THE IMAGE OF ROMANIAN STATE IN BUKOVINA BETWEEN THE TWO WORLD WARS

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Abstract:For Bukovina, the inter-war period represented the administrative, economic and political connection to the Romanian national state. However, this process was very complex and involved all of Bukovina's economical and political forces. Still, the reality of the unification disappointed many Bukovina citizens due to their status in Greater Romania and the difficult administrative unification process of the provinces in the Romanian state's national project. In this period, 'the myth of the corrupt inhabitant of the Old Kingdom' appeared. Even if it has no basis, this myth still exists.
The enthusiastic approach to the Union gradually disappeared and was replaced by the disappointment of the administrative unification, the hurting of the local pride and the loss of a privileged status for the Northern Province. Along with this, the nostalgia for the correctitude of the Austrian regime arose.
The Bukovina intelligentsia was the first one to criticize the flaws of the Romanian inter-war political system, the administrative corruption, and the vices of politicians from Bucharest. The frustrations of Bukovina inhabitants derived as a provincial complex due to the superiority and the arrogance of the Bucharest authorities in dealing with them. The nomination of the persons outside Bukovina to the management of the counties and state institutions led to numerous complaints.
The image of the 'regatean', the inhabitant of the Old Kingdom, was a negative one, associated with corruption, demagogic politics, 'Balkanism', and 'Levantism'. To this situation, a naïve sense of superiority of people from Bukovina added, which had its origins in the appurtenance to the Central European civilization, under Austrian leadership.

Keywords: administrative unification, Bukovina, Old Kingdom, corruption, ethnical communities

The period between the two World Wars meant for Bukovina province the administrative, economic and political inclusion in Romania. This process was extremely complex and involved all economical and political forces of the province. After the Union statement from November 1918, its acceptance by King Ferdinand in December the same year and the recognition of 1918 through 1919 papers of the Peace Treaty from Saint Germain-en-Laye, Bukovina was in a new stage of its history. The large number of studies and articles regarding Romania's unification could cause a reaction on the reason of this study. However, the complexity of this process did not make yet the subject of great historiography debates. In this text, I propose a few negative issues dealing with Bukovina's integration into Romania's borders and the reaction that appeared in this space regarding the process of integration. The differences of collective mentality between Bukovina and the rest of country, the image of the Northern part of the country regarding the centralization policies of Bucharest, and the frustration generated by these new rules will make the study completely useful, from my point of view.

One of the laws established the administrative status of the province, mentioned two state ministers without portfolio appointed in Chernivtsi and Bucharest. The one from Chernivtsi ruled an Administrative Service, divided into nine departments ruled by a Council. The Bucharest minister needed to consult with the one from Chernivtsi in the problem of choosing the public employees,

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wires, railways, information department, gendarmerie and police[1]. The first two ministers of Bukovina, appointed in January 1 1919, were Iancu Flondor in Chernivtsi and Ion Nistor in Bucharest. The two had different visions on how Bukovina needed to be ruled and how it was supposed to integrate into the structures of Romanian state. Flondor was hoping in a decentralization process and the status of a large autonomy that was supposed to keep on the advantages the region had before.

Nistor believed in the solution of centralization, in the national unified state even with the risk of decreasing the local autonomy. The disagreements between them made Iancu Flondor to resign, in April 1919, thus that Ion Nistor was appointed to hold both positions. In 1920, Nistor changed the members of the Administrative Council of Bukovina, preparing the transfer of their duties to the Romanian government. On April 4, 1920, those departments were closed; their duties were taken over by Romanian government. These were the first visible signs of total inclusion and unification of Bukovina with Romania.

At national level, the presidents of Council of Ministers, Alexandru Vaida Voivod, Alexandru Averescu and Ion I.C. Bratianu worked to unify the country's political and administrative status, opting for a strong centralization. This option was a real problem for the internal situation of the province. The two trends that occurred - the desire to centralize Bukovina versus decentralization - created a conflict that marked the political life of Bukovina. Around the first option, the centralism, were grouped the Bukovina politicians led by Ion Nistor, who used "Gazeta Bucovinei" newspaper for disseminating their ideas. Their opponents, led by Iancu Flondor, formed the "Administration of the country" movement and claimed the need to form a decentralized state; they were grouped around the "Bucovina" newspaper. Autonomists went so far as to declare that it was necessary "to build a sanitary fence against corruption work of agents of Mr. Constantinescu and the work of the Liberal Party."[2]. Flondor led a political party called the Party of Romanians in Bukovina, but it did not live long[3]. This conflict, known at that time as "Bucovina crisis" was the starting point of political struggle in Bukovina between the wars.

Thus, his followers got close to the liberals while the "Administration of the country"[4] movement, as it was called, turned to the opposition parties. Flondor Iancu became an opponent of the government in Bucharest. At a conference in June 1919, he stated in connection to the minorities from Bukovina, that he wanted to end the "deep daily dissatisfactions of all sorts of population from the province caused by the current regime"[5]. Flondor wanted that process of unification to take into account the previous status of the Duchy of Bukovina and to occur gradually, in several stages. This battle marked the political life in Bukovina to the highest level. Nevertheless, the centralizing policy actions opposed the wishes of "squire of Storojinet" favoring his opponent, Nistor. The conflict between those two worsened, with insults and slanderous accusations, from irreconcilable positions. Flondor even asked the replacement of Nistor. However, Nistor's reply was to discredit his opponent that remained in Chernivtsi. Finally, Iancu Flondor ceased the arguments[6]. Flondor Iancu's resignation on April 17, 1919 resulted in aggregation functions by Ion Nistor and put an end to the political conflict that dominated the early years after the Union. Instead, Ion Nistor returned to Bukovina and implemented an entire political program, as was the "true golden age" of his activity[7]. He practically ruled Bukovina, until May 1920, when

[1] Vlad Gafiţa, *Iancu Flondor (1865-1924) şi mişcarea naţională a românilor din Bucovina*, Iaşi, Junimea Publishing House, 2008, p.274;
[2] R. Economu, *Unirea Bucovinei. 1918*, Bucureşti, Romanian Cultural Foundation, 1994, p.56;
[3] Vlad Gafiţa, *op. cit.* p.297;
[4] R. Economu, *op. cit.*, p. 53;
[5] Central National History Archives (onwards: A.N.I.C.), Royal House, Oficial Documents Oficiale. Part II, Ferdinand I, 11/1919, f.1;
[6] Vlad Gafiţa, *op .cit.*, p.294;
[7] Doina Alexa, *Ion Nistor – dimensiunile personalităţii politice şi culturale*, Rădăuţi, Bucovina-Basarabia Publishing House, 2000, p.185;

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Dorin Popovici replaced him. The conflict between the two sides ended when Iancu Flondor died. After the disappearance of Bukovina function of delegate minister, in 1920, the integration of the province in Romania followed, until 1922 when the old autonomy was deleted. This decision intrigued Bukovina's people[8].

From the administrative point of view, during 1918-1925 Bukovina was divided into 11 counties. The new administrative-territorial division in 1925 consecrated in Romanian Bukovina only five counties namely Campulung Chernivtsi, Radauti, Storojinet and Suceava. In addition, the union of 1918 enabled the introduction of the Romanian language in administration, justice, and schools. By a decision of the Council of Ministers, minorities had to learn Romanian for one year. Speaking the official language of the state was conditional for the employees in the public sector to maintain their jobs. In addition, speaking the official language of the state was a condition laid down by the Decree-Law of June 16, 1919, which recognized Romanian citizenship for the inhabitants of Bukovina[9].

Due to the necessity to introduce Romanian language in the administration various people were brought from the Old Kingdom; they spoke good Romanian. Pride Bukovina was recognized: "Bukovina people are proud people who do not accept to be humiliated." Appointment to various positions of people from the Old Kingdom aroused discontent among the locals. This discontent often led to violence and murder incidents. A witness described the murder that took place in the early 1920s when Mihoveni, the chief of police, a violent man from Dobrogea, was killed at a village celebration. The case was hushed up and received no feedback[10].

A number of cities that had German names were changed into Romanian names, including street names in Bukovina cities[11]. Measures falling within the broader project of Romanianization in newly annexed provinces generated a specific oppositionist current in Bukovina joined by both Romanians and the minorities. An original motion was the preservation of civil servants who wanted Austrian administration model without ethnicities and political affiliation[12]. Bukovina people repeatedly expressed their regret for the Austrian government and for the liberalism practiced in the region, compared with the "dominance from the banks of the Dambovita Byzantism"[13]. The dissatisfaction of Romanian population, especially in rural areas, came from the fact that the language was still German in Chernivtsi, both in institutions and on the street. On the other hand, the government in Bucharest wished a speedy implementation of the Romanian legislation because the "so-called Bukovina legislative autonomy is the mother of all attacks on Jewish that the German minority media throws at us"[14].

Breaking with the past, according to new government, consists in replacing the old Romanian officials by officials brought from the Old Kingdom. In the report cited, the situation in Bukovina was presented as catastrophic, Romanians being subjugated to Germany interests, which were supported by the Hebrew. The conclusion was that we should "start cleaning all the weeds from the Bukovina wheat, these being the German and Jewish evil", from the government, police, schools, and forestry administration[15].

Great complaints were generated by land reform. Although the atmosphere was relatively peaceful, there were complaints on the issue of rural land and urban civilians protested against late

[8] ***Буковина 1918-1940 рр.: Зовнішні вплив та внутрішній розвиток (Матеріали і документи)*, Чернівці, Зелена Буковина, 2005, p.63;

[9] Doina Alexa, *op. cit.*, p. 188;
[10] Mardarie Popinciuc, *Pentru Sfânta Cruce pentru Ţară*, Buenos Aires, 1985, 26-27;
[11] ***Буковина 1918-1940 рр…*, p.84-85;
[12] A.N.I.C. Ministry of Interior Archives, The General Police Department, 7/1919, f.29;
[13] Francisco Veiga, *Istoria Gărzii de Fier (1919-1941), Mistica ultranaţionalismului*, Bucureşti, Humanitas Publishing House, 1995, p.97;
[14] A.N.I.C. Ministry of Interior Archives, The General Police Department, 7/1919, f.33;
[15] *Ibid*, f.35;

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payment of wages, which created agitation[16]. These issues were the subject of heated debates and helped sour relations between Flondor Iancu and Ion Nistor. Only a few months after the promulgation of the agrarian law in October 1921, the peasants of Comanesti (Suceava County) complained to the Council of Ministers and President Alexandru Averescu paid a visit to the village. It had been leased for half a century and now became the property of a person who sold it to residents of neighboring villages and the locals could not be given land on the ground[17]. Dissatisfaction caused by land reform and the division of land broke in Humor, Storojinet and Radauti [18]. A Chernivtsi Police Inspectorate report in April 1920 stated that although land reform issues have been settled, many difficulties of the population were recorded in the mountains. The western Bukovina mountainous and sparsely populated region, recorded economic difficulties; the report quoted noting "some discontent in the mountains due to lack of food"[19]. Moreover, between 1922-1924, in Campulung County, at Poiana Stampei, Ostra, Frasin, and Vama uprisings of peasants took place. Such peasants had been overlooked when writing the appropriation act, a fact that drew the attention of government parties from Bucharest[20]. In addition, important representatives of the Ion Nistor group complained about "the bad management of the country by the current government, also criticizing about the misapplication of the agrarian reform"[21].

Gradually, the excitement caused by the accomplishment of the Union disappeared and was replaced by the disappointment of the administrative unification, by local wounded prides, by the loss of privileged status for the province situated in the northern part of the country but also because of the emergence of nostalgia for the Austrian regime's fairness.

The Bukovina intellectuals were the first who criticized the flaws of the Romanian interwar political system, the morals of the politicians from Bucharest and the administrative corruption. The frustrations of the Bukovina people came also from a provincial complex, the superiority and arrogance used in dealing with the decisional authorities from Bucharest increasing these feelings. The appointment of certain persons that did not originate in the region on leadership positions of the counties and state's institutions in Bukovina aroused new discontent. In addition, the Bukovinans' feeling was influenced by the fear of not transforming the province into a Transylvanian annex. The expression of this state of mind is reflected by many documents: "the systematic disregard of Bukovina from the part of Vaida's Transylvania's Government and the lack of a prominent personality amongst the National – Peasants from Bukovina"[22].

The historian Victor Neumann notices that the strong centralism promoted by the Romanian state "encouraged the superiority or inferiority complexes, mostly due to the intellectuals involved in politics"[23]. The desire of the central government to restrain the working area of the local politicians is explained by the need of centralization that would answer to the matter of unity of a newly recreated country. The Soviet danger, in the immediate proximity of the province, made the Bucharest government to adopt fast measures of centralization in order to prevent the centrifugal movements. The state of siege was declared, restraining the free movement, it was established a limited program for shops, and censorship was introduced[23]. Although the restrictive means were not excessively tough, they were generalized. The residents' reaction was to reject this direction. A resident of Zastavna declared that "in Romania, we are only teasels damned by Romania, thus that in Austria it was better and it was more justice"[23]. Ion Nistor - a certain resident from Vicovu de Sus, (no relation to the famous politician), revolted against the Romanian state "categorically claiming that it was better under the Austrians"[23]. And these examples are not singular.

[16] *Ibid*, 41/1921, f. 26;
[17] Dumitru Şandru, *Satul românesc între 1918 şi 1944*, Iaşi, Cronica Publishing House, 1996, p.62;
[18] A.N.I.C. Ministry of Interior Archives, The General Police Department, 2/1920, f. 17-18, and f.25;
[19] *Ibid*, f. 41;
[20] N. Adăniloaie, I. Dârdală, *Acţiuni ţărăneşti în Bucovina*, în „Studii – revistă de istorie", An XVI, 4/1963, p.877;
[21] A.N.I.C. Ministry of Interior Archives, The General Police Department, 23/1921, f.13-14;
[22] apud Mircea A. Diaconu, *Mişcarea „Iconar". Literatură şi politică în Bucovina anilor '30*, Iaşi, Timpul Publishing House, 1999, p.18;

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The Bukovinans' reactions also result from the political disputes. The Bukovina political life encountered substantial changes after 1918, determined by the Romanian authorities' intention to frame the province in the administrative structure of Greater Romania. Thus, the Bukovina Romanians were divided between the need of integrating much faster in the structures of the new national state and the desire to preserve a superior socio-economical statute, a consequence of the autonomy Bukovina had enjoyed within the Austro-Hungarian Empire. The Bukovinans' discontents were also amplified when the representatives of the Romanian's "military dictatorship" as it was labeled the government of Alexandru Averescu appointed the Bukovina's Minister. A Bukovina journalist wrote, "the Minister Nistor fell into disgrace and sir Flondor is too kind to be a good minister of the military dictatorship."

Instead, the rumor was that baron Starcea, labeled as "fierce Austrian lover" and "doubtful individual"[23], would be nominated. The image of "regatean", the inhabitant of the Old Kingdom was negative and it was connected to phenomena such as corruption, demagogic politicianism, "Balkanism", and "Levantism". A naïve superiority feeling of Bukovina inhabitants added to this; it derived from the idea of belonging to the Western Europe civilization, particularly that of Austria under its ruling. Some went that far that they proposed for a genuine "sanitary border" to be set out at the frontier of Bukovina and Moldavia[24]. In 1919, the reports of the Special Safety Service showed the existence of an unsettlement and discontent in connection to the local authorities' representatives, mainly among the minorities of Bukovina[25]. Sextil Puscariu, former university professor in Chernivtsi, believed that the politicians in the provinces that had joined Romania should not become involved in the struggles between parties of the Old Kingdom. Such parties had to disappear. It would be after, stated Puscariu that the Bukovina inhabitants and the Transylvanians would take their turn in refreshing the Romanian political life[26]. According to the model set by Romanian National Party of Transylvania, a section of this political force was incorporated in Bukovina. It fought for creating an opposition to the centralizing measures taken by the National Liberal Party. This group was led by an Academy member and was short-lived because it lost its identity[27].

The opposition became a constant in the political life; some politicians bearing less importance could not adjust to the Romanian democracy, with its uncertain mechanisms. The differences between the Bukovina politicians stem from the need to provide stability to their province, and the approaches the Bucharest government made did not answer these needs. During the first years, the dissidences oriented towards the liberal opposition, but became more radical afterwards and deviated towards the extreme right wing. The propaganda of left wing parties did not move far from this either. Except for anti-Semitism, the discourse of Bukovina social-democrats followed the general line of the inter-war elections speech: "the inheritance left by the National Liberal Party and the People's Party is corruption, usury, breaching laws, terror, high prices, heavy taxes, one's will, lack of schools, lack of social protection, lack of hospitals and doctors, thievery and waste of public funds". The commotion was maintained by the unpopular measures taken by the authorities of those times that the opposition parties used to their advantage. In this context, the attractiveness of right wing political forces increased; they had not been in power and the people had not criticized them. "The anti-Semitic propaganda is successful in Suceava, Campulung, Radauti, and Storojinet Counties, mainly because of the Jewish usurers. The teachers conducted this

[23] A.N.I.C. Ministry of Interior Archives, The General Police Department, 1/1920, f.256;
[24] Daniel Hrenciuc, *Continuitate şi schimbare: integrarea minorităţilor naţionale din Bucovina istorică în Regatul României Mari (1918-1940)*, vol. I *Perspectiva naţional-liberală (1918-1928)*, Rădăuţi, Septentrion Publishing House, 2005, p.64-65;
[25] Victoria Camelia Cotos, *Populaţia Bucovinei în perioada interbelică*, Iaşi, Demiurg Publishing House, 2009, p.69;
[26] I. Ciupercă, *Opoziţie şi putere în România anilor 1922-1928*, Iaşi, Al. I. Cuza University Publishing House, 1994, p.34;
[27] D. Marmeliuc, *Viaţa politică şi presa românilor bucovineni după Unire*, în „Zece ani de la Unire", coord. Ion Nistor, Cernăuţi, 1928, p. 256;

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propaganda: for example, in Suceava, in Vama, and in Ostra. They believed that the government was guilty because it was sold to the Jews"[28]. On the other hand, the social-democratic propaganda accused the government of encouraging and directing the birth of the National – Christian Defense League: "the capitalists and boyars guided the organization of N.C.D.L. by whose help it wants to control Romania. The boyars would like to introduce fascism like in Italy"[29].

The Bukovina inhabitants accused the governments of authoritarianism and disinterest in connection to their problems. "The pre-war generation believed that the nationalism process would end with Bukovina's Union to Romania settled to be at the most vaguely political. The result was that it educated a generation without a nationalist central axis that would be a categorical imperative in favor of Bukovina."[30] In the 1930s, the great demographical pressure in Bukovina and the large number of persons that did not benefit of the agrarian reform created a maneuver mass for the extreme right wing. Practically, the weaknesses of Romanian democracy, the intellectual unemployment, the poverty of the rural population contributed to the success of the extreme right, especially the legionary one. The model of Romania's moral regeneration attracted all social categories given its originality.

The sensibilities of Bukovina inhabitants and the naïve superiority to the Romanian politicianism generated powerful frustration feelings whose coverage was found in the political right extreme. Thus, one must not be surprised that Bukovina was one of the important headquarters of Romanian extreme right. The orthodox clergy that was extremely sensitive to nationalist speeches enhanced the general situation. The Faculty of Theology in Chernivtsi, organized according to the German school model, had a high reputation in Romania. However, the difficulty in finding a parish for the young priests and the Church's criticism towards political life made many graduates to show their sympathy to the conservatory ultranationalist extreme right. The participation of priests in the extreme right is easy to understand considering their sympathies. A priest in Chernivtsi sent an open letter to the authorities. His message indicates the clergy's disappointment towards politicianism and the solutions passed by politicians. "Our country can be governed to better serve us and only by Romanian idealist men", he wrote. "Idealist can be only a nationalist man. Materialism will dig the hole of disappearance, and democracy waits to sing at our funerals". For him, "democracy puts to sleep the Romanian nationalist energy", while "nationalism is the flame giving life to Romanian people". And his solution adopted the same path: "each true Romanian would testify from his heart that we would need a person like Mussolini or Hitler. Please God, give him to us!"[31] At the same time, a teacher in Valea Cosminului would ask, also in an opened letter, "down with failed and pale democracy, a plain mist curtain behind which dishonest men lurk (…) Let ‹‹numerus clausus›› apply for all fields of the Romanian life". The solutions he would foresee were "termination of political parties and of the Parliament" and "a legionary-constructive-corporatist party" should lead the country[32].

Even since the beginning, Bukovina had a distinct political behavior as against that of the Old Kingdom. This province's special situation, its multi-ethnic and multi-religion character, the complex of provincialism and the position of central authorities negatively amplified their feelings towards the new political reality. As well, many were disappointed in connection to their situation within the Greater Romania, and to the difficult administrative unification process of all provinces within the national project of the Romanian state. From a political point of view, the dissatisfactions derived from the Bukovinans' lack of interest to the struggle of political parties from the Old Kingdom, but also the fact that the government had appointed many mayors and that the Bukovina inhabitants were not correctly represented in the Bucharest Parliament.

[28] A.N.I.C. Ministry of Interior Archives, The General Police Department, 7/1931, f. 6-7;
[29] National Archives of Suceava., Fond a Documents Collection, XXVIII, 93/1926, f. 1;
[30] Mircea A. Diaconu, *op. cit.*, p.17;
[31] „Curentul", 18 may 1934, p.5;
[32] *Ibid*, din 12 september 1934, p.5;

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Bukovina was one of the provinces most heterogeneous from an ethnical point of view. Each community was able to maintain its national identity within the Greater Romania; it benefits of written press, school, and cultural institutions in its mother tongue. Romania's legislative framework allowed the minorities to keep their identity. However, the authorities did not always understand that they had to observe the legal statute of minorities, thus encouraging the nationalist manifestations.

The dissatisfactions of the ethnical communities to the situation of Bukovina within Romania rapidly emerged after the Union. On July 16, 1919 a Decree-law was signed granting Romanian citizenship to all those that lived in Bukovina on November 12, 1918[33]. The complex administrative unification processes confronted the Romanians with the representatives of the other ethnicities. In 1919, a political cleavage occurred in Bukovina; the situation of nationalities dominated it. On the other hand, the solution proposed by the government for the integration of minorities in the state's structures represented more their elimination from the administration and economy. Next, the Romanians in Bukovina were displeased with the large participation of minorities in governing the province; many of them believed that the Romanians were more disadvantaged in Romania than during the Austrian occupation. Often, the minorities were seen as suspicious and the authorities in Bukovina after the Union reprimanded them: "If you don't like the Romanian laws, move to Austria. Go to Vienna, go to America!"[34]. The minorities attempted to maintain their national individuality, while the Romanian population sought to become integrated in the political life of Romania by adhering to the tendencies of that era.

The Jews were the first that boycotted the Romanian assemblies, no matter their type, and refused to participate in the first elections; they also organized demonstrations and protests against the administration of the province[35]. The Romanian elite did not know how to use the economic and intellectual capital of the Jewish community, many of the members losing their jobs given the context of administration Romanization[36]. Lastly, having to cope with the new realities, they organized for defending their own identity facing the assimilation danger. Since 1919, the Jews in Chernivtsi publically manifested their discounted to the intentions of Bucharest government in connection to administrating Bukovina[37]. They were among the signatories of a memoir submitted to the Peace Conference in Paris, a fact that caused concern among the Bukovina Romanian leaders[38]. The most important community from a political and economic point of view was the Germans. After 1918, the Germans were in general discreet, seeking to become integrated in the new legislation of the Romanian state. The documents show that the Germans made up a quiet well-organized community but that had a separate opinion and rarely acted with other minority groups. Few incidents existed and they represented more reactions in favor of maintaining the national identity[39]. The authorities in Bucharest feared the German community that they saw as a bridge to the German imperialism. "Chernivtsi, wrote a document, was built by Vienna as center of German imperialism meant to be used as headquarters for directing the entire province" or "as center for dissemination of Germanism in Romania"[40]. Subsequently, the nationalism displayed by the Third Reich drew the German community of Bukovina. The Ukrainian minority was divided but also

[33] R. Economu, *op. cit.*, p.62;
[34] Dan Jumară, *Societăţile culturale academice româneşti din Bucovina în perioada interbelică*, Iaşi, Junimea Publishing House, 2005, p. 66;
[35] Ştefan Purici, *Românii şi evreii din Bucovina 1918-1923: împreună sau separat?*, în „Studia et Acta Historiae Iudaeorum Romaniae", VIII, coord. Silviu Sanie, Dumitru Vitcu, Bucureşti, Hasefer Publishing House, 2003, p.135-139;
[36] Mariana Hausleitner, *Rolul intelectualilor evrei în Europa Est-Centrală pornind de la exemplul Bucovinei*, în „Studia et Acta Historiae Iudaeorum Romaniae", IX, coord. Silviu Sanie, Dumitru Vitcu, Bucureşti, Hasefer Publishing House, 2005, p.270;
[37] A.N.I.C. Royal House, Oficial Documents Oficiale. Part II, Ferdinand I, 16/1919, f.13;
[38] *Ibid*, 19/1920, f.3;
[39] Idem, Ministry of Interior Archives, The General Police Department, 7/1919, f.24;
[40] *Ibid*, 7/1919, f.32-33;

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hostile to the Romanian state. Most of its members desired to form a Ukrainian state that would also comprise the northern part of Bukovina, thus that they rapidly entered a conflict with the Romanian nationalists. Another part, lured by the Bolshevik ideology, was attracted by a union project of Bukovina and Soviet Russia. Small part of it understood that it had to integrate in the structures of the Romanian state. The state authorities sought to lead a rapid Romanization policy of regions in northern Bukovina, where the majority population was the Slavic component[41]. The reaction of minorities was to reject the national projects of the Romanian state. For more than a century, the province had been a tolerant intercultural and inter-religion space. However, this peaceful life would stop during the interwar period.

Another important reform from the beginning of the interwar period was the election one. Following the legislative unification, Bukovina received 18 mandates for deputies, which was a 4.65% distribution of mandates. This percentage put Bukovina on the last but one place, far below the average that consecrated an over sizing of Parliament as against Romania's population[42]. Thus, the distribution of parliamentarian mandates in Bukovina upon taking into account the number of inhabitants was equitable but when compared to other Romanian regions, it was unfair. Creating an artificial election majority became the sole concern of the government, which led to a feeling of rejecting the system by the Bukovina inhabitants. The authoritarian measures taken by the government annulled the democratic inclines of an important part of population and led to losing confidence in the values of democracy. The reaction was as great, thus that the Bukovina electorate sought an alternative and reached intolerance and extremism. From here, the main anti-system vote marked the elections history of interwar Bukovina. Even Ion Zelea Codreanu complained in the Parliament of the abnormalities committed during the elections campaign of 1920 in Suceava County. "At one time, the army surrounded the city and for three days no child, woman, or man could enter it. The agents and thugs brought here from other cities voted using sequestered certificates."[43]

It is not by accident that the Bukovina counties had a different elections-related behavior as against that of the majority of Romania. Having a distinct electorate, the Chernivtsi, Campulung, Radauti, Storojinet, and Suceava Counties adopted the anti-government and even anti-system vote. In general, the Bukovina electorate was more prepared for the democratic game than that in other regions. The relative civilization, urbanization, and industrialization of this province made that the vote to be oriented according to the parties' platforms. The vote cast by Bukovina inhabitants in favor of the party that organized the elections was highly influenced by political convictions and not by the elections subculture that characterized that era. For example, in Chernivtsi County, 40% of the population was involved in non-agriculture activities, and 30% of the electorate in Chernivtsi and Campulung lived in the urban environment. The counties inhabited by a rural population residing in large villages, such as in the case of Raduti or Suceava, having a relatively high degree of literacy, would constantly vote against the political power represented by the model promoted by the Bucharest elite. This electorate had a specific behavior when faced with the ballot boxes. The important minority component of these counties, such as in the case of Storojinet, diversified the vote; the Germans, the Ukrainians, and the Polish had their own candidates. As well, a strong socialist tendency was found when expressing the electorate's political desires due to rejecting the parties in office, and not to a class-related conflict. Thus, the party that organized elections received in Bukovina electoral points below the average points in Romania. However, the main opposition

[41] A.N.I.C. Ministry of Interior Archives, The General Police Department, 7/1919, f.24-25;
[42] Cristian Preda, *Influenţa sistemelor electorale asupra sistemului de partide în România interbelică*, în „Studia Politica. Romanian Political Science Review, vol. II, nr. I, Bucureşti, 2002, p.59;
[43] *Totalitarismul de dreapta în România. Origini, manifestări, evoluţie, 1919-1927*, coord. Ioan Scurtu, Cristian Troncotă, Natalia Tampa, Dragoş Zamfirescu, Ion Bucur, Bucureşti, Institutul pentru Studiul Totalitarismului, 1996, doc.9, p.210;

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party surpassed the average in Romania[44]. The electoral behavior of Bukovina is another particular aspect that shows the reaction of that area's population to the Romanian state.

The conclusion of some experts that noticed the geopolitical turn point of Bukovina that "left" the Central Europe space for being included in the structures of a country located in the southeastern Europe must be considered also. The ethnical communities of Bukovina moved from a world of liberal values, of peaceful living together, to a space of nationalism, intolerance, and excess, due to the lack of modern democratic values[45]. From another perspective, an expert in the history of Bukovina wrote that after the Union the province "ceased its administrative and political experience, remaining just a representation at the collective mental level whose existence, during the Austrian period, was more or less idealized"[46].

The Romanianization process of some cultural institutions of the province such as the University of Chernivtsi, German Theater that later became National Theater, incorporation of Music and Dramatic Arts Conservatory did not bring the much desired stability. More, the contradictions between various ethnic communities in Bukovina became acute. Rumors of moving the University to Craiova, the matter of closing the National Theater and some Romanian schools and that of the disappearance of some local courts of law amplified the dissatisfactions. Many of the cultural articles written by the plethora of intellectuals in the interwar Bukovina hid in their text various political dissatisfactions. The influence of some prestigious intellectuals coming from the Old Kingdom channeled the energies of the local students to other currents on the right of the political spectrum. Removing the majority of minorities from the administration, rendering the bureaucracy and economic order Romanian, as well as the sensibilities and high regionalism of Bukovina represented the manner of rejecting the Romanization and centralization policy led by the Romanian state. On this context, the extreme right emerged. The local and regional particulars of Bukovina care allowed extremism to acquire a shape since its early age and the disappointment caused by the costs of integration in the structures of the Romanian state led to reluctance towards the political models proposed in Bucharest. Thus, the opposition to the political behavior in Greater Romania led to radical, anti-system, and anti-democracy options. The political life of Bukovina surpassed the post-Union crisis, but split the society into two factions. The Bukovina electorate then chose one of the sides according to their own options. If the centralists group remained relatively united, the ones supporting autonomy divided according to various Romanian political forces that appeared in Bukovina. However, such forces were always against the politics of government, no matter their political orientation. The flaws of Romanian society led to the idea that the Bukovina inhabitants are superior to all others. Frustrations, the vague feeling of superiority due to belonging to a different civilization space and the specific mentality created a barrier in the unification process. The weaknesses of these processes remained, in masked forms, until late in the 20th century.

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[44] Stelu Şerban, *Elite, partide şi spectru politic în România interbelică*, Bucureşti, Paideia Publishing House, 2006, 2006;
[45] Ştefan Purici, *op. cit.*, p.124-125;
[46] Marian Olaru, *Bucovina – sfârşitul unui posibil Eden. Ultimul act*, în „Analele Bucovinei", Anul XVII, 1/2010, p.265;

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