The aspirations to enter the European Union were visible on the level of identity discourses as well, and Geoană's text makes no exception, as he continued: "The German ethnics are not only a connection bridge between the two countries, and a factor favouring the amplification of the bilateral relationships, but they also illustrate a new type of solidarity, significant for the project of European unity and identity *per se*."[346] German migration from Romania to Germany, a migration of "ethnic un-mixing" as Brubaker called it, was based upon a "German" national sense of belonging rather than upon any "European" solidarity whatsoever, yet the references to "Europe", no matter whether actually void of content or not, have been a must of post-1989 Romanian political discourses, especially when these discourses referred to "Germans" and the "German minority in Romania".

Nevertheless, the abovementioned statement is hardly comparable with Geoană's utterances at a television show from 2003. On the occasion of

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[343] "Präsident Constantinescu über eine Rückkehr der Rumäniendeutschen und das Verhältnis zu Bonn," *Focus Magazin*, April 28, 1997, http://www.focus.de/politik/ausland/ausland-gleichgueltiges-deutschland_aid_165079.html (accessed November 24, 2011).

[344] "Rumäniendeutschen sollen zurückkehren," *Frankfurter Allgemeine Sonntagszeitung*, March 16, 1997; "Rumäniendeutsche von Angebot überrascht," *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, March 19, 1997; "Rumäniendeutschen sollen Eigentum zurückerhalten," *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, April 12, 1997.

[345] Mircea Geoană, "Alocuțiune la deschiderea lucrărilor forumului 'Germania, partener al României pe drumul spre Europa,", in *Politica externă a României la începutul secolului XXI. "Drumul spre Europa și lumea transatlantică"* (Bucharest: Univers Enciclopedic, 2005), 1:30.

[346] Ibid.

the celebration of the French-German Treaty from January 1963, in the presence of both the French Ambassador in Romania, and his German counterpart, Geoană stated:

> We are Francophones and Francophiles since the founding of the modern Romanian state, that has to do with the Latinity of the Romanians, it is an obvious and beautiful thing, and we want to continue that, but we have not forgotten, not even for a moment, that Germany and the Germans have been one of the co-founding nations of the Romanian nation, especially in Transylvania. The great towns of the Middle Ages, from pre-modern and modern times, urban civilization in Romania has been done with the support, with the direct contribution of Saxons, Swabians, of those who have come from the German space.[347]

These statements are worth an investigation, as they seem to add new elements to the representations associated with Germanness I have implicitly referred to until now.

The idea that urban civilization has been brought to Transylvania and, by means of an interesting synecdoche,[348] to Romania as a whole, through Saxon colonists, stems from a big variety of historiographical products. However, the idea that "Germany and the Germans have been one of the co-founding nations of the Romanian nation", would require some explanations. First of all, it looks like a clear case of *captatio benevolentiae* directed towards the German Ambassador. The reference to "Germany" (i.e., the German state) strikes through its anachronism, as historical dates are quite direct in this respect: Romania became a state on the European map in 1859, Germany only later, in 1871. The presence of a German king on the Romanian throne (the Sigmaringen branch of the Hohenzollern family) dates from 1866, so even this precedes the unification of Germany under Bismarck's Chancellorship. Hohenzollerns first started to rule Romania, and then Germany.

Secondly, his view of Germans as a "co-founding" nation of the Romanian nation in Transylvania, suggests that Geoană wanted to establish a causal relationship between the influence of Transylvanian Saxon cultural life and the emergence of the Romanian nation. Indeed, printing houses run

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[347] Mircea Geoană, "Intervenție," Ministerul Afacerilor Externe, http://old.mae.ro/index.php?unde=doc&id=22905 (accessed December 15, 2011).
[348] A *synecdoche* is a figure of speech by which a part is put for the whole or the whole for a part.

by or with the help of Lutheran Saxons were some of the first cultural disseminators of the Romanian language. Benedict Anderson noted the importance of what he called "print-capitalism" and of the dissemination of local vernaculars for the emergence of modern "imagined communities".[349] Processes of nation-building are very much connected with the centralized capacities of the modern state, i.e. they are mostly top-down constructions due to the support and direct implication of central and local authorities; nonetheless, processes of "national awakening" also precede the creation of states.

The message Geoană conveyed was that of a hierarchical difference between Germans and Romanians, the former being the instructors, conveyors not only of urban civilization in the Romanian cultural space, but also symbolic "parents" of Romanians in Transylvania. Perceiving Germans as instructors and "parents" of Romanians, directly involved in the ethnogenesis of the Romanian people, a topic stirring passions and debates in Romanian society, Geoană made an indirect plea for Romania's Europeanness, attainable through our Germans much more than through our Latinity, as his juxtaposition of German influence and Francophile sentiment would suggest. This Francophile sentiment is traceable, in Geoană's view, to the foundation of the modern Romanian state (i.e. 1859), whereas Germans have been there ever since the inception of the Romanian people, and, even more, have directly contributed to it. Geoană's artifice could also lead to another conclusion: if Romania's Latin identity and henceforth its Europeanness could be contested (this happened quite often in history, especially in Romanian-Hungarian historiographical debates), choosing to play the German cultural card can prove to be much more consistent, since German cultural heritage in Transylvania (hence, in Romania) is visible and touchable, very much matter-of-fact. Nobody would contest the European character of Germany and of German culture: its physical presence in Romania (by means of "urban civilization") is bound to entail Romania's Europeanness as well.

2004 saw the accession to power of the "Justice and Truth Alliance" against the Social Democratic Party that had ruled the country between 2000

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[349] Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1991);

and 2004. However, before the elections of 2004, at the annual Homeland Meeting of the Transylvanian Saxons, taking place in Dinkelsbühl, Bavaria, a high-ranked member of the Romanian Government was for the first time present. Symptomatically, the respective member was Alexandru Farcaș, Minister of European Integration between 2003 and 2004.[350] His address was a praise for the German community in Transylvania, perceived as a "model", but also as a "lively certitude in Europe". There are recurrent references to the Europeanness of the Germans in Romania and to Europe as a "common home" for both Romanians and Germans.[351] In matters German, the right-oriented Liberal-Democrat coalition, also fuelled by the election as president of former Bucharest mayor Traian Băsescu, continued to grant attention to Transylvanian Saxons and Banat Swabians, especially to the ones living in Germany. In 2005, Gheorghe Flutur, Minister of Agriculture at the time, also attended the Dinkelsbühl reunion, calling the Saxons "dear compatriots", "our elder brothers on the way of reintegration in the European family" and rendering homage to the common Romanian-German past and to their historical role in the evolution of Romania.[352] Farcaș' discourse emphasized the common Europeanness in view of Romania's future accession to the European Union and pledged for future support from the Transylvanian Saxons living in Germany and from German authorities; Flutur did not fail to refer to the European dimension connecting Romanian-Germans and Romanians, yet went further and specifically asked that the historical presence of Transylvanian Saxons in Romania, visible through both material and symbolic artefacts be completed by "your coming back to Transylvania when and how you wish". As an incentive, he mentioned that "property laws" were being revised, stating their further adequate implementation.

Following internal coalition disputes and parliamentary elections, in the context of a parliamentary crisis, a spontaneous alliance consisting of Liberals, Social-Democrats and the Democratic Alliance of Hungarians in

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[350] Coincidence makes it that Alexandru Farcaș replaced Hildegard Puwak as a Minister for European Integration, the latter being actually an ethnic German from Reșița, in Banat. She resigned following accusations of corruption, yet these did not entail attempts towards a public reevaluation of German prestige in Romania.

[351] Alexandru Farcaș, "Alexandru Farcas, Europaminister Rumäniens," Verband der Siebenbürger Sachsen, Real Audio Metadata file, 5:12, http://www.siebenbuerger.de/medien/audio-video/reden/ (accessed, December 15, 2011).

[352] Gheorghe Flutur, "Rumänien will Folgen des Kommunismus beseitigen," Verband der Siebenbürger Sachsen, MP3 file, 2:41, http://www.siebenbuergen.net/dkb2005/dkb2005flutur.mp3 (accessed, December 15, 2011).

Romania tried to impose the nomination of Klaus Johannis, president of the German Democratic Forum and mayor of Sibiu, as prime-minister. The move failed, yet at the shortly following presidential elections the Social-Democrat candidate, Mircea Geoană, officially chose to announce the future appointment of Johannis as a prime minister in the case of his winning the elections after the second round, supported by Crin Antonescu, the President of the Liberal Party, himself a presidential candidate in the first round. Geoană lost, yet by an extremely low margin. Traian Băsescu, the incumbent president having won a second term, usually quite vocal in the criticism of his political opponents, was cautious in attacking Johannis, aware of the good reputation the German mayor of Sibiu enjoys in the entire country.

The so-called "Johannis Project" is definitely telling of the prestige associated with Germanness in general and with the Transylvanian Saxons in particular and the possibility to use this prestige as an asset on the Romanian political scene. The main argument in favour of Johannis, namely his activity as a mayor of Sibiu since 2000, was a strong one, yet other mayors in Romania were equally successful, winning term after term in office, with extremely high percentages (e.g. Gheorghe Ciuhandu in Timișoara, Tudor Pendiuc in Pitești, or Radu Mazăre in Constanța). Neither of them had the reputation of Johannis, enhanced by the success of Sibiu - ECC 2007 and by his German origin.

The open association of Johannis with an alliance seen by many as a purely anti-presidential alliance was also not conducive to an improvement in the relations between the party in power and the political and cultural organization of the Germans in Romania. Nonetheless, this background did not deter Vasile Blaga, prominent member of the "presidential" Democratic Liberal Party and Minister for Internal Affairs, to go himself to Dinkelsbühl, to the 2010 Homeland Meeting of the Transylvanian Saxons, where he held a lengthy speech.[353] Blaga's initial *captatio benevolentiae* is more complex, as he emphasized the preservation of Transylvanian Saxon identity in Germany, noticeable in the yearly Dinkelsbühl meeting. He made a case for the Transylvanian Saxon contribution to German society, for their "active participation to the construction of modern Germany". He thus argued that

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[353] "Festrede von Vasile Blaga," Siebenbuerger.De Portal. Verband der Siebenbürger Sachsen, MP3 file, 18:56, http://www.siebenbuerger.de/reden/heimattag2010/Festrede_Vasile-Blaga.mp3 (accessed December 15, 2011).

the values learned and perpetuated in Transylvania (and Banat) constituted the Romanian German input within German society. Blaga did not forget to make Europeanizing references: the Transylvanian space, and so the Banat one, are in today's Europe "models of harmonious cohabitation", a paradoxical statement in front of an audience who in fact contributed to the diminution of the multiethnic character of the two regions through its out-migration. However, the purpose of such a reference was made clear later on, aiming to underline the quality of "authentic Europeans" of the Transylvanian Saxons, worthy of emulation. Blaga then continued by bewailing the absence of the German community from Romania, speaking in the name of "we, Romanians". The statement is interestingly exclusive: by ethnicizing the regret for the German absence, by attributing it to the "Romanians", Blaga suggested the existence of a special Romanian-German relationship. The most numerous minority group in Transylvania, the Hungarians, absent from Blaga's speech are thus excluded from this special relationship.

The high importance granted to Blaga's speech within the Romanian German communities in Germany is connected to his remarks regarding the property laws (five years after Flutur's touching upon the same subject!) and to his asserting the continual support for the restitution of the abusively confiscated properties to their former owners. Thereby, he meant essentially the properties confiscated by or forcefully sold to the Romanian state as a consequence of the illegal or legal migration of Romanian citizens during the Communist regime. In Dinkelsbühl, Blaga stated his support for the restitution, inviting Bernd Fabritius, the president of the Association of Transylvanian Saxons to ask for his help whenever needed. Nonetheless, four months later, following an internal scandal in Romania, Blaga resigned.

The various discourses on the Germans I have referred to in this section are telling of an equation of the "German minority" in Romania and "Europe", pinpointed especially in front of audiences from the Federal Republic of Germany, i.e. German officials or members of the Romanian German diaspora. At the same time, the recurrent references, over a long period of time, to projects of modifying legislative acts in order to meet specific German demands show that the discursive embrace of things German and the essential valorization of the German minority and of the potential

benefits it might bring to Romania are not necessarily accompanied by straightforward and satisfactory legislation in this respect.

All this is not to say that there are no signs of anti-German discourses in the political sphere, yet they are quintessentially marginal. For example, nationalist politician Corneliu Vadim Tudor, in a "holiday diary", rhetorically asked who "gave" the Black Church in Brașov to the Saxons, arguing that beyond its religious cult characteristics, "the Black Church is a component of Romanian National Patrimony, an important point of reference for Romania".[354] But even such statements are not so much a rejection of things German, but rather an appropriation of them, in manners reminiscent to National-Communist ideology, whose post-1989 representative Vadim Tudor actually is. The fact that on the cover of the book one sees an illustration of what can easily be taken to be a Transylvanian Saxon *Burgkirche* (fortified church) is also an illustration of the attempted symbolic "Romanian" appropriation of Saxon and Swabian culture in Transylvania and Banat. The more recent anti-German rants of an individual such as Marius Albin Marinescu, unsuccessful contender of Johannis at the local elections, who accuses the German Forum of being a Nazi organization, should be mentioned, but they are far from finding a way towards the foreground of any public debate whatsoever.[355]

## 5.5. Romanian-German Relations, Memory, and Identity

### 5.5.1. The Romanian-German Treaty for Cooperation

An important question is whether the "philo-Germanism" detected in the abovementioned memory and identity discourses has been in any way mirrored in concrete legislative actions touching upon the fate of the German community in Romania. Henceforth, a more concrete analysis regarding the relationship between the Romanian state and its German minority, undertaken by looking at some of the legislative issues connected therewith,

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[354] Corneliu Vadim Tudor, *Jurnal de vacanță* (Bucharest: Ed. Fundaţiei România Mare, 1996), 135-36.

[355] Marius Albin Marinescu, "Incredibil: F.D.G.R. a devenit în mod oficial organizaţie nazistă protejată de justiţie!", *Justiţiarul*, February 15, 2012, http://justitiarul.ro/atitudini/393-incredibil-fdgr-a-devenit-in-mod-oficial-organizaie-nazist-protejat-de-justiie.html (accessed March 9, 2012).

is appropriate. I have mentioned earlier in this chapter that one the consequences of the attempts to "stabilize" the German minority in Romania was the creation of a special governmental commission to tackle the migration issue, specific to the German community. However, during the Theodor Stolojan government (October 1991-October 1992), the respective Commission for the Stabilization of the German Minority was quietly disbanded, probably also on account of its lack of efficiency.

Nonetheless, when considering Romanian-German relationships in the early 1990s reference can and should be made to the Romanian-German Treaty for Cooperation, signed in 1992, with two articles dealing directly with the German minority in Romania. It was the first post-1989 bilateral treaty signed by the Romanian state, which included provisions and guarantees on the rights of individuals belonging to a minority group, more precisely the German minority group. Within the Preamble, the latter's "valuable and unmistakable contribution to the life of Romanian society, thus constituting a natural bridge between the two peoples" is acknowledged, together with the "wish to keep this historical contribution viable, for the common good". Further on, articles 15 and 16 of the Treaty refer to the German minority in Romania; they still govern bilateral Romanian-German relationships as concerns the ethnic Germans who live in Romania. According to Article 15, the legal standards to be followed in terms of minority protection are the ones set up at the Conference for Security and Cooperation in Europe from July 1990. The Romanian state affirms that it will protect the identity of the persons belonging to the German minority in Romania and will support the latter's furtherance through concrete measures. Moreover, Romania acknowledges and facilitates the furtherance measures undertaken by the German state in favour of the German minority in Romania.[356] What some years before would have been perceived as intrusion in Romanian internal affairs gained a legislative form in 1992. It was the first treaty with provisions of the sort. Furthermore, references to "Europe" are strewn throughout the entire text of the treaty, signalizing that the German-Romanian rapprochement and consequently the Romanian interest towards the German

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[356] "Lege nr. 95 din 16 septembrie 1992 pentru ratificarea Tratatului dintre România și Republica Federală Germania privind cooperarea prietenească și parteneriatul în Europa, încheiat la București la 21 aprilie 1992. Textul actului publicat în M. Of. Nr. 237/24 sep. 1992," Guvernul României. Departamentul pentru Relații Interetnice, http://www.dri.gov.ro/documents/romania%20RFG.pdf (accessed December 15, 2011).

minority are best understood if considering the "return to Europe" discourses specific to countries in Central- and Eastern Europe after the fall of Communism. On a comparative note: although there is a Romanian minority in Bulgaria and a Bulgarian minority in Romania, the Romanian-Bulgarian Treaty, signed in January of the same year, included no references to rights of the individuals belonging to the respective minorities.[357]

Within the Romanian-German Treaty, the first paragraph of Article 15 includes the enactment as legal norms of "the standards on the protection of minorities contained in the document of the Copenhagen Meeting". It has already been noticed that the provisions included in the document of the Copenhagen meeting went at the time beyond "the current international provisions with a binding force in this area".[358] Further on, Andreescu, Stan and Weber stated that "one might come to the conclusion that the Romanian state is willing to grant to the German minority in this country such opportunities as it would deny the Hungarian minority, which is much larger and one of the major topics falling under the Pact." In other words, this would signify "discriminating" (double) standards of the Romanian state in its treatment of minorities.[359]

Recently, Adrian Năstase, Minister of Foreign Affairs at the time when the Romanian-German Bilateral Treaty was signed, started publishing a multiple volume work, based upon his daily agenda in that period, dealing with the time when he was the representative of Romania on the international scene. In the fourth volume, Năstase detailed his first visit to Germany, in April 1991, when he met Hans-Dietrich Genscher, Horst Waffenschmidt and Franz Kroppenstedt, the latter two being at the time Secretaries of State within the German Minister of Internal Affairs.[360] His discussion with them touched upon the issue of the German minority in Romania, Năstase reiterating the Romanian interest that the Germans continue to live in

[357] "Lege nr. 74 din 17 iulie 1992 pentru ratificarea Tratatului de prietenie, colaborare și bună vecinătate dintre România și Republica Bulgaria. Textul actului publicat în M.Of. nr. 174/23 iul. 1992," Guvernul României. Departamentul pentru Relații Interetnice, http://www.dri.gov.ro/documents/romania%20bulgaria.pdf (accessed December 15, 2011). Gabriel Andreescu also remarked the absence of any clauses regarding the minorities living in each of the two states in *Națiuni și minorități* (Iași: Polirom, 2004), 149.
[358] Gabriel Andreescu, Valentin Stan and Renate Weber, "Pact on Stability in Europe: Romania's Interests," *International Studies* 1 (1995): 9.
[359] Ibid., 10.
[360] Adrian Năstase, *România după Malta. 875 de zile la Externe*, vol. IV: 1 martie-30 aprilie 1991 (Bucharest: Fundația Europeană Titulescu, 2007), 311-25.

Romania.[361] Further on, he stated that the only "realistic way" in which to convince these people to remain in Romania is to raise their standard of living; in view of this objective, he looked for (financial) support from the German government.[362] Reaching the conclusion that it would be appropriate to set up an intergovernmental commission to deal with the German minority and, through common projects, to try and improve its standard of living, Năstase delineated the general context and the possible implications of such an enterprise for Romania:

> ... a very important thing for us is to explain that we cannot have two democratization gears, one for the majority and one for the minorities. We have made a special effort to grant a special status to the ethnic Germans, although this could have created difficulties for us as regards other ethnies. It is obvious, if we can discuss openly, that in our relationship with Hungary, the question of the Hungarian minority has a political dimension. What we agree now with you acquires the value of a precedence case, and that can be dangerous for us. Nonetheless, we have made special efforts, both as regards education in all forms, accepting teachers from Germany, and also the idea of a consulate in Sibiu. These are things what we do in good faith and with the desire to help a specific process.[363]

The Romanian-German Treaty was signed at a time when Romanian authorities were highly sensitive as regards the issue of minority rights, constantly reasserting that minority rights do not exist as such, but are a subspecies of human rights, thus individual rights. Furthermore, attempts of the Hungarian state to open a consulate in Cluj-Napoca or to push towards the Romanian state-sponsored foundation of a Hungarian-language university in the same town, were seen as interferences in Romania's internal affairs.

In this context, alongside Năstase's negotiations with German officials, a declaration made by Traian Chebeleu, State Secretary in the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and later advisor of President Iliescu, concerning the German minority in Romania, is also extremely valuable for the researcher of perceptions of minorities within Romanian society. Questioned about the status of minorities in Romania and about possible similarities between the Hungarian-Russian Statement on the Rights of National Minorities, issued in

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[361] Ibid., 317.
[362] Ibid., 319.
[363] Ibid., 321.

November 1992, and the Romanian-German Treaty of April 1992, Chebeleu, at that time chief of staff within the Minister of Foreign Affairs, retorted:

> Therein [in the Treaty] there are the practical stipulations through which concrete measures on behalf of the German government in view of the preservation of the German minorities (sic) are sustained, together with its endorsement as regards the reorganization of social, cultural and economic life under the new circumstances in Romania. This practical stipulation has an objective basis, as you know, due to some policies and causes that we should not comment upon here. In the meantime, the German minority shrank, so that today it reached less than a third from its quantity during the years preceding the Revolution. The German minority enriches Romanian life from a cultural point of view, but also from other points of view - spiritually, even politically. We have an interest in preserving and consolidating the German minority and the cultivation of its traditions in Romania. This is the meaning of the practical stipulation in the Treaty with Germany. As regards our relationship with Hungary, the problems are not to be treated in the same way, neither in principle, nor in practice.[364]

Valentin Stan was the first to draw attention to Chebeleu's statement, remarking the hierarchical difference entailed thereby.[365] Năstase's comments in front of the two representatives of the German state, presented above, practically follow the same pattern.

Such comments by Romanian officials and such political facts enable to comparatively juxtapose Romania's approach with respect to the Hungarian and German minorities. It is visible that the German influence and behaviour in Romania are perceived as different (and judged as more valuable) than Hungarian influence and behaviour. This perception informs political approaches to Romanian-German relationships, being also visible in the historical representations and in the identity and memory-related discourses on the German "other". Furthermore, the representation of a good Romanian relationship with the German minority can be used in order to diminish real or potential Hungarian claims in Romania.

On the basis of the abovementioned Treaty, a mixed intergovernmental Romanian-German commission was set up, whose proceedings take place

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[364] Traian Chebeleu, "Statutul minorităților nu poate fi obiect de negociere," interview by Rodica Chelaru, *Meridian*, December 7, 1992.

[365] Valentin Stan, "Nationalism and European Security: Romania's Euro-Atlantic Integration," *International Studies* 1 (1995): 45.

yearly, where issues regarding the ethnic Germans living in Romania are discussed. What is striking in view of the Romanian traditional obsession regarding "foreign interference in internal affairs", very much present in the early 1990s, is the following stipulation present in the Treaty: "Romania will allow and facilitate the measures of promotion from the Federal Republic of Germany in favour of the German minority in Romania." Thereby, Romania legislated that the German state has a word to say as regards the fate of the German minority in Romania.

The Romanian-German Treaty is the only bilateral treaty signed by Romanian authorities acknowledging the right of another state to carry out measures in favour of the minority living in Romania. I have already referred to the Romanian-Bulgarian Treaty, which does not include any clause regarding minorities or individuals belonging to minority groups. Furthermore, the Romanian-Hungarian and Romanian-Ukrainian Treaties, two of the internally and externally most contended bilateral treaties ratified by the Romanian state, signed in 1996 and 1997 respectively, would eventually not include similar provisions, but rather strongly assert the obligations of the state on whose territory the minority group is inhabiting to carry out measures for the protection and promotion of its identity.[366] There are a number of bilateral treaties signed by Romania which include references to minorities, besides the three already mentioned ones, such as the Romanian-Croatian Treaty, the Romanian-Polish Treaty, or the Romanian-Slovak Treaty.[367] Neither has any clause comparable to the one in Art. 16,

[366] "Tratat din 02/06/1997 (Tratat din 1997) cu privire la relațiile de bună vecinătate și cooperare între România și Ucraina. Publicat în Monitorul Oficial nr. 157 din 16/07/1997," Guvernul României. Departamentul pentru Românii de Pretutindeni, http://www.dprp.gov.ro/wp-content/uploads/2010/03/Tratat-de-baza-Romania-Ucraina.pdf (accessed December 15, 2011); "Tratatul de bază. Tratat de înțelegere, cooperare și buna vecinătate între România și Republica Ungaria," Consulatul General al României. Szeged, http://szeged.mae.ro/index.php?lang=ro&id=63940 (accessed December 15, 2011).
[367] "Lege nr. 79 din 22 septembrie 1994 pentru ratificarea Tratatului privind relațiile de prietenie și colaborare dintre România și Republica Croația, încheiat la București la 16 februarie 1994. Textul actului publicat în M.Of. nr. 273/27 sep. 1994," Guvernul României. Departamentul pentru Relații Interetnice. http://www.dri.gov.ro/documents/romania%20croatia.pdf (accessed April 16, 2012); "Lege nr. 28 din 24 mai 1993 pentru ratificarea Tratatului cu privire la relațiile prietenești și la cooperarea dintre România și Republica Polonă, încheiat la București la 25 ianuarie 1993. Textul actului publicat în M.Of. nr. 112/31 mai 1993," Guvernul României. Departamentul pentru Relații Interetnice. http://www.dri.gov.ro/documents/romania%20polonia.pdf (accessed April 16, 2012); "Lege nr. 10 din 7 martie 1994 pentru ratificarea Tratatului privind relațiile de prietenie și colaborare dintre România și Republica Slovacă, încheiat la Bratislava la 24 septembrie 1993. Textul actului publicat în M.Of. nr. 64/11 mar. 1994," Guvernul

Paragraph 1 of the Romanian-German Treaty. Furthermore, the Preamble of the Romanian-Ukrainian Treaty contains no reference to the Ukrainian minority in Romania or to the Romanian minority in Ukraine and to their contribution to the two societies. The Preamble of the Romanian-Hungarian Treaty includes a general reference to "national minorities as an integral party of the society they live in", asserting that their protection is strongly linked with European cooperation and peace and thus regulated through the international protection of human rights; again, unlike in the Romanian-German Treaty, no reference was made to the contribution of the Hungarian minority in Romania and to the contribution of the Romanian minority in Hungary.

### 5.5.2. A Tenuous Relationship with the Past. Reparation Measures

In an interview from 2007 literary critic Stefan Sienerth was asked about the reasons leading to the German exodus after December 1989. In his answer, Sienerth included a phrase alluding to a counterfactual history scenario, admitting though that it is a "thought impossible to verify": "...if the land restitution had taken place at the beginning of the 1990s and if the official apologies of the Romanian state had come earlier, the history of the Germans in Romania might have looked differently."[368] With this statement, Sienerth captured the essence of the post-1989 Romanian-German relationships, placing them in a framework where social memory in general and politics of memory in particular are quintessential. Furthermore, it also captured the two key dimensions of the relationship with the historical past and with perceived historical injustices: the factual and the symbolic.

Directly involved in the politics of the Democratic Forum of Germans in Romania, Wolfgang Wittstock, former MP (1992-1996 and 1997-2004) and former president of the Forum (1998-2002), stated that the core areas of his activity as a representative of the German community in the Romanian Parliament were concerned with minority protection, reparations of the arbitrary measures taken during the Communist dictatorship and the

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Romániei. Departamentul pentru Relații Interetnice. http://www.dri.gov.ro/documents/romania%20slovacia.pdf (accessed April 16, 2012).
[368] Stefan Sienerth, "Dacă Herta Müller ia mâine Premiul Nobel, literatura română o va accepta subit," interview by Cristian Cercel, *Observator cultural*, September 27, 2007.

restitution of nationalized properties.[369] Wittstock was a representative of his community for eleven years in the Romanian Parliament: undoubtedly, his considerations can be extended to the activity of the German Forum in the other legislatures as well. They summarize the main areas of involvement of the German Forum on behalf of the ethnic Germans it claims to represent: politics of identity and politics of memory.

At this point, reemphasizing some key aspects regarding the fate of the Romanian Germans following the Second World War is meaningful. Following Romania's change of sides, which took place on 23 August 1944, from an ally of the Axis to an ally of the Allied Powers, the German minority in Romania was over night placed into the position of a "fifth column". Although now formally allied with the Soviet Union, Romania was practically occupied by the Soviets and the subsequent political trajectory of the country was imposed from Moscow. In January 1945 all German adults living in Romania were deported for the reconstruction of the Soviet Union, mostly in the Donbas region and in the Urals. Moreover, the ethnic Germans were the first to be directly hit by expropriation measures undertaken by central authorities, before the subsequent general nationalization and expropriation legislation.

However, when post-1989 authorities drafted the first laws aimed at the reparation of the Communist measures, seen as illegal, their initial temporary milestone was March 6, 1945. Consequently, the Germans deported to the Soviet Union were not included in the text of the law granting rights to those politically persecuted by the Communist regime.[370] Only in December 1990 were the provisions of the law extended, in order to include the Germans deported to the Soviet Union.[371]

A similar situation arose in the case of the Law on Land Resources: the Communist regime expropriated German owners as early as March 1945, through a law directed nominally against the collaborators of Hitler's Germany. In practice, this referred to almost the entire German population in

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[369] Wolfgang Wittstock, "Mitreden und mitentscheiden. Schwierigkeiten der parlamentarischen Vertretung eines Minderheitenverbandes," in Demokratisches Forum, *Einblick & Ausblick*, 34.

[370] "Decret-lege privind acordarea unor drepturi persoanelor persecutate de dictatura instaurată cu începere de la 6 martie 1945," in *Monitorul Oficial al României*, April 9, 1990.

[371] "Lege privind extinderea prevederilor Decretului-lege nr. 118/1990 și la persoanele deportate în străinătate după 23 august 1944," in *Monitorul Oficial al României*, December 13, 1990.

Romania, who had been part of the German Ethnic Group during the war. "German" and "Hitlerite" were seen as synonyms.[372] About 97% of the German population was hit by the land reform of 1945.[373] However, when post-Communist authorities first drafted the Law on Land Resources, it referred only to the expropriations and nationalizations taking place later, from 1949 onwards. Consequently, in order for the Law on Land Resources to include the ethnic Germans affected by the March 1945 decree, the German Embassy in Bucharest had to intervene.[374]

The Law was indeed eagerly awaited by the members of German community in Romania, yet its text, together with the way it was put into practice, soon led to considerable disappointments. Despite the intervention of the German Embassy in Bucharest, the end result, i.e. the text of the Law on Land Resources (Law 18/1991) was not completely satisfactory for ethnic Germans. It did refer to those whose properties were confiscated before the commonly accepted date of the start of the collectivization (1949). Article 17 of the Law stated:

> 1) In the localities with Romanian citizens belonging to the German minority or where persons inhabit, who have been deported or resettled, dispossessed of their lands through normative acts drafted after 1944, upon request, they or their descendants, will have priority in being attributed land surfaces from the reserve land at the Commission's disposal or the procedure will follow art. 37.[375]

However, these provisions within the legislative act were perceived as discriminatory within the German community. In her analysis of post-socialist land reform in the Transylvanian village Aurel Vlaicu, Katherine Verdery summarized what they entailed for the Germans: "Article 16 (sic) of the law provided that descendants of the Germans should receive land from the reserve fund, if there were any - that is, not necessarily their old lands or

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[372] Horst Weber, "Die Rumäniendeutschen," 18.

[373] Anton Sterbling, "Historische und aktuelle Aspekte der 'Bodenfrage' und der Agrarkrise in Siebenbürgen," in *Kontinuität und Wandel in Rumänien und Südosteuropa. Historisch-soziologische Analyzen* (Munich: Südostdeutsches Kulturwerk, 1997), 36.

[374] Paul Philippi, "Bericht des Landesvorsitzenden vor der Vertreterversammlung des DFDR (26. November 1994)," *Zugänge*, 19/20 (1996): 89; Horst Weber, "Das Forum ist mancherlei Belastung ausgesezt," *Hermannstädter Zeitung*, March 8, 1991.

[375] "Legea nr. 18 din 19 februarie 1991. Legea Fondului Funciar," Camera Deputaților, http://www.cdep.ro/pls/legis/legis_pck.htp_act_text?idt=7996 (accessed November 22, 2010).

even any land at all."[376] Furthermore, claims for land were subsequently analyzed and decided upon by internal commissions in the respective village: in some cases, the entire restitution process led to an upsurge in ethnic feeling and animosity. Ironic "invitations" were addressed to ethnic Germans to go and find land restitution in Flanders or wherever they came from.[377]

There are some obvious similarities between the two specific legislative acts I touch upon: they both aim to repair measures unjustly taken during the Communist regime, and the first drafts were both initially oblivious of the discrimination and persecution of Romanian Germans. The intervention of Germany as a kin-state has contributed to the Romanian acknowledgment of German victimhood as due to the Communist regime and henceforth to the attempt to legislatively address it. Still, as I have suggested earlier, in effect ethnic Germans had few reasons to be content, as they stood worse than all those whose lands were taken afterwards, since they were to be granted lands only from the so-called "reserve fund".

However, the fact that in both cases the Germans were eventually included in the legislative acts shows that from the point of view of Romanian authorities, the memory of the Communist past was negotiable and that acknowledging past anti-German discrimination measures was indeed possible. In order to make full sense out of this interpretation, one should take into consideration the fact that despite their uneasy relationship with pre-1989 realities and a specific reluctance towards market economy, post-revolutionary Romanian authorities eventually attempted to reverse a series of measures taken by the Communist regime, thus acknowledging their unjust character. Although far from fully addressing the German claims towards restitution of property, the Law on Land Resources was a legal attempt to reverse a past wrongdoing. Nonetheless, whilst (superficially) attempting to repair the unjust and discriminatory measures provoked by the Communist regime, the Law conveniently failed to refer to the land expropriations taking place before the onset of Soviet-inspired

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[376] Katherine Verdery, *The Vanishing Hectare: Property and Value in Postsocialist Transylvania* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2003), 133.
[377] Paul Philippi, interview by the author, October 29, 2010, Sibiu; for German-Romanian interethnic rivalry in Aurel Vlaicu, see also Katherine Verdery, "Nationalism, Postsocialism, and Space in Eastern Europe," in "Nationalism Reexamined," *Social Research. An International Quarterly of the Social Sciences* 63, no. 1 (Spring 1996): 77-95.

authoritarianism, such as the expropriations touching upon Jewish properties during Fascist rule in Romania.[378]

Furthermore, following the path of the argumentation adduced by Andrew Cartwright, another extremely relevant observation should be brought to the fore. He remarked that Article 36 (actually, Article 37) in Law 18/1991 provided that those who lost land as a consequence of political persecution were entitled to receive state farm shares as long as they could prove they had indeed been victims of political persecution, a status legislated through Decree 118/1990, which also included a reference to past Fascist activities. At the same time, Cartwright argued, ethnic Germans could actually claim back land on the basis of Article 17 in Law 18/1991, thus bypassing any critical encounter with a potential Fascist past.[379] Wolfgang Wittstock states that most probably the Germans with Fascist spots in their past either left the country together with the German troops at the end of the war or during Communism.[380] Nonetheless, even if that had not been the case, not addressing the Second World War past and applying for land restitution was made possible for ethnic Germans. In this context, it is worth noting that the property expropriations from the time of the Second World War touching upon Jews and organizations of the Jewish community would eventually be addressed only later, in 1997.[381] Furthermore, the Jews persecuted by the Fascist regime in the 1940s, survivors of the Holocaust, would be able to enjoy the rights stipulated in Decree 118/1990 only following a governmental ordinance from 1999, which directly referred to those persecuted on "ethnic grounds" between September 6th 1940 and March 6th 1945, yet without once using the terms "Jews" or "Roma".[382]

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[378] Andrew Cartwright, "Avoiding Collectivisation: Land Reform in Romania, 1990-92," *Rural Transition Series, Working Paper No. 50*, Center for Central and Eastern European Studies, University of Liverpool, http://www.liv.ac.uk/history/research/cee_pdfs/WP50v2.pdf (accessed December 15, 2011).

[379] Ibid.

[380] Wolfgang Wittstock, email to the author, 23 November 2011.

[381] "Ordonanța urgentă nr. 21 din 20 mai 1997 privind retrocedarea unor bunuri imobile care au aparținut comunităților evreiești din România," Guvernul României. Departamentul pentru Relații Interetnice, http://www.dri.gov.ro/documents/oug%2021-1997.pdf (accessed November 23, 2011).

[382] "Ordonanța nr. 105 din 30 august 1999 (actualizată) privind acordarea unor drepturi persoanelor persecutate de către regimurile instaurate în România cu începere de la 6 septembrie 1940 până la 6 martie 1945 din motive etnice," Guvernul României. Departamentul pentru Relații Interetnice, http://www.dri.gov.ro/documents/og%20105.pdf (accessed, December 15, 2011).

The legislative German-related provisions were deemed far from satisfactory by the ethnopolitical entrepreneurs within the German community in Romania, and by many of the ethnic Germans who were envisaging claiming back their land or the land of their parents and grandparents. Nonetheless, it is also possible to speak of a Romanian-German compatibility in eschewing from addressing sensitive topics in the pre-Communist past. A state-imposed Transylvanian Saxon and Banat Swabian *Vergangenheitsbewältigung* (coming to terms with the past) would have had high chances to entail the need for a Romanian coming to terms with its own Fascist past, an issue still too sensitive to be tackled in the 1990s.

One of the key aspects of the Romanian "transition" towards a market economy was the gradual dismantling of the property regime built up by the Communist regime. Although some legislative acts were issued in favour of those who gained from various nationalization and expropriation measures, such as Law 112/1995, that allowed tenants of nationalized houses to buy the properties they were living in, the general process was rather one emphasizing restitution or the establishment of new types of property, especially through privatization of state goods.

In this context, alongside the already-mentioned Law on Land Resources, Romanian authorities issued a series of other legislative acts of reform, in their attempt to regulate the property market and to acquire an European "face" in view of the much desired European integration.[383] Some of them directly bore upon the German community, as for example the Emergency Ordinance 83/1999 and Law 66/2004, dealing with the restitution of property confiscated by the Romanian state between September 1940 and December 1989 to the organizations of national minorities, Law 501/2002 on the restitution of properties to religious organizations, Law 1/2000, regulating once again the restitution of land following the multitude of discontents caused by Law 18/1991, Law 10/2001, dealing broadly with property confiscated during Communism. In some cases, such as the one of Law 1/2000, subsequent changes leading to discriminations against the German population were again to be enacted. Henceforth the strong opposition of

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[383] David Phinnemore, "And We'd Like To Thank... Romania's Integration into the European Union, 1989-2007," *Journal of European Integration* 32, no. 3 (May 2010): 291-308.

German MP Wolfgang Wittstock and the intervention of the German Embassy in Bucharest were necessary in order to countermand them.[384]

Nonetheless, such legislative acts are in effect in direct breach with some of the positions of Romanian officials from the 1990s. Upon a visit in Germany, in 1990, Prime Minister Petre Roman stated that it would be impossible to return properties confiscated from the Catholic and Lutheran Churches to their initial owners.[385] In 1997, in an interview granted to the German weekly *Focus*, president Emil Constantinescu, whose wife is half-German from Sibiu, also argued with reference to Transylvanian towns that "it is hardly imaginable to give back all the houses in the town centres to the German community".[386] Yet at least in theory the hardly imaginable was made possible some years later, in the context of the EU-ruled accelerated process of European integration. The process of ownership restitution is hardly satisfying for many of those involved, as for example the activities of the association "ResRo Interessenvertretung in Rumänien" show, yet steps in this direction have definitely been made during the two post-Communist decades, with ethnic Germans being amongst those who can apply for restitution of ownership on the basis of these legislative acts.[387]

The Second World War was directly addressed by Law 44/1994, on war veterans. One of the debated issues was who amongst Romanian citizens qualified as a war veteran. The difficulties raised by this question originated from a series of historical events taking place during the conflagration. The most sensitive problems regarded on the one hand the ethnic Hungarians from Northern Transylvania, annexed by Hungary between 1940 and 1944 and on the other hand, the ethnic Germans who had been incorporated in the German Army and in the SS during the Second World War. Germany, Hungary, and Romania had been fighting on the same side until August 23, 1944, when Romania suddenly entered the camp of the Allied Powers. Consequently, amongst the potential war veterans in the 1990s there were also Romanian citizens who had actually fought against the Romanian army and the Romanian state in the final months of the conflagration.

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[384] Trégomain, "'Normales'?" 86.

[385] Mihai Mihăilescu, "Doleanțele sașilor și șvabilor," *România liberă*, December 1, 1990.

[386] "Präsident Constantinescu über eine Rückkehr".

[387] James Koranyi and Ruth Wittlinger, "From Diaspora to Diaspora: The Case of Transylvanian Saxons in Romania and Germany," in "Diaspora and Citizenship," ed. Elena Barabantseva and Claire Sutherland, special issue, *Nationalism and Ethnic Politics* 17, no. 1 (January 2011): 109-10.

According to the first draft of the Law, these citizens were not qualified to enjoy the rights associated with the quality of a war veteran. Nonetheless, there was one exception, namely the ethnic Germans who were compulsorily recruited in units of the German army, on the condition they still have Romanian citizenship. Wolfgang Wittstock remembers that the decision to include the Germans who had been in the German Army and in the SS was reached with a majority of only two votes in the Chamber of Deputies.[388]

However, fact is that the text of the law in its initial form actually mirrored a symbolic hierarchy of minority groups, since Hungarians who had fought against the Romanian Army as a consequence of the Vienna Dictate from 1940 dividing Transylvania into two parts, were not considered to be war veterans. Furthermore, it did not address the fact that the Romanian-German Treaty of 1943 enabled the drafting of ethnic Germans from Romania into "Wehrmacht-SS", a wording definitely open to interpretations.[389] The text of Law 44/1994 referred to ethnic Germans who were part of "units of the German Army", yet did not draw a distinction between SS and the German Army, which practically paved the way for equating the participation in the two organizations. Most of the ethnic Germans who then made use of the provisions of this legislative act actually fought in SS units.[390] Eventually, following an appeal by the Democratic Alliance of Hungarians in Romania, the Constitutional Court ruled that those provisions were discriminatory against Romanian citizens and henceforth unconstitutional; this led to the inclusion within the legislative provisions of the Romanian citizens who had fought in the armies of other states, thus allowing for the ethnic Hungarians in Northern Transylvania to receive a pension as well.[391]

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[388] Wittstock, interview.

[389] Paul Milata, *Zwischen Hitler, Stalin und Antonescu. Rumäniendeutsche in der Waffen-SS* (Cologne: Böhlau Verlag, 2007);

[390] Wolfgang Wittstock, e-mail message to the author, November 23, 2011.

[391] "Decizia nr. 47 cu privire la constituționalitatea unor prevederi din Legea privind veteranii de război, precum și unele drepturi ale invalizilor și văduvelor de război. Publicată în *Monitorul Oficial* nr. 139 din 02.06.1994," Curtea Constituțională a României, http://www.ccr.ro/decisions/pdf/ro/1994/D047_94.pdf (accessed November 22, 2010).

### 5.5.3. The Romanian Response to the Project of the Hungarian Status Law. Some Comparative Notes

I have already suggested throughout this chapter that juxtaposing Romanian approaches to questions related to the German minority with approaches related to other minority groups, most saliently to Hungarians, is a fruitful method. In order to find the place of the German within Romanian politics of identity and Romanian politics of memory, considering the wider network of representations in Romanian society is meaningful. In this context, the current section deals with the Romanian response to and the ensuing Romanian-Hungarian dispute generated by one of the most controversial Hungarian legislative issues, i.e. the Hungarian Status Law of 2001 or, more accurately, The Act on Hungarians Living in Neighbouring Countries.

Through the said law project, the Hungarian Government attempted to set up a series of benefits and entitlements for the Hungarians living in the neighbouring countries, on the basis of their ethnicity.[392] In its ideological tenets, the Hungarian Status Law had its similarities with the *Spätaussiedlerpolitik* (late resettlers politics) promoted by the German state, having direct consequences upon the fate of the Romanian Germans. In theory, it reflected an attitude present not only in Hungary, but also in Germany, namely that co-ethnics living in other countries should be financially aided in the states they live in rather than be supported to migrate to Hungary and Germany respectively. Nonetheless, it has been observed that some of the provisions of the Hungarian act offered entitlements that could have been interpreted as actually supporting migration.[393]

In Germany, a straightforward change in approach took place in 1992, when the *Kriegsfolgenbereinigungsgesetz* (War Consequences Conciliation Act) was drafted and then ratified, substantially modifying the legal and ideological framework regulating the relationship of Germany with Germans

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[392] Zoltán Kántor et al. (ed.), *The Hungarian Status Law: Nation Building and/or Minority Protection* (Sapporo: Slavic Research Center, Hokkaido University), http://src-h.slav.hokudai.ac.jp/coe21/publish/no4_ses/contents.html (accessed November 24, 2010); Bogdan Aurescu, "Bilateral Agreements as a Means of Solving Minority Issues: The Case of the Hungarian Status Law," *European Yearbook of Minority Issues*, 3 (2003/2004): 519-30.

[393] Herbert Küpper, "Hungary's Controversial Status Law,", transl. Dezső Bánki, in Kántor et al., *The Hungarian Status Law*, 313-27, http://src-h.slav.hokudai.ac.jp/coe21/publish/no4_ses/chapter11.pdf (accessed November 24, 2010); Walter Kemp, "Kin-States Protecting National Minorities: Positive Trend or Dangerous Precedent?" in McGarry and Keating, *European Integration*, 103-23.

in Central and Eastern Europe.[394] Until then, this relationship was fundamentally understood in terms of a Wilhelmian *jus sanguinis* (right of blood) and of a historical-moral debt of the German state towards the Germans on the other side of the Iron Curtain. Henceforth, the migration of the Romanian Germans from Romania to Germany had taken place under the aegis of a legislative framework generously permitting first the integration of *Vertriebenen* (expellees), and then of *Aussiedler* (resettlers). However, as a consequence of the War Consequences Conciliation Act, it became much more difficult for the Germans abroad to obtain German citizenship. In theory, this was possible only if ethnic Germans were discriminated against in the country of residence. At the same time, proving the existence of discriminations had become almost impossible once the respective countries (in our case, Romania) were officially considered to be on the path of democratization and Europeanization.[395]

Fundamentally, both Hungary and Germany considered they have specific duties towards the co-ethnics living outside their borders; furthermore, so does Romania in relationship to the ethnic Romanians living outside its borders.[396] However, the 2001 Status Law was received with severe criticism in Romania, Prime Minister Adrian Năstase and Minister of Foreign Affairs Mircea Geoană being amongst the most vocal opponents. MP Attila Varga, member of the Democratic Alliance of Hungarians in Romania, enumerated the main objections of the Romanian part in respect to the Hungarian Status Law: the issue of extraterritoriality, the issue of discrimination, the rejection of the idea of (Hungarian) national unity expressed in the text of the law, the objection to the issue of benefits and entitlements going educational and cultural support, the criticism of the entitlements granted to non-Hungarian spouses, and the contentious issue of the Hungarian certificate, presumably deciding who is and who is not

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[394] Amanda Klekowski von Koppenfels, "The Decline of Privilege: The Legal Background to the Migration of Ethnic Germans," in *Coming Home to Germany? The Integration of Ethnic Germans from Central and Eastern Europe in the Federal Republic*, ed. David Rock and Stefan Wolff (New York: Berghahn Books, 2002), 102-18.

[395] Georg Weber et al., *Emigration der Siebenbürger Sachsen. Studien zu Ost-West Wanderungen im 20. Jahrhundert* (Wiesbaden: Westdeutscher Verlag, 2002), 145-83.

[396] Bogdan Aurescu, "Romanian Legislation on Kin-Minorities," in *The Protection of National Minorities by Their Kin-State / La protection des minorités nationales par leur Etat-parent*, ed. European Commission for Democracy through Law / Commission européenne pour la démocratie par le droit (Strasbourg: Council of Europe Publishing / Editions du Conseil de l'Europe, 2002): 175-93.

Hungarian.[397] Taking into consideration the heavy symbolic sensibilities often present in Romanian-Hungarian relationships, the political rejection and criticism of the Law are not surprising.[398] Nonetheless, although similarities can be drawn, some of the specific critical points brought forth in this Romanian-Hungarian contentious debate have never been critically addressed in Romania with regard to the German policies towards co-ethnics living outside the borders of Germany, Transylvanian Saxons, Banat Swabians and the other German-speaking groups in Romania included.

The first issue of dispute was that of extraterritoriality, i.e. enacting the law from a state on the territory of another state and, in its negative understanding, extending the jurisdiction of a state to the citizens of another state. However, there had always been effects of the German legislation, more precisely of the *Bundesvertriebenengesetz* (federal law on expellees) upon Romanian citizens of German ethnicity. At the beginning of the 1990s, during Adrian Năstase's tenure as Minister for Foreign Affairs, more than 100.000 Romanian citizens migrated to Germany: they could do that on the basis of German legislation. Despite pleas to stay in the country, never have post-1989 Romanian officials protested against the extraterritoriality implied by German legislation. Even if one admits that the situation from 1990-1992 was not comparable to the one in 2001, fact is that József Antall's declaration from 1990, according to which he considered himself prime-minister of 15 million Hungarians (i.e. also of ethnic Hungarians living outside of Hungary) elicited responses and criticism from Romanian authorities. So have subsequent similar declarations by Hungarian officials. However, the policies of Helmut Kohl and Hans-Dietrich Genscher, who led to the migration of Romanian citizens from Romania to Germany and to their acquisition of German citizenship never elicited any type of criticism in Romania. After 1993, the new legislative measures in Germany practically put a halt to the migration of Romanian Germans; nonetheless, German policies and the German-Romanian bilateral treaty legally sanctioned the direct responsibility of Germany for the German ethnics in Romania.

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[397] Attila Varga, "Legislative Aspects and Political Excuses: Hungarian-Romanian Disagreements on the 'Act on Hungarians Living in Neighbouring Countries'," transl. Bob Dent, in Kántor et al., *The Hungarian Status Law*, 461-74, http://src-h.slav.hokudai.ac.jp/coe21/publish/no4_ses/chapter19.pdf (accessed November 24, 2010).
[398] Kemp, "Kin-States Protecting National Minorities".

Secondly, the issue of discrimination regards the establishment of an ethnically based distinction between Romanian citizens, that would then lead to a negative discrimination against Romanian citizens who are not of Hungarian ethnicity. According to Romanian Constitution, the support for the preservation and development of minority identity cannot lead to the discrimination against other Romanian citizens (a provision also sanctioned in other bilateral treaties, including the Romanian-German Bilateral Treaty). Nonetheless, the Hungarian attempt was not the only "positive discrimination" attempt that could have been interpreted as leading to discrimination against other Romanian citizens. A relevant example in this direction is the *Anwerbestoppausnahmeverordnung* (regulation on the exceptions from recruitment ban) regulating the exceptions from the ban on foreign labour in Germany. Paragraph 10 of the legal ordinance, coming into force in January 1991, allowed ethnic Germans in possession of a notification of acceptance or who were visiting relatives to be granted a work permit.[399] The ordinance would be later modified, the possibility of those visiting relatives to get a temporary work permit being eliminated.[400] Within the German community in Romania, the latter provision was perceived as disappointing, as it actually established a series of bureaucratic hurdles to be overcome in trying to get a work permit in Germany. However, paragraph 10 indirectly permitted specific Romanian citizens, distinguished through their German ethnicity and through the possession of a specific document released by German authorities and asserting their German *Volkszugehörigkeit* (ethnic belonging), to be granted a work permit.

There were, of course, other exceptions in the text of the ordinance. Most of them regarded nonetheless specialists or referred to domains where bilateral conventions between Germany and another state had been signed. Within Germany, paragraph 10 established a positive discrimination in favour of specific ethnic Germans who were not German citizens, whereas the same paragraph indirectly established a case of positive discrimination on

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[399] "Verordnung über Ausnahmeregelungen für die Erteilung einer Arbeitserlaubnis an neueinreisende ausländische Arbeitnehmer (Anwerbestoppausnahme-Verordnung)," Universitas Saraviensis, http://archiv.jura.uni-saarland.de/BGBl/TEIL1/1990/19903014.1.HTML#GL10 (accessed December 15, 2011).
[400] "Verordnung über Ausnahmeregelungen für die Erteilung einer Arbeitserlaubnis an neueinreisende ausländische Arbeitnehmer (Anwerbestoppausnahmeverordnung, ASAV)," Aufenthaltsrecht, Asyl & Grenzbereiche - Praxis, http://www.aufenthaltstitel.de/asav.html (accessed December 15, 2011).

ethnic grounds in Romania: Romanian citizens of German ethnicity, having an *Aufnahmebescheid* (notification of admission), could be granted a work permit on the basis of a German legislative act. The *Aufnahmebescheid* has its similarities with the Hungarian identification card proposed through the Status Law, as it practically established who was "German" (i.e. eligible for German citizenship on the basis of *jus sanguinis*). In 2001-2002, when the whole Hungarian-Romanian debate on the Status Law was at its height, the *Anwerbestoppausnahmeverordnung* was still in force. Furthermore, on the basis of the *Aufnahmebescheid* Romanian citizens of German ethnicity were also almost automatically granted visas to travel to Germany and henceforth in the Schengen area, at a time when for all other Romanian citizens this was much more difficult. This could also have been regarded as a case of discrimination against other Romanian citizens, yet never have Romanian authorities made any official comments of the sort.

Thirdly, Romanian officials objected to the involvement of Hungary in matters going beyond educational and cultural support. However, in the case of Germany's involvement in Romania, in favour of the ethnic Germans, this has always gone beyond educational and cultural support, the economic aspect being highly important for the envisaged stabilization of ethnic Germans in Romania.[401] The bilateral Romanian-German Treaty includes a reference to the "reorganization of the social, cultural and economic life" of the German minority in Romania. The main difference stems from the fact that in one case, the involvement of the kin-state in the economic life of the kin-minority has been regulated through a bilateral treaty and in the other case, the attempt was to regulate it through an internal kin-state law; nonetheless, the opposition "in principle" to economic entitlements in the Romanian-Hungarian case is also telling of the existence of slightly different Romanian approaches to the minority issue, and in effect, of a hierarchization of minority groups, Germans faring best and being thus entitled to most benefits, as compared to Hungarians or other "others".

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[401] Wolff, "The Impact of Post-Communist Regime Change".

## 5.6.  Cultural Heritage

Another relevant aspect to look at when discussing Romanian-German post-1989 relationships in general and the post-2000 environment in particular is related to the issue of cultural heritage and to physical cultural memory artefacts. The close relationships between politics of identity, social memory and cultural heritage have been emphasized by Pierre Nora's work on *lieux de mémoire*, an emphasis observed by other scholars as well.[402]

In the very recent past, a significant grow in interest for Romanian German (first and foremost, Transylvanian Saxon) cultural heritage has become visible. The actors involved in the related processes are both from within the community, *e.g.* the German Forum in Romania, Transylvanian Saxons living in Germany, the Transylvanian Saxon Foundation and from outside of it, *e.g.* Romanian authorities, the German state through GTZ - Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (German Society for Technical Cooperation) -, the Mihai Eminescu Trust, whose Patron is the Prince of Wales. Some of the instantiations of interest for German heritage in Transylvania, together with the way they have been framed and in which they have evolved have already constituted the object of investigative analysis.

The high profile acquired by issues related to Transylvanian Saxon heritage is best perceptible by looking at the passionate debates regarding the potential construction of a Dracula-themed park in the close vicinity of Sighișoara and also at the case of Sibiu, European Capital of Culture in 2007.[403] In both situations, cultural politics followed the path of an emphasis on the Germanness of the cultural heritage of the locality, despite the small percentage of ethnic Germans living nowadays in both Sighișoara and Sibiu.

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[402] Nancy Wood, "Memory's Remains: *Les Lieux de mémoire*," in *Vectors of Memory: Legacies of Trauma in Postwar Europe* (Oxford: Berg, 1999), 26.

[403] For the case of Sighișoara, see Claudia Nicoleta Câmpeanu, "Material Desires: Cultural Production, Post-Socialist Transformations, and Heritage Tourism in a Transylvanian Town," (Phd diss., University of Texas at Austin, 2008); for Sibiu, see Emanuela Grama, "Searching for Heritage, Building Politics: Architecture, Archaeology, and Imageries of Social Order in Romania (1947-2007)," (PhD diss., University of Michigan, 2010); Alexandra Oanca, "Governing the European Capital of Culture and Urban Regimes in Sibiu," (MA Thesis, Central European University, Budapest, 2010); Monica Stroe, "Sibiu European Capital of Culture 2007: Saxonness as a Romanian Cultural Brand," in *Every Day's a Festival! Diversity on Show*, ed. Susanne Küchler, László Kürti and Hisham Elkadi (Wantage: Sean Kingston Publishing, 2011), 83-112.

In the former case, Claudia Câmpeanu noticed the "hopeful fixation on German heritage".[404] However, in 2001 the medieval town of Sighișoara was the site of contested strife, as central authorities, supported by local authorities in the town endorsed the building of a Dracula-themed park, which would have fundamentally changed the outlook of the locality. German heritage was menaced to be directly blemished by the long-term consequences of the potential investment, and this led to overt conflicts between the German community in Romania, the Lutheran church and the Transylvanian Saxon diaspora in Germany on the one hand and central and local Romanian authorities on the other hand. The open support of the latter for a project directly threatening the medieval German heritage in the town was sometimes doubled by not-so-sympathetic remarks regarding the opposition to the project expressed by the Transylvanian Saxon community, both in Romania and abroad. Yet at the same time, the "German card" was played in various ways, not only by the opponents of the project, but initially also by its staunchest supporters, as Câmpeanu showed.[405] International lobby, including an intervention by the Prince of Wales, eventually put a halt to the project; following Câmpeanu's argumentation, it is safe to say that the failure of the project was argumentatively orchestrated through references to the German cultural heritage. Eventually, the imaginary around which the future of Sighișoara was conceived would revolve around the reimagining of the town in multiple ways "as a German one".[406]

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[404] Câmpeanu, "Material Desires," 8.

[405] "The German mentions were in part preemptive, if misguided, gestures of goodwill toward the local and diasporic German communities, signaling to them that they had been included in the project and that the project was designed with *them* in mind. But, what this German innuendo was mainly doing, I would argue, was sketching and accessing an imaginary - let's call it modern or developmental - where Romanian hopes for a Western future and a Western prosperity have been settling for decades. Agathon's [Minister of Tourism at the time] rendering of the project - and it wasn't just his personal vision - was brushing against German tips of this landscape of desire and hope: the German work ethic, seriousness and success, German prosperity and its promise of sharing and spilling over into our needy pockets. The German referent was probably one of the most credible and well contoured of the many invoked by this imaginary, thanks to the lingering memory of all the émigrés and the streams of packages flowing back into the country before 1989. Germany had been a concrete, real sign of the West, a credible proof of its existence and success, but a sign nevertheless, and a sign of remote reality, at that. Agathon made the mistake of trying to do more than to reference it; he tried to make it material, to promise its perfect replication through a hyperbolic project that would bring to Sighișoara - he declared - a million tourist a year, would eventually create 6000 local jobs, and would total 18 million Euros worth of direct investments and 20 million Euros in indirect investments. A project made for Germans and by Germans, after a German model, would not fail. This was what we all had been waiting for." Ibid., 65-6.

[406] Ibid., 97.

Such a transformative trajectory proving the high profile acquired by the German cultural heritage in Transylvania is highly significant, as it shows that the case of Sibiu, whose post-2000 (re-)branding has also distinctly emphasized its German (Saxon) character is not necessarily one *sui generis*. Gallagher and Tucker looked into the case of Brașov and concluded that despite the shirking of the German minority, its traces "in the cultural landscape show every sign of lasting far longer than the community itself".[407] Furthermore, the preservation and consolidation of Transylvanian villages also emphasizes their former Saxonness, thus also clashing with the present needs of the inhabitants of those villages, usually Romanians and Roma.[408]

Sibiu definitely constitutes a peak of German cultural branding in Transylvania, as its post-2000 development and identity building have played the "Saxon heritage card" to a huge extent: the cultural policies preceding the title of European Capital of Culture, acquired in 2007, together with Luxembourg, and the ECC events as such show the apparent re-Germanization of the town, embraced by both local and central authorities. The European Capital of Culture program is very much about identity: the way cities represent themselves within the program is telling of symbolic identity building in front of both a national and a wider, European audience. The story of Sibiu unexpectedly and rather suddenly becoming European Capital of Culture has already been told, and emphasis has been placed upon the almost fortuitous character of Sibiu's rise to cultural preeminence by means of the ECC program. Luxembourg was supposed to be the only European cultural capital in 2007 until the Luxembourgeois authorities decided to co-opt the town of Sibiu, recurring in their bid to the presumed "myth of common origins".[409] In Romania, the result, i.e. Sibiu as a European Capital of Culture in 2007, was hailed as it also marked Romania's EU accession. The two (distinct) events showed Romania's re-joining of the

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[407] Joseph J. Gallagher and Philip N. J. Tucker, "Aussiedler Migration and Its Impact on Brașov's Ethnic German Population and Its Built Environment," *Geojournal* 50, no. 2-3 (February 2000): 309.

[408] Tom Hughes, Alina Hughes and James Koranyi, "Transylvanian Villages: Conservationism, but at What Price?" *openDemocracy*, August 26, 2010, http://www.opendemocracy.net/james-korany-tom-hughes-alina-hughes/conservation-at-what-price (accessed November 24, 2011); Alina Hughes, "Germanicity without Germans and beyond: Post-Saxon Rural Transylvania," (paper presented at the conference "The Flight and Expulsion of Germans in Contemporary German Culture", Nottingham Trent University, October 21, 2011).

[409] Oanca, "Governing the European Capital of Culture".

European family, on both a political and cultural level. Culturally, the German lineage was symbolically outspoken. Sibiu - ECC 2007 stood under the aegis of a rediscovered Saxonness, also establishing a symbolic hierarchy within the urban texture, as the great winners of the disputes surrounding what and how to represent were mostly Saxon institutions, such as the Brukenthal Museum or the Lutheran Church. At the other end of an imaginary scale, stood institutions such as the Romanian Astra Museum, dedicated to Romanian rural life. Despite an apparent discursive emphasis on multiculturalism understood as a European value, Sibiu actually made visible first and foremost Saxon traditions and Saxon heritage.[410]

Economically, this was mostly (70%) supported through national funding, despite common beliefs that the EU was the main sponsor.[411] Through GTZ, the German state partially supported the restoration of buildings in the city centre; this was done by means of a "heritage-as-practice" approach, as Emanuela Grama called it, which also aimed at teaching the residents of the city centre, mostly Romanians and Roma, to "be" Saxons, i.e. to appropriate a set of behaviours and practices deemed to appertain to the Saxon community.[412] The Sibiu case is not the only one in which Germanness ends up being performed by non-Germans. Bianca Botea analyzed the case of Jimbolia in Banat and noted that on the occasion of the *Kirchweih* festivities, a traditional Swabian yearly celebration, the children performing the various dances are actually Romanian.[413]

The relevance of such phenomena can be better understood if conjoined with sociologist Paul Connerton's theoretical observations on memory and its place in social life. Connerton noted the relationship between memory, legitimacy and hierarchies of power, showing how social memory is formed and disseminated through social practices and behaviours.[414] The emphasis on German heritage and on German social practices, typical for Sibiu, but also for other localities formerly inhabited by Transylvanian Saxons or Banat Swabians is in fact very much telling not only of the high prestige of

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[410] Bogdan Iancu, "Sibiu CCE 2007. Moduri de întrebuințare," in "Sibiu, o capitală culturală," ed. Bogdan Iancu, special issue, *Secolul 21*, 1-6 (2007): 80.
[411] Oanca, "Governing the European Capital of Culture".
[412] Grama, "Searching for Heritage", 315-26.
[413] Bianca Botea, "'Valoare colectivă' și discurs performativ asupra interculturalității: o abordare a noilor procese de dezvoltare la Jimbolia," in *Banatul din memorie. Studii de caz*, ed. Smaranda Vultur (Timișoara: Marineasa, 2008), 231.
[414] Paul Connerton, *How Societies Remember* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989).

Germanness disseminated thereby, but also of the integration, in many cases, of the German past into Romanian social memory, also by means of cultural heritage and cultural branding. Reproducing Germanness and integrating Germanness in social memory practices, in a context in which nonetheless few Germans still live, acts therefore as a useful symbolic Europeanizing resource in the Romanian political and cultural environment.

## 5.7.   Conclusions

Fundamentally, this chapter argued that the policies of the Romanian state and, even more so, the discourses of some of the main actors involved in Romanian state politics, with respect to the Germans in Romania have been distinguished, after 1989, by a certain preference on behalf of Romanian authorities for the German community in the country.

With some significant exceptions, such as the signing of the Romanian-German Treaty in 1992, a treaty including provisions on the protection and furtherance of the German minority, this preference has been expressed mostly on a declarative level. Thus, the chapter tells a story of how Germans turn into a showcase-minority, a phenomenon possible only through the production and reproduction of specific positive representations of Germanness. Other researchers interested in the topic noticed that the Germans in Romania have been surrounded with sympathy, apparently more often than other ethnic minorities living in Romania.[415] Paul Philippi, one of the most important post-1989 ethnopolitical entrepreneurs active within the German Forum as president (1992-1998) and, since 1998, as honorary president, considers that Germans in Romania are a *quantité négligeable* (negligible quantity) in terms of the general political interest granted to them, yet emphasizes that they are at times used as an "exhibit-minority".[416]

Looking at minority politics and related legislative acts, politics of memory and discourses on Germans in Romania, it has become visible throughout this chapter that the "philo-Germanism without Germans", or the integration of Germans within Romanian social memory, is a phenomenon with hues and nuances, discernible especially if the discursive treatment of

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[415] Gabanyi, "Bleiben, gehen, wiederkehren?" 504-06.
[416] Philippi, interview.

the Germans is placed in a comparative framework. In other words, Germans get to have a place in Romanian social memory in much easier ways than other minorities, such as Hungarians or Jews. The early acknowledgment of German victimhood and the difference in response to German kin-state legislation, as compared to Hungarian kin-state legislation are a proof in this respect.

Nonetheless, it has to be emphasized that to a large extent this "philo-Germanism" has not been doubled by relevant measures or, better said, has been doubled by measures that were deemed far from sufficient by the German population still living in or having migrated from Romania. No matter its form, the "philo-Germanism" is a key indicator of the symbolic instrumentalization of the Germans in Romania, who are almost by default be part of "Europeanizing" discourses. In other words, Romania is asserting its Europeanness by dint of its Germans. This assertion often comes hand in hand with a series of self-orientalizing views of Romanian identity. Interestingly, these discourses seem to respond perfectly to Transylvanian Saxon and Banat Swabian self-identification, of colonists who have fundamentally contributed to the civilization and modernization of the regions they came to. At the first post-1989 elections, taking place in May 1990, one of the slogans on a poster of the Democratic Forum of Germans in Romania was *Wir helfen Fenster nach Europa öffnen* (We help open windows on Europe).[417] It is precisely this German pride that Romanian officials are constantly tickling, nurturing the representations of German wellbeing, seriousness, and civilization, whilst at the same time promoting in some ways a less positive self-view of Romanianness.

The political landscape suggests that collective memory discourses and social memory as the all-encompassing concept referring to the presence of the past into the present are largely compatible when it comes to contemporary Romanian representations of Germanness. In other words, as present in politics, the ideological construction of memory, identity and otherness matches very well with the overall image of the German minority on both a national and a local level. This will become even more visible if the findings presented in this chapter are conjoined with those in the next empirical chapters.

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[417] Baier, *In der Heimat Europa*, 29.

# 6. Representations of the German Minority in Post-1989 Romanian Print Media

## 6.1. Sources

The present chapter adds to the empirical analysis undertaken throughout this dissertation by looking at representations of and memory/identity discourses related to Romanian Germans in the print media. It starts by succinctly presenting the newspapers I investigated, covering a period of almost two decades, more precisely between 1990 and 2009. The analytical body of the chapter is structured around a series of tropes, recurrently appearing in Romanian accounts directly or indirectly related to the German minority. Consequently, these tropes, i.e. "Germans leaving from, returning to or staying in Romania", and "nostalgia, lastness, and cultural heritage" are dedicated specific analytical sections. Further on, the chapter places journalistic representations of the German minority in a comparative framework, showing that counterposing them to representations of other others in Romania, more precisely Hungarians and Roma, enables a better understanding of the prestige Germans are usually endowed with. The chapter ends with a series of conclusions, summing up the arguments presented throughout its pages.

Following the events in 1989, the written and audiovisual press in Romania suffered enormous transformations and changes: the transition from a sector completely under state influence to a plethora of mass-media products, lying at the crossroads of state, market and personal interests is one of the most intricate and fascinating socio-cultural phenomena in post-Communist countries, Romania making no exception. Although not extensively, the Romanian case study has been researched, with an emphasis upon questions related to mass media independence, to the assessment of the impact of mass media upon the acquisition of specific tenets of democracy, such as "civil society", "public sphere" etc., and to the tight relationships between mass-media and the political.[418] It has been noted that after 1989

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[418] Richard A. Hall, "The Dynamics of Media Independence in Post-Ceaușescu Romania," in *Post-Communism and the Media in Eastern Europe*, ed. Patrick H. O'Neil (London: Frank Cass, 1997), 102-23; Peter Gross, *Entangled Evolutions: Media and Democratization in Eastern Europe* (Washington: Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, 2002); Valentina

Romanian mass media developed as a contested field of power relations.[419] Furthermore, media discourses and political discourses are intrinsically entangled; in the Romanian case, but also elsewhere, the actors involved often "share the same values and a unique symbolical system".[420] Consequently, the present chapter looks at representations of the German minority and more precisely of the "German" past in Romania in several post-1989 publications, searching on the one hand for the similarities allowing to speak of a "unique symbolical system", shared by the political field and the field of journalism, and on the other hand for the specificities related to journalistic discourses and to the memory-related processes as present in the post-1989 Romanian print media.

The sources used in my research are the collections of six different mass-media products, more precisely three daily newspapers and three weeklies. The daily newspapers I looked at are *România liberă*, *Adevărul* and *Gândul*, whilst the weekly publications chosen for perusal were *Formula As*, *Dilema* and *Dilema veche*. In the following pages, I succinctly present the profiles of the publications, in order to substantiate my selection.

*România liberă* was founded in 1877, being thus one of the few Romanian publications able to refer to the existence of a long tradition. During the Communist regime, it was the second newspaper in importance after the official party organ, *Scînteia*. At the end of December 1989, *România liberă* soon adopted a strongly anti-Communist stance: its new director became Petre Mihai Băcanu, a former editor of the publication who was imprisoned at the end of the 1980s as a consequence of his attempt to publish an underground newspaper. In the 1990s, *România liberă* soon positioned itself on the same side with the so-called "Opposition", i.e. the multitude of parties opposing the neo-Communist authorities in the country. In the first years following the fall of Communism, it was printing around 1.500.000 copies a day, a clear indicator not only of its popularity, but also of the huge success enjoyed by press products in the immediate aftermath of the demise of the

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Marinescu, *Mass media din România. O lectură sociologică* (Bucharest: Tritonic, 2002); Mihai Coman, *Mass-media în România postcomunistă* (Iaşi: Polirom, 2003); David Berry, *The Romanian Mass Media and Cultural Development* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004); Valentina Marinescu, *Mass media şi schimbarea politică în România* (Bucharest: Tritonic, 2004).
[419] Coman, *Mass-media*, 10.
[420] Marinescu, *Mass media şi schimbarea*, 124.

Communist regime.[421] Nonetheless, against a background of a "disenchantment" of the public related to mass-media, augmenting competition from the liberalized television sector, and growing financial difficulties and related changes in ownership, the success story from the early 1990s lost part of its lustre. Yet *România liberă* did not cease to exist, nor did it substantially modify its profile, as it happened to other publications during the post-Communist period in Romania. Having coped with several ups and downs, it remains a quality newspaper, occupying a leading position on its share of the market, although this means nowadays printing only around 40.000 copies a day.[422]

The main competitor of *România liberă* in the early 1990s was *Adevărul*. A first publication bearing this name was founded in 1871. *Adevărul* had a turbulent history, with various shorter or longer periods of closure, the last of them during the Communist regime. Following the events in December 1989, *Adevărul* soon reappeared, in effect a rebranding of the former organ of the Communist Party, *Scînteia*. It started as a strong supporter of the new authorities, hence being very much at odds with *România liberă*, in many ways its main ideological adversary. Just like the latter, it boasted huge figures in terms of printed copies at the beginning of the 1990s.[423] Very much thanks to Dumitru Tinu and Cristian Tudor Popescu, long time director and respectively editor-in-chief of the publication, but also to a generally stable team of popular journalists and pundits, such as Adrian Ursu, Corina Drăgotescu or Bogdan Chirieac, it managed to consolidate its position as one of the most respected quality newspapers in Romania.

In March 2005, following the death of the director and at the same time owner of the biggest percentage of shareholdings, Dumitru Tinu, and an ensuing conflict with the potential new owners, most of the journalists from *Adevărul* left the editorial team and put the basis of a new daily newspaper, *Gândul*, whose first issue was in May 2005. Consequently, although a publication bearing the name *Adevărul* has continued to exist, *Gândul* was in many ways the legitimate continuator of the former *Adevărul*. *Gândul* soon

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[421] Mirel Bran, "Romania: Computer-Generated Freedom," *UNESCO Courier*, February 2000, http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0011/001187/118789e.pdf#118797 (accessed December 17, 2011).

[422] Gabriela Dita, "Tirajele ziarelor românești, în scădere în al doilea trimestru al anului 2011," Mediafax, http://www.mediafax.ro/cultura-media/tirajele-ziarelor-romanesti-in-scadere-in-al-doilea-trimestru-al-anului-2011-8698611/ (accessed December 15, 2011).

[423] Bran, "Romania".

managed to become a brand within the varied Romanian press landscape. In March 2011, it became the first Romanian publication to move completely from print to online. All in all, *România liberă* and *Adevărul* (from 2005, *Gândul*) have been two of the most important post-1989 publications in Romania, setting trends and shaping public opinion.

Amongst the various weekly publications in Romania, *Formula As* is one of the most successful, in many ways a brand on its own. It is a very popular magazine dealing with subjects of general interest: celebrities, recipes, social and political life, ecology, culture, reportages etc. Its publication began in 1991, soon acquiring a numerous readership, enjoying high popularity. A clear indicator of its popularity is its being one of the extremely few publications not belonging to a large press trust, without any direct or indirect political sponsorship and at the same time managing to deal successfully on its own with the question of national distribution. In terms of content, the articles published by *Formula As* and the numerous letters received from its readers often revolve around an expression of "Romanianness". "Romanianness" and Romanian "cultural memory", understood in various forms and guises, constitute the crux of the themes recurrently addressed in the pages of *Formula As*.[424]

*Dilema* was, ever since its first issue on January 14, 1993, one of the most important cultural weeklies in Romania, under the directorship of Andrei Pleșu, a prominent member of the Romanian intelligentsia, also involved in state affairs in various periods of time, as Minister of Culture (1990-1991), Minister of Foreign Affairs (1997-1999) or foreign policy advisor of President Traian Băsescu (2004-2005). Important voices from the Romanian intellectual world have constantly published therein. As a consequence of a conflict with its hitherto editor, the Romanian Cultural Foundation, in 2003 *Dilema* ceased to exist. The following year, in a move very much similar with the transition from *Adevărul* to *Gândul*, the editorial team parted and founded *Dilema Veche*, in practice a continuation of *Dilema*.

I looked at these mass media products over a period of two decades, more precisely between 1990 and 2009. My aim has been to come up with a

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[424] Gary Burnett and Mihaela Nicosian, "A Romania of the Imagination: *Formula As*, Virtual Community, and Normative Behaviour," *First Monday* 13, no. 11 (November 2008), http://firstmonday.org/htbin/cgiwrap/bin/ojs/index.php/fm/article/view/2257/2040 (accessed December 15, 2011).

comprehensive qualitative overview of the print media discourses regarding the German minority and the memory of its presence in Romania. In this respect, some preliminary, perhaps desultory, observations should be made. Fundamentally, this dissertation does not argue that the phenomenon describable as "philo-Germanism without Germans" is striking through its frequency, but rather through its constant reiteration. In other words, I contend that the category "Germans in Romania" tends to be positively represented whenever (or, more accurately, in most cases) it is represented or discussed about and, moreover, even in cases when it is not represented or discussed about, but it could have been. In other words, I am looking for what lies beneath the sympathetic or commendatory accounts regarding most often Transylvanian Saxons and Banat Swabians, but sometimes also the other German-speaking groups living or having lived in Romania. I do not argue that accounts about Romanian Germans are present on a large scale: a comparative, quantitative study would most probably lead to the conclusion that overall topics related to the German minority in Romania are rather marginal in Romanian print media.

In my research, I have used the comprehensive archives found in various Romanian libraries, looking for articles dealing either directly, or tangentially, with the German minority in Romania. My initial selection of the articles took place primarily in view of their titles and of the topics addressed. This has also led to gathering a whole range of unnecessary material considering my research focus, yet eventually the texts I looked at in a thorough manner, more than one hundred (not all of them quoted in this dissertation!), together with the findings of my research in the other fields I investigated, enable the shaping of a both comprehensive and coherent analysis. I fundamentally argue that the print media research corpus I made use of in this dissertation is extremely symptomatic: its apparent "philo-German" character being a constant feature of accounts regarding the German minority in Romania. The latter supposition has been confirmed by my research. In effect, the question is not whether Germans are to a large extent positively seen in the Romanian context in general and in the Romanian press

in particular, as this has already been noticed, but rather how and why this happens.[425]

Throughout my investigation, I have come across several tropes, recurrently appearing in the accounts and narratives published in Romanian press after 1989 and related to the German minority in the country. I do not intend to present this categorization in any way as all-encompassing, definitive or unique. Nonetheless, I do argue for it being a valid instrument, useful in order to provide a reading key accounting for the way texts on Germans and on the German past in Romania are being framed. In the following pages, I dwell upon these tropes, unravelling the deeper relations they stand for, their meanings for a post-Communist society such as the Romanian one.

## 6.2.  Germans Leaving, Staying in or Returning to Romania

In the previous chapter of this thesis, I have referred to the interview granted by Romania's first post-1989 chief of state, Ion Iliescu, in the first days of 1990, to the German newspaper *Die Welt*. Therein, Iliescu was pleading for a return of the Transylvanian Saxons and Banat Swabians who had migrated to Germany during Communism. Furthermore, Iliescu's statements were telling of a rather unrealistic wish regarding a return to Romania of Transylvanian Saxons and Banat Swabians living in Germany. The 1990s witnessed the opposite phenomenon, namely a huge wave of migration from Romania to Germany: in effect, the great majority of Germans still in Transylvania and Banat in 1989 subsequently enjoyed the newly acquired freedom by fleeing the country. The process could not escape the attention of Romanian journalists and commentators.

To the two factors substantially shaping the complex equation regarding Romanian Germans, namely the (potential) remigration of ethnic Germans from Germany to Romania, and its correspondent, the migration of ethnic Germans from Romania to Germany, a third one should be added, more precisely that of ethnic Germans from Romania deciding to stay in the

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[425] See for example the account regarding a symposium on the German minority in the press, published in 2003: "Ein 'eher positives Image'. Tagung zum Thema 'Die deutsche Minderheit in der Presse'," *Hermannstädter Zeitung*, January 24, 2003.

country, politically framed as "stabilization", as the eponymous governmental commission shows.

The three abovementioned possibilities were all recorded and framed in various ways by Romanian newspapers, ranging from neutral to quintessentially dramatic, with apparently an overall preference for the latter variant. For example, on October 3, 1990, on the occasion of the German reunification, *România liberă* dedicated what seems to be one of the first so-called *fotoreportaje* (photoreportages, in effect reportages accompanied by several photos), on an entire page, to the Germans in Romania, poignantly and innovatively called "Românii-germani" (the German Romanians).[426] The emphasis in the title is placed upon *românii*, the articled noun, an interesting and rarely used way of discursively appropriating/Romanianizing the Germans in Romania. The latter would have difficulties in identifying themselves with the abovementioned denomination.

Although publishing articles on Romanian Germans on the occasion of the German unification would not become a habit in *România liberă* or in any other publication, the photoreportage is in many ways telling of various identity and representations issues concerning both Germans and Romanians in Romania. The article was elicited by German reunification, an open statement regarding the existence of one German nation and of one German state, thus creating an overlap between the two. Publishing a reportage on the Germans in Romania is in many ways a clear indicator not only of the acknowledged "Germanness" of Transylvanian Saxons, Banat Swabians etc., but also of the recognition of Germany's role as a kin-state with respect to these ethnic groups.

The vision of a pan-German nation is clear from the very beginning of the article, in which Coroamă Stanca commendatively spoke of the "Saxons, Swabians, Austrians and other Germanic communities". Her view communicates over time with representations of "Germans" existing at various other moments in Romanian history and in effect denoting a multitude of referents, an issue I touched upon in the third chapter of this dissertation. Saxons, Swabians, Austrians, Germans, "other Germanic communities": they are all discursively coalesced.

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[426] Sorana Coroamă Stanca, "Românii-germani," *România liberă*, October 3, 1990.

On what grounds did Coroamă Stanca bewail the German out-migration? She praised the Germans' "exemplary cohabitation with Romanians", "whose language they know and they speak perfectly, with no foreign accent". Applying a conceptual framework developed by Gina Philogène, I argue that Coroamă Stanca's account of Romanian-German relationships leads to the idea that Germans are fulfilling the role of the "cultural Other" in the Romanian context. Discussing the various views of otherness in the American society, Philogène argued that the Black Americans are perceived and constructed as a "social Other", whereas immigrant groups are perceived and constructed as a "cultural Other". Although different from the in-group, the latter's otherness can be "overcome by learning about the unfamiliar and anchoring it".[427]

Albeit recognizing German "otherness", Coroamă Stanca's text also suggests that otherness and the distance towards it were overcome, leading to the representation of an "exemplary" Romanian-German cohabitation. This overcoming took place on the basis of common Romanian and German experiences in the past. A discursive integration of the Germans into Romanian "social memory" is thus performed: "the ethnic German minority" and "the Romanian majority" allegedly share interests and romantic stories, leading to "mixed marriages". Moreover, they have also been equally discriminated and persecuted, "throughout time". German history in Romania is thus presented as a history of suffering, the agents of this suffering being fundamentally external both to the German and to the Romanian communities: Hitler, the "Communists", "invading armies both from the West and from the East", "the politics of left or right totalitarianism". Furthermore, German out-migration from Romania, worded as "rupture" is seen as a consequence of this suffering.

Deploring the fact that the only ethnic Germans who remain in the country are the elderly people, author Sorina Coroamă Stanca regretted both the economic and the spiritual losses linked to the migration of Germans from Romania. An "unwanted population exchange" was allegedly taking place: in the "long alleys of beautiful villages of yore", there are now "gadders-about" who "devastate, destroy, steal gates, windows, doors, walls even". Alas!,

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[427] Gina Philogène, "Social Representations of Alterity in the United States," in *Social Representations and Identity: Content, Process, and Power*, ed. Gail Moloney and Iain Walker (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2007), 33.

some of them, "dirty and filthy" even took refuge there. Although Coroamă Stanca made no textual reference to the ethnic identity of these unwanted newcomers, one of the photos accompanying her text showed a woman dressed in traditional Roma clothing, with the rhetoric title "The new ethnics of Hărman?", providing thus an easy reading key for whoever could have been in doubt in this regard.

Furthermore, Coroamă Stanca did not forget to refer to "Europe" in her account: on the one hand, at the very beginning of the text, by naming Germany a "cultural and economic pillar of our continent", and on the other hand, towards the end of the article, where she stated: "We live in the year 1990. In Europe. We can let neither our towns, nor our monuments, our villages or our souls lay waste."[428] Further on, the last sentences in the article are telling of the obsessive tension connected with Romania's belonging between East and West and of the Europeanizing aspirations that can be attained through a better relationship with Germany, by dint of "our Germans". Coroamă Stanca stated: "Let's greet the arising of the new Germany, peaceful, democratic, factor of equilibrium, balance between East and West."[429] And further on: "And, may it be that Romania, put by History at the gates of this East, remain the much beloved country, heavily defended, of all its populations."[430]

The careful reader of Coroamă Stanca's article would have difficulties understanding whether in the author's view Romania belongs to the East or to the West. If Germany is to act as a balance between East and West, it can be inferred that Romania is placed on the Eastern side of this balance, yet if Romania is at the gates of the Orient, the question regarding the boundaries of East and West becomes rather fuzzy. This fuzziness is what Maria Todorova called "liminality", the being in-between specific of identification discourses present in countries in Eastern Europe.[431] Nonetheless, one thing is clear: Germany's Europeanness is not debatable, whereas Romania's belonging to the European continent can entail unwanted tensions and can be questioned. The last sentence in the article, according to which Romania is "lying at the gates of this East" and henceforth should be "heavily defended",

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[428] Ibid.
[429] Ibid.
[430] Ibid.
[431] Maria Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997).

suggests that Romania's Europeanness has not been and is not a given, but rather something that must be fought for in order to be attained. Considering the entirety of the article, the implication is that "our Germans" actively contribute to pushing away the doubts about Romania's Europeanness, hence the sadness associated with their leaving the country, as it also leads to raising questions about this much desired Europeanness. The text signed by Coroamă-Stanca seems to set the tone for further hypernostalgic accounts of a positive German past, presented in opposition to a much bleaker present.

Cutting across the wide spectrum of Romanian press, the topic of German migration from Romania, this time conjoined with its yearned for opposite subject, that of German remigration to Romania, has also been touched upon by Petre Sălcudeanu, writer and commentator in *Adevărul*. Sălcudeanu would eventually be even appointed Minister of Culture for a short period of time in 1993. In September 1990, when he was not yet openly involved in politics, he published an op-ed depicting what he purported to be a dream of his, also including a fictitious dialogue with Chancellor Helmut Kohl, on a potential remigration of Germans from Germany to Romania.[432] The rationale behind such a remigration was, for Sălcudeanu, quintessentially an economic one, whilst he was also conscious of the fact that the Romanian state would have to come up with specific incentives in order for such a "dream" to be transformed into reality.

Sălcudeanu would then revisit the topic some months later, in February 1991. Yet again he used the same artifice, talking about a "dream", of Germans standing in a queue in order to return to Romania, wishfully imagined as an orderly country most eager to have them back, with Romanians dressed "in Saxon and Swabian attires" wait for them.[433] Paradoxically, this would prove to be a fateful prediction: Transylvanian Saxon and Banat Swabian traditions in former Saxon and Swabian localities are currently performed by a majority of ethnic Romanians. However, in this second article signed by Sălcudeanu and dealing with Romanian Germans there was no hopeful undertone anymore, as the author jumped from the wishful thinking about German remigration to Romania to the reality of the decision to leave the country taken by Nicu Vlad, a successful Romanian

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[432] Petre Sălcudeanu, "Fir-ar să fie... de vis," *Adevărul*, September 9, 1990.
[433] Petre Sălcudeanu, "Migranții din Carpații Bavarezi," *Adevărul*, February 1, 1991.

heavyweight lifter. The author regretted Vlad's decisions, suggesting a parallel between the latter's departure from Romania and German migration. The final lines of the article are telling in this respect: "Why, folks, why? What have we done so bad that the best of the best are leaving us, i.e. the Country? Folks, why is the Country leaving, what have we done to it?"[434] Suggesting parallels between a much loved and internationally successful sports champion, seen as a Romanian symbol, and an ethnic group, namely the Germans, is very much telling of the prestige associated with the latter. Germanness thus turns into a value in itself and its disappearance from Romania amounts to a real drama. On the other hand, German remigration to Romania, much yearned for by Sălcudeanu in particular and by Romanian commentators on Germans-related issues in general, is tantamount to a "dream".

In the early 1990s, questions related to German out-migration and remigration were also present in the Romanian press through the voices of those directly involved in it, i.e. the representatives of the German Democratic Forum in Romania. An interview with Thomas Nägler, at the time president of the organization, published on May 23, 1990, bore the title "Etnici germani care pleacă sau revin în țară" (Ethnic Germans who Leave or Come Back to the Country).[435] Despite the fact that the title suggested that the numbers of the two groups were comparable, the contents of the article offered the true image of the two phenomena: dozens of thousands wanted to leave, whilst only dozens were coming back. The interviewer named the former "a real loss for Romania", thus clearly endowing Germanness with a positive value.[436] The fact that feelings of regret regarding migration were expressed whenever possible by the members of the German community, especially since the ones who got to appear in the Romanian press, as interviewees or authors, were representatives of those who decided to stay in the country, is by no means a surprise.[437] Yet Romanian authors seemed to echo them perfectly, in an interesting case of assimilation of discourses.

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[434] Ibid.

[435] Thomas Nägler, "Etnici germani care pleacă sau revin în țară," interview by Ion Marin, *Adevărul*, May 23, 1990.

[436] Ibid.

[437] Rehner Wolfgang, "Revoluția a venit prea târziu," interview by Mircea Bunea, *Adevărul*, July 23, 1990.

Writing about the German minority in Romania and henceforth addressing the question of its migration almost compulsorily elicits on the one hand feelings of regret and on the other hand a mantra regarding the zealousness, professionalism and other related "German" traits. In another example of an article written in the immediate aftermath of the Revolution in 1989, a certain Dumitru Bujdoiu followed the same pattern in presenting various voices within the Saxon community of Țara Bârsei, more or less from the grassroots level, all dealing with the question of leaving or staying. He offered space to the two sides standing for the possible alternatives within the community, i.e. staying in Romania or leaving the country. The preference of ethnic Germans towards the former variant was visible. Amongst the several answers received from his informants on the field, as to whether to leave or to stay, one made a specific reference to Europe. A "young substitute teacher" motivated her decision to migrate with the following words, as reproduced by Bujdoiu: "We know that our meaning is here, but if the entire country does not make efforts to enter Europe, why would we, Saxons, be stopped?".[438] Migration to Germany is thus seen as bringing the Europeanness Romania is not able to provide.

Ever since the beginning of its publication in the early 1990s, *Formula As* has addressed the issue of German migration from Transylvania and Banat, very much in the same terms as the articles in *România liberă* and *Adevărul* did. Voicu Bugariu, writer and literary scholar, spoke in 1992 of a "saddening exodus" of the Germans from Romania.[439] Further on, he clearly asserted the Europeanizing value of the Germans in Romania: "It seems that all there is to do is to regret these correct people, living together with us until yesterday, as true emissaries of a Europe to which we only tend."[440] What is often striking in his text, but also in the ones I mentioned above and in other contributions related to the German minority in Romania is the framing of the phenomenon of German migration as an inexorable reality.

Almost as a counterweight to such accounts in general and to Bugariu's text in particular, attention has also been granted to the few ethnic Germans who decided to stay. One such case is Rohtraut Wittstock, editor of *Neuer Weg*, the daily newspaper of the German-speaking community in

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[438] Dumitru Bujdoiu, "De ce mai pleacă sașii?" *România liberă*, December 5, 1990.
[439] Voicu Bugariu, "Întristătorul exod," *Formula As*, May 1992, no. 28 (16).
[440] Ibid.

Romania, since 1993 called *Allgemeine Deutsche Zeitung*. An interview with her was published on the same page as the article signed by Bugariu. The interview touched upon two main issues: on the one hand, the fate of the newspaper under the difficult new auspices of the post-Communist convulsions and on the other hand, the migration and the possibilities of stabilization of the German communities in Romania. The narrative brought forth by Wittstock is one constantly found in condensed accounts dealing with the German minority in Romania, emphasizing a series of key moments in the history of the community: the settlement in Transylvania and Banat in the distant past, the permanent relationships with the German and European culture (in Wittstock's words: "the great German culture"), and Communism seen as a rupture point in the life of the community, the irreversible beginning of the end.[441] Nonetheless, Wittstock's narrative obliterated at least one of the key and fateful moments for German history and identification in Romania, strongly linked with the subsequent resettlement to Germany, namely the significant and matter-of-fact influence of Hitlerism upon Transylvanian Saxons and Banat Swabians.

However, one of the most important things in Wittstock's answers was the explanation related to her decision to remain in Romania. Despite the multitude of problems and hardships encountered by the Germans in the country even after the fall of Communism, she used the self-identification "German from Romania", underlining the existence of "strong sentimental bonds with some of the things here".[442] She emphasized the high importance granted by the Germans in Romania to belonging to a community, seen as an explanation for the survival of the ethnic group: "For the Germans in Romania, this feeling is important and the interests of the individual have been always subordinated to those of the community".[443]

All in all, the equation appeared to be quite straightforward in the early 1990s, as regards the representations of the German minority in Romanian-language newspapers: German out-migration was seen as negative, a sign of dereliction and sadness, an implacable reality, whilst remigration to or remaining in Romania were something positive, to be

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[441] Rohtraut Wittstock, "Rădăcinile mele spirituale sînt în acest spațiu," interview by Dieter Werner, *Formula As*, May 1992, no. 28 (16).
[442] Ibid.
[443] Ibid.

sustained and supported, occurring nonetheless much more rarely. The "European" character of the Germans was referred to, directly or indirectly, suggesting that the same adjective cannot be so outspokenly linked to Romanians.

Yet beyond the representation of German out-migration as an implacable reality, the articles and interviews related to the German minority in Romania also touched upon the concrete contemporary reasons contributing to the implacability of the phenomenon. The already quoted article by Dumitru Bujdoiu referred for example to the difficulties related to the drafting of what will subsequently be the Law on Land Resources. In May 1991, following an international colloquium taking place in Sibiu, *Adevărul* dedicated a whole page to the question of German migration from Romania. It was put together by Silviu Achim, a journalist voicing on other occasions a variety of anti-Hungarian and pro-Antonescu opinions. The page included several opinions of representatives of the German Forum, of Romanian authorities and of Transylvanian Saxons in Germany. The various discourses expressed therein are telling of the various issues and interests at stake. With the exception of the preamble, there lacks a proper position of the journalist or of the newspaper. Nonetheless, although rather short in length, the preamble followed the typical grieving tone, common for accounts of the German migration from Romania: "Romanian society feels the effects of the migrations of Saxons and Swabians as a painful loss, as a phenomenon in discordance with an entire historical tradition, characterized through a good cohabitation with Saxons and Swabians."[444] The reference to the alleged constant exemplary Romanian-German cohabitation should be acknowledged. The contributions gathered by Achim, belonging mostly to German-friendly journalists and to representatives of the German minority also shed light upon the various points of criticism related to the text of the Law on Land Resources, and to its enactment, more precisely the discriminations encountered by Saxons and Swabians.[445]

Following the shock of the big exodus from the 1990s, the questions related to Saxon and Swabian out-migration soon stopped to be addressed as such. The reason is quite simple: the big migratory wave significantly

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[444] Silviu Achim, "O etnie de opt ori seculară se strămută," *Adevărul*, May 15, 1991.

[445] Ingmar Brandsch and Hugo Schneider, "Avem nemți, dar nu știm să-i păstrăm," *România liberă*, April 23, 1992; Christa Richter, "Șase sași din șase sute," *România liberă*, May 15, 1992.

dwindled, because the number of Germans in Romania diminished. In other words: the great majority of those who decided to leave did that in the immediate aftermath of the fall of Communism. Consequently, after 1992 the triad of possibilities for Transylvanian Saxons and Banat Swabians, i.e. leaving, staying, returning, to a large extent lost one of its elements, namely that related to leaving. The migration, or "leaving", continued to be present, though not as something that can be acted upon, but rather as a historical fact, mostly through interviews with Romanian German cultural personalities, living in either Romania or Germany.

Some of the personalities recurrently appearing in *Formula As* are of German ethnicity: journalist Rohtraut Wittstock, whose interview I quoted above, historian Adolf Armbruster,[446] musician Hanno Höfer,[447] writer Eginald Schlattner,[448] and, last, but definitely not least, mayor Klaus Johannis.[449] The migration of the German community is touched upon in interviews with or texts about such personalities. A well known Romanian proverb emphasizing that one should always appreciate old people is often transformed in *Formula As*, and at times even in other publications, with "Germans" replacing old people.[450] Therethrough, one can discern a particular attempt to transform social memory into a locus in which German prestige is invested. Transylvanian Saxons and Banat Swabians seem henceforth to act like an added value to Romanian identity, live witnesses of the European

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[446] Adolf Armbruster, "Sașii nu se mai întorc niciodată deși au vrut din tot sufletul să facă treabă aici," interview by Claudiu Ionescu, *Formula As*, October 28, 1996.

[447] Iulian Ignat, "Avem și noi nemții noștri: Hanno Höfer," *Formula As*, January 26, 1998; Iulian Ignat, "Cine îl oprește pe Hanno Hofer?" *Formula As*, February 1, 1999; Hanno Höfer, "Mi-ar părea rău dacă ar trebui să plec acum în Germania," interview by Corina Pavel, *Formula As*, January 31, 2000; Hano Höfer, "Nu am nici un regret că am rămas aici. Fac ceea ce-mi place și trăiesc din asta," interview by Iulian Ignat, *Formula As*, December 9, 2002; Corina Pavel, "Neamțul care a uitat să mai plece. Hanno Höfer," *Formula As*, July 19, 2008.

[448] Eginald Schlattner, "În 1200, când la Berlin orăcăiau broaștele, biserica din Roșia avea cor în limba latină," interview by Sorin Preda, *Formula As*, August 16, 1999; Eginald Schlattner, "Țin la această țară și știu că Dumnezeu mă vrea aici. Aici mă cunoaște Dumnezeu după nume," interview by Ion Longin Popescu, *Formula As*, May 23, 2005; Eginald Schlattner, "Românilor le lipsește mândria de-a fi români," interview by Sorin Preda, *Formula As*, June 25, 2001.

[449] Klaus Johannis, "Vrem să facem din Sibiu ceea ce-a fost cândva. Un oraș european, un avanpost al integrării în Uniunea Europeană," interview by Ion Longin Popescu, *Formula As*, September 18, 2000; Klaus Johannis, "Prea mulți politicieni români sunt simpli figuranți. Ei excelează prin a povesti problemele, nu prin a le rezolva," interview by Ion Longin Popescu, *Formula As*, November 8, 2004; Klaus Johannis, "La o Țară Europeană se cuvine și o Capitală Europeană," interview by Ion Longin Popescu, *Formula As*, December 25, 2006.

[450] *Cine n-are bătrâni, să și-i cumpere* (Who has no old people, should buy them) becomes in the modern Germanophile version *Cine n-are nemți, să și-i cumpere* (Who has no Germans, should buy them).

character of Romanian culture, understood at the same time as a potentiality and a reality.

The profiles of the personalities I referred to above, eulogically presented in *Formula As*, are symptomatic for this representation of Germanness and of its influence upon Romanian culture. Armbruster, for example, was a historian who got his doctorate on the basis of a dissertation regarding the Romanity of the Romanians, thus unwaveringly inserting Romanian culture in Europe on the basis of its kinship to Latin culture. At the same time, his political views regarding for example the Romanian-Hungarian relationships in Transylvania, fitted well in the larger nationalistic and ethnocentric paradigm often promoted by mainstream press in general and by *Formula As* in particular.

The references to Europe are extremely visible in the cases of Schlattner and Johannis, i.e. in the discourses both they and their interviewers disseminate in the pages of *Formula As*. Schlattner appears to be an ardent supporter of the European value of Romanian culture. A Lutheran pastor, he is nonetheless fascinated by the religiosity of Romanians, henceforth his belief that "God cannot forget such a world". At the same time, Schlattner disseminates a nostalgic discourse regarding the good old times prior to the Second World War, apparently paying less attention to nuances in his statements for the press as compared to his books.[451] In one of his interviews, he argued that "the Romanians of today are the nephews of those who in the 1930s were travelling through Europe and paying everything in gold lei", thus flattering the pride of many Romanians, often eager to think of an imagined glorious past of their country, with the interwar period being in many discourses the culmination of this glorious past. Nonetheless, Schlattner built his argument of Romania's Europeanness on a rather idealized, if not utterly fallacious, view of the interwar period in Romanian history. Firstly, despite the autochthonous intellectual fascination for Greater Romania, the great majority of the Romanian population was far from having the possibility of travelling through Europe, let alone with huge assets of gold lei. Secondly, a big part of those few who actually enjoyed such possibilities subsequently perished in the Communist prisons or left the country. The Romanians nowadays are much more the nephews of the peasants and of the

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[451] Schlattner, "Românilor le lipsește mândria".

proletariat of the 1930s, social categories whose members did not have the chance to travel through Europe with gold lei in their pockets. Furthermore, Schlattner's argument on behalf of Romania's Europeanness interestingly comes together with commonplaces taught in Romanian history and geography textbooks. He rhetorically asked: "Who has a country richer than Romania? It's not insignificant to have 20% hills, 20% mountains, 60% fertile plain".[452]

An even more definitive argument for Romania's Europeanness can be extracted from an interview with the same Schlattner, taken by Ion Longin Popescu in 2005. The introduction referred to Schlattner's words in front of Otto Schilly, Minister of Internal Affairs in Germany, on the occasion of the latter's visit to the fortified church of Roșia, whose pastor is Popescu's interlocutor. The passage deserves to be quoted in its entirety:

> When, in the forests and in the swamps, where nowadays lies Berlin, the twitch was growing, here, in Transylvania, German was sung and Latin prayers were said. This is Saxon oldness! And if nowadays I can greet you in our common language, German, I am thankful for this to my homeland, Romania, which never forbade our mother tongue, not even in those nine months, when the Romanian kingdom was at war with the German Reich, from August 23, 1944, to May 9, 1945.[453]

Several observations should be made regarding these utterances. First of all, they are perfectly contiguous with the hypernostalgic and softly nationalistic views very much disseminated through the issues of *Formula As*. By argumentatively recurring to the old age of Transylvanian Saxon churches and to their anteriority compared to Berlin, they also respond to Romanian questions related to identity. Henceforth, Transylvania acts as a synecdoche for Romania, with Berlin acting as a synecdoche for Germany. Had Schlattner referred to, let's say, Aachen, he would have had some difficulties to actually be persuasive with such a demonstration. Nonetheless, his aim was to prove the Germanness of Transylvanian Saxons, relating to the *germanissimi germanorum* discourses of centuries ago, and, strongly linked to that, their Europeanness and that of Romania as a whole: the event took place in 2005, i.e. before Romania's accession to the European Union, Schlattner giving the said speech in front of Otto Schilly, German Minister of Internal Affairs.

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[452] Ibid.
[453] Schlattner, "Țin la această țară".

Furthermore, Schlattner strongly argued on behalf of Romania's "European" treatment of national minorities in history. His answer to the first question posed by the interviewer was in fact the following one: "I wanted to prove that Romanians are Europeans by vocation and by mindset, that this country comes from history having appropriated the *acquis communautaire*, even surpassing it as regards minorities".[454] Further on, the Lutheran pastor and German-speaking writer argued in favour of the constitutive European character of Orthodoxy, a recurrent issue of contention in Romanian identification discourses, also bluntly stating that nobody chased away the Saxons from Romania, a statement with which probably many of the Saxons and Swabians living nowadays in Germany would find it hard to agree.

If Schlattner acts as the Transylvanian Saxon intellectual acquiescing in the representation of Romania as a minority-friendly country in general, extremely sympathetic towards its German minority in particular, a slightly different perspective, more focused on politics and local administration, is found in the discourses promoted by and with respect to Klaus Johannis, the mayor of Sibiu since 2000 and a favourite of *Formula As*. In one of the first interviews granted after his first election as a mayor, Johannis openly spoke of the objective of bringing Saxons back to Sibiu, "as a symbol". Emphasizing that he speaks Romanian with no accent and that he is married to a Romanian, henceforth using a self-identification of someone who is not a stranger or foreigner, Johannis also referred to his attempt of transforming Sibiu into an outpost of Romanian integration into the European Union.[455] Judging by the fact that soon afterwards Sibiu successfully applied to be European Capital of Culture in 2007, it seems that Johannis' attempt was not dust in the wind. In 2005, he could already state that "the old Saxons who left Sibiu would be proud of our work", envisaging that Sibiu would turn into a town getting rid of its "provinciality".[456] Whilst Schlattner, through his interventions in *Formula As*, provided grounds for a cultural merger of Romanianness and Saxonness, Johannis did something similar, yet on the level of local administration.

*Formula As* is keen not only in showing the added value brought by well-known Germans who stayed in Romania, but also strives to emphasize

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[454] Ibid.
[455] Johannis, "Vrem să facem din Sibiu".
[456] Johannis, "Prea mulți politicieni români".

the good reputation of less known Germans, farmers, owners of small enterprises, tourism entrepreneurs, thus persuasively proving the presumed validity of the German model in Romania. Furthermore, readers of *Formula As* also had the chance to find articles about Germans from the Federal Republic of Germany who decided to settle down in Romania, most often in rural Transylvania. Thus, on the one hand stress is laid upon the traditional and natural character of life in Romanian villages, in a positive re-evaluation of the traditionalism professed by some Romanian intellectuals at the beginning of the last century. On the other hand, the representation of Romania as a German-friendly country and of Germans able to find in Romania a proper place for their personal development, whilst also preserving their German identity, is reinforced. It would go beyond the scope of this dissertation to analyze in depth the entirety of these discourses, on Germans from Germany coming to Romania, yet it is worth underlining that their presence in the pages of *Formula As* can be better understood if one bears in mind the positive representations of Transylvanian Saxons and Banat Swabians, present in the same periodical, and in other Romanian media products.

The best illustration, yet only one amongst several, is probably the article signed by Beatrice Ungar in April 1997, whose title is telling: "Saxons Are Leaving, Germans Are Coming". Ungar's article dealt with the work of Gerlinde Gabler-Braun, director of the Sibiu "Carl Wolff" hospital and home for the elderly, meant to cater for the distinct needs of the aged Transylvanian Saxon population.[457] In another article, returning Saxons and Germans who decided to settle down in Transylvania are dealt with together.[458] In an issue of *Dilema*, dedicated to the German minority in Romania, Cristina Stoica wrote about the Germans and the Swiss who have decided to move to Laslea in the old Saxon houses, bringing once again life to the village.[459]

Looking at articles in the Romanian press, it appears that Saxons and Swabians who remained in the country end up per force standing for the entire community, their value being at the same time enhanced by their having remained in Romania. The extended by-line of an article signed by Beatrice Ungar, on Michael Lienerth, the Saxon mayor of the village Vurpăr, is

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[457] Gerlinde Gabler-Braun, "Sașii pleacă, nemții vin," interview by Beatrice Ungar, *Formula As*, April 7, 1997.

[458] Beatrice Ungar, "Pași ai speranței în Transilvania," *Formula As*, June 1, 1998.

[459] Cristina Stoica, "Au plecat germanii, vin germanii," *Dilema*, July 2, 1999.

exemplary in this respect: "Not all Saxons left Romania. And of those who stayed, one equals seven".[460] Lastness and scarcity end up being two added values of Saxonness. Germans still in Romania are to be appreciated because there are so few of them. By "lastness", I refer to the fact that the Germans who did not leave Romania are endowed with positive traits precisely on the basis of the fact that they are still there and that they are considered to be the last Germans to be there.

A series of other articles are written in a similar vein: a Satu Mare Swabian is showed to contribute, on a local scale, to Romania's post-1989 agricultural development. The text makes use of the commonplace that the country once used to be "the granary of Europe".[461] In the introduction of an interview with Hermann Spack, Saxon returnee and owner of a touristic boarding house in Cristian, Ion Longin Popescu referred to Saxons and Swabians as a population acting as a "standard" to emulate for Romanians. Paradoxically, the interviewee affirmed that although he and his wife always spoke Saxon at home, they always felt Romanians.[462] Hermann Spack became thus an exemplary case of how Romanians should be: of German-Romanian education, sharing "German" values such as order and discipline, yet dedicated to things Romanian and to living and developing themselves in Romania.

German remigration to Romania is also understood as a potential healing device for specific problems of Romanian economy. In 1998, *România liberă* journalist Virgil Lazăr wrote about the wish to return of ethnic Germans who had left Romania during Communism. Using as an argument his own personal experience of living alongside Transylvanian Saxons, Lazăr made eulogizing observations about their lasting households and about the performances of their agriculture. He was quite convinced that if the Saxons returned to the region, they would set up farms "as only they knew to initiate", thus representing a model to emulate for the Romanian population.[463] In 2008, *Formula As* also published an account about what was

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[460] Michael Lienerth, "Un om credincios nu părăsește țara în care l-a așezat Dumnezeu," interview by Beatrice Ungar, *Formula As*, May 12, 1997.

[461] Bogdan Lupescu, "Extemporal cu grâu în câmpia Sătmarului," *Formula As*, July 2, 2001.

[462] Hermann Spack, "În copilărie, la Sibiu mi se zicea 'hitleristul'; mai târziu, în Germania, toată lumea îmi zicea 'românul'," interview by Ion Longin Popescu, *Formula As*, March 4, 2002.

[463] Virgil Lazăr, "Se reîntorc germanii?" *Satul. Supliment săptămânal de agricultură al ziarului România liberă*, May 26, 1998.

perceived as a "true miracle", of Saxons returning to Romania, in order to help the economic progress of the country, giving the example of two Saxon entrepreneurs ready to invest on the Romanian market.[464] A partly similar approach was present in the special issue of *Dilema* dedicated to the German minority in Romania, published in July 1999. In his "Argument", Adrian Cioroianu (later Minister of Foreign Affairs, between 2007 and 2008) spoke of the migration of Germans from Romania caused by economic reasons, wishfully adding that when *here* it would be better, they might come back.[465] Thus, Cioroianu presented the German return as a potential consequence of Romanian economic development, a supplementary reason for Romanians to make efforts in this direction. Either as a cause or as a consequence, Romanian Germans are represented in connection with progress and economic growth.

Looking at representations of Transylvanian Saxons and Banat Swabians with emphasis on questions related to Germans leaving, staying in or returning to Romania shows, at least after the implacable reality of the exodus in the early 1990s a preference for the two latter tropes. A majority of the articles selected on this topic are from *Formula As*, a weekly magazine touching upon issues of general interest. Unlike most of the daily newspapers in Romania, *România liberă*, *Adevărul* and later *Gândul* constituting no exception, *Formula As* offers its readers reportages on a multitude of social and cultural issues or portrayals of more or less known successful personalities in Romania, from peasants and owners of small enterprises to real celebrities, such as actors, writers or singers. Henceforth, it is an excellent source for investigating how the German minority in Romania is represented and, taking into account its success within the landscape of Romanian press, it can be argued that the discourses disseminated therein are mirroring and producing an image of the Germans in Romania that is mainstream.

The migration of the Germans is seen mostly as a sad, if not tragic, phenomenon, a rupture in the life of the community, but at the same time a partial decoupling of Romania from Europeanness, from the Occident. Placing it in connection with the reluctance of Romanian authorities to restitute the properties to their former German owners, this phenomenon was also seen as one of the many consequences of criticizable post-Communist

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[464] Ion Longin Popescu, "România e țara noastră," *Formula As*, February 25, 2008.

[465] A.C. (Adrian Cioroianu), "Argument," *Dilema*, July 2, 1999.

governing. However, interest was then granted to those who did not go with the wave, to those who stayed in the country or to those who returned, thus showing that there is no proper incompatibility between German culture and German values and Romanian mentality, but on the contrary. At the same time, the articles dedicated to such individuals definitely suggest the existence of specific positive traits associated with Germanness. Germans are successful, enterprising, a model to be emulated, they love Romania, bringing a so-called oasis of successful "normality" in the daily life of various local communities. Through them, it's Europe speaking, that Europe to which Romanians want to belong, brought closer by Germans, as such narratives imply.

Furthermore, a key aspect should be emphasized at this stage. Especially in *Formula As*, but not only therein, active members of the German community in Romania are able to disseminate their own messages, be it as authors (e.g. Beatrice Ungar), or through interviews published in a verbatim manner. Writing in Romanian and being interviewed in Romanian-language publications, Germans thus actually use the latter in order to disseminate self-identification discourses. Nonetheless, these are not clearly framed as such: when ethnic Germans in Romania write in Romanian about their community, their ethnicity is not always indicated. This is, of course, the case, when they are interviewed, yet even then the questions or the articles accompanying the interviews show an appropriation of German identification discourses in Romania by Romanian journalists. Journalism offers thus another example of a compatibility of Romanian discourses on German otherness and German self-identification discourses.

## 6.3.   Nostalgia, Lastness, and Cultural Heritage

In the previous section, I alluded to the hypernostalgic tone of some of the accounts on the German minority in Romania and also to the German "lastness", i.e. the transformation into an added value of the fact that the ethnic Germans still living in Transylvania, Banat or other regions in the country are presumably the last Germans to do that. German prestige in Romania is enhanced by the scarcity of the German population in the country.

A steadfast feeling of nostalgia imbues articles, accounts, and interviews dealing with the German minority. The commonplace "our Germans left", in its multiple variants, elicits melancholic, lachrymose considerations, which have become part and parcel of specific collective memory discourses, constantly reiterated in the course of the past twenty years. Precisely this reiteration enables their integration into "social memory" as a whole. At the same time, such discourses are also bound to refer to the current state of dereliction in which former Saxon and Swabian houses, monuments and localities stand, as opposed to the good old times in the past. Nostalgia needs to construct a bleak present, in order to be able to praise the perceived virtues of the past.[466] Furthermore, the two are in many ways tightly interconnected.

The same *Formula As* carries the banner of such representations, yet they definitely cut across the wider spectrum of Romanian press products. As such, they have also been present in the issues of *România liberă*, *Adevărul* and *Gândul*; moreover, in my reading of and interaction with Romanian press across the years, I have come across similar depictions in correlation with "our Germans" in other press products, such as *Evenimentul zilei*, or *Jurnalul național*, but also in documentaries or TV shows. There are two articles in *Formula As* that can be used as the very epitomes of this type of representations, one signed by Sânziana Pop, the other by Sorin Preda.[467]

In the former article, Pop, general director of *Formula As*, painted a representation in which the glorious German past was contraposed to both Communist and post-Communist realities. Pop's nostalgia is, according to a categorization proposed by Svetlana Boym, a reflective one. It "lingers on ruins, the patina of time and history".[468] Nonetheless, it also seems to be elicited by two different aspects of social memory: on the one hand, Pop displayed a fully constructed nostalgia for times immemorial, when Saxon colonists arrived in Transylvania and started to build up civilization, whilst on the other hand a nostalgia for the lived past can also be discerned in her text, for a past in which the author herself experienced the cohabitation with the Saxons in the Sighișoara of her adolescence. The whole text is lachrymose,

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[466] Svetlana Boym, *The Future of Nostalgia* (New York: Basic Books, 2001).
[467] Sânziana Pop, "Sașii din Ardeal," *Formula As*, November 15, 1999; Sorin Preda, "Sașii din Roșia se pregătesc pentru Rai," *Formula As*, August 9, 1999.
[468] Boym, *The Future of Nostalgia*, 41.

as Pop shows to have clearly internalized specific self-identification discourses disseminated by Transylvanian Saxons, reproducing them without any hint towards possibilities of criticism. The reader is immersed into a world magnificently transformed by settlers, who, coming "from Germany to Transylvania" brought with them "their models of civilization". The transformation of the historical past according to the needs of the present is crystal-clear: Pop referred to settlers coming from "Germany", a modern political reality which simply did not exist in the 12th century. Furthermore, studies on Saxon settlement in Transylvania emphasized that the medieval settlers actually came from a variety of regions, which would not qualify for being categorized as "Germany", not even according to today's geographies. Luxembourg and Flanders, places of origin of 12th century settlers, have never been "Germany", with the exception of particular short-lived 20th century German attempts towards military expansion in Europe. Nonetheless, referring to "Germany" as such, Pop practically "Germanized" the Saxons echoing Romantic understandings of a pan-German nation, but also specificities of National-Socialist ideology.

Her text continued: the looks of the Romanian inhabitants, watching the Germans building up civilization, were probably "astonished". There is a translucent hierarchization of ethnic groups in Pop's account: Germans, coming from the West, allegedly embarked right away upon concretizing their civilizing mission, whilst Romanians are represented as not able to overcome their status of passive on-lookers, waiting to be "civilized". Furthermore, beyond the visible nostalgia, the way Pop framed her memory discourse on German feats in Transylvania, is also telling of putative Transylvanian superiority towards other regions in Romania. As such, Pop's narrative is a fine example of what Bakić-Hayden called "nesting Orientalisms".[469] It emphasizes a "Western" identification of Transylvania and, on the other hand, it transparently suggests that the other regions in the country are less civilized, more backward, hence "Oriental". Yet the most important aspect of Pop's discourse considering the focus of my research is that the presumed superiority of Transylvania with respect to the other regions is strongly linked with the influence of Germans upon the social and

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[469] Milica Bakić-Hayden, "Nesting Orientalisms: The Case of Former Yugoslavia," *Slavic Review* 54, no. 4 (Winter 1995): 917-31.

cultural development of the region. Having been inhabited by Germans, Transylvania became more civilized, Pop implied, deriving out of that an entire hierarchy of ethnic groups, cultural affiliations, and geographical regions.

She also noted that Transylvanians display nostalgia after the pre-1918 institutions, of German extraction. Positive representations of Transylvanian Saxons are thus splendidly interwoven with and lead to the commonplace image of Transylvania as a more civilized region in Romania and with remnants of a melancholic intellectual discourse on the Habsburg Empire, reminiscent of the "Central Europe" versus "Eastern Europe" division arising out of the related debate in the 1980s.[470] Thus, Saxon past and Saxon memory are embedded into a regional Transylvanian identity discourse. Yet regionalist discourses and the discursive creation of regional identities cannot be decoupled from the quest for legitimacy: fundamentally, regional identity discourses are about power and legitimacy, just like any other type of identity or memory discourse.[471]

Pop counterposed a presumed splendid, German-related past of Transylvania to the post-1945 events, when, in her view, the German civilization model in Transylvania got destroyed by the Communist authorities, which soon led to the mass migration of Germans to the Federal Republic of Germany. The order and the discipline embodied by Saxons were replaced by the chaos and the mediocrity brought in by Communism, embodied this time by "Gypsies": the ethnic hierarchization I have already mentioned is now complete, with Roma being quintessentially the last on the civilization ladder. In her description of post-1945 realities, Pop limned a derelict picture of suffering, weeds, skeletons, oblivion and stupidity. Nonetheless, unlike the articles published earlier in the 1990s, as the one signed by Sorina Coroamă Stanca, already used in my demonstration, Pop's text ended with grounds for optimism, fundamentally connected with the preservation and restoration of cultural heritage: "Go and see Sighișoara! The

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[470] Robin Okey, "Central Europe / Eastern Europe: Behind the Definitions," *Past & Present*, no. 137 (November 1992): 102-33.
[471] Pierre Bourdieu, "Identity and Representation: Elements for a Critical Reflection on the Idea of Region," in *Language and Symbolic Power*, ed. John B. Thompson, transl. Gino Raymond and Matthew Adamson (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1991), 220-28.

cheerful, pastel, varnished, sky-blue, rosy colours have been yet again refreshed over the mould and the dampness of the walled city".[472]

A similar tone can be found in the article signed by Sorin Preda, who used the Saxon community of Roșia as a case study, in order to exemplify the tragic character of the German exodus. The reference to German "civilizing patterns" is once again present. In order for his message to be more effective, Preda spoke of "1000 years of historical loyalty" when referring to the German presence in Transylvania, although the date of Saxon settlement in the region is historically considered to be 1141. The first sentences of the article say more than anything else:

> For years, our heart has beaten with the hope that the Saxons in Transylvania will stay home, in the villages they built, and where they were happy for 1000 years. [...] A millennium of Saxon history in Transylvania ends dramatically, in total indifference, erasing its civilizing patterns to which Transylvanian Romanians owe a lot. [...] Their departure is, first of all, a Romanian defeat. [...] Now, what separates us from them is the word with which one crosses the Styx: farewell. We thank you for 1000 years of historical loyalty.[473]

The image of a millennium of bliss and historical loyalty is one that cannot do other but elicit nostalgia, and this is the tone in which the entire, two-pages long, material is written, including two interviews, with Eginald Schlattner, and with Julius Roth, one of the last Saxons to live in Roșia.

Preda's article emphasized the lastness of Transylvanian Saxons, adding to it some religious undertones. Thus, a moral feature of Saxons is also created, visible from the title, which states that the Saxons in Roșia prepare for Heaven. On the one hand, the catchy expression suggests that the respective population is actually on the verge of extinction, whilst on the other hand it authorially endows German ethnicity with morally positive traits, on the basis of which ethnic Germans would presumably enjoy an afterlife in Heaven. Nostalgia has a strong "spiritual" component.[474]

Furthermore, the readers find out from the text that Schlattner is the 100th Lutheran priest of Roșia and likes to add to his letters the signature "the last Evangelical priest in Roșia". The Saxons still living in the village are less than 20, all old. The images of nostalgia for a livelier past and of derelict

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[472] Pop, "Istorie cu ochii în lacrimi".
[473] Preda, "Sașii din Roșia se pregătesc".
[474] Boym, *The Future of Nostalgia*, 8.

emptiness are intensified by the portraits of those who are still there, who do not want to leave. Through Preda's account, and other accounts of the sort, Saxons seem to have turned into an extinct species, whose last members are an object of interest for the wide public, precisely because of their lastness.

This approach and this representation of Saxonness and Swabianness is visible in a multitude of other articles and texts, some already cited, as, for example, Beatrice Ungar's text on Michael Lienerth I have referred to previously. Moreover, there are also many other examples of articles and reportages on localities where nowadays there are no, or very few, Saxons and Swabians, often pinpointing their state of abandonment or at least the sadness implied by the aging/disappearance of the German-speaking population. In other cases, readers can come across the other side of the coin, namely the success stories of the last Saxons or Swabians who manage to transform them into touristic attractions or who manage to still preserve traditions and customs.

As early as 1991, *România liberă* published a sobbing account about the village Amnaș, displaying scepticism about its future on the basis of German out-migration.[475] The situation in Viscri, Rupea or Sighișoara was also not depicted in much more positive terms: they were referred to as "fortified towns that die standing", despite the acknowledgment of the efforts made by an activist such as Caroline Fernolend in the first case.[476] However, at least as regards Viscri, the situation would definitely change later, as I will show further down. We find a more neutral account about Bradu, yet the acknowledgment of the Transylvanian Saxon culture as a "dying culture" due to the constantly dwindling number of Saxons was also present.[477]

An article published in *Adevărul*, in 1997, by Carmen Chihaia, touched upon the fate of Hărman, a village with a fortified church in the vicinity of Brașov. In Chihaia's portrayal, the locality is desolate, under the siege of carelessness and decay. The same decrepit image is found in an article published in *România liberă*, by Vasile Șelaru, who bluntly stated with respect to Hărman: "Founded by the Teutonic Knights, inhabited for hundreds of

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[475] Mihai Creangă, "La Amnaș, cele mai tinere sunt suspinele," *România liberă*, September 18, 1991.

[476] Ciprian Chirvasiu and Dumitru Manolache, "Cetăți care mor în picioare," *România liberă*, September 1, 1993.

[477] Elena Tomulescu, "La Bradu, sașii lucrează pământul lăsat de Dumnezeu," *România liberă*, August 23, 1994.

years by Saxons, the locality degraded once they definitively left for Germany".[478] If Hărman had succeeded in coping with attacks and sieges in the past, it did not seem to cope with the Romanian transition, the article argued, whilst acknowledging Hărman's belonging to Romanian national heritage.[479] Similar observations and remarks were made with respect to the decay and the poverty getting hold of Brateiu, at the periphery of Mediaș.[480] Copșa Mare was not portrayed in such a desolate manner, yet the permanence there of only a few Saxons was emphasized.[481] Even the articles about Sibiu, nowadays the Transylvanian Saxon *caput mundi*, presented the town in the 1990s as one on the verge of ruin, very much unlike the current, more glamorous and "European" image of the town.[482]

In the 2000s one comes across more numerous successful stories related to Saxons and Swabians. The emphasis placed on the case of Viscri is relevant in this respect, mostly because of it becoming a tourist attraction under the efforts of Caroline Fernolend, one of the few Saxons who decided not to leave Romania,[483] but also for some more unusual reasons, such as the selling, under German guidance, of woollen hand-braided socks made by the women of Viscri to customers in Germany.[484] Even more peculiar is the story of Thomas Herbert, a Saxon from Sibiu who made a business out of opening a reindeer farm in the Transylvanian town.[485] For Beatrice Ungar, Hărman offered a "small paradise",[486] whilst Prejmer, itself in the vicinity of Hărman, was seen as a village refusing to die, the keeper of the keys to the church

[478] Vasile Șelaru, "O localitate săsească fără sași," *România liberă*, March 5, 1997.

[479] Carmen Chihaia, "Cetatea Hărman este asediată azi de nepăsare și ruină," *Adevărul*, February 15, 1997.

[480] Adrian Cercelescu, "Sărăcia se întinde ca o epidemie," *Adevărul*, June 21, 1999.

[481] Loreta Budin, "Clopotul Bisericii Evanghelice mai bate doar pentru fiii decedați pe pământ străin," *Adevărul*, April 18, 2001.

[482] For Sibiu as a city threatened by ruin, see Adriana Vela, "1500 de imobile stau să cadă în capul locatarilor," *Adevărul*, May 16, 1996; Carmen Chihaia, "În Cetatea Sibiului, casele se prăbușesc peste oameni," *Adevărul*, June 12, 1997; Adriana Vela, "195 de clădiri monument istoric din Sibiu - în pericol de prăbușire," *Adevărul*, April 6, 1998; Camelia Popa, "Cetatea Sibiului stă gata să se surpe," *România liberă*, March 20, 1997; for "Sibiu, the success story", see for example the articles in *Dilema Veche*, January 20, 2008, and also Silvia Kerim, ". Astă vară la Sibiu," *Formula As*, September 19, 2005.

[483] Caroline Fernolend, "Prințul Charles a spus că satul nostru e cel mai frumos din lume și nu înțelege de ce ne trebuie 'Dracula Park'," interview by Ion Longin Popescu, *Formula As*, June 10, 2002.

[484] Adrian Popescu, "Viscri - satul care s-a scos din foame cu 'ora de șosete'," *Adevărul*, October 5, 2004.

[485] Loredana Voiculescu, "Un sas și-a făcut fermă de reni în Sibiu," *Gândul*, 28 April 2006.

[486] Beatrice Ungar, "Micul paradis de la Hărman," *Formula As*, June 24, 2002.

thanking God each evening that she was born there...[487] The German villages in Banat also have their own success stories, such as Gărâna, a village which, the author notices, thrived after it was deserted by most of the autochthonous inhabitants - the Bohemian Germans. They did come back eventually, transformed their houses into vacation cottages and now Gărâna lives out of tourism.[488]

Instead of continuing to enumerate similar examples, it is more meaningful at this point to make some analytical observations about what can be intellectually entailed out of them and other alike articles and texts. The subtle change in approach, from an emphasis on the sadness and dereliction associated with the departure of the Germans to more positive accounts pinpointing successful transformations is easily inscribable in the logics of post-1989 discourses in Romania. After the short-lived enthusiasm of December 1989, in the press of the 1990s catastrophic and bleak accounts were burgeoning unhindered. The departure of Transylvanian Saxons and Banat Swabians fitted perfectly with the representation of the disastrous state of Romanian society as a whole or, even more, was a symptom of it.

It is not to be inferred that with the passing of time "sad" articles about former Saxon or Swabian villages have disappeared altogether. Yet a growing focus on successful transformation and use of Romanian German history is visible in the past decade. Deploring the departure of Germans, their "loss" has remained in many ways a constant of mass-media discourses about this ethnic group, yet this was soon joined by a stress laid upon the extremely positive input of the Germans who stayed or who returned to Romania, especially in terms of entrepreneurship and setting up lucrative businesses. It is not hard to read between the lines that such stories and such accounts can easily elicit thoughts about how good it would have been if the Germans had not left. In 2000, in *Dilema*, philosopher Vasile Morar wrote an article dealing with the return of the Saxons who left. He argued that the meaning of the hypothetical Saxon return is to make us dream and imagine how many events would have looked like if they had not left or if they returned.[489] The success of Klaus Johannis in Sibiu and the growing number of articles about Germans who stayed or who returned, about Germans putting positive things into

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[487] Valentin Iacob, "Cetatea care nu vrea să moară," *Formula As*, September 13, 2004.

[488] Caterina Nicolae, "Al doilea descălecat al pemilor," *Gândul*, October 12, 2005.

[489] Vasile Morar, "Întoarcerea sașilor plecați," *Dilema*, May 19, 2000.

practice in Transylvania and Banat are thus seen as concrete hints regarding what could have happened had the Germans not left.

The question of Romanian identity is bound to refer often to that of cultural and historical heritage in Romania. Connecting it with the question of European identity makes it clearer that what is at stake is the issue of cultural belonging, which has always been a sensitive and thorny one for Romanian intellectuals and political leaders alike. On the one hand, the policies of Ceaușescu's nationalistic regime partly aimed towards the "razing of Romania's past", as the eponymous book by Dinu C. Giurescu argued.[490] On the other hand, as Hans Bergel noticed, German heritage in Romania was apt to be instrumentalized as it provided relatively easy access to a symbolic European medieval identity, an aspect in which Romanian history actually never fared well.[491]

After 1989, mass-media displayed a renewed interest in cultural and architectural heritage; nevertheless, considering the poor economic conditions in the country it was rather difficult for this interest, no matter whether shared or not by state authorities, to gain a more concrete form. This section is not about what the state or other actors did for the preservation of Romanian German cultural and architectural heritage, but rather about how this heritage has been represented in post-1989 Romanian press and, more precisely, about the role played by this heritage in the discursive production of a Romanian identification with Europe. At this point, it is definitely worth mentioning that out of the seven Romanian sites inscribed in the UNESCO Cultural World Heritage database, two are considered "Transylvanian Saxon" ones, namely a complex of seven Lutheran fortified churches (Biertan, Câlnic, Prejmer, Viscri, Dârjiu, Saschiz, Valea Viilor) and the medieval city centre of Sighișoara. The fact that the fortified church of Dârjiu is actually a Unitarian, Szekler church is rarely mentioned.

I build on what I have already argued in this chapter, as discourses on Saxon and Swabian heritage (mostly Saxon, to be completely accurate) are strongly related to discourses on German out-migration from and remigration to Romania or to nostalgic discourses emphasizing on the one hand the

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[490] Dinu C. Giurescu, *The Razing of Romania's Past* (London: World Monuments Fund, 1990).
[491] Hans Bergel, *Die Sachsen in Siebenbürgen nach dreißig Jahren Kommunismus. Eine Studie über die Menschenrechte am Beispiel einer ethnischen Gruppe hinter dem Eisernen Vorgang*, 2nd edition (Innsbruck: Wort und Welt Verlag, 1976).

lastness of Germans in Romania and on the other hand the derelict state of German villages and monuments nowadays. Often, the discourse on heritage has been one arguing for salvation: it might be that Germans have fled Romania, their cultural and architectural traces should be saved. It is a type of discourse that fits perfectly with the representation of Saxons and Swabians as an extinct species, and henceforth with their "natural" environment in need of salvation.

The text signed by Coroamă-Stanca, published as early as 1990, was already emphasizing that German monuments and houses should not be neglected, linking that to the fact that we live "in Europe".[492] In 1991, Adrian Bucurescu was pleading for the salvation of the cultural heritage of Sighișoara,[493] whilst earlier that year, in the pages of the same newspaper, Virgil Lazăr had asked whether "more than eight centuries of material and spiritual culture" can still be salvaged, emphasizing the civilizing influence of Germans upon Romanians.[494] Complaints about the state of Viscri, Rupea and Sighișoara could still be read in 1995, making use of two interesting parallels: instead of using the touristic potential comparable with that of Switzerland, the country is led to a situation similar to that of Beirut.[495] The list of monuments and churches that entered the attention of the press because they needed to be saved is much longer: the church in Hosman was presented as interesting only for the German Forum,[496] mirroring in effect the condition of all Saxon fortified churches.[497] The author of the latter article was ready to say that "these monuments belong to the Romanian cultural and archaeological historical dowry", also quoting the deputy director of the History Museum in Brașov, Dorina Negulici. Allegedly, the latter argued that the name "Saxon churches" is not correct, as those who worked towards their building were probably often autochthonous (read: Romanians), in an example of how to appropriate Transylvanian Saxon heritage and then transform it into

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[492] Coroamă-Stanca, "Românii-germani".

[493] Adrian Bucurescu, "Cine salvează Sighișoara?" *România liberă*, June 29, 1991.

[494] Virgil Lazăr, "Germanii din România, trecut dar mai ales prezent și viitor," *România liberă*, May 9, 1991; Virgil Lazăr, "Germanii din România, trecut dar mai ales prezent și viitor (II)," *România liberă*, May 10, 1991.

[495] Adrian Bucurescu, "Cetăți care mor în picioare," *România liberă*, September 1, 1993.

[496] Mariana Petcu and Irina Pop, "O cetate fortificată și un castel care nu mai interesează pe nimeni," *România liberă*, December 13, 1996.

[497] Carmen Chihaia, "Cetățile-săsești din Transilvania - un patrimoniu-unicat în pericol de pulverizare," *Adevărul*, December 14, 1996.

something "Romanian" according to patterns reminiscent of the national-communist ideology promoted under Ceaușescu.[498]

Since the second half of the 1990s articles about monuments that are being saved started to be visible, signalizing the growing interest of authorities and other funding bodies for them. For example, the restoration of the Black Church in Brașov finished in 1999 and this was announced in a one-page article in *România liberă*.[499] The plan of Tourism Minister Dan Matei Agathon to build, in the early 2000s, a thematic Dracula Park close to Sighișoara, also elicited a stubborn campaign by *România liberă* and in general a plethora of national and international calls for salvation, listened to by the Prince of Wales himself, who then intervened and managed to put a halt to the project, mostly with arguments regarding sustainable tourism and the relevance of Saxon cultural heritage for the region.

The interventions of the Prince of Wales, together with the involvement of other European institutions and authorities, from Germany and Luxembourg for example, show the symbolic Europeanization of the issue of Transylvanian Saxon heritage, a topic very much embraced by Romanian press. Prince Charles has become patron of Mihai Eminescu Trust, one of the main foundations lobbying and acting for the preservation of Transylvanian cultural heritage, Saxon included. His vision, of a Europe very much in touch with its rural, traditional roots, needing to be saved, found a perfect object of salvation in Transylvanian Saxon culture and heritage. His lobby for the region surrounding Sibiu was based on the fact that this is an "unaltered corner of Europe", an expression also taken by Romanian mass media.[500] Some even hoped that his advocating for the preservation of Transylvanian Saxon villages would entail a return of Transylvanian Saxons.[501] The restoration of Sibiu in view of Sibiu - European Capital of Culture 2007, the successful opposition against the building of a Dracula-themed park in Sighișoara, the fortified churches belonging or not to the UNESCO World Heritage List: these are all topics touched upon by the Romanian press, emphasis being placed on the high cultural value of these monuments and on their belonging to Romanian and international heritage.

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[498] Ibid.
[499] Vasile Șelaru, "Restaurare după 80 de ani," *România liberă*, December 1, 1999.
[500] Iulia Blaga, "Sibiul, 'un colț nealterat al Europei'," *România liberă*, May 5, 2000.
[501] Horia Țurcanu, "Transilvania - dulce patrie," *Formula As*, June 10, 2002.

Writing about the fortified churches which are part of the UNESCO World Heritage, Emil Hurezeanu drew symbolic parallels to the Moorish palaces in Granada, Seville or Cordoba. Just like the latter allegedly represent the "indelible mark" of the Orient on the Occident, the Saxon fortified churches in Transylvania seem to represent the Western influence in the East, Hurezeanu argued. He then went further, quoting a statement by French poet Paul Valéry, namely that Europe ends where one finds the last Gothic churches:

> The last Gothic churches were built by Saxons, between Sibiu and Brașov, in Southern Transylvania, at the beginning of Middle Ages. If you come from Hamburg and Vienna, Sibiu and Brașov mark the end of Europe. If you come from the warm seas and still wear on your cloak the dust of the silk road, the Gothic naves of the Transylvanian Saxons are the first valid blazon of the old Europe.[502]

Despite the reference to "the old Europe", Hurezeanu was crystal-clear in placing the architectural feats of Transylvanian Saxon culture, now part of Romanian heritage, in a European symbolic framework. However, their capacity to mark the Europeanness of the Transylvanian territory was in itself a proof that this quality is not self-understood, but rather open to being questioned. The Transylvanian Saxon fortified churches provide a clear-cut answer to this interrogation. Of course, not all accounts on Saxon heritage play the "European card", yet their symbolic linking to German culture, together with their being Lutheran open up spaces for interpretation, practically leading the reader in this direction.

Carmen Andrei ended her article on several fortified churches by quoting one of the inhabitants of the respective villages, who stated that she and her colleagues were the first Romanians to visit that respective church. She also emphasized the fact that the fortified churches are well known in the entire world, less so in Romania.[503] Representing Saxon (German) monuments in Transylvania as a unique treasure ignored by Romanians, in contrast with the attitude of tourists from the entire world, in the context of a society obsessed with its own image and with the question of international cultural recognition, is an answer to this latter question. The discourse can be

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[502] Emil Hurezeanu, "Transilvania, *mon amour* - despre cetățile fortificate -," *Dilema veche*, December 24, 2009.
[503] Carmen Andrei, "Bisericile-cetăți săsești," *România liberă*, June 7, 2002.

summarized in the following way: there are cultural features that could make Romania qualify for acknowledgment by the entire world, they just need be placed under the spotlight. Not by chance, some of these features are the Transylvanian Saxon monuments. If they are not already, they should be introduced in the touristic circuit, sometimes also envisaging the development of local tourism through the potential return of Transylvanian Saxons.[504] Numerous materials dealing directly with Transylvanian Saxon monuments can be used in order to support my statement; to a much lesser extent, the same thing can be argued with respect to Banat Swabian heritage. Yet in Romanian press Saxons are granted more attention than Swabians, thus partially reinforcing a much older hierarchical representation within the Romanian German community, according to which Saxons occupy a superior position to the Swabians, due to their oldness and to their cultural deeds.

Nonetheless, even if to a lesser extent, the same type of discourse accompanies reports on Banat Swabians. For example, Liliana Brad wrote about the successful transformation of Gărâna, in Banat, into a tourist resort where even Western ministers come with pleasure. There is a touch of local pride towards the end of the article, where we read that thanks to the efforts of the association "Banat-Ja", Gărâna managed not to share the fate of Saxon villages in Transylvania, namely to become deserted and derelict.[505] Yet of more interest is, once again, the representation of German heritage in Romania as a possible gate for entrance in the Western world or, in this case, as a gate through which the Western world comes to Romanians.

The archives of four publications, over a period of twenty years, offer much more examples supporting the argumentative thread of my demonstration. I deem the ones I used to be sufficient in order to emphasize the representation of Transylvanian Saxon and Banat Swabian cultural heritage as capable of instrumentalization in view of affirming a European identity in Romania and of Romania. Amongst the multitude of arguments directly or subtly used in support of this statement regarding Romania's belonging, the issue of German heritage in the country, derelict or re-brought to life, occupies a special place.

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[504] Virgil Lazăr, "Reîntoarcerea sașilor va duce la dezvoltarea turismului local," *România liberă*, July 5, 2002.
[505] Liliana Brad, "Gărîna, locul unde vin cu plăcere miniștrii cancelariilor occidentale," *România liberă*, February 25, 2000.

## 6.4.    Germans - the Good Neighbours. A Comparative Perspective

The final empirical section of this chapter deals with what I call the representation of Germans as the "good neighbours". To word it differently, I maintain once again that the positive representations of Germanness are much better understood if they are juxtaposed (and contraposed at the same time) to representations of other ethnic groups in Romania, more precisely to Hungarians and Roma. This is not always an exercise of imagination, as often Germans and Hungarians or Germans and Roma are placed together in the same article, for obvious reasons. Nonetheless, at times absences are also telling, in terms of a preferential treatment granted to Germans in matters where Hungarians for example fare much worse in the Romanian press.

Not by chance, a subtle apologist of the Antonescu regime and of anti-Hungarianism such as Silviu Achim was also one of the authors granting attention as early as 1991 to the German migration out of Romania, bewailing it as a "painful loss".[506] The two attitudes fit perfectly together: the Germans are often deemed more valuable if compared to the Hungarians or, even better, the Germans and their apparently good relationship to Romanians offer a way for discourses emphasizing the Romanian magnanimity and their more tolerant nature as compared to Hungarians.

This instrumentalization of the representation of Germans as compared to the representation of Hungarians, the former playing the role of the "cultural other", the latter of "the threatening other" is best illustrated by the way Satu Mare Swabians are portrayed in *România liberă*, *Adevărul* and *Formula As*. This branch of the Romanian German community rarely reaches the foreground of the public interest, dominated first and foremost by Transylvanian Saxons and, to a lesser extent, by Banat Swabians. At the same time, there is not too much academic literature on the topic. Their migration to Germany has been more reduced than in the case of the Saxons and of the Banat Swabians, yet one of the reasons for this has to do with a specific peculiarity of this ethnic group. As a consequence of longstanding pressures towards Magyarization, mainly through the Catholic Church, Satu Mare Swabians often declare Hungarian as their mother tongue. Consequently, Romanian accounts represent Satu Mare Swabians as being threatened with

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[506] Achim, "O etnie de opt ori seculară".

assimilation by Hungarians, hence as in need of salvation. The salvation can come, of course, from Romanian authorities and institutions.

This is the tone in which, in 1991, the same Silviu Achim called the Satu Mare Swabians "the most isolated and hence the branch most exposed to the hostility of times, amongst our entire population of German extraction".[507] The danger was that of denationalization, more precisely that of Magyarization, a phenomenon that had started during the Austro-Hungarian Dualism, yet continued up to the first decades of the Communist regime, Achim wrote. The need was, therefore, to "recover the ethnic identity of the Swabians".[508] An interview granted by Helmut Berner, the president of the Association of Satu Mare Swabians in Germany, to Silviu Achim, was even more virulent in its criticism of the perceived Magyarization. Berner was extremely critical of "these gentlemen" who continued the Magyarization actions instead of admitting that this type of politics belonged to the 19th century. It is not written black on white who the "gentlemen" were, yet readers could easily understand that Berner was referring to Hungarian political and religious elites in Romania and presumably in Hungary as well. The need for saving an ethnic identity under threat was made clearer through references to Europe: "… we want that the people in the Satu Mare clime get along well, all preserving their ethnic identity in this small Europe that is Satu Mare county. Our wish is that this small Europe enters big Europe; of course, together with the entire Romania."[509]

The discourse propagated by Berner, an ethnopolitical entrepreneur within the Satu Mare Swabian community, fitted perfectly with the one disseminated by Achim, a nationally-oriented Romanian journalist, in the previous two articles I cited. The Satu Mare Swabians are discursively used against representatives of the Hungarians in Romania, whilst also resorting to a "Europeanizing" argument. The forced assimilation (Magyarization) of Satu Mare Swabians was also the topic of an article in the same newspaper, by Val Vâlcu, in 1995.[510] It is an account about the village Palota, in Bihor County, with a simple message: German-speaking Swabians are being Magyarized. Vâlcu did not come forth with too many comments, yet some subtle

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[507] Silviu Achim, "Întâlnirea șvabilor," *Adevărul*, July 11, 1992.
[508] Silviu Achim, "Viitorul șvabilor din România," *Adevărul*, July 13, 1992.
[509] Helmut Berner, "Aici naționalitățile se înțeleg bine," interview by Silviu Achim, *Adevărul*, July 23, 1992.
[510] Val Vâlcu, "În satul Palota, din Bihor, șvabii vorbesc ungurește," *Adevărul*, August 12, 1995.

observations are sufficient in order to understand that the message of the text is a clear critique of Hungarian politicians in Romania. A by-line of the article stated "*À propos* forced assimilation", a clear reference to the accusations professed by many representatives of the Hungarians in Romania regarding the presumed forced assimilation touching upon ethnic Hungarians. Once again, we find an open instrumentalization of Germans, who become, in the accounts of Romanian journalists, an object of Hungarian ethnic politics in the Satu Mare region. Thus, the historical image of the assimilationist Hungarian got reinforced, while the representation of the Satu Mare Swabians as an ethnic group in peril fitted perfectly with the broader representations of the Romanian Germans as a whole, also endangered given their extremely small numbers.

In 2004, *România liberă* also approached the issue of the Satu Mare Swabians. The author dealt with the question of German vs. Hungarian identity of the Swabians in the Satu Mare region, yet did that in the most salient way, announcing it from the very title: "The Swabians - our Germans or their Hungarians?".[511] The antagonism between Romanians and Hungarians was played upon, the stake being this time the Germanness of the Swabians, that is their "true" ethnic identity. The author offered from the very first lines an answer to the question in the title, by stating that they "are Swabians: our Germans".[512] The Germans can therefore be "ours", even if they are Germans, it's us that actually allow them to be Germans, in contrast to the assimilationist Hungarians.

At times, one can discern that Germans enjoy a specific prestige in Romania even from topics that are absent. In 2006, *Formula As* published a series of articles and interviews severely criticizing the restitutions taking place in Transylvania, especially in the city centre of Cluj-Napoca, the unofficial capital of the region. The authors and the interviewees spoke about a marginalization of Romanians, who "lose" the city centres in Transylvania, the most sensitive case being Cluj-Napoca, in a situation reminding of the pre-1918 discriminations against Romanians in the Habsburg Empire. Nonetheless, a similar process of restitution of buildings to various institutions belonging to minority churches also took place in Sibiu, mostly in

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[511] Mihnea-Petru Pârvu, "Șvabii - nemții noștri sau ungurii lor?" *România liberă*, August 17, 2004.
[512] Ibid.

favour of the Lutheran Church. Yet a Transylvanian town centre "occupied" by Germans was not perceived as dangerous and anti-Romanian as one "occupied" by Hungarians.

An even more striking contraposition is that of Germans and Roma, mostly entailed by the fact that in many cases, houses deserted by Saxons and Swabians have been taken over by Roma. The phenomenon has been represented as a huge problem by both remaining Saxons and by Romanian public opinion, often showing clear signs of anti-Gypsism. I have referred above to the implicit anti-Gypsism present in the article by Sorana Coroamă-Stanca, from 1990, as she wrote about the newcomers in the Saxon villages, emphasizing the huge cultural difference between them and the former inhabitants, to the advantage of the latter.

The common representation of the civilized and civilizing Germans who left, replaced by the anarchic Roma is quite widespread, shared by both Romanian Germans and Romanians. Wolfgang Rehner, a Lutheran pastor interviewed by Mircea Bunea in the 1990 spoke of two different mentalities, of two mutually incompatible ways of living, asking rhetorically whether the interviewer saw how a Saxon house looked like before and after it was occupied by Gypsies.[513]

Sibiu and Timișoara, the unofficial Saxon and Swabian "capitals", have often been in the foreground of mass media discourses due to their perceived transformation into "Gypsy" towns. An article published in *România liberă*, in 1996, by Bogdan Burileanu, referred to Sibiu as a potential "transnational capital of Gypsies". It started with a description of the history of Sibiu, acknowledging the Transylvanian Saxon influence upon it. Saxons have inhabited and have moulded the town, from a socio-economical and an economic point of view. Bewailing the deportations and the Communist policies towards Saxons, Burileanu identified the two categories having benefited most from the departure of the latter, namely party activists and Gypsies:

> The houses left by Saxons were immediately occupied, either by the former or by the latter. Slowly, the latter have ended up representing the main ethnic minority, quickly proliferating through the profuse natural growth. Nowadays, there are only some hundreds of Saxons in the whole county, whilst the

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[513] Rehner Wolfgang, "Revoluția a venit prea târziu".

> Gypsies (self-titled Roma) mean 17% of the county population and 4% of the population of the town.[514]

What followed was an extremely critical article about various illegalities of Gypsy leaders, who have become the real masters of the town, Burileanu suggested. On another occasion, Timișoara was presented as a "Little Vienna" on its way to becoming "the Gaza Strip", due to the proliferation of Gypsy and Arab buildings in a town known for its Central European architectural style.[515] Nonetheless, in 2004, *România liberă* would report on plans being made for offering Timișoara its old aspect of a "burg", alluding to the Central European past and to the influence of German culture in Banat.[516]

On December 7 of the same year, Irina Pop published a short article about a plan to repopulate some Saxon villages. She explained their current situation:

> Until 1989, these villages were inhabited in a proportion of over 60% by Saxons. Immediately after the Revolution, a great part of them left for Germany. The Saxons who stayed in Transylvania can be counted on the fingers of one hand. The households of those who left have been abandoned. Gypsies stole everything there was to be stolen.[517]

Vasile Șelaru's account of Hărman also emphasized the prosperous Saxon past in opposition to the Gypsy poverty, described with words such as "laziness", "lack of appetite for work" and others alike.[518] In an article on Viscri, Adrian Bucurescu noted that "despite the Gypsy demographic pressure, some Occidental Europeans bought or built homes here".[519] He was probably alluding to Maria and Harald Riese, the two entrepreneurial Germans who set up a business through which Roma living in Viscri sold their hand-woven woollen socks in Germany. However, according to press

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[514] Bogdan Burileanu, "Sibiu. O capitală transnațională a țiganilor?!" *România liberă*, August 5, 1996. Another article about the Gypsy influence in Sibiu, in defiance of laws and authorities, but without reference to the Saxon past: Mariana Petcu and Flavius Popa, "Sfidarea autorităților," *România liberă*, April 2, 1997.

[515] Ion Medoia, "'Mica Vienă', târâtă spre 'Fâșia Gaza'," *România liberă*, October 24, 1997; Ion Medoia, "Timișoara. 'Palatele' țigănești cu 'turnulețe' iau locul construcțiilor în stil vienez," *România liberă*, July 10, 1998; Ion Medoia, "Bulevardul C.D. Loga, îmbâcsit de turnuri și turnulețe orientale," *România liberă*, November 10, 2000.

[516] Laura M. Forțiu, "'Mica Vienă' își va recăpăta înfățișarea de burg," *România liberă*, April 9, 2004.

[517] Irina Pop, "Satele săsești vor fi repopulate, dar la primăvară," *România liberă*, December 7, 1996.

[518] Șelaru, "O localitate săsească".

[519] Adrian Bucurescu, "Cetatea Viscri," *România liberă*, November 23, 2000.

accounts, this eventually successful story had to overcome the initial distrust of the Roma who had taken the place of the migrated Saxons.[520]

The same type of antagonism is found in the accounts published in *Formula As*, maybe the least *nuancé* publication in its treatment of Transylvanian Saxons and Banat Swabians, a true rostrum for dissemination of an extremely positive and nostalgic image with respect to the German communities in Romania. In an already quoted text, symptomatic for the apologetic view of Saxonness and Swabianness in Romania, Sânziana Pop, editor-in-chief of *Formula As*, wrote:

> In the spirit of Socialist equity, the immovable German property was transgressed, and, out of state order, the rich villages around Brașov and Sibiu have been invaded by the Gypsy migration that also imposed its models of civilization, lighting the fires under their cauldrons directly from the oaken floors of the centuries-old houses.[521]

The antonymic representation of two ways of life, on the one hand the steadfast civilization symbolized by centuries-old houses, and on the other hand the cauldrons used by nomads to prepare their food, is blatant.

Framing representations of Germanness and representations associated with Roma in Romanian society as parallel and antonymic leads to relevant conclusions on more general issues pertaining to contemporary Romania.[522] If Germans are seen as colonizing agents of Europeanization, the references to Roma (who also migrated to today's Romania, but in a different context and seemingly three centuries after the first waves of Saxon migration) often bring forth the putative "Roma problem" as an obstacle in front of the European integration. Moreover, if Germans, through their affiliation with German/European culture are seen as a symbol of progress and civilization, Roma, through their presumed affiliation with India (common knowledge places the geographic origin of the Roma in India, although there is no universally acknowledged scientific theory in this respect), are seen as lacking civilization. The nomadic Roma, representative of a totally different way of life, are therefore subtly counterposed to the stability associated with the

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[520] Adrian Popescu, "Sub conducerea unei familii de nemți".
[521] Pop, "Istorie cu ochii în lacrimi".
[522] These observations are partly taken from a text I wrote for an exhibition curated by Alexandra Croitoru and Ștefan Tiron, *A Fresco for Romania*, Berlin, Galeria Plan B, in 2009.

German fortified churches and with the perceived German rootedness in Romania.

Another point where imagistic representations of Germans and Roma are opposing is a more pragmatic one, having to do with the physical portrait of the Transylvanian Saxon (or Banat Swabian, for all that matters) and of the Roma. Whereas the latter are often presented as young, powerful, violent, sensual and sexual, gregarious, very lively, and, last but not least, very numerous, Germans are symbols of twilight: they are often represented as old, lonely, weak, frail, an extinct species in Transylvanian or Banat villages, "preparing for Heaven". A documentary film about two ethnically mixed families in Transylvania was presented by a central Romanian newspaper in an article titled: "Bizarre Mixture of Ethnies: Saxons and Gypsies, in Transylvania".[523] The poorly done production was shown in as official an institution as the Romanian Cultural Institute in Bucharest.[524] It played on the same antagonism, following the traces of Saxon-Roma families, seen as an anthropological curiosity. The images it conveyed are at best shallow, but they clearly supported my argument regarding the two antagonistic images surrounding the two ethnic groups.

Roma (called "Gypsies" throughout the entire movie) are considered to have occupied the "empty houses" of the Saxons who left for Germany. Although it is true that there are cases of Roma living in former Saxon households, it is just as true that there are also ethnic Romanians doing it. Yet the perception that Roma took over German homes is widespread. I have showed that this representation was quite present in the pages of *România liberă*, *Formula As* and *Adevărul* before 2005. It cuts across the wide spectrum of opinions and ideologies present in the Romanian press. I take the liberty of quoting from an article in *Adevărul*, published after the transition from *Adevărul* to *Gândul*, in November 2007, referring to the situation in a Transylvanian village: "Although they took the place of the Saxons who left to Germany, the Gypsies inherited neither the prosperity nor the German

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[523] A.E.G., "Combinație bizară de etnii: sași și țigani în Transilvania," *Ziua*, July 28, 2008, http://ziarero.antena3.ro/articol.php?id=1217244520 (accessed December 2, 2011).

[524] Geo Scripcariu, *Adela & Agnetha*, http://video.google.com/videoplay?docid=6483563543868723335&hl=en# (accessed December 15, 2011).

order".[525] The documentary I mentioned above went further than that in disseminating the antagonistic image of the two minorities, by stating that Germans and Roma are two "extreme minorities" as regards their "level of civilization and culture". Germans and Roma together: that is bizarre, a sort of weird "cross-breeding", worth to be anthropologically investigated like a curiosity, because for Romanian society the two ethnic groups stand for two different worlds, with two different sets of values, mutually incompatible.

## 6.5.  Conclusions

My analysis of the representations of and of memory discourses related to the German minority in Romania in post-1989 Romanian print media, fundamentally shows their tight links with particular Romanian identification issues. It also captures the "Europeanizing" framework in which texts and accounts about the German minority get substantiated. In the following paragraphs I elaborate more on some of the considerations presented in the previous pages. Furthermore, I reemphasize an explanation on the prestige associated with the German minority, focusing on who disseminates such messages in Romanian newspapers.

As already stated and as made visible in the empirical sections of this chapter, the journalistic representations of and the journalistic memory discourses related to Romanian Germans are best understood if related to concepts such as "liminality", "self-orientalism", or "nesting Orientalisms". Furthermore, such discourses also stand proof that memory can turn into a "journalistic device": references to the German past are used in order to add perspective and to explain the present.[526] Fundamentally, Germans in Romania are represented as a cultural gate towards Europe. Out-migration, return of Germans to Romania, Germans who stayed in the country, nostalgia, cultural heritage, lastness - all these tropes can be subsumed to the question of European belonging, asserted in the case of the Germans, debated

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[525] Sorin Ghica, "Vătrașii din Sibiu s-au mutat din corturi în casele sașilor," *Adevărul*, November 14, 2007, http://www.adevarul.ro/exclusiv_adevarul/Vatrasii-Sibiu-corturi-casele-sasilor_0_35397584.html (accessed December 2, 2011).
[526] Dan Berkowitz, "Telling the Unknown through the Familiar: Collective Memory as Journalistic Device in a Changing Media Environment," in *On Media Memory. Collective Memory in a New Media Age*, ed. Motti Neiger, Oren Meyers, and Eyal Zandberg (Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan, 2011): 202.

in the case of the Romanians. The latter debates are sometimes answered by recurring to "our Germans": their historical and even contemporary presence can be an argument in favour of Romania's European character, even though at the beginning of the 1990s, it was more their absence that was emphasized, hence rather reinforcing the disputed nature of Romania's cultural belonging.

The implicit or explicit instrumentalization of the German minority and, more precisely, of the German past in Romania takes place in order to make assertions about Romanian identity or, in other cases, about regional identity. Both memory discourses and discourses about German cultural heritage in Romania lead to the same conclusion. Strongly connected with the prestige Germans tend to be endowed with in the Romanian setting is then the understanding of German ethnicity as a value in itself. Furthermore, Germans seem to be appreciated precisely due to their small number: lastness, their being the last of their ethnic group, apparently makes Germans in Romania more valuable, just like it happens with extinct species in biology or with rare gems on the jewellery market.

The philo-Germanism without Germans is even more visible if one considers representations of Germanness and memory discourses about Saxons and Swabians in the wider framework of Romanian representations and discourses of otherness. Loving the Germans often implies a hierarchization of minority groups, and disparaging views of other ethnic minorities, such as Roma, or even of one's own group. Furthermore, as the case of the Satu Mare Swabians shows, writing about Germans can also easily turn into an assertion of Romanian positive treatment of minorities as compared to Hungarian attempts towards assimilation. Such discourses make salient the fact that Germans are also seen as a counterweight to Hungarians: a "cultural other" versus a "threatening other".

There is one last aspect that should be again emphasized. As made visible through the selection of articles and interviews I quoted from in the empirical sections of this chapter, Romanian-language press, especially *Formula As*, but also other publications, offers in effect a space for disseminating discourses about Germans produced by Germans themselves. For example, Beatrice Ungar, a journalist of whose articles in *Formula As* I have made extensive use, is a Transylvanian Saxon, editor-in-chief of *Hermannstädter Zeitung*, a weekly publication partly sponsored by the

Democratic Forum of Germans in Romania. Moreover, since 2008 she is also a member of Sibiu County Council. I have also quoted articles by and interviews with Rohtraut Wittstock, Christa Richter, Eginald Schlattner, Klaus Johannis, Ingmar Brandsch; I could have referred to interventions by Carol Ludovic Lupșiasca, an active member of the German Forum in Banat, or by Paul Philippi, prominent member of the German Forum. All these personalities have been or are, one way or another, Romanian German ethnopolitical entrepreneurs, directly involved in the production and reproduction of Romanian German identity. What is interesting is their presence in Romanian-speaking press, a feature specific to Romanian German elites, as opposed for example to the Hungarian case. Furthermore, it is not always straightforward that they write from a "German" point of view: it might be pretty obvious in the case of interviews, yet not so much in the case of press articles.

The presence of individuals involved in German ethnopolitical affairs in Romania is apt to explain the apparent compatibility between "Romanian" and "German" discourses on the German minority in Romania: the former are actually in part produced by "Germans" as well. Secondly, it shows that for the German elites in Romania the identity stakes are not only within the German-speaking community, but also very much within the Romanian-speaking community. This is not so much valid in other similar cases: once again, the Hungarian case is slightly different in this respect. If on a political level it is normal for the stakes to lie in both ethnic fields, internal and external, the German case is one in which the same can be said on a cultural and social level. "Germans" choose to communicate directly with "Romanians", and at the same time they are accepted to do that: a Romanian-German compatibility is thus constructed and at the same time reinforced.

# 7. Post-1989 Romanian Historiography and the German Minority

## 7.1. Romanian Anteriority and Demographic Superiority in Transylvania. "German" Arguments as Pro-Romanian Arguments

Historiography played a fundamental role in determining the processes connected with Romanian identity formation, from the end of the 18th century onwards.[527] Political, cultural and historiographic debates regarding Romanian national identity have roughly taken place along two dividing lines. Katherine Verdery analyzed the conflicts between the camp of the "autochtonists" (called "protochronists") and the "Westernizers" during the Communist regime.[528] Iordachi and Trencsényi introduced a degree of relativization with respect to this divide, showing that after 1989 the dichotomy between Europeanizers and autochthonists, though essentially valid, has actually made place for a "multitude of ideological combinations", of a more heterogeneous nature.[529]

Such conflicts and ideological combinations placed history at the intersection of various interests, being constantly used and abused for the legitimisation of cultural and/or political claims altogether. Its fate under the Communist regime is perhaps one of the best exemplifications of the attempt to ideologically and politically appropriate and mould historical writing. Șerban Papacostea reviewed the state of history under the Romanian Communist regime, emphasizing its univocal ideologization and its close links with politics, whilst Dennis Deletant showed how during Communist rule the writing of history by specific Romanian historians actually turned into militant history.[530] Consequently, post-1989 Romanian historiography

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[527] Frederick Kellogg, *A History of Romanian Historical Writing* (Bakersfield: Charles Schlacks, 1990); Keith Hitchins, "Historiography of the Countries of Eastern Europe: Romania," *American Historical Review* 97, no. 4 (October 1992): 1064-83.

[528] Katherine Verdery, *National Ideology under Socialism: Identity and Cultural Politics in Ceaușescu's Romania* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991).

[529] Constantin Iordachi and Balázs Trencsényi, "In Search of a Usable Past: The Question of National Identity in Romanian Studies 1990-2000," *East European Politics and Societies* 17, no. 3 (August 2003): 415-53.

[530] Șerban Papacostea, "Captive Clio: Romanian Historiography under Communist Rule," *European History Quarterly* 26, no. 2 (April 1996): 181-208; Dennis Deletant, "Rewriting the

was compelled to communicate over time with a complex tradition of historical studies, informed by political influences, ideologies and identity claims. Considering also that historical discourse and representations of the self are strongly interlinked, the Romanian case being no exception, it is easily inferable that representations of otherness in Romanian historiography can and should also be investigated, and that subsequent relevant conclusions can be drawn.

The present chapter is the last empirical chapter of this dissertation. It looks at what is considered to be a more academic field of knowledge, searching for the presence and absence of "Germans", i.e. "Saxons" and "Swabians", in post-1989 works on Romanian history. It departs from the premise that "history" is a part of social memory, as explicated in the second chapter of this dissertation. I approach historical discourses related to the Germans in Romania as embedded in the ideological fiction called "collective memory", extremely relevant for understanding the shaping and framing of contemporary power relationships.

The main body of analysis is divided into two parts: the first three sections thereof are dedicated to Transylvanian Saxons and Banat Swabians before 1918 and are structured around specific tropes, whereas the subsequent two sections look into the historiography dealing directly or indirectly with "Germans in Romania" as such, that is with post-1918 history. In the final section, I come up with some conclusive considerations on Germans and Romanian historiography after 1989.

I fundamentally argue that aspects of the history of the German presence in Transylvania and Banat are both implicitly and explicitly instrumentalized in Romanian historiography in order to enhance specific Romanian claims. By "Romanian claims" I mean first and foremost claims substantially supporting the corpus of ideas according to which ethnic Romanians are the "state-bearing nation" of Romania, i.e. a paramountly ethnicised understanding of Romania's "national character".

The issue of the Saxon colonization in Transylvania is an illustration of such an instrumentalization. The fact that Transylvanian Saxons arrived in Transylvania in the 12$^{th}$ century, at the behest of the Hungarian Crown, is

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Past: Trends in Contemporary Romanian Historiography," in "National Identity in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union," ed. Wendy Bracewell, special issue, *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 14, no. 1 (January 1991): 64-86.

nowadays something of a widely acknowledged truth for historians. However, the acknowledgment of a Middle Ages Saxon arrival in Transylvania has been constantly apt to raise a number of much more sensitive questions related to Romanian-Hungarian relationships and to Romanian-Hungarian conflicts over Transylvania.

The question of anteriority-related historical rights over Transylvania has been addressed by a multitude of both Romanian and Hungarian studies on the topic and is one of the key issues of Romanian-Hungarian contention. Fundamentally, researchers speak of two main theories dealing with the issue, at first glance both ethnically conditioned. The main argument of the Romanianophile "continuity theory" is that following the Roman conquest of the province of Dacia, a Dacian-Roman population was slowly formed, the ancestors of today's Romanians. Consequently, when the ancestors of contemporary Hungarians migrated to Transylvania in the 10th century, the "continuity theory" argues, they found there an autochthonous population, the Romanians, whom they fought against in order to conquer the region. By contrast, Hungarian and Hungarophile historiography has argued mainly that upon their arrival in the region, Hungarians found a deserted land and only later have Wallachian (Romanian) shepherds migrated to the region, from the Southern part of the Danube. From past centuries to present times, the issue has been the crux of heated historiographic and political debates. These debates have been constantly instrumentalized in order to assert putative historical rights of the Romanian or the Hungarian state over the region. Until 1918, Transylvania was part of Hungary; afterwards it became incorporated to Romania. However, an ideology stating that the state and the territory where the ethnic nation lives have to match made the conflict over Transylvania harsher, since both ethnic Romanians and Hungarians lived and still live there.

At this point, it is worth referring to an observation made by Sorin Mitu, namely that no Romanian historian has ever backed up the "Hungarian" theory, whilst no Hungarian historian has ever argued in favour of the Romanian one.[531] I am not in the position to argue whether Mitu's assertion is completely accurate or not, yet it is definitely telling of the extremely high symbolic relevance of the issue for both Romanian and

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[531] Sorin Mitu, *Transilvania mea: istorii, mentalități, identități* (Iași: Polirom, 2006), 112.

Hungarian national identification discourses. In the early 2000s, Marius Turda noticed on the one hand "the vicious orchestration of Transylvania in the public sphere" and on the other hand, the existence of identity conflicts made visible precisely by recurring to an alleged "Transylvanian question".[532] The place of the Germans in Romanian history in general and representations and interpretations of Saxon colonization of Transylvania in particular can be best comprehended if considering the notable relevance of the "Transylvanian question" in Romanian historiography and for Romanian identification discourses and the orchestration and the identity conflicts Turda referred to.

On a general level, the arrival of Saxons in Transylvania is strictly linked to the imposition of the dominion of the Hungarian Crown over the region and henceforth it has been constantly represented within Romanian historiography as part of the broader process of Hungarian "conquest" of Transylvania. Yet this historical process brings forth a wider interpretative framework dealing with the aforementioned debates.

In volume three of the lengthy treatise *Istoria românilor* (History of the Romanians), published under the aegis of the Romanian Academy, the colonization of the Saxons is presented, as in the great majority of cases, together with the settlement of the Szekler population in Transylvania.[533] Both groups came roughly at the same time to the region and their settlement was one of the modalities through which the Hungarian Crown consolidated its possession of Transylvania. The author of the text in *Istoria românilor*, probably Thomas Nägler, perceived the process as part of the wider German migration towards East, on the basis of "several causes generated by the structure of German society".[534] He underlined one of the "special features of the colonization of Saxons in Transylvania", namely that they were settled by the Hungarian Crown in a recently or about to be conquered territory,

[532] Marius Turda, "Transylvania Revisited: Public Discourse and Historical Representation in Contemporary Romania," in *Nation-Building and Contested Identities: Romanian and Hungarian Case Studies*, ed. Balázs Trencsényi et al. (Budapest: Regio Books; Iași: Polirom, 2001), 197-206.
[533] István Ferenczi and Thomas Nägler, "Așezarea secuilor și colonizarea sașilor. Cavalerii teutoni în Țara Bârsei," in *Istoria Românilor. Vol. III: Geneze românești*, ed. Ștefan Pascu and Răzvan Theodorescu (Bucharest: Ed. Enciclopedică, 2001), 412-27.
[534] Ferenczi and Nägler, "Așezarea secuilor și colonizarea sașilor," 418. Some of the volumes of *Istoria românilor* have a peculiar way of noting the authors, making it difficult to properly reference the work. The fifteen pages dedicated to the Szekler and Saxon colonization of Transylvania in volume three have two authors, István Ferenczi and Thomas Nägler, yet taking into account their areas of expertise, it is easily inferable that the former wrote the part about Szekler colonization, and the latter one about Saxon colonization. Nägler is a Transylvanian Saxon historian teaching at the University of Sibiu and the first president of the German Democratic Forum after 1989.

"inhabited in majority by Romanians".[535] Thus, Romanian anteriority in the region is asserted, although the relevance of this assertion is only tangential to the issue under discussion. The keyword is nonetheless "majority" - thereby the text answers the questions always lurking in the background whenever Transylvanian or Romanian history are discussed.

Further on, the text examined the various theories regarding the geographic origin of the Saxons and the various stages of their settlement in Transylvania. Yet another key fact was not forgotten, namely that through the Golden Charter bestowed to Saxons by King Andrew II of Hungary, they were granted the right to use "the forest of the Romanians and of the Pechenegs", another argumentative prop emphasizing the Romanian anteriority in the region. The potentially more dubious (in view of Romanian claims) references in some of the medieval diplomas granted to Saxons, according to which the territory of Sibiu was a *terra deserta* (deserted land) are also addressed as to chase away their potential use in a Hungarophile argumentation: "...the authorities wanted to guarantee the colonists that the place was free and without any other possession rights sanctioned by the officialdom, because the right of possession of the Romanians did not have to be confirmed, as they were having it of always, as an autochthonous population."[536]

Comparatively, one can look at the account of Saxon colonization authored by Tudor Sălăgean, in a compendium of Romanian history edited by Ioan-Aurel Pop and Ioan Bolovan, under the aegis of the Centre for Transylvanian Studies, at the time a structure within the Romanian Cultural Institute, now under the authority of the Romanian Academy.[537] Sălăgean referred extensively to the documentary pieces of information offering clues about Saxon colonization of Transylvania in the 12th century and its concrete development. As regards the presumed Romanian presence in the region, he used a type of argumentation similar with Nägler's, summarized above. More precisely, he convolutedly argued that the granting of deserted lands to the colonists did not interfer with Romanian rights over land, as these, on the

[535] Ibid., 419.
[536] Ibid., 423.
[537] Tudor Sălăgean, "Romanian Society in the Early Middle Ages (9th-14th century)," in *History of Romania. Compendium*, ed. Ioan-Aurel Pop and Ioan Bolovan, transl. Viorica Baciu et al., transl. revised by Bogdan Aldea and Richard Proctor (Cluj-Napoca: Romanian Cultural Institute, Center for Transylvanian Studies, 2006), 133-207.

basis of the Romanian indigenate in Transylvania, could not refer to lands subject of possession by other authorities.[538]

A partially different approach is the one provided by Ioan-Aurel Pop, currently rector of the Babeș-Bolyai University in Cluj-Napoca, former director of the Romanian Cultural Centre in New York (1994-1995) and of the Romanian Cultural Institute in Venice (2003-2007). In a chapter on Transylvania between the 12th century and 1541 (the year of the Ottoman conquest of Hungary), from yet another lengthy treatise, *Istoria României. Transilvania* (History of Romania. Transylvania), Pop also addressed the issue of Saxon settlement in the region.[539] Unsurprisingly, he remarked the fact that Saxons (and Szekler) arrived on territories inhabited by Romanians, emphasizing thus that their being invited to Transylvania also had a political role. The "forest of Romanians and Pechenegs" was also referred to, and so are yet other proofs of Romanian presence in the region, amongst them a document attesting that the Cistercian monastery of Cârța received a land exempted from Romanians.[540] Pop's understanding of Saxon colonization has twofold implications, ensuing one from the other: on the one hand, political and on the other hand demographic. The political aspects of the issue are linked to the fact that Saxons colonized the region in order to contribute to the consolidation of Hungarian possession, which presumably implies, from a demographic point of view, that Hungarians were not numerous enough as to be able to defend by themselves the newly conquered region.

The historiographic representation of Saxon colonization in Transylvania turns into a means of underlining Romanian anteriority and Romanian demographic superiority in the region. We can henceforth speak about a scholarly argumentative instrumentalization of Transylvanian Saxons, whose internal logics is that of contributing to the scientific settlement of the centuries-old Romanian-Hungarian debates on anteriority and demographic superiority in the region.

Fundamentally, German colonization in Banat, which took place in the 18th century, under several Habsburg emperors (Charles VI, Maria Theresa, Josef II), does not elicit the same type of interest as German colonization in

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[538] Ibid., 164.
[539] Ioan Aurel Pop, "Voievodatul Transilvaniei și părțile vestice în sec. XII-1541," in *Istoria României. Transilvania*, ed. Anton Drăgoescu (Cluj-Napoca: Ed. George Barițiu, 1997), 1:451-543.
[540] Ibid., 455-58.

Transylvania did, presumably because Banat is not and has never been in the centre of any territorial or identity conflict whatsoever. The political and cultural stake of the Romanian-Hungarian conflict has always been Transylvania proper, whilst the Romanian-Serb conflict over Banat, although a political and military reality of the immediate aftermath of the First World War, has never had the paramount importance of the former and is now gone into oblivion. Nonetheless, a reading key similar to the one used in the case of Transylvanian Saxon colonization, is valid for understanding the Romanian interpretation of the colonization of Banat Swabians.

In *Istoria românilor*, published under the aegis of the Romanian Academy, the colonizations of Banat are treated in a chapter authored by Aurel Răduțiu and Nicolae Edroiu, who emphasize that the 80.000 colonists arriving to the region between 1718 and 1790, most of them German, "could not diminish too much the autochthonous Romanian element, which remains preponderant".[541] Just like in the case of the Transylvanian Saxon colonization, one can notice the importance assigned to asserting both the Romanian anteriority and the demographic preeminence of Romanians in the region, even if in the case of Banat this is apparently done in a more moderate way. Reading more carefully the text signed by Răduțiu and Edroiu, one can find a paradoxical statement, which highlights the ambiguities of the way in which Romanian historiography addresses the issue. Before asserting that the colonizations "could not diminish too much the autochthonous Romanian element", Răduțiu and Edroiu argued that the colonizations "visibly modified the ethnic structure of the population".[542] How could one and the same phenomenon modify "visibly" the ethnic structure of Banat, yet without diminishing "too much" the percentage of Romanians is an issue eschewing both mathematical and lexical-semantic logics.

A small, yet important difference is found in a piece authored by Rudolf Gräf and Thomas Nägler, who argued that alongside the Swabian colonization of Banat, the central authorities in Vienna also allowed the settlement of Orthodox Romanians from Oltenia and of Orthodox Serbs from

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[541] Aurel Răduțiu and Nicolae Edroiu, "Populație și societate în Transilvania și Banat," in *Istoria românilor. Vol. VI: Românii între Europa clasică și Europa luminilor (1711-1821)*, ed. Paul Cernovodeanu and Nicolae Edroiu (Bucharest: Ed. Enciclopedică, 2002), 82.

[542] Ibid. A rather similar phrasing is found in Florin Tănăsescu, *Istorie socială*, 6th revised and completed edition (Bucharest: Ed. Fundației România de Mâine, 2009), 120.

the South of the Danube in the region,[543] a much more sensible argument in favour of Romanian demographic superiority despite the German colonization of Banat. At the same time, it is telling of current identity discourses promoted by local elites in Banat, which regard the transition from the Ottoman to the Habsburg Empire as point zero of the history of Banat, making practically *tabula rasa* out of the period of Ottoman occupation. The German-less past of Banat is not a past to remember. In the *History of Romania* edited by Pop and Bolovan, the chapter on Romanian principalities in the 18th century is written by Ionuț Costea, who also referred to the "more than 80.000 colonists" brought into the region, most of them German, but also of other ethnic origins. Costea was more straightforward in saying that the colonists did indeed modify "the ethnic structure of the population", nonetheless without offering more details in this respect.[544]

Another concrete line of argumentation which makes use of Transylvanian Saxons in order to substantiate strong Romanian identity claims is connected with the already mentioned debate between Romanian and Hungarian historiography over who has first set foot in Transylvania. Between the 16th and the 18th centuries, a series of Transylvanian Saxon historians stated the autochthonous character of the Romanian population in Transylvania.[545] Such statements become a perfect asset on the one hand in the discursive shaping of a historical Romanian-German compatibility and on the other hand in the creation of a Romanian-friendly argumentative scaffolding.

Even an individual of a dubious reputation such as Josif Constantin Drăgan, a billionaire historian with a Fascist past, referred to the Saxon historians who tried to "elucidate the origin of the inhabitants of Transylvania".[546] Although acknowledging the attempts of some Saxon historians to establish a kinship between Dacians and Saxons, Drăgan suggested that Saxon historians contributed to the consolidation of the ideas regarding Romanian anteriority in Transylvania. Linguist Ion Coja, better known as a Holocaust denier, of a similar ideological stock as Drăgan, also

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[543] Rudolf Gräf and Thomas Nägler, "Biserică și stat la sași și șvabi," in *Istoria Transilvaniei. Vol. III (de la 1711 până la 1918)*, ed. Ioan-Aurel Pop, Thomas Nägler and Magyari András (Cluj-Napoca: Centrul de Studii Transilvane, 2008), 109.

[544] Ionuț Costea, "The Romanian Principalities in the 18th Century," in Pop and Bolovan, *History of Romania*, 403.

[545] Ligia Bârzu and Stelian Brezeanu, *Originea și continuitatea românilor. Arheologie și tradiție istorică* (Bucharest: Ed. Enciclopedică, 1991), 21-2.

[546] Josif Constantin Drăgan, *Istoria românilor* (Bucharest: Ed. Europa Nova, 1993), 131.

referred to the "Saxon argument" in his reasoning concerning Romanian anteriority in Transylvania. His direct reference is to the work of historian Adolf Armbruster, who dedicated an entire doctoral dissertation in the 1970s to the Latin origin of the Romanian people.[547] Coja spoke of Armbruster as representative of an "illustrious historical school: the school of Saxon historians from Transylvania", characterized through a tradition of "objectivity and 'neutrality'".[548]

However, praising words coming from an individual such as Coja should not to be taken without a question mark. In effect, Coja suggested that Transylvanian Saxon historiography, presumably neutral and objective through its being Saxon, that is un-Romanian and un-Hungarian at the same time, confirms the theories of Romanian anteriority in Transylvania. For him, the argumentation of Armbruster is valid not necessarily through its logical reasoning and through its use of appropriate sources, but also by means of its belonging to the Saxon school of history, by default neutral and objective. Henceforth, Saxons fare well in Coja's view: they are objective and neutral, which actually means that they stand on the side of the Romanians in the Romanian-Hungarian debate. They thus become voices of authority and are thereby transformed in the "good neighbours".

Argumentative references to Germans in Transylvania can be found in other nationalistic accounts of Transylvanian history, such as a book by a certain Ion Dulamă-Peri, published by the printing house of the Romanian Ministry for Internal Affairs (!). Referring to the issue of ethnic affiliation in the 19th century and to the debates regarding the results of the censuses carried by Hungarian authorities, Dulamă-Peri noted: "Besides the Romanian intellectuals, whose co-nationals were directly involved, the elements of German nationality took position against the visible injustices, and their statements weigh visibly more than the mystifications of the Hungarians in the balance of truth".[549]

Nonetheless, in a book dedicated to Romanian-Saxon relationships until 1848, Thomas Nägler did not shy from speaking about Saxon historians who took the "Hungarian side" in the autochthonism vs. immigrationism

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[547] Adolf Armbruster, *Romanitatea românilor. Istoria unei idei* (Bucharest: Ed. Academiei Republicii Socialiste România, 1972).

[548] Ion Coja, *Transilvania. Invincibile Argumentum* (Bucharest: Ed. Athenaeum, 1990), 50.

[549] Ion Dulamă-Peri, *Ardealul. Pământ, cuvânt și suflet românesc* (Bucharest: Ed. Ministerului de Interne, 1995), 68.

debate. Yet Nägler, before arguing that the typical 19th century Hungarophile arguments were completely unfounded, felt the need to add: "In this context, we remark that not all Saxon historiographers from the aforementioned century [the 18th century] allied to the idea of the discontinuity or of the Romanian immigration from the South of the Danube. Amongst the Saxon adepts of Romanian continuity there was Johann Seivert of Sibiu…".[550]

Nägler is openly much more moderate in his appreciation of the Saxon school of historiography, maybe also because of his belonging to it: speaking too highly of it would have looked like a blatant example of self-praise.[551] His emphasis, actually placed upon the fact that there were Saxon historiographers who were adepts of the theory of Romanian continuity, can be seen as a sort of a *captatio benevolentiae*, meant to contribute to the consolidation of a history which underlines that Saxons were on the good side, namely the Romanian one.

The same type of representation of Saxons as being voices of authority on the "Romanian" side is found in the common reference to the position of Stephan Ludwig Roth in the 1840s. Roth was a priest, a pedagogue and eventually a participant in the 1848 Revolution. History textbooks and accounts of Romanian history rarely forget referring to his extremely Romania-friendly positions, often quoting from his booklet *Der Sprachkampf in Siebenbürgen* (The Linguistic Battle in Transylvania) a fragment in which he states that the *de facto* official language in Transylvania is Romanian, suggesting that it should also become the *de jure* official idiom.[552]

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[550] Thomas Nägler, *Românii și sașii până la 1848 (Relații economice, sociale și politice)* (Sibiu: Thausib, 1997), 10.

[551] However, another Saxon historian, the already mentioned Adolf Armbruster, argued that in general Saxon historians showed a great interest for their Romanian neighbours and acknowledged the Daco-Roman origin of Romanians. See Adolf Armbruster, "Die Romanität der Rumänen im Spiegel der sächsischen Geschichtsschreibung (16.-18. Jh.)," in *Auf den Spuren der eigenen Identität* (Bucharest: Ed. Enciclopedică, 1991), 94-130.

[552] Corneliu Albu, *Lumina din trecut. Aspecte din lupta Transilvaniei pentru independență și unitate națională* (Bucharest: Ed. Științifică, 1992), 77-80; Alexandru Gheorghe, *Din epopeea românilor. Dialog istoric* (Craiova: Ed. Ramuri, 2003), 15-6; Florin Constantiniu, *O istorie sinceră a poporului român* (Bucharest: Ed. Univers Enciclopedic, 1997), 224; Mircea Rebreanu, *Opțiunile istorice ale românilor* (Iași: Agora, 1996), 74; Ovidiu Popescu, *Ardealul* (Deva: Călăuza, 2003), 70.

## 7.2. Germans - Conveyors of Modernization, Occidentalization, Progress

Alongside their being used in order to enhance "Romanian" arguments in Romanian-Hungarian debates, accounts on Transylvanian Saxon and Banat Swabian colonization, are also placed in a "modernizing" framework. Practically, there are two main elements associated with Saxon settlement in Transylvania: on the one hand, as already discussed, the fact that Saxons did not colonize a deserted land, but one already inhabited by autochthonous Romanians, and on the other hand the interpretation of their presence in the region as one leading to progress. Consequently, German settlement and the subsequent German presence in the Western and Central regions of contemporary Romania are inscribed in a teleological narrative, their historical role and consequence being seen as leading to the cultural and even economic coupling of the said regions and, through them, of "Romania" proper to the "Western" world.

Let's look for example at the already quoted text, by Thomas Nägler, from the Romanian Academy treatise on the history of the Romanians. The question of Romanian anteriority sorted out, the Saxon colonization is then described as an "element of progress, contributing to the transition of the economy from its early to its developed period".[553] In his analysis of Saxon colonization of Transylvania, Viorel Sălăgean stated that the arrival of Saxons in Transylvania ended the period of "direct penetration" of Western civilization in Transylvania; he then argued for its progressist character, contributing both militarily and economically to the consolidation and further development of the province.

Several other accounts of Saxon colonization in Transylvania equate it straightforwardly with Occidentalization. For example, Ioan-Marian Țiplic integrated the colonization of Transylvania into a process he termed as "the Occidentalization of Transylvanian society between the 12th and the 13th centuries",[554] whilst Șerban Papacostea referred to Saxons as "main exponents of Occidental influence in Transylvania", who "founded prosperous villages and had an extremely significant contribution to the development of trade,

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[553] Ferenczi and Nägler, "Așezarea secuilor și colonizarea sașilor", 425.
[554] Ioan Marian Țiplic, *Contribuții la istoria spațiului românesc în perioada migrațiilor și Evul Mediu timpuriu* (Iași: Institutul European, 2005), 162-64.

crafts and mining".[555] Neagu Djuvara also placed Saxon colonization in a teleological framework of progress, on both a rural and urban level: "On the one hand, in the countryside, this German population was meant to introduce a more advanced agriculture, whilst on the other hand, it was meant to found towns such as the ones in Germany, with their fortifications, all sorts of crafts, and with a good trade practice".[556]

Surprisingly for a historian of Djuvara's experience and kudos, he fell into the trap of considering that a great part of Saxons came from nowadays Saxony.[557] However, it has to be added, he is not the only one to come up with considerations of the sort.[558] Even in a history textbook for the fourth grade, one can also read that the name "Saxons" comes from "Saxony", where they allegedly came from.[559] Interestingly, the Romanian word for Saxon is "sas", "sași" in plural, coming from the Hungarian *szasz*, which for the reader unaccustomed to historical etymologies does not instantly send to "Saxony" (in Romanian, "Saxonia"), as the English "Saxon" or the German "Sachse" do. Nonetheless, this simplistic etymological connecting thread is false, "Saxon" being rather the denomination of a judicial status than a geographical reference.[560] At the same time, perceiving Saxons as a population "meant" to bring to the region more advanced technical elements reinforces a teleological understanding of their arrival in the region, which plays on the idea of an advanced Western Europe helping the Eastern part of the continent on its tenuous path towards modernization and development.

Ioan-Aurel Pop did not place Saxon colonization into a pure framework of "progress", considering that Saxons (and Szekler), "together with the Romanians, worked the land, raised animals, bred animals, took care of crafts, mining and trade".[561] He also mentioned the influence of the German-speaking colonists upon the urbanization of Transylvania and of the Hungarian kingdom in general, yet he did not overtly link that to a narrative

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[555] Șerban Papacostea, "Geneza statelor românești (secolele XI-XIV)," in *Istoria României*, revised and completed edition, ed. Mihai Bărbulescu et al. (Bucharest: Corint, 2005), 124.

[556] Neagu Djuvara, *O scurtă istorie a românilor povestită celor tineri*, 5th, revised edition (Bucharest: Humanitas, 2005), 42.

[557] Ibid.

[558] See for example Pascu Vasile, *Istoria antică și medievală a românilor* (Bucharest: Ed. Clio Nova, 1998), 128.

[559] Liviu Burlec, Liviu Lazăr and Bogdan Teodorescu, *Istoria românilor. Manual pentru clasa a IV-a* (Bucharest: Ed. All Educațional, 1998), 33.

[560] Konrad Gündisch, with the collaboration of Mathias Beer, *Siebenbürgen und die Siebenbürger Sachsen* (Munich: Langen Müller, 1998), 30.

[561] Pop, "Voievodatul Transilvaniei," 458.

of progress.[562] Nonetheless, the implications of "urbanization" are transparent. Răduțiu and Edroiu's account on the colonization of Swabians in Banat functions in a similar way: once Romanian anteriority and demographic superiority established, the authors also felt free to admiringly refer to the civilizational advancements brought by "colonists of Germanic origin", namely "the organization of the peasant household, the level of culture and the mentalities", "the spirit of order".[563] The same text was published in Drăgoescu's history, as part of a larger chapter.[564]

The examples I brought forth can be used in order to sum up the main elements of the representations of Saxon colonization in Transylvania. The process is understood as one bringing "progress", a sign of "Occidentalization", by dint of its economic consequences and also through the introduction of a more advanced agriculture and of a specific type of urban civilization in the region. In the same context, one can also refer to a book signed by a certain Mircea Rebreanu, *Opțiunile istorice ale românilor* (The Historical Options of the Romanians), which at times turns into a true eulogy of the Transylvanian Saxon community. The author lays down a plethora of elements which are in effect part of the extremely positive representation of Germans in Romania: practitioners of an advanced agriculture, reputed vine growers, master craftspeople, excellent traders, honest and fair, all in all a "positive factor" for the Romanian population, "both economically and as regards the social discipline and organization". At the same time, the author argued that the Germans in Transylvania have played a "stabilizing" political role in the Romanian-Hungarian conflicts, even if this did not put a halt to Hungarian acts of exploitation.[565]

More moderately, the image of the Saxon conveyor of civilization is also visible in some of the post-1989 history textbooks, such as for example the one authored by Lazăr and Lupu, who also referred to the "economic and cultural Occidental influence" disseminated by Saxons,[566] or the one authored

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[562] Ibid., 513.
[563] Răduțiu and Edroiu, "Populație și societate," 94.
[564] Avram Andea, Aurel Răduțiu and Nicolae Edroiu, "Transilvania sub stăpânire habsburgică," in Drăgoescu, *Istoria României. Transilvania*, 1:647-744.
[565] Rebreanu, *Opțiunile istorice*, 29-32.
[566] Liviu Lazăr and Viorel Lupu, *Istoria românilor. Manual pentru clasa a VIII-a* (Bucharest: Ed. Teora, 1999), 52-3.

by Brezeanu et al., establishing a direct correlation between Saxon colonization and urban life of a Western type in Transylvania.[567]

In a book first published in Romanian language and only afterwards in German, Thomas Nägler also spoke about Saxon contribution to urban development in both Transylvania and the extra-Carpathian principalities.[568] However, Nägler underlined that the Transylvanian Saxon towns "are not the result of a transposition or of a direct filiation from the models of the territory of origin", but rather evolved, on both an economic and an urbanistic level, in a tight relationship with local realities.[569] By emphasizing what actually looks like a common sense reality, Nägler also made a statement regarding Transylvanian Saxon identity: not a simple oasis of German (Western) culture in the East, as mid 19th to mid 20th century Saxon identification discourses would have probably asserted, but rather a *mélange* of the cultures from the "territory of origin", i.e. German, and its engraftment onto local realities. There is, here, a statement which in the background aims to emphasize the existence of a subtle distinction between Saxons and Germans, understandable since it is made by one of the main post-1989 advocates of Saxon permanence in Transylvania. Aimed at a Romanian readership, Nägler's book focuses indeed on Saxon-Romanian cooperation, thus producing yet another element supporting the symbolic statement, dear to Romanians, according to which Transylvanian Saxons are "our Germans".[570]

Following the typical pages dedicated to Saxon colonization, histories of Romanians, of Romania or, more specifically, of Transylvania, tend to offer only marginal attention to issues and topics pertaining to the life of the Saxon community. Emphasizing mostly the institutional-political development of Transylvania, what the French would call *histoire événementielle*, Romanian historiography generally does not seem to consider the internal life, i.e. the social and the cultural history of the Saxon "nation" of real scholarly interest. Setting aside the typical enumerations of Saxon cultural figures in the purely descriptive sections usually dedicated to "cultural life", the social and cultural

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[567] Stelian Brezeanu et al., *Istoria românilor. Manual pentru clasa a XII-a*, 2nd revised edition (Bucharest: RAO Educaţional, 2000), 43-7, 72. The positive portrayal of Saxons in Romanian history textbooks has already been noticed. See Anamaria Dutceac Segesten, "Myth, Identity and Conflict: A Comparative Analysis of Romanian and Serbian Textbooks," (PhD diss., University of Maryland, 2009), 354.

[568] Nägler, *Românii şi saşii*.

[569] Ibid., 77.

[570] Also Mircea Rebreanu, *Opţiunile istorice*, 29-32.

history of Saxons in particular or of Transylvanians in general is rather absent from syntheses of Romanian history.

Nonetheless, it is acknowledged that Lutheranism, an almost ethnic (Saxon) religion in Transylvania, had a series of cultural influences upon the Romanian population, mainly as regards the development and dissemination of printing, one of the key tenets of modernity.[571] As Ion Bulei, former director of the Romanian Cultural Institute in Venice (1997-2003), noted in his *Short History of the Romanians*, the Saxons of Sibiu and Brașov had the very valuable initiative of translating the holy books into Romanian, aiming thus to spread Lutheranism.[572] The intellectual and economic relationships between Romanians in general and Coresi, an individual who converted to Lutheranism, in particular, on the one hand and Transylvanian Saxons on the other hand are generally recognized. To give just some examples: Djuvara referred to the relationships between Coresi, the Brașov-based editor of the first Romanian books and the Transylvanian Saxon printing houses.[573] Papacostea spoke about the prolific cultural Romanian-Saxon confluences following Reformation, whilst Pop noticed that Johannes Honterus, the key figure in the dissemination of Lutheranism in Transylvania, also published a map of "Dacia", identified with the three principalities that have later emerged to create the Romanian state (Wallachia, Moldova, and Transylvania).[574] Other authors, with an obscure, if any, academic pedigree, also speak about the influence of Lutheranism upon Romanian cultural advancement.[575] Thus, Saxons emerge to be once again conveyors of what is perceived to be one of the main features of Western civilization, i.e. the printed word, whilst continuing to be argumentative props in favour of the Daco-Roman continuity theory.

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[571] Krista Zach, "Religiöse Toleranz und Stereotypenbildung in einer multikulturellen Region. Volkskirchen in Siebenbürgen," in *Das Bild des Anderen in Siebenbürgen. Stereotype in einer multiethnischen Region*, ed. Konrad Gündisch, Wolfgang Höpken and Michael Markel (Cologne: Böhlau Verlag, 1998), 109-54.
[572] Ion Bulei, *A Short History of Romania*, 2nd edition, transl. Liviu Radu, transl. supervised by David Hill (Bucharest: Meronia Publishers, 1998), 57.
[573] Djuvara, *O scurtă istorie*, 120-21.
[574] Papacostea, "Geneza statelor românești," 183-84; Pop, "Voievodatul Transilvaniei," 511.
[575] For example Alexandru Ioachimescu, *"Agenda istorică" a poporului român și a religiilor*, 2nd edition (Bucharest: Publistar, 1998), 164.

### 7.3. Romanians and Germans as Victims of Hungarians or Romanians as Victims of Hungarians and Germans?

Presenting Romanian history in pre-1918 Transylvania as a history of suffering and victimhood is a marker of Romanian historiography, as it contributes to the justification of the 1918 incorporation of Transylvania into Romania and to the building of a teleology therewith connected. The key moment legally sanctioning the inferior status of the Romanian population under Hungarian domination is the 1438 *Unio Trium Nationum* (Union of the Three Nations), which practically implied the transformation of Transylvania into a principality in which the deciding groups were the corporative "nations" of Hungarian nobles, Saxons and Szeklers. The particular historical event is documented and explained at large in Romanian historiography, as it constitutes one of the main arguments regarding discrimination and exclusion of Romanians.

Moreover, the *de facto* discrimination against ethnic Romanians was also accompanied by a religious discrimination. Until the 16th century, the only possibility of social ascension for ethnic Romanians was to convert to Catholicism. In the 16th century, the advent of Protestantism and the subsequent official acknowledgment of four *recepta* (accepted) religions in Transylvania (next to Catholicism, this referred to Lutheranism, Calvinism and Unitarianism) consolidated the status of Orthodoxy as a "tolerated religion". Considering the factual superposition of Orthodox religious denomination and Romanian ethnicity, this strengthened the discrimination against Romanians.

Taking this into account, it should be acknowledged that the Lutheran influence upon Romanians is not always positively perceived. Mainstream Romanian historiography emphasizes the modernizing features of Lutheranism upon Romanian cultural development, yet more alternative accounts, such as for example one offered by Anton Moisin, a Greek Catholic high-school history teacher, in his *Istoria Transilvaniei* (History of Transylvania), bring counter-histories and counter-memories to the surface. Moisin's approach is, in many ways, a *sui generis* example, yet it is worth looking into, especially since it provides a not-so-positive account of Saxon presence in Transylvania. The work is a huge opus written from a strongly Greek-Catholic, nationalistic and xenophobic perspective. Between 1997 and

2000, four volumes were published, seemingly also with the support of very highly ranked officials, such as President Emil Constantinescu and Prime Minister Radu Vasile. Transylvanian history is seen as a continuous plight of Romanians, abused and exploited by "allogeneous minoritarians". Moisin is also a harsh critique of Slavic peoples and even of Orthodoxy, this fact singling out his position in the rather large chorus of nationalist voices in Romanian historiography.

Speaking from a Catholic and almost inquisitorial perspective, Protestantism and Lutheranism are seen as purporters of several evils upon Romanians: "wherever Protestant Reform spread, it led to conflicts, wars, misfortunes and unlawfulness." Further on, one reads: "numerous are the evils that Transylvanian Romanians had to suffer from Lutherans and especially from Calvinists".[576] The Act of Union with the See of Rome, which led to the emergence of Greek Catholicism in Transylvania is seen as a "spiritual salvation" in front of the "Protestant danger".[577] For Moisin, the result of Saxon presence in Transylvania was predominantly negative, especially upon the Romanian population, Reformation playing an important role in the shaping of this negative representation of Saxons.[578] Considerations regarding a Reformist "offensive" against Orthodoxy are found elsewhere as well,[579] yet the virulence of Moisin's critique of religious Reformation is indeed particular and rare, comparable only to some other extremely nationalistic accounts of Romanian history.[580]

The *Unio Trium Nationum* as an anti-Romanian, Hungarian-Saxon-Szekler pact, together with Moisin's bigoted rants on Lutheranism and Saxon-Romanian relationships show that the historical representation of Romanian suffering can also bring forth the image of the Saxon "perpetrator" or at least contributor to anti-Romanian persecutions and henceforth gaining from the discrimination against Romanians. Romanian-Saxon relationships and competition leading to conflicts historically augmented in the 18th and 19th

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[576] Anton Moisin, *Istoria Transilvaniei. Partea a II-a: Apărarea drepturilor românești în Transilvania (I) - sinteză istorică și documentară. Volumul 3: Sfidarea drepturilor românești în Transilvania (Noaptea asupririi) 1300-1700* (Sibiu: Imago, 1999), 5.

[577] Anton Moisin, *Istoria Transilvaniei. Partea I: Fundamentele drepturilor românești în Transilvania - sinteză istorică și documentară. Volumul 2: 271 d.Chr. - 1300 d.Chr.* (Sibiu, 1998), 517-20.

[578] Moisin, *Istoria Transilvaniei. Partea a II-a*, 450.

[579] Berciu-Drăghicescu and Stănculescu, *Temeiurile istorice*, 148.

[580] Augustin Deac, *Istoria adevărului istoric. Moșii și strămoșii poporului român* (Giurgiu: Tentant, 2001), 2:336-7.

centuries, against a background of growing national consciousness of Romanian elites, modernising endeavours of the new Habsburg authorities (since 1683) and also Romanian demographic growth. Romanian historiography studies acknowledge the increasing Romanian-Saxon conflicts and the attacks upon the Saxon "medieval" privileges, yet at the same time a penchant towards finding Romanian-German common points in the fight against Magyarization (especially in the second half of the 19th century, after the 1867 imposition of Austro-Hungarian Dualism) can be detected.

The 18th and the 19th centuries in Transylvania are marked by several essential moments for the further development of the region: firstly, the reformist measures of the Habsburg monarchs in the 18th century, under the influence of Enlightenment political thought, hence aiming towards a centralisation of the authority; secondly, the 1848 Revolution and its short and long term consequences; last, but not least, the 1867 introduction of the Austro-Hungarian Dualism, which practically implied the imposition of Hungarian domination over Transylvania, and the subsequent Magyarization policies promoted by the authorities in Budapest in their attempt to build/numerically enhance the Hungarian nation in the Carpathian Basin.

All these events occupy an important place in Romanian historiography, whilst also being momentous in the shaping of Romanian-Saxon political relationships. On the one hand, following the demographic increase of the Romanian population which had become a reality already in the 18th century, several Saxon attempts to maintain the *status quo* are registered, in the obvious detriment of the numerically majoritarian Romanian population. On the other hand, during the 1848 Revolution, but especially after 1867, Saxons start to be represented as sharing, at least in part, the fate of the Romanians, more precisely that of victims of the ongoing Magyarization pressures coming from the Budapest authorities.

In the already mentioned treatise published under the aegis of the Romanian Academy, Avram Andea remarked for example that the 1781 Josephinian Tolerance Edict was received with "resistance and inveterate opposition" by the Saxon University.[581] Further on, Ladislau Gyémánt, in his analysis of Transylvanian political structures in the first half of the 19th

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[581] Avram Andea, "Instituțiile centrale ale Principatului Transilvaniei," in Cernovodeanu and Edroiu, *Istoria românilor. Vol. VI*, 399.

century, remarked both the Saxon-Romanian conflicts over rights in the *Königsboden*, but also the developing conflicts between Saxon politicians and representatives of the other historical "nations" in Transylvania (Hungarians and Szekler) over the perspectives of Magyarization in Transylvania.[582] Gyémánt also published a similar text in *Istoria Transilvaniei*, coordinated by Anton Drăgoescu.[583] Liviu Maior, former Minister of Education (1992-1996), MP (1996-2000) and Romanian ambassador in Canada (2003-2005) also noticed the Romanian-Saxon agreement regarding the opposition to Magyarization, and the Saxon opposition to the Romanian claims regarding the rights to be bestowed to them in the *Königsboden*.[584] A slightly different emphasis is found in the sections dedicated to Transylvanian Saxons and Banat Swabians and signed jointly or separately by Rudolf Gräf and Thomas Nägler in the third volume of the other synthetic work titled *Istoria Transilvaniei*, edited by Pop and Nägler. The two historians focus on the Saxon conflicts with the central authorities rather than on Romanian-Saxon disputes and/or attempts to cooperate. Nonetheless, the stress laid on the latter in some other works dealing with this period in Transylvanian history, as the ones referred to above, can be best comprehended if considering the general understanding of Romanian history in Transylvania as one of victimization and discrimination, phenomena legitimizing the eventual unification of 1918.

From Gelu Neamțu we find out about the Romanian-Saxon cooperation during the Revolution of 1848, to which he opposes the Hungarian fierceful nationalistic approach.[585] Liviu Maior offered a similar account of the 1848 positioning of the various ethnic groups in Transylvania, although he also referred to Romanian revolutionary George Barițiu's fear of the effect of Hungarian and Saxon guards upon the Romanian population.[586]

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[582] Ladislau Gyémánt, "Transilvania," in *Istoria românilor. Vol. VII, Tom I: Constituirea României moderne (1821-1878)*, ed. Dan Berindei (Bucharest: Ed. Enciclopedică, 2003), 167-99.

[583] Ladislau Gyémánt, "De la Reformism la Revoluția din 1848," in Drăgoescu, *Istoria României. Transilvania*, 1:745-804.

[584] Liviu Maior, "Pregătirea și desfășurarea primei adunări de la Blaj," in Berindei, *Istoria românilor. Vol. VII, Tom I*, 262-66.

[585] Gelu Neamțu, "Revoluția democratică de la 1848-1849 din Transilvania," in Drăgoescu, *Istoria României. Transilvania*, 1:805-986.

[586] Liviu Maior, "1848. Opțiuni programatice românești în Transilvania," in *Istoria României. Pagini transilvane*, ed. Dan Berindei (Cluj-Napoca: Fundația Culturală Română, 1994), 188-243.

The bivalent Saxon-Romanian relationship is documented as such by analysts of post-1848 and post-1867 Transylvania.[587] *Istoria Transilvaniei*, coordinated by Drăgoescu, dedicated an entire chapter to Transylvanian Saxon society under Dualism.[588] The text actually includes lengthy considerations about the pre-1867 history of the Transylvanian Saxons: it speaks about their stance during the 1848 Revolution and the subsequent negotiations with the central authorities in Vienna regarding their administrative and legal status as a community. Surprisingly, considering the general nationalistic outlook of Drăgoescu's *Istoria Transilvaniei*, the text is one of the few products of Romanian historiography dealing with the internal political life of the Transylvanian Saxon community. In the broader argumentative logics of the entire publication, the chapter emphasizes yet another aspect of the conflicts between the various nationalities in Transleithania, Saxons included, and the assimilationist Hungarian authorities. The subchapter, titled "Politics, Church and School at Transylvanian Saxons during Dualism (1867-1918)" is part of a much bigger one dedicated to Romanians in Transylvania under Dualism. Saxons are the only ethnic group granted such an attention by the authors of the treatise: we find nothing similar about the Jews in Transylvania or the Armenians or the Roma, let alone about Hungarians or Szekler. Thus, both this type of approach, underlining the conflicts of the Saxon minority with the Hungarian authorities in Budapest and the approach emphasizing the Romanian-Saxon cooperation in view of similar goals actually mark the consolidation of the image of the assimilationist Hungarians, aiming to Magyarize all other nationalities living in Transylvania. They also lay the foundations for the future Saxon embrace of the unification of Greater Romania.

## 7.4.    Germans in an Imagined *Romania Felix*

One of the key moments in Romania's modern history is 1918, the year of the unification of Greater Romania. Following the First World War and the

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[587] Dumitru Suciu and Ioan Bolovan, "Transilvania în timpul regimului neoabsolutist," in Drăgoescu, *Istoria României. Transilvania*, 1:987-1107.

[588] Dumitru Suciu et al., "Politică, biserică și școală la sașii ardeleni în timpul dualismului (1867-1918)," in *Istoria României. Transilvania. Vol. II (1866-1947)*, ed. Anton Drăgoescu (Cluj-Napoca: Ed. George Barițiu, 1999), 244-84.

subsequent Paris Peace Treaties, Romania's territory significantly increased, as it incorporated Transylvania, Banat, Bukovina and Bessarabia. Not only that Romania's surface almost doubled, but the same happened with its population. However, from a country where more than 90% of the population defined themselves as ethnic Romanians, Romania turned into a *de facto* multinational state, where only around 70% of the population were Romanians, the rest being Hungarians, Jews, Germans, Ukrainians, Roma, Bulgarians and members of ethnic groups. Consequently, representations of the event in 1918 and its aftermath are slightly different, also according to the ethnic lens its commentators wear. Romanian historiography tends to frame the interwar period as a period of economic and cultural blossoming, an interpretation partly at odds with the interpretations of many historians belonging to the various minority groups in the country. Understanding Greater Romania as a sort of a *Romania Felix* does not crosscut ethnic affiliations.

As regards the Saxons in Transylvania and their position with respect to the unification, Romanian commentators are usually keen in emphasizing Saxon allegiance to the Union. The decision taken on January 8, 1919, by the Saxon representatives gathered in Mediaș, to recognize and comply with the decisions of the National Assembly in Alba Iulia, constitutes an almost compulsory reference in (larger) chapters regarding the creation of Greater Romania. Usually, the position of Saxons is seen in terms of pragmatism, i.e. acknowledging an ineluctable phenomenon and hence adopting the most reasonable position with respect to it.

Știrban et al. spoke about internal and external events leading to the January decision of the Saxons, but also about their lucid analysis, whilst Pascu, whose understanding of Romanian history is fundamentally a teleological one, the moment of December 1, 1918 being its culmination, reviewed the allegiances to the unification of all German-speaking groups in Greater Romania, part of a "logic and binding process".[589] Drăgan referred to the German minority in Romania as "one of the first to recognise Transylvania's unification with Romania and which expressed its gratitude

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[589] Marcel Știrban et al., "Unirea și desăvârșirea unității statului național," in Drăgoescu, *Istoria României. Transilvania.* 2:617-840; Ștefan Pascu, "Desăvârșirea statului național unitar român," in Berindei, *Istoria României*, 374-75.

for the new homeland, where all of its liberties were respected".[590] Alexandru Ioniță, professor of theology at the Ovidius University in Constanța, argued that Saxons "embraced from the very start the Romanian cause", yet failed to explain how exactly they did that.[591] Historian Augustin Deac emphasized the putative enthusiasm and sincerity of the Saxon and Swabian allegiances to the unification of Greater Romania.[592] Virgil Pană spoke about the "very lively sense of reality" manifested by Saxons,[593] who enabled them to agree to the unification. More nuanced, Vasile Ciobanu critically remarked that Romanian historiography tends to consider the Saxon agreement as one originating in an enthusiastic acquiescence with the ideological and moral tenets leading to the unification of Greater Romania.[594]

Further on, Transylvanian Saxon history in the interwar period is seen in accordance with the perception of Greater Romania within Romanian history as a whole. Studies dedicated especially to minority politics in the period and granting significant place to the Germans, such as the ones by Pană, by Adrian Liviu Ivan or Vasile Ciobanu offer a basically positive account of the relationship between Romanian authorities and the German minority.[595] In the following pages, I will extensively analyze the claims and the interpretations proposed in these studies.

For example, Ivan distinctly polemicized with Irina Livezeanu's book on the nation-building and at the same time assimilationist policies of the Romanian state in the interwar period, a compulsory reference for scholars of interwar Romania ever since its publication.[596] Unlike Livezeanu, Ivan fundamentally argued that Greater Romania was a state whose policies were not aiming towards assimilation, but generously towards integration. One of the main theoretical operative distinctions used in his comparative study of the Hungarian and the German minority between 1919 and 1933 is that

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[590] Drăgan, *Istoria românilor*, 202.
[591] Alexandru M. Ioniță, *Istorie și cultură - evenimente, fapte, oameni* (Constanța: Ex Ponto, 2004), 222.
[592] Deac, *Istoria adevărului istoric*, 502-4.
[593] Virgil Pană, *Minoritățile etnice din Transilvania între anii 1918-1940. Drepturi și privilegii* (Târgu-Mureș: Tipomur, 1996), 11.
[594] Vasile Ciobanu, *Contribuții la cunoașterea istoriei sașilor transilvăneni 1918-1944* (Sibiu: hora, 2001).
[595] Pană, *Minoritățile etnice*; Virgil Pană, *Minoritari și majoritari în Transilvania interbelică. Studiu de caz asupra fostelor județe Mureș și Târnava Mare* (Târgu-Mureș: Tipomur, 2005); Adrian Liviu Ivan, *Stat, majoritate și minoritate națională în România (1919-1933). Cazul maghiarilor și germanilor din Transilvania* (Cluj-Napoca: Eikon, 2006); Ciobanu, *Contribuții la cunoașterea*.
[596] Irina Livezeanu, *Cultural Politics in Greater Romania: Regionalism, Nation Building and Ethnic Struggle* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1995).

between *national minorities* (the presumed case of the former) and *ethnic minorities* (the presumed case of the latter). The distinction is fundamentally based on the relationship of the minorities with their "kin-state".[597] Hungarians looked towards Budapest and used the help of Hungarian state officialdom in shaping their relationship with Romania, thus being constantly in a situation of conflict with Romanian authorities and tending to externalize this conflict to the League of Nations, whilst Germans did not nurture politico-national relationships with Germany and hence were much more predisposed to attempt to solve the contested issues with Romanian authorities on an internal level. Ivan's whole line of argumentation is based upon the aforementioned distinction. He went as far as to state that Transylvanian Saxons did not aspire "towards an integration in the bosom of a German nation, understood in a Herderian or political sense", an attitude quintessentially different from the Hungarian one.[598]

Albeit seemingly appealing, the argumentation has its flaws. Weimar Germany did not encourage the externalization of the issues related to the German minority in Romania towards the League of Nations, but this political pragmatism did not mirror the lack of "Germanizing" aspirations of the Transylvanian Saxons. Literature on Transylvanian Saxon identity and on Transylvanian Saxon history emphasizes the existence of a German myth mostly from German unification onwards, but with much deeper roots. Furthermore, the eventual success of Hitlerism can be comprehended only if we consider the reputation enjoyed by Germany amongst Saxons. For ideological reasons, Nazi Germany took its role as a "kin-state" for ethnic Germans abroad much more seriously than Weimar Germany. Nonetheless, relationships between Transylvanian Saxons and German institutions, such as das Gustav-Adolf-Werk, existed during Weimar Germany as well. Saxons aimed towards a cultural integration in the German nation, understood precisely in a Romantic-Herderian sense, hence the colder relationships with the German state and its political and cultural environment between 1919 and 1933. Transylvanian Saxon self-identification discourses and their German-speaking education (the alternative of promoting Saxon-speaking education could have been imagined, at least in theory) emphasize the allegiance to the

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[597] Rogers Brubaker, *Nationalism Reframed: Nationhood and the National Question in the New Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996).

[598] Ivan, *Stat, majoritate și minoritate*, 296.

German *Kulturnation* (cultural nation), which eventually will be doubled by a political allegiance to Germany. I argue therefore that the main difference between Saxon and Hungarian attitudes towards cooperation with the Romanian state originates not so much in the former being an *ethnic minority* and the latter being a *national minority*, but rather in the absence vs. the presence of potential irredentist claims and of a *de facto* irredentist ideology. Fundamentally for geographical reasons Transylvanian Saxons never envisaged anything of the sort, very much unlike Hungarians and Hungarian political representatives in both Hungary and Romania in the interwar period.

Ivan's investigation also strikes through the discrepancy between the number of pages dedicated to the Hungarian minority and the number of pages dedicated to Germans in Transylvania. The book looks more like an analysis of the relationship between the Hungarian minority and the Romanian state during the period 1919-1933, with some appendices related to Transylvanian Saxons. The considerations regarding the latter seem to be an instrument within the much more comprehensive analysis of the Hungarian minority. Thus, in Ivan's interpretation, Saxons become an exemplary minority, as they accept the new state order and the status of a minority in Romania, aiming to improve their condition and to attain their objectives through cooperation with Romanian authorities or through internal ways of attacking the implementation of unwanted measures. Hungarians, on the other hand, by constantly resorting to the League of Nations, also via Budapest, attempt to erode Romanian authority, the ideological pillar of this endeavour being mainly the non-acceptance of the new state order. Indeed, Ivan singled out two distinct minority attitudes towards the relationship with the Romanian state between 1919 and 1933, yet he did that by departing from a partially flawed theoretical distinction, which impedes him from a fair investigation of the underlying reasons of Transylvanian Saxon attitudes towards the Romanian state. Nonetheless, considering the research question of this thesis in general and of this chapter in particular, most relevant is the fact that Saxons can become a sort of an analytical trump, used to show that Romanian interwar policies were not aiming towards assimilation and that minorities enjoyed internal means to aim to improve their situation. Thus, in a

moderately positive discourse about the interwar period, Saxons become an exemplary minority.

Virgil Pană's analyses are also conducive to extremely favourable conclusions as regards the treatment of minorities in interwar Romania, with a special emphasis on the German case. His studies are a transparent attempt to depict a positive image of the Romanian state in the interwar period, constantly comparing it and the situation of its minorities with pre-1918 Hungary, a comparison bound to be favourable to Romanians. Beyond concrete political and economic data emphasizing on the one hand Saxon development in interwar Romania and on the other hand an eventual accommodation with the new state order, Pană also viewed Saxons as an "elite", having built an "enviable civilization" and being able to use the most important economic resources.[599] In his conclusions, he referred to a well known 1937 publication by C. A. Macartney, *Hungary and Her Successors*, written from an overt Hungarophile position.[600] Not only that Macartney himself, called by one researcher "a devoted and frustrated friend of Hungary",[601] was obliged to admit many improvements in the status of Transylvanian minorities under Romanian authorities, but the positive treatment of Germans in Hungary's successor states, Romania included, and the German desire not to be Hungarian subjects again, is seen as extremely beneficial for Romanians. In Pană's words: "If through the Vienna Award of August 30, 1940, the claims of Horthy's Hungary were only partially met, this is also due to the German minority in this province, which declared at the time that under no circumstances does it wish to end up under Hungarian administration."[602] Thus, representing Transylvanian Saxon or German history in interwar Romania becomes yet again a way of proving Romania's positive treatment of minorities, hence adds to the multitude of potential arguments for the representation of the interwar period as the golden age of Romanian history.

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[599] Pană, *Minoritățile etnice*, 92-5.

[600] See also Dumitru Firoiu et al., "România - stat național unitar. Unitatea administrativă, economică, culturală și spirituală a României," in Drăgoescu, *Istoria României. Transilvania*, 2:896.

[601] Ágnes Beretzky, "C. A. Macartney. A Devoted and Frustrated Friend of Hungary (1939-1945) Service in the Foreign Office and the BBC," http://www.ssees.ucl.ac.uk/confhung/beretzky.pdf (accessed September 8, 2011).

[602] Pană, *Minoritățile etnice*, 304.

In a short presentation book about the German minority in Romania, one of the few such attempts by Romanian authors, Sorina Paula Bolovan and Ioan Bolovan also claimed, on the basis of a putative scholarly agreement in this respect, that the interwar period was a true period of economic blossom and prosperity for the Germans in Romania.[603] Albeit in a soft manner, they also addressed the issue of the high appeal of National-Socialism for the German communities in Romania. Allegedly, this took place due to frustrated leaders, unhappy that the 1919 promises had not been met.[604] The argument lacks internal logics: how could Germans be frustrated, considering that, according to the same authors, they were living in a period of blossoming and prosperity? Thus, the two academics actually produced a discourse perfectly compatible with the representation of the interwar period as an extremely positive period in Romanian history, a representation which fails to address the numerous problematic issues, such as the rise of the extreme right, the obvious imperfections of the "democratic" regime, the numerous scandals related to corruption and poor state management. The manner in which Bolovan and Bolovan present the German minority in the interwar period is a splendid paradox. They assert that following 1918 Saxons, Swabians and the other German groups entered a period of prosperity, yet also try to refer to the embrace of National-Socialist ideology, which appears as an illogic and irrational phenomenon, thus obliterating any possibility of addressing its real causes and the real mechanisms enabling it.

The best documented study on German history in Transylvania following the unification of Greater Romania is Vasile Ciobanu's richly documented monograph, modestly titled *Contribuții la cunoașterea istoriei sașilor transilvăneni* (Contributions to the Knowledge of the History of Transylvanian Saxons). Through its well kept balance and its impressive use of a variety of archival, journalistic and other type of sources, Ciobanu sets a high standard for any further research on the topic. His publication aimed to fill in a lacuna in Romanian-language scholarship: the absence of scholarly studies focused on Transylvanian Saxons in Greater Romania. Even if his work is mainly documentary and factual, he did not fail to place Transylvanian Saxon history within a wider, more general framework, that of

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[603] Sorina Paula Bolovan and Ioan Bolovan, *Germanii din România: perspective istorice și demografice* (Cluj-Napoca: Centrul de Studii Transilvane, 2000), 61-9.
[604] Ibid., 67-9.

Romanian history. As such, it marks a clear-cut differentiation as compared to the focus of German-speaking publications on Transylvanian Saxons between 1918 and 1944 which engage first and foremost in a critical analysis of the relationships between the Germans in Romania and the German state.[605] This is undoubtedly also related to the academic institution Ciobanu is affiliated with, the Institute of Socio-Human Research in Sibiu, where scholarship on the German minority in Romania is constantly produced.

Ciobanu saw Transylvanian Saxon history as an integral component of Romanian history. His understanding of Romanian interwar history is also one emphasizing the progresses and the developments associated with the significant augmentation of Romania's territory. Thus, although he acknowledged the hardships encountered by Saxons in the immediate aftermath of the unification and later on in the context of the national and international economic crisis and although he presented the disagreements between Saxon elites and Romanian authorities, especially in the interpretation of the binding or non-binding nature of the Declaration of Alba-Iulia, Ciobanu's representation of Transylvanian Saxons, is *grosso modo* one of a thriving community, coping with the various difficulties associated with a new state order and with the ideological aims of Romanian authorities. The chapters and subchapters dedicated to the issues of industry, agriculture, trade or to the banking system stress the leading role occupied by Saxons in these economic branches and their overall prosperousness, presenting Saxons into a model for the other populations in the region. The same type of approach is found in the chapters dedicated to Transylvanian Saxon cultural life, fundamentally enumerative, yet whose summarizing keyword could well be "blossoming".

A more sensitive issue is the one of Saxon history after 1933, i.e. the gradual Nazification of the Saxon leadership, the growing dependence on Berlin and eventually the tragedy of the Second World War. Ciobanu touched upon it, calling the consequences of Nazi influence upon Transylvanian

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[605] Wolfgang Miege, *Das Dritte Reich und die Deutsche Volksgruppe in Rumänien 1933-38. Ein Beitrag zur nationalsozialistischen Volkstumspolitik* (Bern: Herbert & Peter Lang, 1972); Johann Böhm, *Das Nationalsozialistische Deutschland und die deutsche Volksgruppe in Rumänien 1936-1944. Das Verhältnis der Deutschen Volksgruppe zum Dritten Reich und zum rumänischen Staat sowie der interne Widerstreit zwischen den politischen Gruppen* (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1985); Johann Böhm, *Die Deutschen in Rumänien und die Weimarer Republik 1919-1933* (Ippesheim: AGK, 1993); Johann Böhm, *Nationalsozialistische Indoktrination der Deutschen in Rumänien 1932-1944* (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2008).

Saxons "catastrophic", one of these consequences being practically the destruction of the "exemplary Saxon unity".[606] However, at the same time Ciobanu also refrained from analyzing in depth the success of National-Socialist ideology within the Transylvanian Saxon community and the inner causes related to this success. Paradoxically, he argued that one of the first negative effects of an authoritarian, profoundly anti-individualist ideology such as Nazism was the destruction of Saxon unity, without considering that precisely this much praised "unity" was an excellent soil for breeding and nurturing extremist, illiberal ideologies. Thus, although providing the interested readers with valuable material, Ciobanu did not properly engage in a profound critical interpretation of Transylvanian Saxon choices and attitudes following 1933.

In their presentation of the interwar period, some textbooks also include references to the German minority, more precisely to their political representation and to the relationships with the Romanian state.[607] Brezeanu et al. consider that "the German community did not represent a danger for the unity of the Romanian state", "at least until the end of the 1930s".[608] The presentation of the German Party, active on the Romanian political scene in the period between the two world wars, emphasizes the reluctance of German leaders towards a cooperation with the Hungarian Party, with the exception of the 1927 elections. The growing influence of National Socialism is acknowledged, yet the pro-Hitlerist tide is seen as having adopted the "most rational attitude possible", a synthesis between the "defence of the German community" and the "fidelity towards the Romanian state".[609] There is no criticism towards this Nazi slip of the German community.

The interpretation of the history of Satu Mare Swabians in the interwar period is also illustrating the reading of the German experiences in Greater Romania as fundamentally positive. The subject is definitely under-researched, yet a study in Romanian dealing with this sub-branch of Danube Swabians, does exist. It was published in 1998 and it was actually written by one of the *de facto* representatives of the Satu Mare Swabian community

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[606] Ciobanu, *Contribuții la cunoașterea*, 408.
[607] See for example Ioan Scurtu et al, *Istoria românilor din cele mai vechi timpuri până astăzi. Manual pentru clasa a XII-a*, 2nd edition (Bucharest: Petrion, 2000): 157-64.
[608] Brezeanu et al., *Istoria românilor*, 167.
[609] Ibid., 171.

during Communism, Ernst Hauler.[610] The booklet is worth investigating first of all because it was purposefully written and published in Romanian, that is for a Romanian public, and secondly because at least parts of it were initially published in a local Satu Mare newspaper, *Gazeta de Nord-Vest*, at the prompting of Ion Bledea, its director at the time.[611] Hauler's account of Swabian history in the region of Satu Mare is the account of a constant fight against Magyarization, from their colonization in the region to present times. Nonetheless, there was a short, and much appreciated, intermezzo in this fight against Magyarization, namely the imposition of Romanian authority over the region and the subsequent halt of Magyarization policies. In Hauler's words: "In Yugoslavia and Romania, the Swabians enjoyed a particular cultural blossoming, because they could open schools with German as the teaching language and they could organise themselves from an ethnic point of view."[612] The references to Banat and Satu Mare Swabians present in other post-1989 Romanian historiographic accounts play on the same antagonism regarding the positive treatment of minorities in Greater Romania vs. the severe Magyarization attempts prior to 1918. Virgil Pană spoke about the Romanian contribution to the "Germanization" of the Swabians, summed up by a putative phrase of a Romanian official: "We don't want to Romanianize the Swabians, but to Germanize them".[613]

Gräf and Nägler also referred to the pre-1918 Magyarization of the Swabians, much more successful than in the case of the Saxons. Swabians, especially those in the Satu Mare region, are thus represented as an object of conflict, a conflict regarding them directly, but in which the main contenders are Romanians and Hungarians, with the former being the advocates of minority identity preservation, also putting it into practice following the unification taking place in 1918, and the latter the de-nationalizing assimilationists. Pană spoke of a "demographic genocide" having taken place

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[610] Thomas Nägler, former president of the German Democratic Forum, also published in Romanian or in Romanian-language compendia studies on Transylvanian Saxon history. Similarly to the case of print media, the argument can be made that Saxon and Swabian historians, directly involved in the ethnopolitical entrepreneurship of their communities, also write for Romanian audiences. Thus, the compatibility of Romanian and German discourses on particular topics can be in part explained.

[611] Ernst Hauler, *Istoria nemților din regiunea Sătmarului* (Satu Mare: Lamura, 1998), 5-6.

[612] Ibid., 25.

[613] Virgil Pană, *Minoritățile etnice*, 206. The same idea in Bolovan and Bolovan, *Germanii din România*, 62.

under Hungarian authorities, whose victims were Swabians, a situation that started to be reversed only after the unification of Greater Romania.

## 7.5.    The Second World War and Communism

Emphasizing a positive Romanian treatment of minorities and more particularly a positive Romanian-Saxon relationship in the interwar period can also be seen as another argument in favour of the rightfulness of the unification of Greater Romania. For example, Titu Georgescu contended against the Hungarian claims over Transylvania, a constant of Hungarian foreign policy in the interwar period, partially satisfied through the Second Vienna Award, of 1940, by referring to a putative assertion of a certain Saxon leader called Schönburg who was claiming, Georgescu argued, that Germans did not want to be under Hungarian domination after enjoying for a period of 20 years so many rights in Romania.[614] Interestingly, the index of the comprehensively documented book by Vasile Ciobanu, quoted above, does not include any Saxon leader bearing the name Schönburg.

The absence of Romanian-German territorial disputes, and the Romanian-German alliance in the war against the Soviet Union, rarely accused as such by Romanian historians, since Bessarabia and Northern Bukovina had been occupied by the Soviets following the Ribbentrop-Molotov Pact, contribute to the absence of a fundamental critical analysis of the history of the German minority in Romania during the years of the war. The growing influence of Berlin is recognized, yet all in all Romanian historiography on the Second World War does not necessarily include the Germans in Romania. Romanian-Hungarian relationships, also taking into consideration the situation in Northern Transylvania, Romanian-Jewish and Romanian-Roma relationships obscured by the acknowledgment or non-acknowledgment of the Romanian participation at the Holocaust are in the foreground of Romanian historiography dealing with the period.

At best, Germans receive thus a treatment such as the one by Cristian Scarlat, since 2004 Director of the National Office for the Cult of Heroes, in the treatise dedicated to the history of Romanians, published under the aegis of

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[614] Titu Georgescu, *Istoria românilor*, 2nd edition (Bucharest: Ed. Fundaţiei "România de mâine", 2000), 161.

the Romanian Academy.[615] Scarlat provided an informative account of German history in Romania between 1940 and 1944. He referred to the various frictions between ethnic Germans or their representatives on the hand and Romanian authorities on the other hand, noticing that fundamentally Germans were loyal to the Romanian state.[616] He also referred to the Saxon negative answer to the various proposals circulating in the period, regarding a partition of Transylvania or the possibility that Transylvania did not belong to Romania anymore.[617] After several pages on the relocation of the Germans from Bessarabia, Bukovina and Dobruja to the Reich, Scarlat dealt with the legal status of the German minority during Antonescu's regime. In practice, Germans under Antonescu enjoyed the highest degree of autonomy ever granted to an ethnic group in Romania. Decree-law 830/20 November 1940 sanctioned the privileged status of the ethnic Germans in Romania.

Scarlat's text on Transylvanian Germans between 1940 and 1944 is fundamentally a factual history account, lacking any substantial attempt to critically engage with the ideological choices of the German Ethnic Group and with their short and long term consequences. For example, he referred to the enrolment of young Saxons and Swabians in the Waffen-SS, dedicating significant space to the Romanian-German negotiations in this respect, and to the concrete way in which the process took place, to its various political and legal implications. One short paragraph only was dedicated to those condemned for taking part in the Holocaust (two examples - doctor Fritz Klein and pharmacist Viktor Capesius) and to individuals recently deported from the United States of America, as a consequence of their enrolment in the Waffen-SS. The final paragraph is probably most telling for how German history in Romania during the Second World War is understood:

> The sacrifices, the pains caused to many families in those years proved to be futile. The developments in the period after August 23, 1944 would transform the individual or family dramas into a national tragedy, and the German minority in Romania could not eschew it. From then on, we are witnessing a continuous demographic decline of this population with a once so blossoming existence.[618]

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[615] Cristian Scarlat, "Germanii din România (1940-1944)," in *Istoria românilor. Vol. IX: România în anii 1940-1947*, ed. Dinu C. Giurescu (Bucharest: Ed. Enciclopedică, 2008), 456-98.
[616] Ibid., 456.
[617] Ibid., 457.
[618] Ibid, 498.

We find no sign of any *Vergangenheitsbewältigung* attempt whatsoever, no critical discussion of the enthusiasm for Nazi Germany or of the role of National-Socialist ideology in the life of the German community in Romania. The post-August 1944 developments are seen as a national tragedy, Germans in Romania being part and parcel of this tragedy. Scarlat did not use such words in order to describe the authoritarian regime of Antonescu or the Transylvanian Saxon and Banat Swabian acquiescence to National Socialism.

Following 1918, the slow emergence of an imagined "Romanian German" community can be traced, very much accelerated through the contribution of National-Socialist ideology. As any identification discourse, the *rumäniendeutsch* discourse is also debatable. Annemarie Weber argued that the "discursive emergence and fixation" of "an all-encompassing concept referring to the entirety of the German minority in Romania" took place in the late 1960s.[619] Writing during Communism, Adolf Armbruster contended that this identification was not so much Romanian-German-oriented as it was West-German-oriented, a valid consideration taking into account Katherine Verdery's observations on the preservation of markers of German ethnicity by Saxons during Communism in view of a potential migration to Germany.[620] The post-1989 processes of migration to Germany on the one hand, and of political creation of a German Forum aiming to represent all German-speaking groups in Romania on the other hand show that both identification options, Western German and Romanian German, were valid, albeit on different scales. Furthermore, the Romanian historiographic and public discourse treatment of the German minority in Romania during Communism is fundamentally an all-encompassing one, henceforth this section focuses on Romanian Germans in general and not on the particular groups constituting this community.

One of the most delicate topics of post-1989 Romanian historiography was, understandably enough, the most recent history, i.e. the almost half a century of Communist rule in the country. Nonetheless, this was also meant to lead to a reticence from the scholarly treatment of the topic. The absence of the Communist period from several general syntheses on Romanian history is

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[619] Annemarie Weber, *Rumäniendeutsche? Diskurse zur Gruppenidentität einer Minderheit (1944-1971)* (Cologne: Böhlau Verlag, 2010).

[620] Adolf Armbruster, "Wandel im Nationalgefühl der Siebenbürger Sachsen," in *Auf den Spuren*, 52; Katherine Verdery, "The Unmaking of an Ethnic Collectivity: Transylvania's Germans," *American Ethnologist* 12 (1985), 62-83.

proof of this reticence, displayed by some historians. This absence is also telling of the understanding of the Communist regime as a meander of history, analyzable *per se*, yet difficult to integrate in a general investigation of Romanian history. The most salient absence of a scholarly treatment of the Communist regime is the one in *Istoria românilor*, the opus published under the aegis of the Romanian Academy, which ends at year 1947. The general work on Transylvanian history coordinated by Anton Drăgoescu does the same, whilst the *History of Transylvania* coordinated by Ioan-Aurel Pop and Thomas Nägler looks at the period until 1918.

At the same time, a fundamentally different phenomenon can also be observed: using the newly acquired editorial freedom, in order to publish accounts about what *really* happened, about the victims of the Communist regime, attempts to recuperate an obliterated past. Often, this meant the publication of memories, diaries or collections of oral history interviews. From a German perspective, this recuperation regarded first and foremost the issue of the deportations, to the Soviet Union, but also to the Bărăgan Plain, which could not have been properly addressed in Communist Romania, despite some minor attempts in *Neuer Weg* having taken place before 1989. Other "hot" topics were also the anti-German land reform of 1945 and the migration ("selling") of the Germans under the government of Nicolae Ceaușescu. Probably also because of their being placed in the more distant past, the deportations received more attention than the Romanian-German *Menschenhandel* (human trafficking): collections of documents regarding the German minority at the end of the 1940s and in the 1950s were published, mostly thanks to the efforts of Hannelore Baier. Moreover, memoirs and accounts of the deportations to the Soviet Union and to Bărăgan, based fundamentally on oral history interviews, started to be published in Romanian.[621]

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[621] Hannelore Baier (ed.), *Deportarea etnicilor germani din România în Uniunea Sovietică 1945. Culegere de documente de arhivă* (Sibiu: Forumul Democrat al Germanilor din România, 1994); Smaranda Vultur, *Istorie trăită - istorie povestită: deportarea în Bărăgan 1951-1956* (Timișoara: Amarcord, 1997); Doru Radosav, *Donbas - o istorie deportată* (Ravensburg: Landsmannschaft der Sathmarer Schwaben in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland, 1994); Viorel Marineasa and Daniel Vighi (ed.), *Rusalii '51: fragmente din deportarea în Bărăgan* (Timișoara: Marineasa, 1994); Viorel Marineasa and Daniel Vighi (ed.), *Deportarea în Bărăgan: destine, documente, reportaje* (Timișoara: Mirton, 1996); Nicolae Afrapt, *Germanii din Sebeș în primii ani ai comunismului, 1945-1950. Începutul calvarului*, 2 vols. (Alba-Iulia: Altip, 2006-2007); Hannelore Baier (ed.), *Departe, în Rusia, la Stalino: amintiri și documente cu privire la deportarea în Uniunea Sovietică a etnicilor germani din România (1945-1950)* (Reșița: InterGraf, 2003).

Amongst the syntheses on Romanian history I have investigated, including some works dealing specifically with the Communist period, Germans are either not present, or they are remembered in two extraordinary contexts: on the one hand, their deportation to the Soviet Union in 1945 and also the deportations of the Banat inhabitants to Bărăgan and on the other hand, the process of their migration to Germany.[622]

A slightly different approach can be found in lengthier studies focusing directly on Communist rule in Romania. For example, in one of the first post-1989 works published in Romania and dealing with Romanian communism, economist and former political detainee Gheorghe Boldur-Lăţescu spoke about the "first tragedy of the population of German origin from Romania", namely the deportation to the Soviet Union. Interestingly, he did not go into details, considering that the facts are "pretty well known".[623] In the third volume of his work, he also provided some figures, speaking of about 150.000 ethnic Germans deported to the Soviet Union, a considerable overestimation if compared to the figures advanced by researchers dealing specifically with this topic.[624] In the second volume of the series "Analele Sighet", a series of testimonies by survivors of the deportations are being presented.[625] Furthermore, an intervention by the daughter of Transylvanian Saxon politician Hans Otto Roth, who died in a Communist prison in 1953, was also published, linking the sufferings of ethnic Germans in the first years of Communism to the subsequent migration from Romania to Germany.[626]

In the following volumes of the series "Analele Sighet", papers on the German minority were still present, in many cases translated from German. I refer to them precisely because they are an excellent illustration of a particular

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[622] Constantiniu, *O istorie sinceră*, 522; Dennis Deletant, 'România sub regimul comunist (decembrie 1947-decembrie 1989', in Bărbulescu et al., *Istoria României*, 451-53.

[623] Gheorghe Boldur-Lăţescu, *Genocidul comunist în România. Volumul I: Dimensiunile genocidului* (Bucharest: Albatros, 1992), 21.

[624] Gheorghe Boldur-Lăţescu, *Genocidul comunist în România. Volumul III: Destine strivite* (Bucharest: Albatros, 1998), 8.

[625] Ignaz Fischer, "Date despre deportarea în Rusia a etnicilor germani din Banat," in *Instaurarea comunismului - între rezistenţă şi represiune. Comunicări prezentate la Simpozionul de la Sighetu Marmaţiei (9-11 iunie 1995)*, ed. Romulus Rusan (Bucharest: Fundaţia Academia Civică, 1995), 416-18; Maria Ballasch, "Cinci ani de neînţeles," in Rusan, *Instaurarea comunismului*, 419-20; Jean Schafhütl, "Krasnodon - lagărul 1210," in Rusan, *Instaurarea comunismului*, 421-25; Julius Hager, "Deportarea şvabilor sătmăreni în U.R.S.S.," in Rusan, *Instaurarea comunismului*, 426-28; Hannelore Baier, "Sighet - punctul de frontieră prin care s-au întors primii deportaţi etnici germani din U.R.S.S.," in Rusan, *Instaurarea comunismului*, 433-36.

[626] Maria Luise Roth Höppner, "Detenţia politică şi emigrarea în Germania," in Rusan, *Instaurarea comunismului*, 437-41.

Romanian-German compatibility as regards the representations of the Communist past. In the sixth volume, Luzian Geier pleaded for an archival research of the deportations to Bărăgan.[627] Hans Bergel contributed to the eighth volume of the series, with an article about the political trial he was indicted in, a transparent accusation of the role played in the affair by Eginald Schlattner's, then main witness of the prosecution, nowadays successful writer in Romania and in the German-speaking world.[628] Only a short observation by Dumitru Șandru did not fit the victimization pattern, as he referred to Germans who easily switched from Nazi ideology to a Communist allegiance in the aftermath of the Second World War on the basis of their hostility towards Romania.[629] The tenth volume of the series includes articles signed by Wolfgang Rehner, Cosmin Budeancă, Ulrich Burger and Hans Bergel, the former three dealing in different ways with the issue of emigration, whilst the latter is a text based on Bergel's experience of reading his own Securitate file.[630]

The deportation is also referred to in general works dealing with Romanian history under Communism. Deletant wrote about the deportation of inhabitants from Banat, at the border with former Yugoslavia, to Bărăgan, also mentioning the zealousness and the entrepreneurial spirit, presumably "typical" to the population in Banat.[631] In the introduction to one of her oral history books, anthropologist Smaranda Vultur noticed that for the inhabitants of Bărăgan, these positive traits were often associated with the

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[627] Luzian Geier, "Referitor la dedesubturile, cauzele și contextul deportărilor din 1951 în stepa Bărăganului," transl. Katharina Kilzer, in *Analele Sighet 6. Anul 1948 - instituționalizarea comunismului. Comunicări prezentate la Simpozionul de la Sighetu Marmației (19-21 iunie 1998)*, ed. Romulus Rusan (Bucharest: Fundația Academia Civică, 1998), 430-33.

[628] Hans Bergel, "Procesul scriitorilor germani din România din anul 1959. Perversitățile persistă și în ziua de azi," in *Analele Sighet 8. Anii 1954-1960: fluxurile și refluxurile stalinismului. Comunicări prezentate la Simpozionul de la Sighetu Marmației (2-4 iulie 2000)*, ed. Romulus Rusan (Bucharest: Fundația Academia Civică, 2000), 358-63.

[629] Dumitru Șandru, "Propaganda pe tema colhozului în campania electorală din 1946," in *Analele Sighet 3. Anul 1946 - începutul sfârșitului (instituții, mentalități, evenimente). Comunicări prezentate la Simpozionul de la Sighetu Marmației (7-9 iunie 1996)*, ed. Romulus Rusan (Bucharest: Fundația Academia Civică, 1996), 443-44.

[630] Wolfgang Rehner, "Problemele populației de etnie germană în România. Tendințele ei de emigrare," in *Analele Sighet 10. Anii 1973-1989: Cronica unui sfârșit de sistem. Comunicări prezentate la Simpozionul de la Memorialul Sighet (5-7 iulie 2002)*, ed. Romulus Rusan (Bucharest: Fundația Academia Civică, 2003), 228-34; Cosmin Budeancă, "Emigrația sașilor din Orăștie în ultimul deceniu al regimului comunist," in Rusan, *Analele Sighet 10*, 235-51; Ulrich Burger, "Care dintre cele două Germanii? Imaginea Germaniei din perspectiva sașilor din Ardeal în anii '70," transl. Maria Udrescu, in Rusan, *Analele Sighet 10*, 252-79; Hans Bergel, "Numele meu codificat era 'Bell'. Marginalii la lectura dosarului meu de la Securitate," in Rusan, *Anii 1973-1989*, 433-40.

[631] Deletant, "România sub regimul comunist," 420.

*bănățeni* (Banat inhabitants) in general, whilst for the latter they constituted a key element in the representation of the "German".[632]

Historian and former Minister of Foreign Affairs Adrian Cioroianu, in a scholarly publication on Romanian Communism, granted attention to the fate of the Germans between 1945 and 1989, more precisely to the two identity-endowing phenomena they were victims of: firstly, the deportation to the Soviet Union, and secondly, the "selling" taking place during Ceaușescu's rule. The former event is judged in harsh and straightforward terms by Cioroianu: "one of the darkest and most ignoble episodes in the history of the Romanian state", "the most shameful act" in the history of Romanian-Saxon cohabitation in Transylvania.[633] At the time of the publication of the book, Cioroianu was a member of the Romanian Parliament, representing the Timiș constituency, in Banat, home of the Swabian population. Nonetheless, this did not impede him from speaking about Saxons in Transylvania as if they were actually constituting the entirety of the German-speaking population in Romania. He acknowledged the fact that the deportation was imposed by Moscow, and that the main fault of the deportees was their being German, considering that through their sacrifice they were paying for Hitler's policies. In Cioroianu's account, Germans seemed to be the paradigmatic victims of Romanian Communism, consolidating a representation perfectly compatible with internal Saxon or Swabian identification discourses.

Some two hundred pages later, Cioroianu also addressed the fate of the Germans under Ceaușescu. Only now did he place it in a wider chronological framework, referring to the ominous period of the war. Yet the high appeal of National-Socialism within the German community of Romania receives a mild treatment: the creation of the German Ethnic Group is seen as having taken place "under the influence of the more radical elements", but, more importantly even, "under the influence of European political developments". Thus, an exculpation is enacted, which does not leave place for a critical evaluation of the close relationship between National Socialism and the German minority in Romania. Cioroianu spoke about a "political alignment" to "what seemed to be the *invincible Reich*", in effect having only dire consequences for Romania's Germans. He depicted the German minority of

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[632] Vultur, *Istorie trăită*.

[633] Adrian Cioroianu, *Pe umerii lui Marx. O introducere în istoria comunismului românesc*, 2nd edition (Bucharest: Curtea Veche, 2007), 266-67.

Romania as "one of the most peaceful and industrious minorities in this part of Europe, which gave historical Transylvania clerics, savants and industrialists and from which the Romanian majority always had something to learn."[634] One finds no scholarly reservation in this description, which nonetheless can be questioned.

Firstly, speaking about the German minority in Romania as "one of the most peaceful" in this part of Europe is far from qualifying for a scholarly statement: for example, the widespread Wehrmacht myth amongst Saxons and Swabians during the Second World War and the high success of the Germany-sponsored enrolment of Romanian Germans in units of the German Army and of the SS are two phenomena hard to reconcile with Cioroianu's statement reproduced above. Secondly, it rather contributes to the consolidation of a German myth in Romanian culture, implying a presumed superiority of the German population. What other role could a statement have, regarding the fact that Romanians (a majority, of course) always had something to learn from the Germans? Does it imply that Romanians had something to learn from Germans, but not from other ethnic groups living in the region? Or that Romanians had something to learn from Germans, yet Germans did not have something to learn from Romanians? Both are possible logical semantic consequences of the abovementioned phrase, a perfect example of a completely unnecessary and scientifically dubious sentence, nourished from the positive stereotypes associated with the German population in Romania, and at the same time reinforcing them.

Cioroianu presented the common narrative regarding the recommencement of Romanian-West German state relationships in 1967 and the subsequent migration of Germans from Romania to Germany, on the condition of a German "ransom" for each individual receiving the permission to leave Romania. The author took for granted the commonplace knowledge that this "secret" agreement took place following a Romanian initiative, although there is no evidence supporting this hypothesis. More recently, an impressive collection of Securitate documents regarding German migration from Romania was published, accompanied by a lengthy introductory study,

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[634] Ibid., 172.

suggesting that the initiative was rather German than Romanian.[635] Nonetheless, for Cioroianu the presentation of the conditions in which German migration from Romania to Germany took place, had two interconnected meanings: on the one hand, it showed the immoral character of the Communist regime and on the other hand, it provided an opportunity for an eulogy of the German minority, "one of Romania's great losses in the 20th century". The Communist regime is seen as having chased away an ethnic group "that had definitely brought more benefits than problems".[636] Whether there are ethnic groups which had brought more problems than benefits, this is a question Cioroianu did not address, yet his wording might lead to a positive answer to such an interrogation.

History textbooks in general do not grant special attention to the fate of the German minority in Romania after 1945, yet some exceptions can be noticed. One of them is the textbook authored by Brezeanu et al.. Comparatively, the publication granted overall significant more space to the German minority as compared to other textbooks. Its authors, five academics from the University of Bucharest, dedicate two large paragraphs to the German minority in interwar Romania, then acknowledging its status as the "first victim" of the Communist repression on the basis of its ethnic kinship with Hitler's Germany. However, the same exaggerated figure of 150.000 deportees is advanced.[637] The Banat deportations are also referred to, yet the textbook does specify that they were aimed first and foremost against ethnic Serbs. Furthermore, the "selling" of Jews and Germans is also mentioned.[638] Another textbook granting attention to the issue of the deportations is the one authored by Scurtu et al.. The deportation to Bărăgan is presented as "another form of repression". The number of those deported is estimated at about 50.000 families, yet the text includes a factual error, as it states that the victims were "especially amongst Serbs and Saxons".[639] Confounding Saxons and Swabians finds its way in history textbooks as well.

Furthermore, there is also an official, state-sponsored consolidation of the representation of the Germans during Communism as victims, an

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[635] Florica Dobre et al. (ed.), *Acțiunea "Recuperarea". Securitatea și emigrarea germanilor din România (1962-1989)* (Bucharest: Ed. Enciclopedică, 2011).

[636] Ibid., 473-474.

[637] Brezeanu et al., *Istoria românilor*, 238.

[638] Ibid., 261.

[639] Scurtu et al., *Istoria Românilor*, 224.

argumentative instrument in the public condemnation of the Communist regime by Romanian President Traian Băsescu. Amongst the twenty motives included therein, the official declaration of the latter, meant to condemn Communism as an "illegitimate and criminal regime" also listed the ethnic persecutions, the deportations and, specifically, the "chasing away and 'selling' of Jews and Germans".[640] The Final Report of the Presidential Commission for the Analysis of the Communist Dictatorship in Romania acknowledges both the deportation of Germans in the Soviet Union and their subsequent "selling" starting from the 1970s as arguments for the criminal nature of Communism. Nonetheless, the two phenomena are not presented in a consistent manner.

First, the deportation to the Soviet Union is referred to in the second chapter as one of the steps in the preparation of the "Communist genocide", done at the order of Moscow and with the presumed complicity of the Communist chieftains in the country. In effect, the chapter was done by using a copy-paste method, the source being Boldur-Lățescu's already mentioned work, on Communist genocide in Romania. Consequently, the Report starts by advancing the same figure, of 150.000 ethnic Germans deported to the Soviet Union in 1945.[641] Nonetheless, only 38 pages later, the figure is halved and the number of those deported becomes 75.000.[642] The special section within the Report dedicated to the German minority between 1944 and 1990 emphasized that after Romania's change of sides in August 1944 what followed was a series of repressive measures against the members of the German minority, irrespective of their political affiliation. Furthermore, the subsequent, financially ensued, migration taking place during Ceaușescu's rule is blamed on his "aberrant ambition to pay the external debt before the deadline". Nonetheless, the fate of the German minority in Romania is placed in a wider chronological framework, references to relevant political events in the 1940s being included in the text. Also, the Report asserted the existence of

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[640] "Discursul președintelui României Traian Băsescu, prilejuit de prezentarea Raportului Comisiei Prezidențiale pentru Analiza Dictaturii Comuniste din România (București, 18 decembrie 2006)," Președintele României, http://www.presidency.ro/?_RID=det&tb=date&id=8288&_PRID=ag (accessed November 19, 2010).

[641] Comisia Prezidențială pentru Analiza Dictaturii Comuniste din România, *Raport Final* (Bucharest: 2006), 159-61, Președintele României, http://www.presidency.ro/static/ordine/RAPORT_FINAL_CPADCR.pdf (accessed September 14, 2011).

[642] Ibid., 199.

a German intention to evacuate the Saxons and the Swabians in Romania at the end of the Second World War, which eventually was not realized. The account regarding the German minority in Romania also includes the continuing existence of German-speaking education, even between 1944 and 1948 when Germans were *de jure* excluded from enjoying civil rights and the rehabilitation of the Germans in the 1950s. Emphasis is placed on the issues of victimization and discrimination, first through deportation, then through land reform and finally through the "selling" and all the financial questions this entailed.

However, some slight changes in the interpretation of Romanian German history in Romania can lead to a set of partially different conclusions. In his *Istoria contemporană a României* (Contemporary History of Romania), Ioan Scurtu included a paragraph about the migrations of Jews and Germans from Romania during Communism, pointing out that Romania allowed the migration of a "very big number of Germans and Jews", "whilst in the other Socialist countries the migration was forbidden".[643] Thus, a phenomenon often seen as evidence of the nationalizing and xenophobic policies of the Ceaușescu regime can also turn into a positive feature of Romanian Communism as compared to the situation in the other countries in the Soviet bloc. Moreover, a similar text is published in a history textbook authored by Scurtu et al.[644] Perhaps even more striking than the positive presentation of the attitude of Romanian authorities as compared to the "other Socialist countries" is the way the so-called "ransom" is presented. In both *Istoria contemporană a României*, which is actually teaching material for a course held at one of the biggest private universities in Romania, Spiru Haret University, and the history textbook, the process through which the Romanian state allowed the migration of Jews and Germans only in exchange for hard currency is presented as a "sort of a 'ransom'", through "agreements" with the governments of Israel and Germany.[645] The interpretation of the context of Jewish and German migration during Communism looks like an attempt to normalize Romania's authoritarian Communist rule: members of national minorities were able to migrate, unlike in the other Socialist countries, and

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[643] Ioan Scurtu, *Istoria contemporană a României (1918-2007)* (Bucharest: Ed. Fundației România de Mâine, 2007): 159.
[644] Scurtu et al., *Istoria românilor*, 211.
[645] Ibid.; Scurtu, *Istoria contemporană*, 159.

this migration took place through "agreements", an innocuous word. Nothing is said about the long years of waiting for the exit visa from Romanian authorities, about the sums of money potential migrants were obliged to pay, in legal forms or as a bribe, on a local level, all in all about the entire discretionary system ruling these migrations.

The historiographic representations of the German minority in Communist Romania introduce the image of the Germans as victims of the regime, suffering on the one hand the same deprivations and being subjected to the same repressive measures as the rest of the population, and on the other hand undergoing supplementary privations, i.e. deportations and migration, on their basis of being German. Thus, the fate of the German community during Communism becomes part of a broader argumentation concerning the criminal nature of the regime, which finally resulted in the official sanctioning of the Report of the Presidential Commission for the Analysis of the Communist Dictatorship in Romania. The Report also lists the "selling" of Jews and Germans amongst the acts for which Communism should be condemned.

Nevertheless, Scurtu's short considerations about the fate of the German minority, although not fundamentally at odds with the representation explicated above, suggest there is a possibility, even if definitely not mainstream for the moment, that the fate of Germans in Romania under Communism be also interpreted as a case of "positive discrimination". After all, in a context in which *grosso modo* everybody wanted to leave, Germans, on the basis of their ethnicity, had an extra chance. Undoubtedly, at the moment this interpretation is not in the scholarly foreground, yet its seeds are already planted and it could become more widespread than it currently is.

## 7.6. Conclusions

The purpose of this chapter has been to present and analyze the representations of the German minority in post-1989 Romanian historiographic products. The writing of history is strongly linked with the question of national identity; consequently, investigating representations of otherness in written history actually tells a lot about matters adjacent to the

object being represented. In the present case, discerning and analyzing how the German minority is presented and represented in post-1989 Romanian historiography discloses links to a wider interpretative framework, in which other relationships and other identification discourses occupy a central place.

Thus, the colonization of Transylvanian Saxons is argumentatively used in order to provide answers to interrogations appertaining to the more delicate Romanian-Hungarian relationship and so are other moments in Saxon history in Transylvania. Considering the constant Romanian-Hungarian conflict and the role national historiography traditionally took for itself, namely that of appropriately solving the conflict, the interpretation of Saxon colonization in Transylvania as one consolidating the unquestionable mantra of Romanian writing of history, appears to be sensible. By unquestionable mantra of Romanian historiography I mean the questions of Romanian anteriority in Transylvania and of Romanian demographic superiority.

Further on, the development of Romanian-Saxon relationships in the course of history is open to various interpretations. Conspicuous is the representation of Saxons as urbanisers, conveyors of various civilizing features in Transylvania, such as the printed word or an advanced agriculture, very much compatible with the images of the German minority in Romania presented in the previous two chapters, albeit the historiographic discourse often tends to be subtler and more moderate than the political discourse or the mass-media discourse. There are contesting representations as well, yet the overall image is rather that of Saxons as "good neighbours".

This discourse is consolidated when looking at the place Germans are having in the presentation of Greater Romania, at times locus of contestation, yet more often of scholarly enthusiasm with nationalistic undertones. Once again, in a self-understood and overtly verbalized comparison with the Hungarian population in Romania, Saxons, Swabians, and not only them, fare quite well.[646] Nonetheless, the honeymoon with the Romanian state is not seen

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[646] For the case of Bukovina Germans, see for example Daniel Hrenciuc, *Continuitate și schimbare: integrarea minorităților naționale din Bucovina istorică în regatul României Mari (1918-1940). Vol. I: perspectiva național-liberală (1918-1928)* (Rădăuți: Ed. Septentrion, 2005) and *Continuitate și schimbare: integrarea minorităților naționale din Bucovina istorică în regatul României Mari (1918-1940). Vol. II (1928-1940)* (Suceava: Ed. Mușatinii, 2007). Hrenciuc is much more critical of the minority situation in Greater Romania, yet he does not voice his criticism from a Romanian national(ist) position, but rather from that of a nostalgic of the Habsburg order, supplanted by the Balkanist dubious ethics of the Bucharest authorities.

as having lasted long, considering the two subsequent dramas, i.e. National-Socialism and Communism, both with long term consequences for the community. The allegiance to the former ideology of a significant part of the German elite in Romania is not properly analyzed in Romanian historiography, which prefers to place the phenomenon in the more innocuous and victimizing logics of an implacable tragedy, for which the blame is to be found mainly, if not exclusively, outside the Saxon and the Swabian communities.

The consolidation of the representation of Germans in Romania as victims takes then place through the presentation of the anti-German measures of the Communist regime, more precisely the deportations to the Soviet Union (and to the Bărăgan Plain, the "Romanian Siberia") and the "selling" during Ceaușescu's rule. The common interpretation of these phenomena is one contributing to the official criminalisation of the Communist regime in Romania, a perfect example of official history enabling the imposition of memory. Consequently, Germans become once again an argumentative instrument fitting a wider interpretative framework of Romanian historiography.

# 8. Conclusions

In this dissertation, I have undertaken a qualitative and interpretive investigation of the way the German minority is represented in post-1989 Romania. My main argument is that a phenomenon that can be aptly termed "philo-Germanism without Germans" is best comprehended if analyzed with a theoretical emphasis on "social memory" and integrated in a conceptual framework that has "Euro-Orientalism", "self-orientalization" and "intimate colonization" at its core. In other words, the way the German minority is represented in contemporary Romania is most fittingly explicated if one grants particular attention to the post-1989 socio-political context, i.e. the discursive frenzy related to "Europe", understood in both its political and cultural dimensions, permeating the entirety of Romanian society especially after the fall of Communism, yet at the same time related to a much longer intellectual tradition.

Fundamentally, I analyzed three, tightly interconnected, yet different discursive fields, in which issues related to memory and identity are often present (politics, print media, and historiography). Consequently, I have discerned a series of fundamentally positive representations of Germanness in the Romanian context, slightly different from one discursive field to another, yet all of them apt to be explained through the recourse to concepts such as "self-orientalism" and "intimate colonization". All three discursive fields have been analyzed separately, with specific conclusions drawn from each.

Looking at the issues of minority politics and the politics of memory, I underlined the tenuous path of coping with minority issues following the fall of Communism, despite a short-lived enthusiasm in the immediate aftermath of the 1989 Revolution. Fundamentally, I showed that Germans have often been surrounded by sympathy, first and foremost on a discursive level, but to a smaller extent on more concrete levels as well. An analysis of discourses produced at various moments by high-ranked Romanian officials supports my argument that the philo-Germanism without Germans is intrinsically connected to a "self-orientalizing" view of Romanian identity and to an ethnic hierarchy according to which Germans fare better than Romanians, but also better than the other "others" of Romanian identity (Hungarians, Jews, Roma). Germans become a resource for Romania's Europeanness, as they are

discursively referred to in various Europeanizing frameworks. The image of Transylvanian Saxons and Banat Swabians as disseminators of high culture and of Western civilization in Romania, a country part of a liminal and vaguely identified Central/Eastern European/Balkan region, is thus reproduced and legitimized in the highest ranks of the Romanian political echelon.

Yet there is more to say about the way the Germans are discursively and even legally treated by Romanian political actors. Having stated that representations of the German minority in post-1989 Romania are actually part of a much broader system of representations and that they are strongly interlinked with both self-identification discourses and with representations of other "others", such as Hungarians, Jews or Roma, I proposed a reading of some of the aforementioned discourses and actions precisely with a view towards these other representations. In some cases, the juxtaposition of Germans and Hungarians is straightforward. In other words, Germans (unlike Hungarians) are entitled to efforts that the Romanian government is willing to undertake: the former deserve what the latter do not.

In other cases, such a comparative reading calls for a subtler approach. The absence of conflicts or debates is also telling. Various attempts by Hungarian governments to intervene on behalf of the ethnic Hungarians living in Romania have been constantly rejected by Romanian authorities, on the basis of an ideology arguing against the potential discrimination of other Romanian citizens as a consequence of the rights that the Hungarian state attempted to grant to ethnic Hungarians abroad. The vehement opposition of Romanian officials to the so-called Status Law is more than telling in this respect. At first glance, this has nothing to do with the German minority, being fundamentally a Romanian-Hungarian issue. In terms of Romania's foreign affairs, this is, indeed, the case. Nonetheless, a comparative observation of Romanian-Hungarian and Romanian-German bilateral relationships easily leads to the conclusion that in similar cases the approach of the Romanian state is different. Germans in Romania have enjoyed *de facto* specific favours, whereas in analogous matters Hungarians have not. If the former are an uncontested resource of Romania's Europeanness, also underlined by their kin-state Germany, a key state in the process of European integration, the latter are an object of legislative strife. A Romanian

hierarchization of minorities thus becomes visible, with Germans clearly faring best.

The hierarchization of minority groups and the "self-orientalization" I referred to throughout this dissertation are discernible not only in overt memory and identity discourses related to the Germans in Romania, but also in subtle absences and in comparative readings of similar processes and phenomena. The abovementioned example, related to the Hungarian minority, is but one amongst many. Another such example is the existence of official apologies expressed in the name of the Romanian state for "selling" the Germans, compared to the absence of apologies expressed towards the Jewish community, which was the subject of very similar policies. Understanding how Germans are represented in post-1989 Romania is not a simple and straightforward process, but it implies grasping an entire, much wider network of significations and significants. Furthermore, it involves addressing, at least in part, this wider network.

Representations of the German minority in the discursive field of post-1989 Romanian print media have in many ways obvious similarities with the ones detected in the political discursive field. This is in itself a clear indicator that German prestige is widespread, cutting across interests and discourses originating from a multitude of domains. Nonetheless, considering its internal structure and the more varied nature of topics that can be and are addressed in a mass-media discourse, representations of Germans as produced, reproduced and disseminated through this medium do not simply mirror those expressed through political discourses, but also address other features associated with Germanness.

My analysis of three quality newspapers, displaying *grosso modo* different political preferences, and of three weeklies, also targeting different readerships, revealed a general consensus regarding the positive aspects of the former German presence in Romania. Being empirically acquainted with a series of other mass-media products, from periodicals to TV shows, I can speak of a general agreement with respect to the extremely positive input of the Germans in Transylvania and Banat. I have discerned a series of particular recurrent tropes, placing a spotlight on an array of features associated with Germanness in the post-1989 Romanian setting, some of them fundamentally

contextual, whilst others are tributary to an older tradition of representing the German.

My framing of various images elicited in association with the German minority after the fall of Communism is not axiomatic, yet I have purposefully shown that beyond the concrete manifestations of such representations lie deeper questions and answers related to Romanian identity and to alternate representations of otherness. Thus, recording German migration from Romania to Germany or, the other way around, exceptional acts of return of ethnic Germans or writing about Saxons and Swabians who decided not to leave their Romanian homeland, reveals to the careful reader a series of recurrent interrogations regarding self-identification. Hence, representing Germans becomes a particular type of response to such interrogations. Furthermore, a specificity of the print media discourses I analyzed is related to the fact that Romanian representations of the German minority and internal representations from within the community seem to overlap. One of the main reasons for this apparent overlap has to do with the fact that Transylvanian Saxon and Banat Swabian authors and personalities are present in the pages of Romanian publications (most often in *Formula As*), either through interviews published in a verbatim manner or by signing articles on issues related to the German minority. Thus, Romanian German self-identification discourses are present in Romanian publications not only as self-identification discourses, but also under the guise of discourses on otherness.

Following the demise of the Communist regime in 1989, mass-media accounts have been suffocated, from the very beginning, by overt references to "Europe", understood paradoxically as a standard to be attained, and also as a cultural reality Romanians are entitled to belong to on the basis of their presumed European identity. In this latter context, the half a century of Soviet-inspired Communist rule has been perceived as an unwanted decoupling of the European umbilical cord. Germans could easily fit in these paradoxical and in fact contrasting representations. On the one hand, their exodus, understood fundamentally as a consequence of the Communist regime, stood as an argument that Europe is indeed a standard not yet attained. On the other hand, their presence in Romania, even if mostly in the past tense, stood and stands as a proof of Romania's European character.

By endowing the German with such positive features, transforming them into epitomes of Europeanization, a model to be emulated by the European-yet-not-so-European Romanians, the mass-media identification and memorialization discourses I have looked into showed to have splendidly appropriated and internalized the various commonplaces on Western superiority as compared to the East. Furthermore, they are also producing and reproducing narratives of symbolic geographies, according to which the more Western parts of Romania, i.e. Transylvania and Banat, are more civilized than the more Eastern parts, also on the basis of the former German presence.

At the same time, emphasis is being placed on what I called Saxon and Swabian "lastness", on the fact that the Germans present in mass-media accounts are actually the last Germans, representatives of an extinct species, to be appreciated and admired precisely because there are so few of them. A discourse tightly interconnected to this representation is the discourse of nostalgia, in fact a response to the "accelerated rhythms of life and historical upheavals".[647] Thus, discursively surrounding the Germans with love and regrets, deploring the rupture taking place through their migration from Transylvanian and Banat villages to Germany, becomes actually an act of longing for the good days of yore, emphasizing the ambivalent coexistence of modernity and nostalgia. There is a paradox that no discourse can manage to properly eschew: Germans in Romania, historically one of the most important minority groups in the country, stand for an absence, rather than for a presence. This absence seems in a way to reemphasize the words of Alexander Kiossev, regarding the way the European Other represents all that "self-colonizing cultures" lack.[648] Romania lacks its Germans, yet this leads to another interesting phenomenon: Germanness in Romania becomes a value also on the basis of its scarcity. Romania lacks its Germans, hence the few who still live in the country are endowed with an added value on the basis of their "lastness".

It is not per chance that the weekly *Formula As* carries the banner of such representations, although faithfully followed by other publications and

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[647] Svetlana Boym, *The Future of Nostalgia* (New York: Basic Books, 2001), XIV.
[648] Alexander Kiossev, "Notes on Self-Colonising Cultures," in *Art and Culture in post-Communist Europe*, ed. Bojana Pejić and David Elliott (Stockholm: Moderna Museet / Modern Museum, 1999), 114-17.

through other channels as well. The said weekly specializes in presumably restoring learnings long ago forgotten, from "granny's recipes" to alternative, natural healing cures. Furthermore, these come hand in hand with an appraisal of Orthodox values and of the spirituality associated with them. *Formula As* is paradigmatically nostalgic, yet one of the most fascinating aspects of this nostalgia is its perfect blending with representations of Germanness in Romania. The recent interventions of the Prince of Wales, for whom Transylvania and its Saxon architectural and agricultural heritage are a perfect expression of his professed return to Europe's roots, are also very much supporting this image.

Moreover, representations of the German minority in the print media are also much better comprehended if conjoined with how Hungarians or Roma are portrayed. The wider network of representations I was referring to throughout this entire dissertation and earlier in this chapter also functions in the case of mass-media. Conjoining the analysis of representations of Germans and Hungarians or of Germans and Roma opens the possibility for relevant comparative observations, once again in favour of the former, who fare well not only wherever Romanians do not, but also wherever other others do not.

Finally, I have looked into post-1989 Romanian historiographic products, attempting to discern the role played by representations of Germanness in narratives about Romanian history or about the history of Romanians. First and foremost, history is perhaps the scene of one of the most intricate relationships with memory and identity. Strongly interlinked and interdependent, history, memory and identity are not one and the same thing. The former elaborates the latter two, gives them shape and meaning, whilst at the same time taking its own meaning from them.

Unlike political and mass-media discourses, the writing of history is usually bound to follow chronology, to depict a narration leading from a specific point in the past to another specific point in the past or in the present. Romanian Germans are thus present at various moments in Romanian history, starting, of course, with the colonization of Transylvanian Saxons in the 12th century. Although in general historiography provides a more nuanced representation of Saxons and Swabians, their integration in more general interpretative paradigms cannot be eschewed. Furthermore, once again

German presence in Romania is argumentatively used in order to provide an answer to interrogations related rather to Romanian-Hungarian relationships, as for example the interpretation of Transylvanian Saxon colonization shows. German colonization in Transylvania and also in Banat is fundamentally the object of a teleological, progress-related understanding of history.

Having brought a more advanced agriculture in the colonized regions, having contributed to the urban development of Transylvania, Germans are practically presented as conveyors of Western civilization to places and people in need of top-down education. Thus, the Saxon and Swabian self-identification, very much prevalent in the interwar period, of civilizers of the uncultured Europe, of disseminators of Europeanness, seems to have been appropriated in Romanian texts. A very pragmatic reason can be discerned in this respect, also valid in the case of mass-media discourses: the capacity of Romanian German authors to present their messages in Romanian-speaking discursive fields. Thus, the language barrier is, of course, overcome and at the same time, German self-identification finds its way in Romanian identity and memory discourses.

However, this is only one aspect of the issue. Another one is, as already stated, the capacity of representations of Germanness to be semantically used, backing up Romanian-friendly arguments in contested history issues. That these contentious issues are almost without exception objects of conflict between a Romanian and a Hungarian view goes almost without saying. In the same context, extremely interesting is also the transformation of Transylvanian Saxons into voices of authority, on the basis of their Germanness, whenever intellectuals and historians of Saxon ethnicity back up Romanian claims in Transylvania.

The representation of Germans in Greater Romania follows a similar logics: it is fundamentally presented in positive, luminous terms, perfectly compatible with the wider representation of the interwar period as the golden age of Romanian history. However, representations of Germans which fundamentally derive out of identity-endowing paradigms of Romanian history, such as the question of Romanian anteriority and demographic superiority in Transylvania, the question of Romanian victimhood under Hungarian dominion in Transylvania, or the question of Greater Romania as a golden age in Romanian history, are bound to eschew critical issues related to

the almost axiomatic character of the aforementioned questions/claims. Looking at recent history, the most salient example of the sort is the absence from Romanian historiography of a truly enlightening and analytical critique of the Saxon and Swabian slip towards National-Socialism, taking place at the same time with the growth of extremism in entire Europe, Romania making no exception. Consequently, even if the question of German national identity cannot and does not eschew addressing questions related to German responsibility related to the Second World War and to the Holocaust, the question of German identity in Romania manages to do that, and Romanian historiography uncritically accepts this lack of a profound process of coming to terms with the past. Moreover, the question of German victimhood in Romania during Communism receives, in all three discursive fields I looked into, much more attention. Official memory also legitimizes it.

Despite the apparent peculiarity of this phenomenon that can be called "philo-Germanism without Germans", it can be compared to situations in other countries in the former Socialist bloc. In the second chapter of this dissertation, I have referred to Sigrid Rausing's considerations on representations of Swedishness in Estonia led to similar conclusions. Representing Western "others" in positive terms and constructing memory discourses emphasizing the role of such Western "others" in the development of one's own historical identity seems to be directly related to the Europeanizing aspirations of Central- and Eastern European countries. On the Estonian relationship to Swedes, Rausing noted that it was actually a "relationship to a neighbour that also represents an imagined future and the what-might-have-been of the past".[649]

*Mutatis mutandis*, her observation perfectly accounts for the Romanian relationship to the German neighbours: on the one hand, it elicits images of a proper future Westernization of Romania, whilst on the other hand, it provides an excellent material out of which memory and identity discourses related to the past can be moulded, also underlining Romania's historical belonging to Europe. The fact that Eastern European societies are actively looking for internal "Western" others in order to prove their belonging to Europe is but a clear indicator of the hegemonic nature of the ongoing

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[649] Sigrid Rausing, *History, Memory, and Identity in Post-Soviet Estonia. The End of a Collective Farm* (Oxford: Oxford University Press), 5.

relationship between the two parts of the continent and at the same time of the appropriation by elites and ordinary people of representations reinforcing a mental West-East divide. The Romanian case illustrates this quest.

On a comparative note, the present study of representations of the German minority and henceforth of Germanness in the post-1989 Romanian context can also be seen as communicating with the rather recent interest granted to Germanness abroad. The prestige with which the German minority is contemporarily endowed within the wider Romanian society seems to be rather a *sui generis* case, if one makes abstraction of the Baltic countries. Poland for example overstresses through contradistinction the peculiarity of the Romanian case. Both empirical observations and research show that memories and representations of Germanness tend to be negatively imbued in some of the countries in Central- and Eastern Europe, Poland being perhaps the most salient of such cases. Analyzing the image of the ethnic German in Polish cinema after the Second World War, Eugeniusz Cezary Król reached the conclusion that the quest for a "good ethnic German" is fruitless, thus emphasizing the perception of the German as the quintessential enemy in Poland.[650] Although the post-1989 political context brought forth a much needed revaluation of Polish-German relationships, the fabric of traumatic collective memory does not get easily softened.[651] Gerhard Kosellek has also remarked the antagonistic representations of Germans and Poles in Silesia and their literary instantiations, noticing nonetheless that they are mainly a 20th century phenomenon. In this context, he mentioned the one-dimensional character of the portrayal of the Silesian German.[652]

The historical experiences of German occupation during the Second World War in particular and of interethnic enmity and conflict in general continue to shape, in part, the social and cultural representations of Germanness in countries such as Poland or Czech Republic, especially since they are deeply embedded in the past.[653] Karl Cordell and Stefan Wolff noted

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[650] Eugeniusz Cezary Król, "Das Bild des ethnischen Deutschen im polnischen Film," transl. Bernd Karwen, in *Die "Volksdeutschen" in Polen, Frankreich, Ungarn und der Tschechoslowakei. Mythos und Realität*, ed. Jerzy Kochanowski and Maike Sach (Osnabrück: fibre Verlag, 2006), 367-89.

[651] Karl Cordell and Stefan Wolff, *Germany's Foreign Policy Towards Poland and the Czech Republic: Ostpolitik Revisited* (London: Routledge, 2005).

[652] Gerhard Kosellek, "Deutsche und Polen in Schlesien," in Heuberger, Suppan and Vyslonzil, *Das Bild vom Anderen*, 77-92.

[653] For the Czech case and the construction of the German as the "other" in relationship to Czech national identity, see Hugh LeCaine Agnew, "Czechs, Germans, Bohemians? Images of

the prevalence of anti-German prejudice in the Czech Republic and the continuing portrayal of the German as the archenemy in history textbooks and even in mass-media discourses.[654]

This is very much telling of the proteic and contextual nature of both external representations of Germanness and German self-identification discourses, both inside and outside of Germany. These two research areas and their interconnections have recently started to be yet again attractive for scholars.[655] German minorities in Central- and Eastern Europe are not analyzed only from a historical perspective, as the academic trend used to be, but emphasis is being placed on their current situation and on issues such as "identity" and "memory" as well. My own dissertation enriches the body of knowledge in this respect as well, presenting a case study in which discourses on the German other and discourses on the German self are mutually communicating. I have attempted to overcome the parochialism often inherent in case study analyzes by assessing representations of Germanness in Romania in relationship to other cases of ethnic difference and by placing the research question within a broader conceptual framework, also taking into account the wider geographical setting.

Directly linked with the research question my dissertation aimed to answer and with the above-quoted studies, new research avenues can be detected. A multitude of questions related to the historical and contemporary experiences of German minorities in Europe and elsewhere have not yet been answered. Interethnic coexistence and enmity, mutual perceptions, political uses of the German-related past in other countries are all subjects worth being investigated in new ways and under the aegis of the rediscovered interest for a comprehensive understanding of the field of "German studies".

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Self and Other in Bohemia to 1848," in *Creating the Other: Ethnic Conflict and Nationalism in Habsburg Central Europe*, ed. Nancy M. Wingfield (New York: Berghahn Books, 2003): 56-77 and Jaroslav Střítecký, "Wer zuletzt lacht. Tschechen und Deutschen in den böhmischen Ländern," in Heuberger, Suppan and Vyslonzil, *Das Bild vom Anderen*, 71-75.

[654] Cordell and Wolff, *Germany's Foreign Policy*, 117.

[655] Stefan Wolff (ed.), *German Minorities in Europe: Ethnic Identity and Cultural Belonging* (New York: Berghahn, 2000); Krista O'Donnell, Renate Bridenthal and Nancy Reagin (ed.), *The Heimat Abroad. The Boundaries of Germanness* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2005); Mathias Schulze et al. (ed.), *German Diasporic Experiences. Identity, Migration, and Loss* (Waterloo, Ont.: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2008); Ruth Wittlinger, *German National Identity in the Twenty-First Century. A Different Republic after all?* (Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan, 2010); Andreas Kossert, *Kalte Heimat. Die Geschichte der deutschen Vertriebenen nach 1945* (Munich: Siedler Verlag, 2008).

Following the Second World War, one of the greatest points of contention regarding the study of experiences of German minorities in Central- and Eastern Europe and of German identity in general was its turning easily into a prop for various, right-oriented, political uses. The time has come to move away from such, ideologically laden, approaches towards more neutral and at the same time more profound ones. In this context, a series of tentative questions can and should be addressed. Have memory discourses related to the German past in Central- and Eastern Europe and their reception in any way changed in the recent past? How is the multitude of actors in the region vying for power over representations of the past framing Germanness? Can a German victimhood identification coexist with the acknowledgment of the responsibility for the Holocaust and for the Second World War? How is Germanness represented elsewhere, in Latin and North America, in the former African colonies of the German *Reich*, or in Australia and New Zealand? It is to be hoped that further studies will provide critical answers to such questions, as such research topics are coming to the foreground of scholarly discourses.

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