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HISTORY AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

**The transformation of the cultural institutions of  
the Hungarians living in Transylvania 1944–1948**

**Thesis summary**

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The thesis entitled “*The transformation of the cultural institutions of the Hungarians living in Transylvania 1944–1948*” tries to make a synthesis of the Hungarian cultural institutions of Transylvania in the post-war period.

The in-depth study of this topic was not possible during the decades of the communist regime; scientific studies were allowed to be published if only treating different segments of the cultural life of the Hungarian minority in the first years of the post-war period. This way, there has appeared an ever growing need to work-out a general analysis covering all the changes that happened in the cultural life of the Hungarians from Transylvania in the given period. The aim of my thesis is to carry out a detailed study on this field.

The fact that the period between 1944 and 1948 covers the transition period after the Second World War, made me possible to study a period full of events, in the course of which an older form of culture reached its final phase of dissolution, and parallel with it the basis of a new cultural concept was laid down. Closely linked to this general changing process, during the first post-war years a wide-spread reorganization of cultural institutions had taken place which resulted in the dissolution of a large number of traditional institutions, whose place has been taken over by new ones, some of them still existing.

Essentially, we can perceive cultural life as a body built up of two major fields: artistic and scientific life. The first one covers the different artistic branches: dramatic art, plastic art, literature, etc., while the second one comprises on the one hand scientific research and academic activity, and on the other hand institutions of higher education. Therefore, this thesis is structured in such a way as to correspond to this division. Among the totally five chapters the first three deal with the different fields of artistic life, while the last two chapters introduce scientific activities.

# **Thesis summary**

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**Keywords:** cultural life, cultural spheres, art, science, world war, post-war period, military administration, society, urban centres, continuity, conservation, transition, transformation, change, adaptation, development, institutional basis, institutional reorganization, organizational structure, administration, foundation, functioning, activity, vitality, optimism, subsidy, purification, analysis, cease, propaganda, influence, ideology, doctrine, socialism, communism, political power, dictatorship, centralization, unification, realism, forms of conjuncture in artistic creation, activists, class struggle, class enemies, bourgeoisie, kulaks, working class, proletarian movement, bourgeoisie remains, theatre, opera, exposition, literary life, magazines, publishing houses, press, university, faculty, institutions of higher education, university properties, removal, professorship, educational process, intelligentsia, staff training, cultural-scientific societies, museum collection, scientific activity, scientific research, restriction, solution, dissolution.

## Sources Used During Research

Sources used in the elaboration of the thesis can be grouped in the following main categories: unpublished archive sources, unpublished documents and manuscripts, legislative sources, collection of documents, generic and specialist books, studies and special articles, contemporary press, memories and interviews.

Considering these one by one, in the case of unpublished archive sources we need to mention that the period under consideration did not favour their preservation in a big number. A big part of the archive documents from Transylvania was destroyed or significantly deteriorated during the war. Nevertheless, it also occurred that the staff of the institution destroyed the archive being alarmed by the closeness of the front line to the settlement where the offices of the given institution were. This was the case with the archive heritage of the "Barabás Miklós" Guild of Cluj which had been almost totally destroyed by secretary Sándor Szolnay at the beginning of October 1944.

Besides this, the archives of many Hungarian cultural institution of Northern Transylvania were packed in and sent to Budapest and to western Hungarian cities following the general eviction order issued by the Hungarian authorities on 2 September 1944. Many of these archives never reached their destination being destroyed during the fights or because of not being transported appropriately. The main part of the archive documents that reached the indicated settlements was subsequently deteriorated because of inappropriate storage conditions. Some archive documents from the "Francisc Iosif I" University had the same destiny, arriving to Keszthely, a town in Hungary, they were deposited in the basements of Festetich castle where they were significant damaged because of humidity.

After the war, the Hungarian state reconveyed a big part of the archive heritage that had been stored in Hungary to the Hungarian cultural institutions of Transylvania. We can take as an example the archives of the Hungarian theatre of Cluj. The reconveyed funds were nevertheless selected by the staff of the given institutions in order to eliminate any documents which could have eventually been used against the previous leaders or employees by the new political power holders. Most of the documents being taken away from the archives were destroyed; others were

kept as private property and could hardly be accessed. This is the reason why archive collections preserved until present days are incomplete in many cases.

The documents not being reconveyed by the Hungarian state in the first years of the post-war period were included in different sections of the National Archives of Hungary seating in Budapest (Magyar Országos Levéltár). Many documents of high value have been preserved in the archives of the Foreign Office (Külügyminisztériumi Iratok, Békeelőkészítő Osztály Iratai), and in the Contemporary Collection of the Ministry of Culture and National Education (Vallás- és Közoktatásügyi Minisztérium, Jelenkori Gyűjtemény). These can be accessed by researchers and are of big help in completing the data concerning the functioning of the different cultural institutions, especially due to the fact that the reports of the Hungarian foreign representatives in Romania, which contain observations and extremely interesting evaluations connected to the functioning of the Hungarian cultural institutions of Transylvania in the post-war period, are attached to them. These syntheses and analyses treat the Hungarian university of Cluj above all, the Transylvanian Museum Society and the Hungarian Economical Society of Transylvania.

As far as the Romanian archives are concerned, the most important archive sources connected to the Hungarian cultural institutions of Transylvania are kept in the Cluj County Branch of the Romanian National Archives as most of these institutions were seated in Cluj. Besides the archives of the Hungarian Theatre of Cluj, that holds information about this theatrical institution until the end of 1944 thus helping in the creation of an overall picture of its functioning in the period before that, the archives of the Transylvanian Museum Society are extremely important which can be accessed by researchers since 2008. More data on institutional transformation in the Hungarian cultural life of Transylvania can be detected at the Cluj City and the Prefecture Archives, and in the archives of the Intelligence Service (“Serviciul Secret de Informații”) Cluj-Turda. The personal archives of György Kristóf and the personal collection of Lajos Kelemen provide us a lot of important information regarding the Hungarian university of Cluj and the cultural activity of the above mentioned personalities, members of several cultural organizations.

Other extremely important Romanian archive sources on this field are the following: the Archive Documents of the Medicinal and Pharmaceutical Institute within the framework of the Romanian National Archives, Mureș County Branch that have preserved the most important documents connected to the former Faculty of Medicine of “Bolyai” University, and the Baia

Mare City Hall Archives together with the archives of the "Colony of Painters" in Baia Mare within the framework of the Romanian National Archives, Maramureş County Branch which provide us valuable information on the art's colony and the painters' school from the same locality.

At the same time, among the archives found in the property of the cultural institutions, the Hungarian Theatre of Cluj possesses the richest archive consisting of original playbills, legal reports written during the board of directors meetings, repertoires of different theatrical seasons and numerous statistics regarding the budget of the theatre and the number of the audience attending the plays.

During my research I complemented the archive sources used with several unpublished documents and manuscripts regarding different cultural institutions. In the case of the Hungarian Theatre of Cluj the original documents possessed by the actor Endre Senkálzsky, while in the case of the Hungarian plastic art institutions the documents held by the inheritors of the painters Sándor Szolnay, Gábor Miklóssy, Zoltán Kovács and Irma Brósz provided big help.

As far as the published sources of the Hungarian cultural life of Transylvania between 1944 and 1948 are concerned, they show a wide variety. Five collections among these are extremely important, three of which contain essential data connected to the different segments of the cultural life. The collection entitled "*A Helikon és az Erdélyi Szépmíves Céh levelesládája (1924–1944)*" (*The Correspondence of the Helikon Literary Society and the Transylvanian Literary Guild Publishing House between 1924 and 1944*), published in Bucharest in 1979, contains many legal reports and letters written by outstanding personalities of the Hungarian literary life until the end of the Second World War. Similarly, the volume entitled "*A nagybányai művészet és művésztelep a magyar sajtóban 1919–1944. Dokumentumok a nagybányai művésztelep történetéből*" ("*The Art's Colony and the Art of Baia Mare in the Hungarian Press between 1919 and 1944. Documents from the Life of the Art's Colony of Baia Mare*"), published in Miskolc, Hungary in 2000, has a remarkable collection of articles and documents regarding the last functioning phase of the painters' colony of Baia Mare. The last similar publication entitled "*Erdély magyar egyeteme 1944–1949*" ("*The Hungarian University of Transylvania 1944–1949*") published in two volumes in Tîrgu Mureş in 1995, provides detailed data on the functioning of the Hungarian University of Cluj in the first post-war years.

At the same time, the other two collections entitled "*Minoritățile etnoculturale. Mărturii documentare. Documentary Evidence. Hungarians from Romania between 1945 and 1955*) and *Iratok a magyar-román kapcsolatok történetéből (1945–1947)*" ("*Revision or Authonomy. Documents from the History of Hungarian-Romanian Relationships between 1945 and 1947*") published in Cluj in 2002 and in Budapest in 1998, are valuable sources in the research of history, adding some data and interesting elements to each field of the Hungarian cultural life of Transylvania.

During the historic documentation of this subject, legislative sources are equally important, meaning the issues of the "*Official Journal*" between 1944 and 1948. Besides these, in some cases, the "*Official Bulletin of the People's Republic of Romania*" between 1949-1950, or "*Official Bulletin of the Great National Assembly in People's Republic of Romania*" from the beginning of the '50s, as they describe the future destiny of those Hungarian cultural institutions which were dissolved in 1948.

Among the contemporary sources of events and transformations in the cultural life of the Hungarian minority in Romania between 1944 and 1948, the contemporary Hungarian press has a special place. The daily papers published since 1944-1945 in Cluj ("*Világosság - Light*", "*Erdély - Transylvania*", "*Erdélyi Szikra - Transylvanian Spark*", "*Igazság - Truth*" and "*Egység - Unity*"), in Oradea ("*Népakarat- People's Will*"), in Satu Mare ("*Szabad Élet - Free Life*"), in Tîrgu Mureș ("*Szabad Szó - Free Word*") and in Brașov ("*Népi Egység - People's Unity*"), as well as the central Hungarian newspaper in Bucharest ("*Romániai Magyar Szó - Hungarian Word from Romania*"), having been published since 1947, abound with articles on the cultural life and a series of reports and interviews with famous artists, actors and writers. Besides the above mentioned, the issues regarding the Hungarian literary life since 1946 are treated in detail by the athenaeum "*Utunk*". We need to mention that the information found in the contemporary press can not be considered authentic from all points of view, as it was profoundly marked by the political-cultural vision of the journalists or the authors of the articles. Similarly, the political allegiance of the press organs also marks their content subjectively. In most cases I had to compare data coming from the largest source of the thesis to similar data originating from other types of sources.

As far as the bibliography studied during research is concerned, it contains on the one hand general publications treating one of the main fields of cultural life, on the other hand

specialist volumes, studies and articles concerning different cultural institutions. We need to mention among the general publications the volume entitled "*Magyar színház Erdélyben (1919–1992)*" (*Hungarian Theatre in Transylvania between 1919 - 1992*) by Lajos Kántor and József Kötő, published in Bucharest in 1994, which holds a remarkable description of the institutional network of the Hungarian theatres of Transylvania. The same way, the book entitled "*Szabályos kivétel. A romániai magyar oktatásügy regénye: 1918, 1944–1948, 1996*" (*Regular Exception. The Novel of Hungarian Education in Romania: 1918, 1944–1948, 1996*) by , published in 1997 is an essential volume regarding the history of Hungarian higher education in Romania.

The synthesizing volume, entitled "*Romániai magyar irodalom 1945–1970*" (*The Hungarian Literature in Romania 1945-1970*) written by Lajos Kántor and Gusztáv Láng, dealing with the Transylvanian cultural life in the post-war period is also important. Although published in 1971, it treats the events with the greatest objectivity possible in that time, trying to eliminate the political connotations from its text .

Among the many special volumes and studies treating one of the above mentioned institutions we only mention a few among the most important ones. The monography of the Hungarian Theatre of Cluj written by Jenő Janovics entitled „*A Hunyadi téri színház*” (*The Theatre on Hunyadi Square*), published in Cluj in 2001 enables us to clearly view this institution and at the same time it reflects the perception of dramatic art of its once famous director.

Similarly, the collection of studies related to the "Bolyai" University of Cluj entitled "*A Kolozsvári Bolyai Tudományegyetem 1945–1959*" ("*Bolyai University of Cluj between 1945 and 1959*") published in Budapest in 1999 is also relevant, as it contains a series of writings and memoirs of previous heads of the institution and of famous professors of the university.

Some of these special studies treat the history of some institutions that have not been scientifically researched until now. Such a study is written by Ferenc Kovács entitled "*Három évad Nagybányán. Rapszodikus jegyzetek egy művészegyüttes indulásáról (1953–1956)*", ("*Three Seasons at Baia Mare. Moody Notes on the Beginnings of a Company 1953-1956*") published in Baia Mare in 1997, treating the short history of the Hungarian theatre of Baia Mare, and is also opening a new direction on this field.

The other special studies represent the continuation of older volumes, published about one of the cultural institutions. Such a study is written by György Gaal entitled "*A 110 éves EMKE*" ("*110 Years of Existence of the Hungarian Cultural Society of Transylvania*") which can be

considered a significant completion of new data and information to the impressive volume written by József Pákéi Sándor entitled "*Az EMKE megalapítása és negyedszázados működése 1885–1910*" ("*The Foundation of the Hungarian Cultural Society of Transylvania and its First Twenty-five Years of Functioning*") published in Cluj in 1910. These two editions give us a comprehensive picture with many details about the Hungarian Cultural Society of Transylvania, thus helping the historian in the analysis and the evaluation of the functioning of this institution.

I have also used some recently published memoirs, besides the scientific volumes and studies, in approaching my thesis topic. In most cases these sources are profoundly marked by subjectivism, this is the reason why I have only used them in adding some less important data to the information base I had gathered before, and whenever possible I compared the ones extracted from memoirs to the data coming from other sources, considered authentic.

I also have to mention that from other points of view some of the memoirs were a big help for me as they could evoke the atmosphere of the studied period which made me possible to more deeply familiarize with the studied past, fact being very important for a historian in doing his research. Such precious memories are, to only mention a few, the one written by Edgár Balogh entitled "*Szolgálatban 1935–1944*" ("*At work. Memoires 1935-1944*"), published already in 1978, and reflect the ideas of a politician and a writer with progressive political views, and also the memoirs of Béla Bethlen, entitled "*Észak-Erdély kormánybiztosa voltam*" ("*I was the Government Commissioner of Northern-Transylvania*") published a bit later in 1989 reflecting the political perception of a central-conservative politician. By using these two volumes simultaneously, I could see the same events treated by two different points of view, so I could create a mainly objective image of the cultural life of the period between 1944 and 1948.

At the same time, the use of other memoirs was only possible with a serious critique as their text had been conceived in such a way as to generate a distorted image, placing its author in the middle of the events, focusing the attention on him, even when the author had not had central, determining positions in cultural life. I could track down this type of character in the lengthy memoirs of István Katona Szabó, entitled "*A nagy remények kora. (Erdélyi demokrácia 1944–1948)*" ("*The Age of Big Expectations. Transylvanian Democracy between 1944 and 1948*").

Finally, taking advantage of the fact that many active participants in the cultural life of the studied period are still alive, I have tried to make as many interviews as possible. Obviously, all the people being interviewed were elderly, one of them even older than 90 years old.

Nevertheless, I acquired some valuable information from them, and in some cases I could even access the original documents in their possession, having been carefully kept for many decades. The most important interview was made with the former deputy manager of the Hungarian theatre of Cluj, the famous actor, Endre Senkálzsky. Similarly, the interviews made with dr.Éva Albert, ear, nose and throat specialist, András Kiss, arhivist, Elek Csetri, professor, Tamás Soó, economist and Ferenc László journalist have also helped me in getting to know in detail the internal organizational transformations in most of the important Hungarian cultural institutions of the studied period as here follows: The Hungarian Theatre of Cluj, Faculty of Medicine of Tîrgu Mureş within the framework of the Bolyai University, Transylvanian Museum Society, Hungarian Cultural Society of Transylvania or the "Józsa Béla" Athenaeum.

In the evaluation process of the sources – as I have previously mentioned – I used both quantitative and comparative methods, as well as oral history, trying to realize a detailed and meticulous documentation, based on a wide variety of sources, and reach the necessary level of objectivity with the elaboration of the thesis both in analyzing the events and the ongoing institutional transformations. Thus, I hope, I could reach the main objective of this thesis that of creating a scientifically adequate and correct synthesis of such a vast topic as the Hungarian cultural life of Transylvania in the post-war transition period.

## Synthesis of the Main Parts of the Thesis

The thesis starts with an introduction which treats the main objectives of the thesis, of the sources used and of the research methodology, followed by a short and concise description of each of the five chapters dedicated to the different fields of culture.

Hereinafter, taking the main parts of the thesis one by one, we will try to make such a comprehensive description of each of them, as possible. The first chapter *entitled "Hungarian Theatres of Transylvania in the Period between 1944 and 1948"* tries to outline an overall picture about the institutional network development of the Transylvanian Hungarian theatres after the second world war. Thus, the chapter, being structured in eight subchapters, describes in detail the Hungarian theatrical life of Transylvania, and focuses on the presentation of the eight Hungarian theatres based in Cluj, Oradea, Baia Mare, Satu Mare, Tîrgu Mureş, Sfântu Gheorghe, Arad and Timișoara, existing in the period referred to, or established in the following years. The chapter introduces the development of the different theatrical institutions by focusing the attention on regional level, thus evaluating the territorial discrepancies of the Hungarian dramatic art of Transylvania.

Besides evaluating the activities of the theatrical institutions, it also concentrates on the different stage types and the components of the repertoire included in the Hungarian dramatic art palette of Romania. Another objective of this chapter is the presentation of the attempts of each director to create a personal theatrical style simultaneously with the desire to keep the Hungarian literary and dramatic art tradition. They did all this under the circumstances in which the communist authorities attributed, on a literary spectrum, to the older Hungarian theatres and the newly established ones the role of prime advocates of propaganda.

Simultaneously with the above mentioned objectives, I also tried to make an estimate of material conditions for each of the Hungarian theatres of Transylvania for the period between 1944 and 1947, from the end of the war until the issuance of the new theatrical law in the summer of 1947.

The problem of training new generations of actors and artists is also treated in this chapter. After 1944 the aim was to create new types of actors, devoted to the regime, this is the reason

why a new educational system was created, marked and guided by the communist ideology. In the case of the Hungarian minority this cultural-educational program started with the establishment of the *Hungarian State Academy of Music and Dramatic Art (Állami Magyar Zene-és Színművészeti Főiskola)* in Cluj in October 1946, and after two years, in 1948 it was fulfilled by transforming the institution into the *Institute of Arts (Művészeti Intézet)* in Hungarian and Romanian teaching languages.

Finally - in the attempt to create an overall picture of the institutional network of the Hungarian dramatic art of Transylvania – the chapter contains the description and the founding process of the Hungarian Opera of Cluj. The official opening of this cultural institution on the banks of the Someş river in the urban centre at the end of 1948, was a big realization of the age referred to, as it has been the only Hungarian cultural settlement of this kind in Transylvania, and as such its establishment and functioning was of a major importance in the spiritual capital of Transylvania.

The second chapter entitled "*Hungarian Plastic Arts Societies and Institutions of Transylvania between 1944 and 1948*" is structured in five subchapters, and presents the different Hungarian plastic art societies and institutions of Transylvania, starting with the dissolution of the traditional ones in the inter-war period ("Barabás Miklós" Guild) getting through to the establishment of a unique forum for artists in Romania (Romanian Plastic Artists Union). The first subchapter of the thesis describes the general situation of Hungarian plastic art during the war, meaning the years right before the age studied in detail. Within this framework it concentrates both on Hungarian plastic art institutions of Transylvania between 1940 and 1944, and on the losses of the Hungarian artists community of Transylvania as a result of the events of the Second World War.

The next subchapter describes different internal conflicts within the Hungarian artists' community between 1944 and 1948, as well as the different attempts of institutional reorganization of Hungarian artistic life of Transylvania in the period referred to. Among them the most important were the following: *Plastic Artists Union of Cluj*, *Art Section of the "Józsa Béla" Athenaeum* and the *Mixed Syndicate of Artists, Actors and Journalists* which granted financial aid to organize contemporary expositions and also funded different artistic educational establishments.

A particular theme of this subchapter is the introduction of the local artistic educational institutions of Transylvania in Hungarian teaching language. First of all it concentrates on the Art's Colony and Painting School of Baia Mare, which reached its climax in 1944. It is followed by the treatment of the newly established Hungarian artistic educational settlements in Transylvania, as here follows: *Plastic Arts City Course* in Tîrgu Mureş, *Conservatory and Plastic Arts School* in Oradea and the *Free Plastic Arts School* organized by the "*Józsa Béla*" *Athenaeum* in Cluj, which ensured the continuity of artistic education in Transylvania in Hungarian teaching language.

In the following, a whole chapter deals with the *Hungarian Arts Institute of Cluj*, which undoubtedly was the most prestigious artistic pedagogical institute in Transylvania in the period referred to.

The last subchapter of chapter two describes the relation of the Hungarian artists community to the political regime and, at the same time it is also a review of the different major elements of the concept of the regime connected to the role and the status of plastic art in cultural life, and an analysis of the ideological stereotypes introduced in the process of artistic creation. This aims to create a comprehensive image of the situation of the Transylvanian Hungarian artistic life in the first years after the war.

The third chapter entitled "*Hungarian Literary Life, Publishing Houses and Press in Transylvania between 1944 and 1948*" covers on the one hand the Hungarian literary life of Transylvania, on the other hand it is a review of the Hungarian publishing and press of Transylvania in the period referred to. All three fields of literary life are dedicated one subchapter.

Describing in detail the institutional transformations of literary life in the first years after the war, this chapter aims to present the redirection process of literary activities between 1944 and 1948. By drawing attention to the dissolution and auto liquidation of the traditional literary societies (*Transylvanian Literary Guild, Helikon Literary Society*, etc.) at the turn of 1944-1945, it is actually meant to demonstrate the end of an era in the Hungarian literary life of Transylvania, and the introduction of a new age, marked by the establishment of new types of associations and literary societies, like the *Hungarian Writers Union from Romania*.

The second subchapter presents in detail the publishing activities between 1944 and 1948, focusing on the characteristics and operational programme of the most important Hungarian publishing houses from Romania, as follows: "*Józsa Béla*" *Athenaeum*, "*Móricz Zsigmond*"

*College* and the "Méhkas" *Students' Society*. Taking these Hungarian publishing houses of Transylvania existing in this period one by one, this part of the thesis aims to realize their analytical evaluation, focusing on the character of their publications published in the first years after the war. Although each of these institutions had, besides the publishing one, other phases of cultural activity, taking into account the extremely difficult economical situation after the war, their realizations in publishing books and volumes is absolutely remarkable, especially if we consider the fact that none of them was state financed.

Finally, the last subchapter of this part of the thesis tries to review as completely as possible the different Hungarian press organs in Transylvania existing between 1944 and 1948. On the basis of their special character, post-war newspapers can be grouped into four major categories: the more moderate ones, which were the organs of press belonging to the Social Democratic Party and to the Hungarian People's Union (UPM), the extreme progressive ones guided by the Romanian Communist Party (PCR), the ones trying to continue the style and the traditions before the war, and finally the ones re-established by the Jews coming back from the German concentration camps whose main topics were the holocaust and the punishment of war criminals responsible for these camps.

Among the first category of Hungarian press organs in Transylvania, the thesis treats the following: the weekly paper "Erdély" (*Transylvania*) in Cluj and the gazette "Népakarat" (*People's Will*) in Oradea. Among the press organs of UPM the following newspapers are analysed: "Világosság" (*Light*) in Cluj, "Népi Egység" (*People's Unity*) in Braşov, "Szabad Szó" (*Free Word*) in Tîrgu Mureş and the one with the same title in Timişoara, and the weekly paper "Bányavidéki Világosság" (*Light in the Mining Region*) published in Baia Mare.

Among the Hungarian periodicals belonging to the PCR published in Transylvania in the first years after the war, the following are introduced in the thesis: the daily paper "Igazság" (*Truth*) and the weekly paper "Falvak Népe" (*Village People*) in Cluj and the gazette "Fáklya" (*Torch*) in Oradea

Among the press organs of the Jewish community from Transylvania, the subchapter focuses on their main paper entitled "Egység" (*Unity*) published in Cluj between 1946 and 1948.

Finally, the subchapter ends with an introduction in detail of the new Hungarian press organ from Romania entitled "Romániai Magyar Szó" (*Hungarian Word from Romania*) which was established at the end of 1947 and seated in Bucharest.

Taking the Hungarian newspapers and daily papers from Transylvania one by one and describing them in detail, I aimed to demonstrate the different aspects of transformation of the Hungarian press organs network of Transylvania, and at the same time I tried to define the relationship between the press organs and the different contemporary political parties and political organizations.

The last two chapters of the thesis are dedicated to the different fields of Hungarian scientific life in Transylvania. The fourth chapter of the thesis entitled "*The Hungarian University of Cluj between 1944 and 1948*" covers the issues connected to the Hungarian university in Transylvania. The importance of this topic is reflected with the fact that this is the longest chapter of the whole thesis, which deals with the institutional transformations of the Hungarian university of Cluj starting with the academic year 1943/1944, during the Second World War, and getting through to the issuance of the law on educational reform on 3 August 1948.

Among the five subchapters of this part, the first one offers an introduction to the question of the Hungarian university of Cluj, treating the origins of this institution of higher education and especially the foundation and functioning phases of the "Francisc Iosif I" University between 1872 and 1944. Similarly, the functioning of the "Regele Ferdinand I" University in Cluj between 1919 and 1940 is also shortly presented within the framework of this chapter. The pedagogic and scientific activities carried out in Cluj between 1940 and 1944 within the framework of "Francisc Iosif I" University are also presented on a few pages.

The second subchapter describes the negative effects of the war on university life which profoundly marked the final academic year of 1943/1944 at "Francisc Iosif I" University of Cluj. I tried to describe both the traditional forms of a high-levelled educational process within this institution, and the difficult financial and spiritual situation of the university at the end of the Second World War. Besides the immediate consequences of the German occupation of Hungary in March 1944 and the losses suffered by the students due to the deportation of the Jews, this part of the thesis deals with the financial destruction caused by the bombings of the city at the bank of the Someş river on 2 June 1944, as well as the consequences of the evacuation order issued by the Hungarian authorities, which in case of the "Francisc Iosif I" University manifested itself in transporting its instruments and the valuable educational materials, and a big part of the archives

of this institution of higher education to the west of Hungary, where the main part of the archives was deteriorated because of inappropriate storage conditions.

Besides these, this subchapter describes the main reasons why the board of directors of the Hungarian University decided to stay in Cluj and continue their educational and scientific activities, as well as the first contacts of the board of Hungarian professors and students with the professors and students of the "Regele Ferdinand I" University of Sibiu in the autumn of 1944. At the same time, the extremely hard financial situation at the beginning of 1945 is also mentioned in this part of the thesis, which the board of professors and the students had to face in order to restart educational process.

The next subchapter is dedicated to the establishment of Bolyai University of Cluj. As far as this problem is concerned, I focused on the structural transformation and the internal organization of this institution of higher education, according to the ideological requirements of the new regime installed in the autumn of 1944, which finally led to the establishment of a totally new university. I gave a detailed description in this part of the thesis on the one hand of the problems arising from the division of the university properties between the two universities of Cluj, the Hungarian and the Romanian one, and on the other hand of the training process of the new professorial board.

The fourth subchapter concentrates on the first two years of functioning of the Bolyai University between 1945 and 1947, and especially focuses on the financial situation of the university. The transfer of the Faculty of Medicine of Bolyai University to Tîrgu Mureş, and subsequently its separation under a new independent institution, called the Institute of Medicine is also separately treated in this subchapter. A significant part of this subchapter treats the self-help student institution called "Móricz Zsigmond" College whose activity in Cluj was tightly linked to Bolyai University between 1945 and 1949.

Finally, the last subchapter starts with a short presentation of the educational reform in 1948, which aimed on the one hand to prove the reorganization within the internal structure of the Hungarian university carried out on a large scale, on the other hand to interpret the new role given to the institution by the regime in the process of staff training. The transformation of the university following the Soviet model of institutional organization is separately dealt with in this subchapter, as well as the return to Hungary of the Hungarian citizen professors of the Cluj University, going on between 1947 and 1953. The replacement of the old professors with new

protagonists of the communist ideology and the changes going on at the management level of the university at the end of the 1940s are presented as the last elements of the transition process between 1944 and 1948 in the history of the Hungarian university of Cluj.

The last chapter of the thesis entitled "*Hungarian Cultural-Scientific Institutions in Transylvania between 1944 and 1948*" gives a comprehensive review of the Hungarian institutions of this type in Transylvania, existing in the first years after the war. The chapter is structured into four subchapters, each of them treating one of the four cultural-scientific institutions. The order of subchapters respects the importance of the institutions presented. The first subchapter deals with the presentation of the prestigious scientific organization having an academic character for the Transylvanian Hungarians: the *Transylvanian Museum Society (Erdélyi Múzeum-Egyesület–EME)*. The following subchapters evaluate the *Hungarian Cultural Society of Transylvania (Erdélyi Magyar Közművelődési Egyesület–EMKE)*, *Hungarian Economical Society of Transylvania (Erdélyi Magyar Gazdasági Egyesület–EMGE)* and finally, *Transylvanian Carpathia Society (Erdélyi Kárpát-Egyesület–EKE)*. With each of these institutions I focused on the interpretation of their cultural and scientific role, the presentation of their general financial situation, analysis of their activities and their results, as well as on defining their relation with the political power between 1944 and 1948. Trying hard to incorporate the new ideological requirements in their cultural program, each of these cultural-scientific institutions inevitably got into contact with politics, and soon got subordinated to it. This way the cultural-scientific institutions gradually ended up in being simple instruments in the hands of the political power, which the latter took full advantage of in imposing its new cultural policy. The description of the transformation process of roles and functions of these institutions in the Hungarian cultural life of Transylvania represents the main topic of this chapter.

Finally, through describing the dissolution process of all these cultural-scientific institutions between 1947 and 1950, I aimed to draw the attention to the gap which remained in the Hungarian cultural life of Transylvania after their winding-up, which could only be filled after the fall of the communist regime in 1989, with the re-establishment of these institutions and organizations in their original form.

## Conclusions

The post-war transition period between 1944 and 1948 discussed in this thesis from the point of view of the cultural institutions of the Hungarian minority in Romania, represents an age marked by transitions on a large scale. In the confused years after the Second World War, all the fields of human life were changing. Besides the major problems of reorientation of the political life or the economic reconstruction of the country after the world war, cultural life evidently got to be second as importance. And in the case of minorities this phenomenon certainly appeared more accentuated. This short post-war period brought its essential transformations as far as culture is generally viewed, leaving its evident mark on the institutional system of this field. As far as the cultural life of the Hungarian community of Transylvania is viewed, the effects of the change in the regime took shape in the disappearance of traditional forms of manifestation and cultural organization, and at the same time in the appearance of a totally new cultural orientation.

The transformations within the Hungarian culture between 1944 and 1948 manifested themselves on two levels: on the one hand in the profound redefinition of the role of culture in the shaping process of the society, and on the other hand in restructuring the institutional network of the cultural life in order to reach these objectives. The gradual integration of the country in the East-European block led by the Soviet Union had a major influence on the cultural life of Romania, and within this, on the forms of cultural manifestations of minorities. Taking over the Soviet model in organizing cultural life went on extremely fast and without significant efforts in adapting them to the special local conditions. This way, until the end of 1940s, the communist concept on the place and role of culture in the life of the society was systematically imposed in all cultural fields, forming by time a uniform and rigid ideological basis, from which any deviation was impossible to be carried out.

As far as the institutional systems of the Transylvanian Hungarian cultural life are viewed, this evidently had to adapt itself to the ideological transformations. Each institution went through major changes. The big majority of the cultural institutions and organizations did not have the necessary flexibility to totally adjust themselves to the new ideological course, thus, during these four years of transition, they self-dissolved or were dissolved by the political power. Similar cases were present on each field of cultural life resulting the winding-up of a series of prestigious

institutions on the Hungarian cultural palette of Transylvania. We can mention among them the Hungarian theatres of Satu Mare and Arad, the "Helikon" Literary Society, the "Barabás Miklós" Guild, Transylvanian Literary Guild and "Méhkas" publishing houses, or among the famous scientific institutions the "Francisc Iosif I" University, Institute of Transylvanian Studies, Transylvanian Museum Society, Hungarian Cultural Society of Transylvania, Hungarian Economical Society of Transylvania and Transylvanian Carpathia Society.

Their place was partially taken over by a series of newly established cultural institutions like: the Hungarian theatres of Tîrgu Mureş, Sfântu Gheorghe, Baia Mare and Timișoara, the Hungarian Writers Union from Romania, the general forum of the Athenaeum "Józsa Béla", the students' society of "Móricz Zsigmond" College, Bolyai University, Medical-Pharmaceutical Institute of Tîrgu Mureş, Hungarian Arts Institute, etc.

At the same time, among the old Hungarian cultural institutions only two remained in existence: the theatres of Cluj and Oradea, though they also had to undergo profound transformations in their internal structure and in their cultural-artistic program.

This way, having an overview of the period between 1944 and 1948 we can state that this relatively short period represented the biggest historical change in the Hungarian cultural life of Transylvania in the last century. The age referred to was marked by the most profound transformations both ideologically, and the general cultural programme and the institutional system linked to it. While after the Second World War the cultural life of the Hungarian community of Transylvania could continuously keep its specific character as far as the way and the form of cultural representation is viewed, similar attempts totally failed under the new conditions after the Second World War. After 1944 the Hungarian cultural life in Romania, in order to survive and assure its continuity, was based on new principles and on new institutional forms, taken directly over from the Soviet model. Thus, the different Hungarian cultural fields detached from their normal course of development, and gradually adjusted to the new ideological requirements of the communist regime. By doing so, they lost their independence towards the political life, being more and more intercrossed by the latter one. The extremely important role of culture in shaping collective mentality and self-vision of society, starting with the first years after the war, was used by the political power for propaganda.

The destiny of the cultural institutions that do not fit this new responsibility imposed by the regime, was inevitably dissolution and disappearance. This is the reason why until 1948 a

series of prestigious Hungarian cultural institutions were dissolved. The ones established according to the directives of the regime, due to their form and program were strictly following the ideology imposed by the Soviets, thus, in most of the cases, they did not represent true values, their main character being temporality.

With all these, the inheritance of the different Hungarian cultural institutions of Transylvania during the decades of communist dictatorship, contributed to the preservation of the vitality of the Hungarian cultural life of Transylvania, and after the fall of the regime, offered the main basis for returning to the traditional forms of cultural representation, realized by the institutional reorganization process of Hungarian cultural life in Romania.