

**UNIVERSITATEA BABEȘ-BOLYAI  
FACULTATEA DE ISTORIE ȘI FILOSOFIE**

**From Deportation to Emigration. The Saxons  
from ‘Târnava Mare’ County (1940 – 1989). Oral  
history study”.**

**-SUMMARY-**

**COORDONATOR ȘTIINȚIFIC,  
Prof. Univ. Dr. DORU RADOSAV**

**DOCTORAND,  
POP CLAUDIU**

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Wandering around southern part of Transylvania one is amazed by the beauty of the Saxon villages or the greatness of the Saxon fortified churches. But unfortunately the successors of those who created all these no longer exist. In most Saxon villages their number is quite small. Mălâncrav is proud to have the largest Saxon community, almost 167 Saxons according to the 2002 census. The period between the World War II and 1992 was actually the period when the German community of Transylvania was destabilized.

Unfortunately there is a lack of works which deal with their contemporary history. Due to this, in 2007 under Professor's Doru Radosav guidance, I started my PhD thesis called: "From Deportation to Emigration. The Saxons from "Târnava Mare" County (1940 – 1989). Oral history study".

The work deals with the contemporary history of the German community around Sighișoara, area which until the administrative reform of 1950 was organized in the so-called "Târnava Mare" County and whose residence was Sighișoara. The paper highlights the main events that marked this community, changed its mentality and in the end made it emigrate. In other word, Saxons' emigration of the early 1990's is the result of a process which had started before the outburst of the World War II, continued during the communist regime and ended with the 1989 emigration.

My work is based on the collective memory of both Saxons and Romanians who lived in communities that used to be Saxons during the two World Wars but also during the communist regime. The reason why I've chosen to use this type of historical source is because the information obtained from those who actively participated to the historical events together with the written sources offer a more real reconstitution of the historical past.

The research went on around Sighișoara, Târnava's Mare residence, county that in 1930 had about 147,994 inhabitants out of which 66,307 were Romanians, 17,419 Hungarians and 58,810 Saxons. According to the data provided by the Evangelical Parish today in Sighișoara live 453 Saxons.

As a result it was necessary for us to establish a group of representative subjects to be questioned about the topic in discussion. Thus, we decided to interview both Saxons and Romanians, women and men who were born between 1918-1945 and who lived in settlements where the Saxon community was predominant. In order to have an accurate study we decided that the group has to include at least several tens of people.

The result was almost 41 interviews around Sighisoara. In order to keep the balance, 19 interviews were taken to women and 22 to men; 26 interviews were made in villages while in the urban area I took only 14 interviews. As far as their age is concerned, we had one witness under 50, 3 between 50- 70 years old and 36 witnesses over 70. As you can notice most of them are quite old (over 50) with a rich experience of life and thus they were able to offer more information about Saxons' conditions during the interwar period and during the communist regime.

Together with the oral sources, I've used many archive sources investigated by the General Department of the State's Archives from Mureş and the archives of the Evangelical Parish, Sighişoara.<sup>1</sup> The information collected from the archives helped us drawing the general frame and elaborate different parts of our thesis where the information provided were unclear or poor.

The main archives investigated were the "CASBI"(information related to 'The house administrating the enemy goods), the first institution specially created to persecute the Saxons, "the agrarian Reform" that contains brochures, statistics, minutes about the reform, "deportation" that has little information about the deportation but still very objective one, "the nationalization" which contains brochures, minutes about nationalization.

The results of this research were divided into 8 chapters:

1. Theoretical and Methodological Landmarks.
2. The Stage of the researches about the subject. Its Historiography.
3. The Saxons at their peak.
4. The war and the Saxons' decline
5. The end of Saxon economic supremacy

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<sup>1</sup> On this way, we thank Mr. Hans Bruno Fröhlich priest for facilitating access to the archives of the Evangelical Parish, Sighişoara.

6. Saxons' life during the communism regime
7. 1989 Revolution
8. Mass emigration. Saxons situation after the revolution

The first chapter starts with a review of oral history. I stated that even from Antiquity history proved to be a science based on testimony. Herodot for instance narrates all the contemporary events from the narrator's point of view. The testimony of the one who saw or heard is his main historical source. The Middle Ages also relies on oral testimony but the Modern Era, starting from the positivist school abandons the oral testimony. Auguste Comte and Leopold von Ranke consider the official document as the only accurate historical source.

According to some sources<sup>2</sup>, oral history is rediscovered at the end of the XIX century through the work of Lyman Copeland Draper (1815-1891), an American collector and librarian. He gathered the stories of some American pioneers and some documentary material about the history of the frontiers in order to write a series of biographies of western heroes. His large collection –almost 500 volumes- well known today as “Lyman Draper's manuscript collection” has been given to the history society of Wisconsin.

Nevertheless, the bases of oral history can be traced back in 1948 and it is related to professor Allan Nevins from Columbia University (New York). He created the institutional frame for the new discipline. On 18 May 1948 he takes his first interview –the one that was interviewed was a political man, George Mac Aneny. In no time an office of oral history is created within the Columbia University. Its main purpose was both recording and transcription of the interviews but also organizing an oral history archive.

In Romania the first attempts in this field are made only in 1993 within “Babeş-Bolyai University” (Cluj Napoca). In 1994 within the History Department and under professor Doru Radosav's coordination, a work written by Gabriela Otescu is published and this work deals with the resistance groups from The Banat Mountains. This work opens a new chapter in the Romanian historical field.

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<sup>2</sup> [http://erasmusisha.files.wordpress.com/2008/11/revista-erasmus\\_nr12\\_2001.pdf](http://erasmusisha.files.wordpress.com/2008/11/revista-erasmus_nr12_2001.pdf) accessed in 1 February 2011, Revista ERASMUS, nr. 12/2001, Bucureşti, Editura Ars Docendi, 2001, author: Mircea Stanciu, article: “Scurtă istorie a unei istoriografii în expansiune. Istoria orală (1950-1980)”, p. 47-56.

Thus, in 1997 the Institute for Oral History is created in Cluj and this offered an institutional character to the oral research. The bases of this were made by two historians: the late Pompiliu Teodor and Doru Radosav who is now the manager of the University's Central Library "Lucian Blaga".

The first project's theme was about the anticommunism resistance in Romania. Much research has been done about the resistance groups from Rodnei Mountains, Apuseni Mountains, Banat Mountains, Maramureş or Făgăraş Mountains.<sup>3</sup>

Other projects in which this institute was involved were those about minorities: "*Majority and Minority in Central Europe*", work that investigates the way minorities opposed the communism regime; *The other's image in Transylvania after 1918, case study among the Romanian- German communities from Hunedoara, Alba and Sibiu*", work that tried to highlight the attitudes of this community towards different events that marked the contemporary era: the World war II, the Agrarian Reform, deportations, collectivization, etc.; "*War and peace – stories of Germans that lived in Romania.*" The work tried to take interviews in the areas that compact German groups lived in order to recover "*life stories*" from the XX century. Many of these interviews were used in a series of articles published in the Institute's magazine: "The institute's directory of oral history (IDO)", which reached XII edition.<sup>4</sup>

The rest of the chapter deals with the features of the oral history by showing its advantages. Thus we showed that oral history provides information that cannot be obtained otherwise. The interviews offer information about daily life but also provide a perspective over ordinary people's mentalities which are not reachable through the traditional sources.

On the opposite, criticizing oral history, positivist school considers oral testimony very subjective and putting together facts by using memory only so incomplete that loses any credibility. To put it in a nutshell, positivist school rejects oral history completely.

The subchapter entitled "Methodological Landmarks" I have shown all types of interviews that can be used within oral history, highlighting the fact that our present work uses mainly the semi-structured interview. This involves establishing the themes or the main aspects

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<sup>3</sup> Budeancă Cosmin, "*Institutul de Istorie Orală din Cluj Napoca 1997-2004*" in Anuarul de Istorie Orală, nr 5, Cluj Napoca, 2004, p.13.

<sup>4</sup> [http://www.romanalibera.ro/opinii/aldine/istoria-orala-sursa-a-memoriei-192377-pagina1.html#top\\_articol](http://www.romanalibera.ro/opinii/aldine/istoria-orala-sursa-a-memoriei-192377-pagina1.html#top_articol), accessed at 2 februarie 2011.

that have to be reached within a discussion, the interviewers will give the answers in a personal manner. This type of interview is a more qualitative way of collecting data. I have also used the structured interviews<sup>5</sup> but only when the interviewed no longer lived in Sighișoara but in Germany. For this type of interview the order of questions is established beforehand, one can usually offer multiple choice answers, the subject's job being that of choosing the answer or answers that he/she considers as being right. It is sort of an inquiry that has many advantages. For instance you can make it by post.

The second chapter reports the works that had been identified while elaborating my thesis concluding that the history of the Saxon community from the former "Târnava Mare" County, had never been studied completely before in order to capture its evolution during the contemporary era.

Moreover, a study concerning this subject does not exist, except for several German studies about the deportation to URSS. In other word, the present work is a new approach of "giving back" past.

The third chapter starts with a geographical and historical description of the former "Târnava Mare" County, a county where the Saxons used to be 40 % of the inhabitants. From this leading position they were in charge of all economic activities of this county. This chapter also discusses about this county's industry by showing that at the beginning of the interwar period, the Romanians had only 9 factories, most of them being built after 1918, while the Saxons had 97, almost 11 times more than the Romanians.

Although the Romanian authorities struggled hard to encourage the Romanian economic initiatives, their effort has modest results. At the end of the interwar period the Saxons had 273 factories in the urban area within the entire county while the Romanians had only 73.

The agriculture deals with the same situation. At the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century the county was dominated by the large agricultural property. From an ethnic point of view, these properties were mainly owned by minorities, the Romanians represented only 7.5 %. The 1921 Agrarian Reform changes this. Thus the German properties represent after the reform 32.60% of

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<sup>5</sup> Rotariu, Traian, Ilut, Petru, *Ancheta sociologică și sondajul de opinie. Teorie și practică*, (ediția a II-a, revăzută și adăugită), Ed. Polirom, Iași, 2006, p. 63.

all properties of the county, the rest of them being owned by Romanians, Hungarians and other minorities.

Nevertheless they keep their dominance from an economic point of view, dominance that together with their historical past of having been on this land from their very beginnings in a permanent position of superiority, led to a special mentality of superiority in relation to the Romanians.

This is a feature of the Saxons' identity in Transylvania that together with the Germanity myth, their community independence and their attachment towards Germany push this community from the early 1930's towards Nazi Germany. Their bond to Germany is becoming stronger. Nazism emphasized this connection and the idea of Saxon superiority in Transylvania, posing as a distinct progerman group with the outbreak of the World War II, struggling to assume local power.

The chapter goes on talking about daily life in Sighișoara during the interwar time and during the first year of the war. It is revealed the fact that everyday life is typical for a small provincial town, being split between work, family and entertainment. The local newspapers, strolling areas, shops, theatre performances, car racing were activities that could not have not missed from locals life. On this ground we present the relationships between Saxons and Romanians are presented during both the interwar time and the first years of World War II. It is presented that despite the situation that marks the international politics (the rise of Nazism) or the national one (the rise of Carol's regime), the interethnic relations are based on understanding and mutual respect. All the interviews I took to either Romanians or Saxons show this understanding has its origins in the mutual respect and communication that was established from early childhood. Nevertheless, the connection between the two ethnicities during the investigated period was a very limited one. This is obvious when we count the number of mixed marriages which is very small. This type of marriage is considered to be a way of altering the ethnic quality. Hardworking, honest, good craftsmen, the Saxons promoted a discriminating matrimonial behavior, based on hostility towards mixed marriages and towards relating to "strangers". This situation is obvious within the so-called "neighborhoods".<sup>6</sup> A "neighborhood" was a type of organization which is particular to Saxons between more neighbors which

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<sup>6</sup> Mihăilescu, Vintilă *Vecini și vecinătăți în Transilvania*, București, Editura Paideia, 2002, passim.

contributed to the welfare of the community and which meant mutual help whenever needed. In Sighișoara there were 15 Saxon “neighborhoods”. Romanians were not allowed to be part of these. Due to this, the Romanians will create their own “Neighborhoods” which are still to be found today.

At the beginning of the 4<sup>th</sup> chapter I Talked about Saxons accession to the Nazi ideology. The reason that led to this has to be searched not only in the political options of the Saxons from “Târnava Mare” but also in the political situation of that time. In a time when nationalism was the predominant feeling through the whole of Europe, seeing this in the Saxons from our county, mustn’t surprise us. Moreover, at that time Germany was a superpower, and the Saxons dominating the economy felt like they wanted to be part of an identity, provided by Germany of the time.

Germany’s assertion as a superpower of the 1930’s, unleashed two things in the Saxons from Transylvania, things that for them will mark the beginning of their end on this land:

- Building the myth of Germany (Vaterland). It is a consequence of Germany’s attention towards the German communities outside Germany. This could be seen through a series of economic advantages, such as giving money, mainly to churches and schools but also through the perception, the increased respect that the Saxons from Romania experienced, namely a life of a well-deserved equality instead of that of a “minority”.
- The German nationalism debut with a Nazi aspect. Its apparition is caused by the identity crisis of the Transylvanian Saxons together with German’s increased attention towards this community. Within the collective memory there are some ideas that capture this situation: *“Hitler called them in ‘the German kingdom’, and they answered his calling.”*<sup>7</sup>

Germany’ status of being a superpower corresponded, on a psychological level, to the self image of the Transylvanian Saxon: diligence, discipline but especially superiority. This is the starting point of the sympathy that Germany enjoys during the 1930’s among Saxons.

The end of the identity crisis comes when the Saxons join GEG and their voluntary enrollment in SS. These two subjects, discussed in two different subchapters of my thesis, is primarily assuming a new identity and secondly a manifestation of nationalism. The official documents show that from a total of 43, 998 Germans in 1940, 6,744 were part of the GEG

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<sup>7</sup> Interview with Crista Richter, born in 1924, guide at the church from Biertan, German ethnicity.

(6,533 members and 211 leaders)<sup>8</sup>, and by 23 august 1944 our county provided a number of 7,944 volunteers.<sup>9</sup> To this we also add those who were taken by force by the retreating German troops: 1,933.<sup>10</sup>

The war is presented from the point of view of its effects on the local communities. Pre-military and then the enrollment and the arrival of the German army are related through the words of those who actually lived during those times. What is worth noticing: the perception of the German army, which was a positive one from the point of view of both Saxons and Romanians, and the agreement of 12 May 1943 between Romanian authorities and the Germans which allowed Saxons to enroll in the SS.

The twist that occurred on the 23<sup>rd</sup> August 1944 is perceived by the Germans as a threat to their identity. The document represents, from a sentimental point of view, a break between Romania (namely Transylvania) and the notion of country. If not long ago these two terms were almost synonyms, from now the term country will refer only to Germany. This is the main reason why young Germans continued to fight with the German army till the end. Another reason was the Soviet army. The way their abuses were perceived is presented in the subchapter entitled “The soviet army”.

At the end of the war, the Saxons from “Târnava Mare” county are confused. On the one hand Germany is destroyed by the war and their household and their families were in Romania. On this ground, some of them came back to Romania where there was a new master who didn't care about Saxons' confused feelings. Moreover, Saxons' option to fight with the German army offers him the reason to start an offensive against this minority. The reason of this offensive must not be misunderstood. In Transylvania, as mentioned before the Saxons were in charge of the economic activities. On the other hand the position of the new leader –outside community- was a poor one, based only on the Red Army' help. But this support could not last forever. Thus Russia decides to help the local communists through a popularization campaign that took place on Saxons' back. In other words the first actions against the Saxons had an electoral reason: the need for the new master to consolidate its position and also to destroy the community that was in

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<sup>8</sup> DGAS, filiala Mureş, fond Legiunea de Jandarmi Târnava Mare, dosar 29/1945.

<sup>9</sup> DGAS, filiala Mureş, fond Legiunea de Jandarmi Târnava Mare, Biroul Poliţiei, dosar nr. 30/1946, fila 6.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibidem*, fila 7.

charge of the economic activities. These actions had a second effect: prepared the ground for the later social equality.

On this ground, the collapse of this minority was fast. The basis of this decline was represented by The Convention Truce of 12 September 1944, completed by circular notes issued by URSS with the help of the so called Allied Commission of Control. From now on, the Saxons' fate was marked by two disastrous events discussed in two different subchapters: forcing suspect Saxons former members of Ss) to enter the Labor Detachments and Camps (Targu Jiu, Caracal, etc) and also the great deportation in the soviet Donbass (January 1945).

As far as the first action is concerned, discussed in a different subchapter, I have shown that it started at the same time with the order n<sup>o</sup>32.132 given by MAI on the 1<sup>st</sup> December 1944.<sup>11</sup>

At the same time, in order to streamline the two operations, the civic guards were brought into existence. Established on October 2<sup>nd</sup> 1944, these guards were meant to provide order in town but in spite of that these guards were made up of individuals of queer morality, soon tuning into posses that were meant to find the fugitive Saxons.

Nevertheless, the first measure aiming all the Saxons was deportation. Issue that was handled in a chapter called "Deportation into the USSR", the deportation aimed for the restoration of Russia after the war. In fact its intention was to weaken the local German communities for the measures which were to be taken. Those who took the road to Russia were young people, those who had a word to say against the expropriations that were to come and those who eventually would have taken a stand against them. It would be rather interesting to see the actual economic results of this massive deportation of the Saxons upon the Russian economy. On account of the work they've provided, of the lack of interest that Russia had with regard to the new labour force and of the year that the Saxons returned home – 1949 – we think that the real reason was the weakening of the German community.

The chapter deals with the details of this process of deportation emphasizing the causes, the way in which it developed, the attempts of escape, the official protests, the road, life and

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<sup>11</sup> Dumitru Șandru, *Etnicii germani și detașamentul de muncă forțată din România (1944-1946)*, în *Analele totalitarismului*, 1995, 3, nr. 1, p. 26-48

death in the camp and the way back home. Before this action started, there were 10.408 Germans in Tarnava Mare County out of which 6.087 Germans were deported by March 1<sup>st</sup>.<sup>12</sup>

The chapter “*The End of Saxon Economic Supremacy*” deals with processes like the creating and functioning of CASBI, the agrarian reform, nationalization and collectivization, together they bring the German economic supremacy to an end.

This concerning, the first measure which was taken was to create the Department of Administration and Supervision of Enemy Goods (CASBI). Created in 1945, this department had the German possession as an objective. A big part of the Saxons lost their rights to administrate their own goods – houses, enterprises and bank accounts – either because of their collaboration with the Nazi regime or because of simple suspicion. Their goods are to be taken over by the new created institution. In Sighisoara, the Office of Enemy Goods started its activity on October 1<sup>st</sup> 1945 according to the decision no. 9681/945 released by the Prefect’s Office of Târnava Mare County under the administration of the attorney Victor Stoian.<sup>13</sup> The office was administrating and supervising all the enemy goods according to the provisions of item 8 from the truce agreement. These were divided in three sections:

- enemy goods belonging to the German subdued, which made up the A category: German ethnics possessing properties in the county which voluntarily enrolled in the German army.
- enemy goods belonging to the Hungarian subdued, which made up the B category: Hungarian ethnics possessing properties in the county which voluntarily enrolled in the German army.
- goods belonging to subdued enemies presumed to be Romanian nationals, which made up the C category: Romanian nationals who at September 12<sup>th</sup> 1944 were absent from the country.

In Tarnava Mare county there were 18 subdued German enemies of category A out of which only two possess real estates, the other ones have movable goods and also 2.505 presumed enemies belonging to category C.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> DGAS, filials Mureş, Fond no 2, Legiunea de Jandarmi Târnava Mare, inv. no. 29/1945, p. 23

<sup>13</sup> DGAS, filiala Mureş, fond Prefectura judeţului Târnava Mare. CASBI, Dosar acte-personal, inv. 3570, fila 65.

<sup>14</sup> DGAS, filiala Mureş, fond Prefectura judeţului Târnava Mare. CASBI, Dosar cu tabele şi inventare bunuri inamice.1945-1949, inv. 3778, fila 43.

A big part of these goods were rented to Romanians for low prices or offered to Russia as war remuneration.

A second attack against the community was the agrarian reform. Almost all the German agrarian properties of the county were taken over in order to be given to the Romanians. One might say that this law was created with the purpose of destroying the economical basis of the German community. Item 3 from the agrarian reform law was stating the following: “*every land and agrarian property of any kind, belonging to German and Romania citizens, natural person or legal entity, of German nationality who collaborated with Nazi Germany, will be expropriated*”.<sup>15</sup> Besides the fact that it satisfied the need of advertising the new regime – after the reform was launched, the Communist Party gets a strong position in the county, more precisely in Medias – it also prepared the collectivization that followed. A considerable part of the expropriated land was owned by the state, after the reform and not by its rightful owner.

At the same time, the nationalization took place and it was meant to take over all the means of production which were mostly in the urban area and make them property of the state. At the end of it, the German economic supremacy of the county stopped. The German ethnic becomes just an employee in his former factory. From this point on the myth of Germany, associated with the idea of emigration gains more interest in the Saxon community.

The collectivization, which appeared in 1949, imposed the principle of absolute equality among every inhabitant but at this point, German property was practically nonexistent. That same year those who were deported to Russia were returning. They can only observe what the government had done in their absence. Because of the lack of their properties and a way of living, the rural German community emigrates not to Germany but to the cities. The German would be remarked throughout time because of his intelligence, seriousness and efficiency that is why he would have no difficulties in adapting to urban life. At this point, the Saxons turn from peasants to valuable workers. However, this new position implies a desire of change. Bonded with Germany and having no properties in the country, the idea of emigration becomes more and more pointed.

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<sup>15</sup> DGAS, filiala Mureș, fond Comisia de îndrumare pentru aplicare a reformei agrare, județul Târnava Mare, plasa Sighișoara, fila 13.

This issue is being handled within the next chapter, called “Life of the Saxons during communism”. Within this chapter the German ethnic is showed to pass through a change after the Second World War. Suffering of an identity crisis up to this event, crisis brought by the economic situation, mentality, history, the Second World War puts an end to this crisis, once they accept their German identity by entering the SS voluntarily.

The measures taken by the communist regime do nothing else but strengthen this feeling. During the agrarian reform in 1945, the expropriation of all German ethnics, members of the German Ethnic Group took place.<sup>16</sup> Besides that, for the members of the German Ethnic Group (which means practically 99% of the German population), civil rights among which the voting and being voted right were removed. The German community is marked by the eradication of the German press and other cultural institutions like the German Theatre in Sibiu which has a very long tradition. Disbelief, doubt and even hostility against the communist regime is spreading throughout the German community.

Even the measure taken during the reform of 1945 which was meant to give back the houses to the Saxons, had a hidden purpose. March 1945, the Jury of the Great National Assembly issued orders 81 and 82 which stipulated that the German were to recover their houses and land once they agreed to join the agricultural household. The fact that regaining their houses was conditioned by joining the G.A.C shows that beyond the idea of justice, the Romanian government used them as a stimulus for the collectivization process which was standing still at that time.

As a result of that, the legal and most of all illegal emigration took massive proportions.

The emigration comes to its climax after 1978, the year of the secret agreement between Germany and Romania. Despite this agreement, the communist regime turns the legal emigration into an offending procedure because after the paperwork was done, it could take years for one to get the permission to leave the country. During this whole period, the Saxons would automatically loose their working places as teachers or doctors. Many of them get to the point where they must take humiliating jobs as janitors and doorkeepers.

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<sup>16</sup> Hügel, Peter, *Istoria unui suicid anomic, Dizolvarea comunității săsești Transilvania*, în Aradul Cultural, 1999, p. 26.

As a result of it, legal emigration was accompanied by the illegal one. It shows just how determined the Germans were in leaving Romania. At the same time it emphasizes the end of a mental process which started during the war: detachment from Romania (Transylvania) as a home and an approach to Germany.

Illegal emigration was realized in two ways. The first, most often used and most secure one was leaving the country pretending to visit relatives or on holiday. Once they got there approaches were made in order for them to stay there.

Illegally crossing the border was more dangerous and as a result of that less used. It was seen as a myth because it was a story heard from others or it was a person to whom the story teller didn't talk at all after the emigration. Illegal crossing succeeded either through Yugoslavia, by swimming in the Danube or through Hungary.

Legal and Illegal emigration contributes to the decrease of population of the German community. The Saxons who stayed were mostly old persons. Before the revolution there were 6.320 Germans out of a population of 42.210 inhabitants in Sighisoara, that means 15% which is half of the Saxons from the interwar period.

The revolution from 1989 is handled with in detail in another chapter showing the part that the Romanian and German workers played within this action. The "Saes episode" will get special attention because of the death of three Saxons on the morning of December 23<sup>rd</sup> 1989.

The next chapter is called "*Mass emigration. The situation of German population after the revolution*". This chapter shows that the revolution was an opportunity for the Germans, not for starting a new life in a free country but for leaving to a country they thought would be theirs from now on: Germany.

The German state played a very important part in the emigration of the Saxons, this being a paradox because it happened because of their measures against it. The Saxons feared that their emigration will be stopped so their interest grew.

Once in Germany they have to deal with this experience which either confirms what they expected or not. After the first contact with the German society, they become pessimistic because of the high expectations they had since they expected to be equal in rights with the native German. So they have to confront themselves with the difficulties of the integration process. The Saxons feel marginalised and isolated.

As a result of it there is a feeling of sympathy for their former home, feeling that is revealed through constant returns to the country for different occasions or through financial support for different cultural events. This feeling is typical for the elder ones and, as time goes by the feeling is shared less.

Conclusions: Our thesis called: “*From Deportation to Emigration. The Saxons from Tarnava Mare County (1940-1989). Oral History Study*” developed from the need to fill in the gap which existed in Romania history concerning the situation of the German minority from Sighisoara area, during the communistic regime and to show the reasons which lead to the massive emigration of the Saxons after 1989.

Our thesis was edited after scientific criteria by using five types of sources: interviews of oral history, unpublished archive documents, scientific books and studies, press, web-sites. By using the information provided by the sources mentioned above, we were able to show that the period between the Second World War and the year 1992 actually meant the disorganisation of the German community from Transylvania and this because of the identity crisis suffered by the Saxons and because of a political regime to which the idea of consolidation and confirmation of the power was more important than the identity problems of the minorities. The consolidation of the new regime was made due to this community which carried the burden of collaborating with the Nazis.

Under these conditions we consider our thesis to be not only a starting point for a scientific reconstruction of Saxon history from our country but also a useful approach for a thoroughgoing study of the Romanian communistic past. On the other hand we have the confidence that our work will contribute to a deeper understanding of the ethnic minorities from Romania.

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