

„BABEȘ-BOLYAI” UNIVERSITY FROM CLUJ-NAPOCA  
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**PhD THESIS**

**SUMMARY**

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**MARRIGE AND FAMILY IN NORTHERN  
OLTENIA DURING THE SECOND HALF OF THE  
IX-eth CENTURY AND THE BEGINNING OF THE  
XX-eth CENTURY**

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## Chapter I

### Introduction. Concepts, research methods, sources and family historiography

The study of the population in terms of quantity and quality has become possible due to rethinking the notion of historical source, making use of the parishes' registers of civil status, later secularized, judicial records concerning divorce, censuses, canon law, religious and artistic representations, memoirs and diaries, the literature of the age and wills. In the 60s, the French demographer Louis Henry and the archivist and historian Michel Fleury, by using the first method of stripping and recovery of parochial registers of civil status, have recomposed the family life cycle, assembling information from registers of births, marriages and deaths using nominal records for every family studied.

For the first time in historical research, parochial civil status registers have been "uncovered" by the historian Liviu Moldovan, who highlighted the importance of these records, for the registration of births, weddings and deaths. Studying the censuses, the statistics, the maps put together by the Russian administration, the civil status papers, Ecaterina Negruți has reconstructed the structure of the village from a demographic viewpoint in her paper: *The Moldavian Village in the First Half of the XIX-eth Century. Demographic Contributions*.

For the first time for the historical demography and the history of the family, the method developed by Louis Henry and Michel Fleury in France was used by Sorina Paula Bolovan for the reconstruction of the family in the paper *The Family in the Romanian Village from Transylvania. The Second Half of the XIX-eth Century and the Beginning of the XX-eth Century*, The Centre for Transylvanian Studies, the Romanian Cultural Foundation, Cluj-Napoca, 1999. The parochial registers concerning the civil status and the censuses organized in Transylvania allowed her to decode the natural movement of the population, the quantification and the interpretation of births, marriages and deaths with the help of the nominatives tables for the studied parishes.

Professor Ioan Bolovan's *Contribution in Transylvania between 1848 Revolution and the Union of 1918. Demographic contributions*: there were reconstructed birth, marriage and mortality, population growth in terms of quantity, seasonality and causality of these phenomena, the relationship between rural and urban population, the evolution of internal and external migration, the ethnic, religious and socio-professional structure of the population, closely related to Romanian realities predominantly rural habitat.

For the Old Kingdom the components of the family universe have been studied, assembled and integrated into historiography by Liliana Andreea Vasile. The book "*The World Must not Hear*". *The Romanian Family from The Old Kingdom* presents the institution of marriage and the matrimonial universe starting with the engagement and dowry- family's premarital stages, continuing with the legal cohabitation, the divorce, concubinage, birth and death.

The family's reconstruction in north Oltenia represents a real challenge, due to the non-existent studies concerning the aspects of social life in general, the marriage and the family in particular, for this space rich in history, whose evolution is closely related economically and demographically to the evolution in Transylvania. In the research paper: *Marriage and family in the north of Oltenia in the second half of the XIX-eth century and the beginning of the XX-eth century*, I've tried to present the reconstruction, as much as it is possible, from the viewpoint of the multidisciplinary, of the matrimonial scenario from the urban and rural settlements from north Oltenia, in comparison with the general tendencies from the Old Kingdom, Transylvania and other European countries.

The historical and demographic context of the rural communities in Gorj, Vâlcea and Mehedinți counties in the direct vicinity of Transylvania, was reconfigured based on the general censuses and the Austrian tabulations completed by the estimations from the geographic dictionaries. The rural settlements Polovragi, Cărpiniș, Topești and Logrești –

Moşneni from Gorj county and Cloşani from Mehedinţi county, with the status of commune as established by the administrative law of 1864, the capital of the county Târgu – Jiu and to a lesser extent Râmnicu - Vâlcea is the subject of demographic research in the chapters devoted to the family.

Adapting the methods of L.Henry and M.Fleury to this demographic pursuit, having as model the studies dedicated to the family life cycle by Sorina and Ioan Bolovan, we have attempted the research and interpretation of the information offered by the civil state registers (parochial until 1865) and the archives of the communities chosen for the case studies, with the purpose of ordering marriages according to the month, year and decade, with the proper interpretation of seasonality, establishing the average age for the first marriage, the relationship between inbreeding and exogamy, remarriage and its implications, interethnic and interfaith marriages - common in urban areas.

The reasons for divorces, a rare phenomenon in the studied settlements, emerge from the court decisions giving us an eloquent picture of the failures within a couple. When it comes to concubinage, the illegitimacy of a child and his or her entering legitimacy through marriage between the biological parents, registered by the books mentioned above are the only way to approximate this phenomenon, which the Church has constantly tried to eliminate.

The birth rate phenomenon is not limited to numerical presentation of the infants by months, years and decades, but at the same time it tries to explain by relating to the period of conception, the oscillations between months, with the ebb and flow determined by the number of marriages, the interval between births, religious holidays and agricultural calendar. The end of family life - death was caused by the inherent biological reasons, but also by aspects of the daily life specific to the Old Demographic Regime.

Nutrition, alcoholism, housing, diseases have negatively affected the average life expectancy, as proven by the large number of deaths from infant age to adulthood. The nomenclative tables used in the previous chapters are relevant in terms of mortality on age segments, months, years and decades. Based on of the nominal family reconstitution records (included in the Appendices), there are presented different types of marital behaviors, which demonstrates a certain control over birth. For Târgu – Jiu, alongside the orthodox Romanians we can find –at least in part, mixed families or families of different ethnicity or religion.

Combining the information provided by documents attesting birth, marriage and death made it possible to determine the age for marrying, the number of children, the period between conception and birth, death of a spouse or children, premature death, duration of marriage and eventual remarriage. Before modern times, the elaboration and preservation of civil status, births, marriages and deaths registers were done by the Church.

## Chapter II

### Matrimonial law in Romania - from the Canon Law to the Civil Code

Being publicly ordained to perform religious services in key moments of an individual's life, that of a couple or that of the community as a whole – baptism, marriage, burial- also being literate the priests kept record of these events for accounting for the activity and income of the clergy<sup>1</sup>. Placed under a sign of modernity, the end of the Phanariot century showed the state's increased interest for the legal regulation of marriage and family life, The Calimachi Code adopted in 1817 in Moldova and The Caragea Law in Walachia in 1818, repealed after the promulgation of the Civil Code from December first 1865, depending on the Romanian laws and the Byzantine law code, have allowed the "mixture" between state and Church when it comes to marriage.

The Organic regulations, the first constitutional settlements from the Romanian Principalities, have upheld the two laws, establishing mandatory introduction of civil status registers administered by the Church. The unification of the Romanian Principalities between 1859 -1 862 emphasized the need to modernize the Romanian society in all areas. According to specific Western secularization trends, the development model of the French Civil Code and its promulgation in December 1, 1865 were followed by the transfer of the civil status from the Church under the authority of the competent legal and administrative institutions.

In chapter III of the Civil Code, entitled "On Marriage acts", Articles 49-62 the marriage procedure was regulated in detail, since its publication until the actual writing of the marriage certificate<sup>2</sup>. Into the marriage there were imperatively recorded: 1) name, surname, profession, age, place of birth and residence of each spouse, 2) age and condition of major or minor, 3) name, surname, profession, parents' residence; 4) respectful acts 5) the consent of parents or family members in case of death of both parents, 6) publication the place of residence; 7) marriage oppositions if formulated , 8) Contracting Parties agreement in marriage as pronounced by the state clerk ; 9) name, age, profession and the address of each of the four witnesses, 10) contracting parties agreement has been based on questions from the previous article, whether or not there was a marriage contract<sup>3</sup>.

Regarding age, according to Article 127 "is not forgiven for the man before the age of 18 and women before the age of 15 to marry" only God - 1881 the King, having the authority to give dispensations for serious reasons<sup>4</sup>. Changing marriage legislation in 1906 standardized the legal age for marriage for both sexes. After the age of 21 the parents' consent became optional. In Romanian Civil Code, the system concerning the dowry was regulated under the Title IV, in chapter I called "About the marriage contract and the respective rights of spouses" (Articles 1223-1232) and in Chapter II called "About the dowry procedure" (Articles 1233-1293), considering the dowry contract an accessory to the marriage contract.

Until the adoption of the Civil Code in Romania in 1864, divorce entered under the authority of the Church. The lawmaker has dedicated to Title XVI called "About separation " with 75 articles, from 211 to 285, each divided into chapters devoted to causes, formalities, different types of divorce, to the measures taken during or after the trial and finally the consequences of family dissolution for each of its former members. Romanian Civil Code put women and men on equal footing regarding dissolution of the marriage. The causes of divorce, raised and proved by the husband and wife were adultery (Article 211), excesses, cruelty or harsh insults (Article 212), sentencing one of the partners of the married couple to forced labor

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<sup>1</sup> Ioan Ceterchi (coordonator), *Istoria dreptului românesc*, Vol. I, Editura Academiei R.S.R., București, p. 497.

<sup>2</sup> *Codice civile* „Alexandru Ioan”, Editura Oficială, Imprimeria Statului, București, 1865, p. 12.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 15.

<sup>4</sup> Constantin Hamangiu, *Codul Civil adnotat cu trimiteri la doctrina franceză și română și jurisprudența completă de la 1868 – 1920*, Editura All Beck, București, p. 172.

or to isolation (Article 213), impossibility to continue living together expressed through mutual consent, particularly prescribed by law (Article 14).

The State and the Romanian Orthodox Church, apparently still compete for the control of the individual and family, they have promoted marriage and family soundness, while discouraging the practice of divorce, whose consequences could only infringe on Christian morals and the good relationship between the actors of conjugal life. The Family Code was developed only in the twentieth century and it was designed to regulate in a modern way the entire familial universe and the conjugal relationships in particular.

### Chapter III

#### Demographic and economic landmarks in the development the settlements in Northern Oltenia

In the Extra-Carpathian space, the Sub Carpathian Oltenia Depression has remarked over the time through its intensively populated settlements, which were favored by its relief, climate and natural richness. The typology of the villages was dominated until late interwar period, by diversity, with villages scattered in the area of mountain platforms and rare settlements with little paths; scattered villages with many concentration nuclei of the settlements, alternating with rare paths and houses, meadows, pastures and crops in the transition areas from the depression to the mountain area; villages found on the river banks and villages in the field area, with houses one next to another<sup>5</sup>.

In the 17th and 18th centuries, most of the free villages, of the free peasants belonged to Oltenia, especially in Gorj and Vâlcea. The villages' row aligned under the mountains, almost at the same line, in front of the southern slope of the Parang mountain starts from the East with Polovragi settlement and ends with Bumbesti Jiu in the Western area, along the left bank of the Jiu river. Between these two extremes there are the "ungurenilor" villages on the right of Olt River: Drăgoiești, Turbați, Crasna, Aniniș, Ungureni and Novaci, which appeared with the contribution of the shepherds from the other side of the Carpathians, especially from Mărgineni villages from around Sibiu and from the river Jiu's Valley<sup>6</sup>.

Not at all spectacular, the apparition and development of Tg-Jiu is similar to many settlements between the Carpathians and the Danube. Therefore, according to the Statistic and Economical annals from January-March 1860, Târgu Jiu was populated by 2432 inhabitants, of a total of 108.071 inhabitants of Gorj County<sup>7</sup>. According to the data from the census from 1899, the country's population increased between the years 1859-1899 with 2.091.842 people, with 52 % at an annual rate of 1,32 % . Considering Romania's size, the growth ratio was considered modest and was thought to be the result of the natural increase of the population (from 9 – 10 ‰ inhabitants), but also of the immigration (till 1, 32 %) <sup>8</sup>. With just 6718 inhabitants Târgu – Jiu was the last of the 32 counties. Along with those of Romanian ethnicity, the majority all across the county, there were living Ardeleni – citizens of the Austro - Hungarian Empire, Austrians, Hungarians, Bulgarians, Macedonians, Serbians, Germans and Jews.

In 1914 there were at the local level registered 9948 inhabitants, of which 6332 men and 3616 women, which reveals the increase of the population in 1912 with 136 persons. By nationality, the town's population included 9226 Romanian, 334 Austro-Hungarian, 162 Mohammedans, 73 Italians, 42 Israelites, 40 Bulgarians, 24 Serbian, 23 German, 17 Greeks, Armenians and 3 French <sup>9</sup>. The Orthodox population represented 9106 people, followed by 342 Catholics, 328 Muslims and 172 mosaics. The extracts concerning natural movement, kept in the archives of Târgu - Jiu Hall, whose accuracy is relative because of the limitation of the recording of the individuals who came or left, temporarily or permanently, the omission of professions from the general trades spectrum, it shows, as well as the general census of population and, records of Civil Status, development of the county capital closely related with that of the county, falling within the general trend of evolution of the Romanian urban world.

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<sup>5</sup> Gheorghe Focșa, Ioan Godea, *Arhitectura Gorjului*, Editura de Vest, Timișoara, 2002, p. 8.

<sup>6</sup> Romulus Vuia, *Studii de etnografie și folclor*, vol. II, Editura Minerva, București, 1980, p. 323.

<sup>7</sup> A.N-D.J.GJ., *Fond Primăria Târgu Jiu, Dosarul nr 23/1859-1862*, f 9.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 27.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibidem*, *Dosarul nr. 94/1914*, f. 69.

## Chapter IV

### The evolution of marriage in Northern Oltenia in the second half of the Nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century

In the Old Kingdom, as in all of the European society, the individual is valued as part of the family from birth to death, less as their own entity. Beyond cultural differences over the centuries, marriage was seen as a social duty which man and woman cannot escape an institutionalized framework of perpetuating life and transmitting property.

The Triple meaning of marriage: the perpetuation of the species, to avoid extra-conjugal sin and marital relations based on reciprocity were analyzed by historians and anthropologists starting from the evolution of the Christian world<sup>10</sup>. Both in a rural or urban context, the marriage was caused by economic and social interests and, following the moral rules perpetuated over time. Excluded from the girls' education love and passion were replaced in the Romanian society with respect and duty towards the parents and future husband. In the Old Kingdom as well as in the entire 19th century Europe, love and passion were considered the mortal enemies of a peaceful and rational life<sup>11</sup>. In the traditional society, stability and the proper understanding within the family were granted by the complementary roles of men - the dominant role and production, and women - associated with household duties - domestic role<sup>12</sup>.

Although complementary, the roles of the two spouses were clearly differentiated. Michelle Perrot compared the family with an enterprise, home with the workspace in which the roles of parents and children, young and old have been rigorously established to be complementary, significantly influenced by eventual "slippage" of the family balance and migration<sup>13</sup>. Statistically, the exact account of the marriages in Polovragi between the years 1859-1910 is impossible to realize due to the only partial conserving of the marriage records. Because of this deficiencies, the total number of marriages is relative, only for the decade 1889-1898 we have an accurate view of marriages – 123, the last chronological segment 1899 - 1910 having 11 years, with 117 new couples.

The social life is closely related to the existence of the calendar, means of measuring time, which correlates the human activities with the recurrent phenomena, from the terrestrial and cosmic space<sup>14</sup>. The distribution in a year, on months, indicates the locals' preference for January with 94 marriages (22, 43 %), followed by November - 93 (22, 20 %) and February 90 (21, 48 %), this kind of behavior related to marriage and the matrimonial strategies are closely related to the pace of everyday life, tributary to farming till late autumn and strongly influenced if not from conviction at least from habit by religious celebrations. December is surprising with 75 marriages (17, 90%). This fact reveals the tendency of the individual, the family and even the community to make their way through the restrictions imposed by the Church and the state's increased control after 1865.

The fewest marriages occurred in June - 1 (0.24%), August - 3 (0.72%), July - 4 (0.95%), the summer being an unfit season because of farming and insufficient resources to organize the wedding party. Clear differences can be noted between October - 19 marriages (4.53%) and November - 93 (22.20%), despite the proximity in the calendar, while March is noted only six marriages (1.43%) due to its double status: religious prohibition during this month for this major event in the life of young people and their families and the beginning of

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<sup>10</sup> Gisela Bock, *Femeia în istoria Europei. Din Evul Mediu până în zilele noastre*, Editura Polirom, Iași, 2002, p. 38.

<sup>11</sup> Liliana Andreea Vasile, „Să nu audă lumea”. *Familia românească în Vechiul Regat*, Editura Tritonic, București, 2010.

<sup>12</sup> Petru Iluț, *Sociopsihologia și antropologia familiei*, Editura Polirom, Iași, 2005, p. 132.

<sup>13</sup> Michelle Perrot, „Funcțiile familiei”, în *Istoria vieții private*, vol. VII, p. 91.

<sup>14</sup> Ion Ghinoiu, *Sărbători și obiceiuri românești*, Editura Helion, București, 2004, p. 7.

spring farm work. At first marriage, average age for men was 22.64 years old and 18.53 years old for women.

In Polovragi there were 34 remarriages, 6 between both spouses being widow and widower, 20 between widowers and women at their first marriage, 8 between widows and unmarried men, only between 1900-1910, 19 such marriages took place. The endogamous universe, generally too small to balance the matrimonial needs with "the social capital" of the settlement, marital agreements were completed with people from other villages, starting with the closest and only by exception with people from villages at a greater distances. Of the 419 marriages, 108 (25.77%) meet the criteria of exogamy.

Cărpiniș is fragmented by the civil status preserved incompletely. If the 180 marriages proved with documents represent only partly the social reality and the evolution of the whole family, more suggestive are - keeping proportions, the seasonality of marriages. Unlike the highly homogeneous distribution for January, February and November in Polovragi, in Carpinis the hierarchy of the twelve months is dominated by February with 79 marriages (42.93%), compared to only 52 (27.17%) in January and much fewer in November, only 19 (10.33%).

March, April, May and July are at the same level with 2 marriages (1.09%), followed in ascending order by September 3 (1.63%), June 5 (2.72%), October 7 (3.80%) and December 11 (5.97%). Unlike the village Polovragi, young people's age for entering marriage was slightly higher, 24.6 years old for men and 19.05 years old for women. Of the 9 remarriages, only two were between widows and widowers, and seven involving widowers and women at their first marriage. The average age of men marrying a second time was 41.1 years old, and widow remarried at the age of 41. Most marriages are made within the community, endogamous marriages, providing a strong network of neighborly relations and reciprocity between families<sup>15</sup>. As shown by the following figures for the period 1869 - 1907 of the 184 marriages registered, 135 marriages were endogamous and 50 marriages were exogamous (27.17%). Exogamous marriages have contributed to avoiding consanguineous kinship, allowing families and young people to carefully select their new partners<sup>16</sup>.

In Cloșani, the matrimonial intentionality was the basis for the completion of the 331 marriages between the years 1875 and 1911. The distribution along the whole year is uneven; November dominating by far with the formation of 110 married couples, at rate of 33.23%. In the top of the local's preference were also February with 64 marriages - 19.34%, October with 52-15.71% and January with 41 - 12.36%. March was avoided entirely, unlike the other settlements, regardless of the prevailing landform and climate. If during the Easter Lent the Ecclesiastical Canons on marriage were fully respected, the same cannot be said about December with 19 marriages - 5.74%. In August, the absence of marriages is caused by the interfering of St. Mary's Lent with the farming calendar, pending the gathering of the crops. We notice a very small number of marriages in April - 2 (0.60%), July - 7 (2.11%) and - 11 (3.32%).

The average age for entering their first marriage for men was 23.8 years old and 19.2 years old for and women. Differences are favorable to men, whose wives were in frequent cases at least a decade younger than their husbands. Of the 28 remarriages, 16 were between widowers and women at their first marriage and only 7 were between widows and single men, and 5 between widows and widowers. For remarried men the average age was 40.3 years old and for remarried women the average age was 31 and a half years old. Of the 331 marriages, 211 were endogamous and 120 exogamous (36.25%). Of these, 75 were with women from other settlements and 45 with men naturalized in Cloșani.

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<sup>15</sup> H. G. Haupt, Jean- Luc Mayaud, „Țăranul”, în vol. *Omul secolului al XIX-lea*, coordonatori Ute Frevert, H. G. Haupt, Editura Polirom, Iași, 2002, p. 318.

<sup>16</sup> Sorina Paula Bolovan, *Familia în satul românesc din Transilvania. A doua jumătate a secolului al XIX și începutul secolului XX*, Centrul de Studii Transilvane, Fundația Culturală Română, Cluj – Napoca, p. 116.

In Topești, from the total of 418 marital events most are from 1876-1885 decade, the recoil of the years 1886-1894 is understood because of the nine years span. Men were married around the age of 23.2 years old and women around 19.4 years old, similarly to the aforementioned rural communities. November with 143 marriages (32.21%) is followed at great distance by the winter months - February 68 (16.27%) and January 66 (15.79%), October and December each with 38 (9.09 %). Of the 45 remarriages - 10.76% of all of marriages, 8 were between widows and widowers (1.91%), widowers and women at their first marriage - 22 (5.26%), 11 with the women being a widow and unmarried men (2.63%). The average age for remarried men is 39.7 years old and for women 30.8 years old. Much smaller than endogamy, exogamy marriages are only 47 - 11.24%, primarily by including the neighboring villages in the family relations system. Except a man established by marriage in Topești, in 46 of the studied cases the woman came from outside the community and followed her husband in his native village.

In Logrești - Moșneni, the recovery of the dynamics of marriage between 1859 and 1906 is affected by the absence of the year 1875, from the whole natural movement of the settlement. In these circumstances, the number of marriages rises to 339, most – 88 - in the 1887-1896 decade. The winter months, January - 109 (32.15%) and February 87 (25.66%) were considered ideal for founding new families, only 48 marriages were registered in November (14.16%), from where we can deduce that late autumn does not provide enough time for this event, to this day considered much more than a civil contract concluded in the presence of a civil officer. December, with 22 (6.49%) marriages, is ahead October with 21 (6.19%), the Advent representing an easier impediment than the time set aside for the autumn harvest. In the case of first marriage the difference of age between men and women was about two years and a few months - 23.09 years old for males and 20.72 years old in females. Statistics indicate 27 remarriages from which only 6 between widows and widowers, 12 between widowers and young women and 9 between unmarried men and widows, most of whom were very young. The average age of remarried men is 38.4 years old and 29.2 years old for women. Exogamy is demonstrated by the 80 (23.6%) marriages to women from other villages belonging to Gorj and Vâlcea counties, most of which are easily accessible by crossing hills: for farming, attending fairs and visiting relatives.

In the urban world, more dynamic with regard to the economic transformations and the population's socio-professional structure, with a greater demographic mobility, the number of marriages increases substantially up to the beginning of the twentieth century. Analyzed by the months of the year, the total of 1348 marriages is distributed unevenly, with large variations between February with 273 (20.25%), January with 252 (18.69%) and March with 26 (1.93%), November ranks third with 167 marriages (12.39%) followed by May with 94 (6.97%) and October with 93 (6.90%). Although there are both similarities and differences when compared with the rural settlements described above, attitudes towards the marriage moment ties in with the same evolution, of oscillation between the occupational and the religious calendar, between profane and sacred time. Given that an important segment of the urban population consists of farmers, a wedding planning is explicable in February, January and November with few agricultural activities, December with 61 marriages (4.53%), slightly surpassed September with 68 (5.04%). The low number of marriages in December and March, both with long fasting periods, are less motivated by respect for the ecclesiastical precepts and more by the time allotted to household chores and spring activities in general. August is much better represented with the 98 marriages (7.27%) compared to Polovragi, Cărpiniș and Topești.

Between 1859 and 1865 there wasn't any marriage celebrated in March and December, which is recurring after 1866. During the same period the Church's authority moved towards the spiritual sphere after losing its administrative power and control over the individual from birth till death.

In general the town inhabitants were married at ages close to those of the rural settlements, to enter the normality of biological and social life, about 23.65 years old to 19.94

years old for both men and women. Remarriage was practiced well into old age, 122 new families - 9% being anticipated by death and divorce. In 29 of the couples both spouses were married before, while only for 51 the man had to face death of his wife or unfortunate experience of separation in the courtroom, 44 women were at the second and third marriage to unmarried men. The average age of those involved in a new marriage was 44.5 years for men and 38.5 for women. Taking into consideration religious confession, in Târgu - Jiu between 1859 - 1905 were carried out 25 marriages between Orthodox and Catholics, two between Orthodox and Protestants, one between Greek Catholics and Orthodox, 25 between Catholics, 7 between Catholics and Protestants, 8 between Protestants, 3 between the Greco-Catholics and Catholics and 9 between the mosaic.

Although the investigated settlements are located geographically in mountains and hillside areas, with considerable distances between them, belonging to both the rural and urban world, in the administrative structure of different counties, the researched demographic phenomena and events: endogamy - exogamy, protogamy - palingamy, the seasonality of marriages, the average age of men and women at first marriage, remarriage and its implications, and inter-ethnic marriages in urban areas had a similar evolution, with peculiarities that should not be neglected.

## Chapter V

### Shortfalls within marital life. Divorce and cohabitation

At the turn of the two centuries, divorce was rare, as shown in the census conducted in 1899, but also in marriage registers, in which rulings issued by the court and concerning the dissolution of marriage were transcribed. Without doubt, the Christian saying "What God has joined together, let man not separate", the mutual assumption of marital duties, bringing up children in challenging circumstances, precarious economic conditions for most of the population, have led to an extremely low number of divorces in all the investigated settlements. Most of the times, divorce was requested by the wife, invoking the grounds covered in the article. 212 of Civil Code: verbal, physical aggression, leaving home and sometimes adultery. Divorce as described by Michelle Perrot, became a female institution in most cases physical violence rather than the adultery being the grounds for the couple's dissolution<sup>17</sup>.

In Polovragi settlement the number of divorces seems to be very low in the registers concerning marriage. There were recorded only 10 declarations of dissolution of marriage. Out of these, eight were initiated by wives and only two by husbands. Both women and men gave as reasons for the separation: leaving home, insults and adultery. In Topesti, the number of divorces is very small, the 6 cases illustrating the durability of marriages in the rural settlements, with mentalities dominated by the Christian morality and the obligations towards family and community. Divorce as a demographic phenomenon is found in Closani on a modest scale, with 13 cases registered until 1911 and one in 1922. In 11 of the court orders, the wife requests separation and custody of the couple's children. There were 3 men who had enough of the hardships of marriage.

In Târgu - Jiu, between 1865 and 1913, as transcribed in the marriage registers, there were 72 divorces, relatively few compared to the total number of marriages and approached period. The reasons for divorce do not differ from those in the rural world, from forms of domestic violence, adultery, leaving the home to the loss of freedom for committing serious crimes. The house was considered the most dangerous place of the modern world, through the violence exercised generally by males in the family setting<sup>18</sup>. According to the marriage register in which there were transcribed the divorce sentences according to the Civil Code, most legal actions of divorce were introduced by wives for ill-treatment, disappearance from home and adultery. A product of the social system, the Romanian family in general and rural family in particular, with strong family ties, has distinguished itself through a great durability and a small number of divorces<sup>19</sup>. In most cases the marital conflicts were resolved within the family, hoping to avoid the infringement of social convenience, the burden on children, and tensions between family members or relatives, "gossip" and breaking the economic heritage.

Condemned by the church and reluctantly accepted by rural communities, cohabitation was an alternative to marriage for young men who were below the age of marriage or for widowed or divorced men and women reluctant to get involved in a new marriage<sup>20</sup>. The large number of illegitimate children, the different name of the father and the mother registered when they had given the consent for their child's marriage make us believe that despite the restrictions imposed by the church and community, cohabitation was a way of life in urban settlements as well as in the rural areas. To fight this, the Church urged the priests to intensify

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<sup>17</sup> Michelle Perrot, „Drame și conflicte familiale”, în *Istoria vieții private. De la Revoluția Franceză la Primul război mondial*, vol. VI, Editura Meridiane, București, 1997, p. 254.

<sup>18</sup> Anthony Giddens, *Sociologie*, Editura BIC ALL, București, p.178.

<sup>19</sup> Maria Voinea, *Familia și evoluția ei istorică*, Editura Științifică și Enciclopedică, București, 1978, p. 64

<sup>20</sup> Elena Olariu, „Concubinaj și divorț. Forme de manifestare a libertății în viața privată”, în *Ipostaze ale modernizării Vechiului Regat*, vol II, Editura Universității București, București, 2005, p. 129.

the actions taken against this practice branded as vice. They also imposed the periodical drawing up of "concubines panels" for each parish.

In the traditional village from northern Oltenia, built on values imposed by the Church and supported by the state, informal cohabitation represented a confined phenomenon largely determined by the demographic potential of the settlement and the numerical ratio between men and women. The most important indication of "the union" of the two protagonists is the number of illegitimate children with issued birth certificates. Unlike Polovragi, with 44 illegitimate children, in Cărpiniș and Topești their number was very low - 7 and 5, but we should not forget the chronological limitations of the studied period and the estimated total of the population by the geographical dictionaries and other publications of the time. None of these children were legitimized by the mother's marriage to the biological father; couples' stability is stronger than the need to change their civil status. Moreover for those with a modest economic status, paying the fees related to marriage and a possible wedding would have created an unbearable financial imbalance.

Unlike Cărpiniș and Polovragi, in Cloșani, a very large number of illegitimate births is an informal evidence of the fact that people were living together without officializing their relation. From 1875 until 1907, seven couples in cohabitation have acquired, by marriage, the status of legally constituted families. In all these cases, the marriage took place after the birth of at least one child. In Târgu - Jiu, the presence of consensual unions is proved by the large number of illegitimate children, often declared by the biological father and registered with the mother's name. Extra-marital relations, including those followed by a birth, are an aspect of early modern family life anticipated by the pre-existing relationships among workers.

Between 1887 and 1905, 43 children were legitimized as a consequence of the official marriage of the two partners. A stable union between man and woman, concubinage manifested itself as a consequence of the impediments, when it came to marriage, imposed by law, family and community. It was also an alternative to legal coexistence and often a preliminary stage to accepting the official commitment of becoming spouses. The community was forced to reshape its attitudes towards those members who expressed their various reasons for choosing a lifestyle outside legitimacy according to civil law and church canons.

## Chapter VI

### Birth rate in Northern Oltenia in the second half of the Nineteenth and the early Twentieth century

A natural consequence of marriage, birth reflects the specific behavior the old demographic regime, dominated by the high number of births in the same families in the studied communities. The annual variation of births should be associated not only with marriage, but also with another component of the natural movement of the population - mortality<sup>21</sup>. The reconstruction of an accurate picture of the natural births and the marital couples' fertility or to some extent the birth from illegitimate cohabitation is a difficult endeavor for most villages in the Gorj County due to the lack of birth registers from various years, which had a negative impact on statistics.

Therefore, there are missing, from the inventory of the civil status in Polovragi, documents from the years 1866, 1867, 1869, 1872, 1878, 1881, 1882 and 1892 - a total of eight years in the period 1859-1905. The distribution of the 1370 births registered during the 39 years is uneven, the numerical increase alternating with the decrease depending on the economic and social context of the settlement, the demographic potential of the community and family behavior. Of the two sexes we can easily see the numerical superiority of boys - 729 (53.21%) to girls - 640 (46.79%), this fact is also notable in the other settlements investigated. The seasonality of births indicates October with the most children born - 138 (10.1%), followed by March with 134 (9.78%); May and July each with 129 births (9.42%). At the opposite pole stands September with 79 births (5.77%) and December with 90 births (6.57%), in this case children were conceived in December and March, known for sexual restrictions imposed by the Church in the two major Lents of the year - Christmas and Easter. In Polovragi, we can deduce from the stored birth documents, which 44 children were borne out of wedlock, they were declared in front of the civil officer by midwives, one of the parents and even by the mother.

Like in Polovragi, in Cărpiniș the number of newborn boys - 386 is higher than that of newborn girls - 351 of 767 of the total of children brought into the world until 1907. The monthly distribution of births reveals that fewer children were born in December - 36 (4.69%), February - 51 (6.65%) and March - 55 (7.17%). The hierarchy is dominated by August with 82 births (10.69%), November with 80 (10.4%) and July with 77 (10%), naturally superior in relation to November, February and October as the month of conceiving the baby. Compared to Polovragi, in Cărpiniș, only 7 children come from illegitimate connections, which show that few of the inhabitants of this mountain settlement with a handful of people, have opted for uncertified cohabitation outside the laws of the church.

In Cloșani (Mehedinți County), according to the birth registers, 1055 children were brought into the world between the years 1875-1907. The monthly calendar demonstrates that the most prolific months were: February with 117 (11.1%) newborn babies that were conceived in May, October, with 116 births (11%) the children being conceived in January, March, with 104 children (9.86 %) conceived in June. The month with a low birth rate was December, with only 60 children (5.69%), a phenomenon frequently encountered in rural settlements due to the lent-specific restrictions and the increased work volume compared to the winter months. Gender distribution was slightly favorable to boys, with number of 530 (50.20%), compared to only 525 girls (49.80%). A peculiarity of the birth rate is the great number of illegitimate births as a result of non-marital cohabitation. Concubinage was certainly a viable alternative to marriage, the 111 illegitimate children (10.5%) being a proof difficult to dispute.

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<sup>21</sup> Ioan Bolovan, *Transilvania între Revoluția de la 1848 și Unirea de la 1918. Contribuții demografice*, Centrul de Studii Transilvane, Fundația Culturală Română, Cluj – Napoca, 2000, p. 118.

Between the years 1859-1894, it is missing only one birth record, that of 1875, making it easier to restore, the ledger of births for this period. The nomenclative processing of births shows a number of 1143 newborn babies, of whom 602 (52.67%) boys and 541 (47.33%) girls. The dynamics of births is unequal during a year, influenced by multiple factors - more pragmatic and less religious, with a big gap between some months. Not surprisingly the most children were born in October - 121 (10.58%) and conceived in January, the second place is held by May with 120 children (10.49%), followed by September with 116 children (10.14%), more than in Polovragi with 4.37% and with 2.32% more than in Carpinis. The least prolific months are December with 62 births (5.43%) and January with 80 (7%) infants who were conceived in March and April. In the community, the illegitimacy of birth is an almost insignificant phenomenon in statistical terms, the studied period revealing only 5 children with unknown father, 3 girls and 2 boys.

The last rural settlement investigated, Logrești - Moșneni, generally followed an upward trend in the birth rate between 1859 and 1909 (except 1875 for which there is no documents attesting childbirth), 1227 births were recorded. Between 1899 and 1909, 393 children were born of whom 214 boys and 179 girls. The numerical superiority of newborn boys is evident in the hill settlements as well as in the mountain and highland communities from Gorj County. The illegitimate births are few - 37, and usually the children's birth is officialized by formalizing the relation between the biological father and the woman still in the transitional state of "illegitimate wife".

Most children were brought into the world in October 127 (10.53%), in May 123 (10.02%) and April - 122 (10.02%), the lowest number of births were in December - 56 (4, 56%), January 86 (7.01%), in February and August 100 (8.15%). Thus, we can see substantial differences between Logrești - Moșneni and the other three villages: Polovragi, Cărpiniș and Topești, the number of children born in August and conceived in November is slightly higher. The explanation could be that in the hill areas where people focused more on farming and less on breeding livestock, November is still quite busy.

In Târgu - Jiu, 5976 children were born, between the years 1859 and 1905, of which 3071 boys and 2905 girls. If for marriages there were imposed various restrictions (Lents, farm work), with large fluctuations between months, when it comes to births and conceptions there were no large variations<sup>22</sup>. The "poorest" months of the period 1859 - 1905 are: June with 411 children - 6.9%; July with 460 to 7.7%; September and December are tied with 463 children each - 7.75%. The same can't be said about October with 591 births - 9.91%, January with 550 to 9.20% and March with 540 to 9.04%. In descending order, January, April and June proved to be the favorite months for the manifestation of conjugal affection. Especially in urban areas, illegitimate births have been a phenomenon generated by multiple factors: moral, economic or social. Between 1897 and 1902, 19 unmarried women of different ages gave birth to 38 children of which two pairs were twins. Among these 9 had 2 children, 6 had 1 child, 3 had 3 children and 1 had 5 children. Between 1859 and 1905, 69 children were found abandoned, of whom 38 were boys and 31 were girls, in all these cases the mother remains unknown. Undoubtedly, most of them are the result of short-term co-habitation, love affairs and perhaps acts of adultery.

Institution and source of stability and safety, the family ensures the connection between mortality of the individual members and its immortality as a true bridge between personal and impersonal<sup>23</sup>. The child represented a way to extend their lives, an expression of love between spouses, a way of enhancing the wealth and social status of the family.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> Sorina Paula Bolovan, *Familia în satul românesc din Transilvania ...*, p. 122.

<sup>23</sup> Zygmunt Bauman, Tim May, *Gândirea sociologică*, Editura Humanitas, București, p. 137.

<sup>24</sup> Elisabeta Stănculescu, *Sociologia educației familiale*, vol. II, *Familie și educație în societatea românească. O istorie critică a intervenționismului utopic*. Editura Polirom, Iași, 2002, p. 51.

## Chapter VII

### Aspects of everyday life from birth to death. Mortality in Northern Oltenia

Mostly rural, the Romanian society has remained tributary to the old demographic conditions, with a reduce life expectancy and a high mortality rate. Individual and family lifestyle was influenced by nutrition and living conditions – true “structures of the daily living” in Fernard Braudel’s conception, with a high impact on the health conditions and longevity. The scarce alimentation, dominated by the excessive consumption of corn favored one of the most spread diseases of the digestive system – pellagra. At the end of 1912, in Oltenia there were confirmed 3997 cases of pellagra, from which in Vâlcea County – 895, in Romanați – 881, in Dolj – 856, in Mehedinți 848 and in Gorj 517<sup>25</sup>. In mountain areas favorable for pastoral activities, the diet, which was much more balanced, has favored a higher life expectancy and a better resistance to diseases. We mustn’t omit the effect of the 184 days of lent per year, in which the peasant ate only unbaked fruits, sour cherry, berries, and rarely beans.

Alcoholism, an alarming phenomenon by its evolution, is part of the quotidian landscape of the age. The high consumption of alcohol associated with a bad diet, made things worse, especially when we talk about the rural population. From the 15<sup>th</sup> medical certificates released in 1891 in Râmnicu Vâlcea, 12 were concerning injuries generated by drunken scandals, one with wounds and injuries caused by violence unleashed by alcohol. Beverage retailers and consumers are not interested in quality, they are looking for quantity, “They abhor opening their bags, they buy what’s cheap and of poor quality”<sup>26</sup>.

In contrast with the spacious houses built from stone, with different rooms for parents and children, with chambers for servants, in the rural areas most buildings had just one room, with dirt floors and rarely with brick, where the whole family lived. The country living, from birth to premature death favored the infection of children, much more vulnerable to the epidemics of the end of the century. A panoramic view of the village presented a courtyard filled with garbage, Baltic ditches and streets left to chance. In turn, the cities excel in poor sanitation, slums, the unpaved streets of the suburbs and questionable cleaning of markets and industries generally considered unhealthy.

Plague and cholera epidemics, still present in the early nineteenth century, were gradually replaced by typhus, tuberculosis, syphilis, scarlet fever and malaria. All age segments are vulnerable to death, but infant mortality dominated by its proportions. One of the causes of high mortality among children under one year of age is inadequate nutrition. The doctors consider that insufficient breast milk, stopping breastfeeding during the night; the poor management of food is fatal for the frail body of a baby under one year old.

From the 186 deaths registered in 1903, from which 17 children were born dead, the statistic of the death causing diseases places in the top of the hierarchy, pulmonary tuberculosis with 16 cases, congenital debility with 12 cases, and gastroenteritis with 12, digestive diseases with 11. From the inhabitants of the county hospitalized in the city hospital, 1 died of differic angina, 3 of typhoid fever, and 2 of puerperal infection<sup>27</sup>. Puerperal fever frequently caused the mother’s death as a result of their contamination by un experienced midwives<sup>28</sup>. Typhus or „the convict’s fever”<sup>29</sup> is transmitted through water contaminated with bacteria in organic matter,

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<sup>25</sup> Dr. Charles Laugier, „Pelagra în Oltenia”, în *Arhivele Olteniei*, anul II, No. 10, noiembrie – decembrie 1923, pp. 433 – 434.

<sup>26</sup> A.N. – D.J.VI., *Fond Primăria Râmnicu – Vâlcea, Dosar nr. 8/1904*, f. 18. .

<sup>27</sup> *Ibidem*, f. 34.

<sup>28</sup> Victor Babeș, *Boalele țaranului român*, Conferință ținută în 27 ianuarie în localul Societății Tinerimea Română, Tipo-Litografia Societății „Tiparul”, București, 1901, p. 6.

<sup>29</sup> Frederick F. Cartwright, Michael Biddiss, *Bolile și istoria*, Editura Bic All, București, 2005, p. 119.

with devastating consequences throughout Europe in conditions of war, famine and widespread poverty.

The disease of poverty and misery, tuberculosis under its two forms: pulmonary and bone related, ravaged the Romanian society, most of the victims being peasants and urban workers. The narrow streets of the cities represented, by population density in unsanitary houses, real "islands with tuberculosis"<sup>30</sup>. In the period between April 1, 1903 and 31 March 1904 out of 7167 people seen in Vâlcea County, 6831 Romanian and 336 foreign, 751 were suffering from malaria, 195 syphilis, 33 of pellagra and tuberculosis<sup>31</sup>. Malaria was caused by alteration of water with organic material in ponds ubiquitous decomposition transparent people in the streets or in yards.

From the daily life of the XIX-XX century there were not missing "shameful" diseases, as they were cataloged by people without medical knowledge and questionable hygiene, syphilis, gonorrhoea and any sexually transmitted diseases. Syphilis, rarely declared because of the shame of those infected, it has his roots in the legal or illegal practice of prostitution. A possible way of fighting venereal diseases was the temporary closure of the brothel. Outside the legal framework of prostitution, by the nature of the humble social condition and hygienic ignorance, maids were frequently suspected of love affairs, generating venereal diseases.

In Polovragi county, most deaths during 1859-1905 occurred among people aged 41-70 years: 203 (26.54%), 153 deaths for demographic aged 20-40 years (20%), children aged 1-7 years with 130 (16.99%) and 117 deaths among children under the age of 1 year (15.29%). The number of stillbirths is quite small, for the period 1859-1905. There were recorded only 3 cases (0.39%). The sex, number of the men killed - 431 (56.34%) exceeded the female population - 334 deaths (43.66%). With reference to our monthly distribution of deaths, most deaths occurred in March due to the increased vulnerability to diseases spring - 87 deaths (11.37%), followed by winter months, January to 83-10, 85% and February with 82 to 10.72%.

In Cărpiniș, as in Polovragi most affected by mortality were adults aged 41-70 years, in 117 (31.88%), children aged 1-7 years - 66 deaths (17.98 %) of adults 20-40 - 56 (15.26%), between 71-80 years - 37 (10.08%) and less babies up to 1 year - 35 (9.54%). Dead babies are a rarity in the small mountain settlement - 2 (0.54%), fact met in the village Polovragi also. During calendaristic year, most deaths were recorded in October - 49 (13.35%), followed by April - 47 (12.81%) and January to 46 deaths (12.53%).

Between 1875 and 1906, in Cloșani there were 933 deaths among all age groups. Unlike other villages studied, death at birth is very high, the 113 children brought into the world without life representing 12.11% of the total deaths and stillbirths with unknown father were 26, representing 23% of the total. Mortality targeted people aged 41-70 years with a total of 273 cases (29.26%), in the background there are young people between 20-40 years - 132 deaths (14.15%) and children from 1-7 years, representing the number of 130 (13.93%). The number of children who died before 1 year, 93 total, amounted to 9.97% of all deaths. The least affected segments were people aged between 14-20 years and children aged 7-14 years, less affected by the disease and hard labor. Out of the months of the year, March stands out with 112 deaths - 12%, probably due to seasonal epidemics correlated with the weakening of the body after passing the winter in poor nutritional conditions. January and February, with 94 to 10.08% and from 89 to 9.54% in contrast to the less affected month, June - 61 cases (6.54%) and July - 66 (7.07%), during these months the climatic conditions are favorable elements of the daily life in mountain communities.

In Topești, of the 917 people who died between 1859 and 1894, there couldn't be found any child born dead. Among the segments most affected by death are: children between 1 and 7 years, with 221 deaths (24.10%), followed by adults between 41-70 years: 206 (22.46%), between 20 and 40: 192 deaths (20.94%). From birth to 1 year - 67 (7.31%) and 7-14 years - 69

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<sup>30</sup> Gheorghe Banu, *Tratat de medicină socială*, vol. IV, *Tuberculoza. Bolile venerice*, pp. 154-156.

<sup>31</sup> A.N. – D.J.VI., *Fond Primăria Râmnicu – Vâlcea, Dosar nr. 8/1904*, f. 66.

(7.52%) the ratio is quite balanced, the less affected are young people between 14-20 years - 35 (3.82%). Distribution of deaths by gender shows a higher number of deaths in men, 475 (51.80%) than women - 442 (48.20%). Highest mortality was shown in February - 105 (11.45%), March and April - 102 (11.12%), followed by a few percent in November - 81 (8.83%), May 75 (8, 18%), December and January - 74 (8.07%). In June - 51 (5.56%) and September - 54 (5.89%), such demographic events have occurred in smaller number.

A similar evolution regarding mortality is met in Logrești county - Mosneni, most deaths being between 41-70 years - 315 (28.48%), followed by a difference of 10 percent of children aged 1-7 years 19.71% (218), between 20-40 years (18.81%) and children under 1 year - 142 (12.84%). For those aged between 7-14 years, the number of deaths is relatively low - 46 (4.16%) and stillbirths are the number three (0.27%). The number of deaths rose to 617 men (55.79%) higher than women - 489 (44.21%). Temporality of deaths ranked first in March with a total of 123 fatalities (11.12%), followed in January with 112 deaths (10.13%) and February with 107 (9.67%). There is an ascending tendency in mortality: in December with 104 deaths (9.40%), in October with 101 (9.13%) and April 96 (8.68%). Months with the fewest deaths were in June with 69 (6.24%), September 72 (6.51%) and July 73 (6.60%).

In Târgu - Jiu, the dimensions mortality are directly proportional to the population and socio-economic development of the county of residence. Between 1859 and 1905, deaths rose to 6465, of which 3653 men (56.50%) and 2812 (43.50%) women. It is surprising the number of dead infants, 350 (5.41%) for the entire period, which means that birth frequently occurs in the absence of specialized midwives and in improper hygienic conditions. The city's population between 41-70 years old was most affected by premature deaths, with a total of 1597 (24.70%). As in rural settlements, young adults between 20-40 years have been quite vulnerable, with a total of 1463 (22.63%) dead. Among children, there was an undesirable tribute at the age of 1 year old, the 1184 deaths representing 18.31% of all deaths. Poor living conditions and birth in questionable circumstances, even infanticide, are the above mentioned causes of death.

With a poor diet, neglected by mothers forced to work immediately after birth, with poor hygiene and reaped by the epidemics, children aged 1-7 years were likely to die, revealing being the 947 deaths (14.65%). The least affected were people aged 7-14 years - 278 (4.30%) and those between 14-20 years - 283 (4.38%). Although we cannot have accurate records of the deceased persons in the county, we must not forget that some of the patients died in hospitals from different rural communities. The distribution of deaths by months indicates the highest mortality rate in March with 703 deaths (10.87%), followed by January with 649 (10.04%) and December with 621 (9.60%). Similar numbers can be encountered in April - 618 deaths (9.56%), November - 537 (8.31%), the lowest level being in September - 415 (6.42%), July - 418 (6.47 %) and June - 427 (6.60%). The fluctuations of deaths from one month to another are similar, although we have to take into consideration the proportions generated by the number of inhabitants. Between the rural settlements from different parts of the county and Târgu-Jiu there are not major differences when it comes to mortality.

The existence of the county hospital in the city, with patients coming from outside the city has contributed, according to the number of deaths recorded in the "County House", to the shaping of a negative natural growth, largely offset by the consequences of immigration from rural areas and in other European countries . An unintended contribution to increased mortality was due to the military unit, the frequency of contamination by sick soldiers was remarkable.

## **Chapter VIII**

### **Family behavior - a nominative reconstruction of the family**

If general demographic tendencies can be established by the charts and cards regarding marriage, birth and death, the nominative cards of reconstruction of a certain number of families for the most representative communities allow the identification of the matrimonial behavior particularities. Therefore, together with very numerous families, with many children, specific to the old demographic regime, there were families with 1-2 children, which demonstrate the existence of certain control of births. In Polovragi, out of the 20 families reconstructed on the basis of civil registries, two of them have had 8 children, 2 – seven children, 3 – five children, 2 – four children, 2 – 3 children, 3 – 2 children, 4 – an only child. In seven of these families, the first child is brought into the world at about 9 – 15 months of the marriage; the marital intimacy is not limited by the desire to postpone conception of the first child. The reproductive behavior is heterogeneous, if for some couples the conception and the birth of children stop after 7 – 9 years from the beginning of life as a married couple, for others fertility is measured in decades.

For analysis of marriage, birth and mortality in Cloșani, there was chosen a sample of 15 married couples, established in 1885 and 1887. From the research of the Registers of birth, there was one family that had no children, without ruling out the existence of children from first marriages. The behavior manifested differently, the number of children being a milestone in trying to decipher the attitude towards the child and its role in everyday life. If five families had one child, two with two children, one family had 3 children, 4 with 4 children, 2 families with 6 children. After the appearance of the first child, the tendency to increase chronological interval to next birth is quite obvious: 1 year and 11 months, between 2 years and 2 ½ years and over 2 ½ years to 5 years. The existence of a certain self on births cannot be denied, from economic and social considerations.

In Logrești – Mosneni, the reconstruction of the familial life aspects was realized on the basis of a pattern of 23 nominative cards. The 23 couples had an uneven number of children, as follows: 2 – nine children, 1 – eight children, 1 – seven children, 1 – five children, 3 – four children, 1 – three children, 8 – two children and 5 – one child. For marital couples formed in 1905, there is less probable that the number of children should limit to 1 or 2, taking into account the age of the spouses and the interval between births. It cannot be omitted the behavioral model offered by community families with 7 up to 8 children.

For Târgu-Jiu there were reconstituted 23 families, among which 15 with Orthodox parents, 4 with Protestant parents, 1 with Catholic parents, one with Jewish parents, and one mixed. According to the profession the sample contains artisans, merchants, farmers, officials and schoolmasters. The family formed from 1870 until 1901 had a different number of children whatever profession, nationality or religion. The nominative cards have shown different marital behaviors, underlining demographers and historians' considerations on families with many children born by the biological limit of procreation.

## Conclusions

By its complexity, the family naturally compared with a real universe of social life, imposes a multidisciplinary approach, sociology, anthropology, the social imaginary studies and historical geography completing the perspective offered by historical demography and by everyday life history. The study of social institutions and realities – marriage and family, it started from investigating sources specific to historical demography: a) the Civil Status Registers, developed by Church and City Hall until 1865, by officers of Civil Status after the implementation of the Civil Code; b) censuses, especially for Târgu-Jiu, organized in 1859-1860s, 1912, without being neglected the correspondence between administrative authorities on natural movement of population at the end of each month or year, the reports elaborated by doctors about population health state, hygiene, the measures adopted to prevent and combat epidemics, the clergy appeals submitted to Prefectures and Municipalities On Christian moral deviations in daily behavior.

In order to get demographic behavior in the selected settlements there was necessary the recovery of marriage dynamics, of births and deaths from numeric perspective, the quantitative one by neo-nominative processing on years and decades of the information comprised in the Civil State Registers. The increasing and decreasing tendencies of these demographic events – marriages, births and deaths, is presenting similarities with the Old Kingdom space until the First World War and with Transylvania after the Revolution of 1848.

The high number of marriages in certain months of the year: January, February and November, is reflecting the correlation between the pace of everyday life, dominated by agricultural work and other economic pursuit and “the beginning” of young people’s family lives, but also committing civil marriage in the months after, show the individual trends of manifestation of individual aspirations, evading ecclesiastical customs and interdictions. Although prevailing *protogamia*, there aren’t missing cases of remarriage in case of death or divorce a spouse. Age differences between spouses are in most cases normal for years, but they can be measured in decades according to “marriage market supply” related to woman or man’s wealth.

Birth rate varied depending on local demographic particularities, in close connection with the annual number of marriages contracted, with social and economic stability in certain decades. Generally families from rural and urban areas have many children, in order to realise the family balance often disturbed by the increased amount of deaths among children under seven years. The temporality of the births shows the smaller differences between the months of the year compared with the distribution of marriages, which demonstrates that the couple ignored the interdictions imposed by the Church and the lent months.

The illegitimacy of birth, reduced in village areas because of the modest number of concubinages, the stricter control done by the community and the Church entered into normality, in Târgu-Jiu the illegitimate birth representing 15-20% of the total. Although the church has vehemently opposed to concubinages, considering it as a sin by rejecting marriage, this lifestyle whose quantitative dimensions are hard to quantify, has been practiced both in rural and urban communities. The state and the community manifested themselves enough reluctance and less tolerance towards the so-called “unlawful marriages” to avoid misunderstandings on legacy assets, weakening sense of authorship, easing up the separation of women and children by men, amplifying extramarital relations, adulteries.

Extremely rare in the traditional world of the village, where the attachment to certain rules of behavior is very strong, the divorce was much more common in urban areas because of the tendencies of changing mentality regarding marital relations, the gradual emancipation of women from men’s authority and the need to ensure a minimum based on own aspirations and ideals. The alleged causes of marriage dissolution through juridical channels, especially by

women, have been injuries, repeated domestic violence, adultery and leaving the conjugal home.

The nominative reconstruction of a sample of families from Polovragi, Logrești - Moșneni, Cloșani and Târgu-Jiu, by linking data from Civil Status Registers – Marriages, Births and Deaths, are offering the image of some communities in which the along with the general behavioral tendencies there are manifested the particularities arisen from the specific of each family in which regards the number of children, the brutal interruption of family cycle by death and only exceptionally by divorce. Stereotypes regarding families with many children have been largely refuted by the presence, as rare as it is, of marital couples with one or two children.

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