

HUNGARIANS LIVING IN ROMANIA BETWEEN 1956-1965. MINORITY STATUS AND COMMUNITARIAN IDENTITY

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Abstract: *The working paper tries to analyze the situation of the Hungarian minority living in Romania between 1956-1965, from the political, judicial and diplomatic point of view of the Romanian-Hungarian bilateral relation. Which have been the aspects the Budapest officials have insisted on? When did Budapest finally rediscover, officially, the “Hungarian problem”? In order to have a wide perspective of the situation of the Hungarian minority in Romania, I summarized how the Romanian communist power dealt with the issue of the protection of national minorities. I also tried to show the main bilateral political contacts, and also the crisis points, namely those events in Romania and in Hungary which have influenced positively or negatively the situation of the Hungarian minority.*

Keywords: Romanian-Hungarian relations, Hungarian minority, communism, individual rights, collective rights, Transylvania, Nationalities' Status, Autonomous Hungarian Region, the 1956 Revolution, Minorities' Treaties.

1. INTRODUCTION

Hungarian ethnics living in Romania found themselves again as a minority in the post-war period. This situation has been influenced, in the first place, by the dynamics of the communist regime in Romania, but also by the realities of the Soviet block. The crisis periods were the ones that most influenced, even determined the rethinking of the inter- and intra-state relations, in our case the relations between Bucharest and Budapest.

A highly important role in rebranding the representation strategy of the Hungarian community in Romania and of its identity matrix was played by the redefinition of Budapest's role and by its decreased interest for the Hungarian communities living outside Hungary, as a result of emerging Communism and the evolutions of the Soviet block¹. This issue has to be understood based on the elements of the trio: home-state (Romania) – national minority (Hungarians) – kin-state (Hungary). Therefore, the identity relation between the Hungarian minority in Romania and the Hungarian state has to be taken into consideration. It is equally important analyzing the strategy of the

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¹ See Tamás Lönhárt, *Problema minorității maghiare și relațiile interstatale româno-maghiare în cadrul blocului sovietic (1945-1968)* afterword of the volume *Minorități etnoculturale. Mărturii documentare. Maghiarii din România (1956-1968)*, coord. Lucian Nastasă, serie *Diversitate etnoculturală în România*, Cluj-Napoca, Centrul de Resurse pentru Diversitate Etnoculturală, 2003, p. 937.

Romanian state regarding the Hungarian minority, a strategy based on national security and the evolution of bilateral Romanian-Hungarian relations. Moreover, the Hungarian elites living in Romania, that influenced the public opinion and the identity construction of this minority, are a relevant element of this equation².

This part of Europe has suffered deep and long term mutations. Furthermore, it had to acquire different society patterns, coming from the East, not from the West, as previously. These new patterns were imposing totalitarian institutions and behaviors, annihilating the individual by the community³.

The uncertainty concerning the border demarcation (the goal to regain Northern Transylvania) determined the Romanian leaders to use tactics such as: extreme obedience towards the USSR, guaranteeing that the emerged regime in Romania was pro Moscow; adopting measures for national minorities' protection, by eliminating all kinds of ethnic discriminations⁴. Therefore, the government that came to power on 6 March 1945 was seen as „a result of the common fight of the Romanians and the co-habiting minorities against the enemies of freedom and rights for all”⁵.

This working paper tries to analyze the situation of the Hungarian minority living in Romania between 1956-1965, from the political, judicial and diplomatic point of view of the Romanian-Hungarian bilateral relation. Which have been the aspects the Budapest officials have insisted on? Which has been the reaction of the Romanian communist leaders? These are questions I tried to answer by consulting secondary (books and specialized studies) and also primary documents: treaties, laws and decrees, intelligence reports and discussion reports, especially from the National Archive of Romania and from the Archive of the Romanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

In order to have a wide perspective of the situation of the Hungarian minority in Romania, I also considered necessary to summarize how the Romanian communist power tried to solve the issue of the protection of national minorities. In this regard, I will present an overview of the main international and regional regulations in this field, especially from the point of view of the individual or collective dimension of minority rights.

I will also try to show the main bilateral political contacts, and also the crisis points, namely those events in Romania and in Hungary which have influenced positively or negatively the situation of the Hungarian minority.

Historical events have complicated the interethnic relations a great deal in this part of Europe. Political configurations haven't matched exactly the ethnic configuration of the region, and changes of the political structures have generated power shifts, switching alternatively the roles of the controlling and subordinated ethnical groups⁶. All these

² *Ibidem*, p. 938.

³ See *Minorități etnoculturale. Mărturii documentare. Maghiarii din România (1945-1955)*, p. 11.

⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 12.

⁵ *Apud* Gh. Gheorghiu-Dej, *Articole și cuvântări*, ed. V, București, Edit. de Stat pentru literatură politică, 1955, p. 87, in *Minorități etnoculturale. Mărturii documentare. Maghiarii din România (1945-1955)*, p. 12.

⁶ Andrei Roth, *Naționalism sau democratism?*, Târgu-Mureș, Edit. Pro Europa, 1999, p.118.

changes have affected the population living in this region, and have created traumas used by some politicians, in order to seize or to keep the power. The brutal intertwining of history and politics, as well as disregarding the different points of view of the other countries' historiographies, has often had severe consequences on the region's stability.

Romanian-Hungarian relations during the World War II were tense, despite the fact that until 23 August 1944 both countries were on the same side. This was due primarily to the uncertainty of the future of Transylvania, in the context of the competition between the two neighbouring states to convince the great powers to grant them this territory. The tension between the two states grew after the Hungarian attack on Romania on 5 September 1944, which was repelled by the Romanian and Soviet troops. In October that year, the restoration of Romanian administration in the Szekler region began. This action finally failed because of the authorities' repression, and a Soviet temporary administration has been installed⁷. Transylvania fully reentered Romanian jurisdiction on 9 March 1945, and Romania's frontiers were recognized by Hungary after signing the Paris Peace Treaty in 1947.

Following the communist regime seizing power in both states, the bilateral diplomatic relations were influenced by how these states related themselves to the Soviet Union. In the beginning, the Romanian political leadership had a relatively tolerant policy towards the Hungarian minority. This underlines the fact that Petru Groza, due to his genuine internationalist beliefs, attempted to put an end to the traditional enmity between Hungary and Romania⁸. A law concerning the Nationalities' Status has been adopted, the educational system of the Hungarian minority was maintained, along with Bolyai University from Cluj, a number of theaters and printing houses. The Autonomous Hungarian Region was established in the middle of the country, in the Szekler region, and functioned between 1952 and 1968⁹.

The Hungarian side has also showed desire to rebuild the relations with its neighbours after 1947, under the leadership of Stalinist Mátyás Rákosi, who applied the new policy of internationalist proletariat¹⁰. The pathological fear of nationalism of this Hungarian communist leader contributed to the exemption of any source of this phenomenon. Nevertheless, before adopting this policy, Hungary had tried once more to win territory from Romania, partly because of achieving domestic popularity purposes by the communists, partly because the other Hungarian borders were with Slavic states¹¹.

⁷ „Diplomáciatörténet” („Istorie diplomatică”), in *HVG*, no. 36, 4 September 1993, HVG-Archivum 1993-2000, p. 1.

⁸ See Joseph Rothschild, *Return to Diversity. A Political History of East-Central Europe Since World War II*, New York, Oxford University Press, 1989, p. 109.

⁹ See S. Vogel, *A magyar kisebbség Romániában (Hungarian minority in Romania)*, Magyar Külügyi Intézet (Hungarian Institut of International Affairs), MKI Tanulmányok, Foreign Policy Papers, no. 8, Budapest, w.y., p. 3.

¹⁰ See Andrew Ludanyi, „Programmed Amnesia and Rude Awakening” in *20th Century Hungary and the Great Powers*, edited by Ignác Romsics, Social Science Monographs, Boulder, Colorado Atlantic Research and Publications, Inc. Highland Lakes, New Jersey, 1995, p. 308.

¹¹ *Ibidem*, p. 310.

The 1956 Revolution also had echoes in Romania, arising ethnic solidarity among the Hungarians of Transylvania, especially in the university centers of Cluj and Timisoara. One of the effects was the revival of anti-Hungarian feelings in Romania, and also in other countries neighbouring Hungary. This produced changes in the authorities' policy towards the Hungarian minority in these states. The troop's pullout from Romania in 1958 led to a wider maneuver space for the Romanian authorities and, implicitly, a revival of nationalist feelings. Nevertheless, Tom Gallagher believes that the origins of the Romanian national-communism may be traced back to 1952, when Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej, a Romanian ethnic, became the undisputed leader of the party and government, following a troubled period of quest for power between Jewish, Hungarian and Romanian communists¹².

The János Kádár regime has adopted, at least on the official level, an internationalist position until the end of the 1980s, trying to gain legitimacy with economic reforms and reduced ideological control¹³. In 1958, during his official visit to Romania, he declared that Hungary had no territorial claims, admitting that the minority issue is a domestic one for each country.

2. REGULATIONS IN THE FIELD OF THE PROTECTION OF NATIONAL MINORITIES¹⁴

2.1. INTERNATIONAL REGIME

From the beginning, we need to mention that the provisions and norms referring to minorities, have had and still have an heterogeneous character¹⁵. The history of minorities' protection is deeply rooted in Europe, beginning with the religious minorities¹⁶.

The first international treaty with provisions for minorities was the final Document of the Vienna Congress of 1815¹⁷, followed by the Paris (1856) and Berlin (1878)

¹² T. Gallagher, *Democrație și naționalism în România. 1989-1998*, București, Edit. All Educational, 1999, p. 5.

¹³ See Pál Pritz, „Magyarország külpolitikája a 20. században” („Hungary's foreign policy in the 20th century”) in *Magyar külpolitika a 20. században*, Tanulmányok, (eds.) Gazdag Ferenc & Kiss J. László, Budapest, Zrénny Kiadó, 2004, p. 37.

¹⁴ Some of the aspects presented in this paper can also be found in my working paper: „Drepturile minoritare – drepturi individuale sau drepturi colective?”, în *Caietele Academiei Interculturale „Transsylvania”*, Târgu Mureș, Edit. Pro Europa, 2004.

¹⁵ Valentin Stan, *România și eșecul campaniei spre Vest*, Edit. Universității din București, 1999, p.1.

¹⁶ In this sense, there can be enumerated some agreements following the Reform, aiming at recognizing the protestants. The Augsburg Peace (1555) witnessed a de facto equality between catholics and protestants; Westphalia Peace (1648) witnessed a de jure equality, allowing the protestants freedom to practice theirs confession; Oliva Treaty between Poland and Sweden (1660); Paris Treaty (1763) between France, England and Spain; Vienna Treaty (1815).

¹⁷ British and Foreign State Papers, 1648-1815, vol.II, James Ridgwaz, London, 1839, p. 136-140 used in Francesco Capotorti, *Study on the Rights of Persons belonging to Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities*, United Nations, New York, 1991, Sales No.E 91.XIV.2, notes 14 and 15, p. 2 in Valentin Stan, *op. cit.*, p. 1.

treaties, and Constantinople international convention (1881). These international conventions had similar characteristics such as: the concern for religious freedom; attempts towards solving the problems of minorities only in the short run (option, emigration); there wasn't any permanent control of how rights stipulated in these conventions were respected by states assuming this kind of obligations¹⁸. That is why Marius Bălan arrives to the conclusion that we can hardly speak about genuine minority protection in the pre-war era¹⁹.

A turning point in the field of minority protection was the creation of the League of Nations, following the Versailles Peace. The provisions regarding minorities' protection were contained in different sets of documents, ranging from peace treaties with defeated states²⁰, to Minorities' Treaties²¹. The main disadvantage of this system was the general character of the treaties' provisions, without mentioning the procedures of how the executive bodies of the League of Nations were supposed to accomplish their tasks²².

The debate about regarding or not the rights of minorities as collective rights began especially after the WW I. Following the political and territorial changes after the end of European Empires, leading to the creation of new states, and in order to ensure stability and peace, the protection of national minorities begins to gain collective dimension²³.

Many of the representatives of these emerged minorities had been used, before the war, with a superior position²⁴. World peace was especially depending on the stability of Europe, in direct connection with how new states were handling minority issues. National minorities were seen – in President Wilson's project for the League of Nations Agreement – as groups. But this project was not accepted by the US allies.

The collective dimension of minority protection in the League of Nations system was, nevertheless enforced, by the use of the notion "community" to identify a specific minority. At the time, there were many judicial points of view considering minorities as collective entities, as organized units, with respective rights, even with a certain degree of autonomy (educational and religious, as for Seklers and Germans in Transylvania, or political for Ruthenians in Czechoslovakia).

Another opinion, belonging to George Sofronie, states that the Minorities' Treaties refer to collective rights "only as far as they are a development of individual

¹⁸ See Marius Nicolae Bălan, *Dreptul internațional și statutul minorităților. Raportul dintre dreptul intern și dreptul internațional*, PhD working paper, coord. Prof. univ. dr. Marțian Niciu, Cluj-Napoca, 1998, p. 31.

¹⁹ *Ibidem*, p. 31

²⁰ See the Peace Treaties: with Austria (Saint-Germain-en-Laye, 10 September 1919), with Bulgaria (Neuilly-sur-Seine, 27 November 1919), with Hungary (Trianon, 4 June 1920), with Turkey (Lausanne, 24 July 1923).

²¹ See the treaties signed with: Poland (Versailles, 28 June 1919), with Romania (Paris, 9 December 1919), with Cehoslovakia and with the Kingdom of Serbs, Croates and Slovenes (Saint-Germain-en-Laye, 10 September 1919), with Greece (Sevres, 10 August 1920).

²² Marius N. Bălan, *op. cit.*, p. 49

²³ Valentin Stan, *op. cit.*, p. 4

²⁴ *Apud* William E. Rappard, *Minorities and the League*, in „International Conciliation”, September 1992, No.222, p. 24-25 in Valentin Stan, *op. cit.*, p. 4

rights”. Sofronie concludes that “the treaties of 1919-1920 have not recognized minorities as collective entities with juridical status, thesis shared by Balogh Arthur²⁵. As V. Stan states, the problem was not of rejecting collective rights, but rather of rejecting the idea of minority as an entity with juridical status. Francesco Capotorti believes that there were special cases of national minorities seen as collective entities, without a juridical status attached (e.g. articles 9 and 10 from the treaty with Poland and article 11 from the treaty with Romania)²⁶.

Regulating the minorities’ regime in the system of the League of Nations, although far from perfect and lacking real implementation mechanisms, represented a way of institutionalizing the protection of minorities, opening the doors for modern regulations²⁷.

The issue of minorities appeared after the WW II, in a different manner. The creation of the UN, based on the experience of the League of Nations, brought about the executive attributions and implementing coercive measures that were lacking before²⁸.

An essential feature of minorities’ protection in the United Nations resides in not mentioning explicitly the minorities, their protection being stipulated in the broader framework of human rights protection and of fundamental freedoms. The problem of minorities was transferred from the political to the human level, and placed in an universal position²⁹.

Although, generally after the WW II, the accent is put on the individual, the collective dimension of groups’ protection is tackled more clearly in international documents, such as: the 1948 Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, the UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education (1960), the International Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination (1965) and Apartheid (1973). Two opposite trends may be observed: on one hand, the protection is generalized with regulations based on non-discrimination and, on the other hand, the minorities’ protection from international documents was targeting specific minorities (South Tyrol case³⁰).

In 1947 was created the UN Sub-Commission on the Prevention of Discrimination and the Protection of Minorities, as a subsidiary agency of the ECOSOC Human Rights Commission. It gained importance by contributing to the article concerning minorities included in the UN International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which includes a definition of “national minorities”, as well as preparing the UN declaration of 1992 regarding national minorities.

²⁵ V. Stan, *op. cit.*, p. 5

²⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 6

²⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 4

²⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 82

²⁹ *Apud* Francesco Capotorti, „Minorities” in *Encyclopedia of Public International Law*, vol. 8, North-holland Amsterdam/New York/Oxford, Elsevier Science Publisher B.V.,1985, p. 388, in Valentin Stan, *op. cit.*, p. 8

³⁰ Marius Bălan, *op. cit.*, p. 82

In this context, the difference of view between western and communist countries was clear. The former were in favor of giving priority to civil and political rights, as a basis for liberal democracy and market economy, while the latter were underlining the importance of economic and social rights that highlighted the “accomplishments” of these countries (the lack of unemployment by means of compulsory work, medical insurance and the system of pensions, as well as the public education system, all of which were under full state subvention)³¹.

Another regional international organization that became active and settled as a priority in the field of human rights was the European Council. From the communist states’ point of view, this organization created by “imperialist states” gained importance only beginning with the 1990’s.

2.2. THE PARIS PEACE TREATIES, FEBRUARY 1947

The general spirit and values of the UN Charter inspired the peace treaties signed in the end of WW II by the “main Allied Powers” with the former Axis satellites: Italy, Romania, Bulgaria, Hungary and Finland. These treaties include general provisions, obliging the defeated states to take all necessary measures to observe human rights and fundamental liberties to all their citizens, regardless of race, gender, language or religion. The peace treaties with Hungary and Romania include also provisions forbidding discrimination between own citizens, especially because of property, business, financial or work interests, status, civil and political rights³².

According to T. Modeen, these treaties were far from reaching the level established by the agreements signed in the end of WW I, in the field of minorities’ protection³³. Mihály Fülöp qualifies the WW II peace as “unfinished”, including because of non-inclusion of provisions on minority protection in these documents. The same author believes that half a century was needed in order to come back and finalize these outstanding issues (see the EU Agreement for Stability, establishes after the clash of communist regimes in Central and Eastern Europe)³⁴.

For Romania and Hungary, the importance of Peace Treaty with Romania was residing in coming back to the Romanian-Hungarian frontier of 1 January 1938, by means of nullifying the Vienna Dictate of June 1940. The diplomatic battle of the two

³¹ See Dr. Alexandru Fărcaș, *Dreptul internațional al drepturilor omului și problematica minorităților naționale*, București, Institutul Român pentru Drepturile Omului, 2005, p. 58.

³² See Dr. Alexandru Fărcaș, *op. cit.*, p. 53.

³³ *Apud* T. Modeen, *The International Protection of National Minorities in Europe*, Åbo Akademi, 1969, p. 76-80, in Dr. Alexandru Fărcaș, *op. cit.*, p. 54. An exception is the State Treaty related to Austria (1955), which stipulated special provisions for Austrian citizens of Slovenian or Croat origin living in: Carinthia, Burghenland and Styria.

³⁴ See Mihály Fülöp, *Pacea neterminată*, Iași, Edit. Institutul European, 2007, p. 11. See more about the stability pact system in: Fülöp Mihály, „Európai Stabilitási Konferencia. Párizs megér egy szerződést?” („Conference for European Stability. Does Paris deserve a Treaty?”), in HVG, no.11, 18 March 1995, p. 23-25.

countries – both trying to get the most out of the belonging of Transylvania – may be seen as the last episode of open bilateral clash on the international arena. Because of the presence of the Soviet Army in both countries the bilateral dispute was carried out “almost mutely”³⁵.

2.3. BILATERAL FRAMEWORK

Bilateral relations – especially with neighboring countries – are crucial on the international arena, also in order to guarantee internal security and stability. Their importance rises, especially when a kin-minority lives in the neighborhood.

The Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation and mutual assistance between The Popular Republic of Romania and the Republic of Hungary, signed on 24th January 1948 in Budapest was the most important bilateral document, that set out the framework of bilateral relations during the communist era. According to the international trend, it didn't include any specific provisions on national minorities³⁶.

A number of sectorial agreements were signed after 1946 by the two communist states (in fields such as culture, border crossing, social and especially economic and commercial), but none proving for the protection of national minorities.

2.4. ROMANIAN DOMESTIC LEGISLATION

Here I will present the main legal domestic provisions in Romania after the accession to power of the communist regime till 1965.

The Status of Minority Nationalities was conceived by the Ministry for Minority Nationalities³⁷ in 1945. The decision was a tactical one, aiming at assuring the support of national minorities for the Romanian Communist Party (RCP). The party's leadership took advantage especially of the Hungarians rejection towards the traditional political parties (PNȚ and „Gărzile Maniu”). An important role was played by the Hungarian Popular Union (UPM).

This legal document included very attractive provisions, such as: maintaining the religious education in the mother tongue³⁸; developing high education in Hungarian and German³⁹, the use of the mother tongue in speaking and writing in public administration and in relation with judicial courts (art. 6). According to this law, the mother tongue

³⁵ See Andor Horváth, *Istorie paralele cu un personaj central*, afterwords to the volume *Minorități etnoculturale. Mărturii documentare. Maghiarii din România (1945-1955)*, p. 852-853.

³⁶ The copy of the Romanian alternate of the Treaty was handed over to me by MR. Alexandru Ghișa, from the Archive of the Romanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

³⁷ See Law no. 86/7 February 1945 published in the Official Journal (M.O.) no. 30/7 February 1945.

³⁸ See art. 18, art. 19 and art. 21 of Law no. 86/7 February 1945.

³⁹ See art. 22 of Law no. 86/7 February 1945, according to which chairs with teaching in Hungarian and German will be established according to the number of respective students at the Faculty of Law and the Faculty of Letters and Philosophy of the University from Cluj.

media could use the denominations of towns and villages in the respective tongue (only if the respective minority reached 30% of the native residents).

The 1948 Constitution took as model the 1936 Soviet Constitution. The article 1 of this first Romanian communist constitution stipulated that „The Popular Republic of Romania is a popular, united, independent and sovereign State”⁴⁰. Compared to the 1923 Constitution, in line with the principles of the communist internationalism, there were eliminated the “national” and “indivizable” terms⁴¹. The provisions related to equality in front of the law, the exercise of civil and political rights etc., replaced the “ethnic” (ethnic origin) term with “nationality” (see articles 16 and 18).

Article 24, dedicated to the protection of the “co-habitant nationalities”, stipulated the right to use the mother tongue in speaking and writing in public administration and justice, as well as the organization of education in the mother tongue at all levels, and the appointment of public servants who knew the local language. The regions concerned were the ones with residents of another ethnic origin than Romanian. It also stipulated the obligation of teaching Romanian language and literature at all levels.

The 1948 Constitution guaranteed the freedom of religion, without establishing the predominance or the dominance of any religion, as it was the case in the Constitution of 1923⁴². At the same time, it opened the way towards the nationalization of schools which had been previously cared for by churches. This was the aspect that mostly affected the education in Hungarian in Transylvania (art. 27).

Two other laws, concerning education and religion, were adopted in August 1948. These affected especially the national minorities’ situation, as they stipulated the close-down of a whole educational network including confessional schools (468 Catholic units, 531 Protestant, 34 Unitarian, 8 Evangelic were nationalized, and their wealth was taken in by the state treasury)⁴³. It has to be mentioned that there was not any professional education in the mother tongue, and all the laws on the organization of the technical education (1955, 1966, 1968) ignored this aspect⁴⁴.

The same Law on religion, adopted on 4 August 1948, prohibited all kinds of contacts with strangers, as well as the educational and socio-cultural activity of the

⁴⁰ See the 1948 Constitution of P.R. of România, published in M.O. part I, no. 87 bis/ 13 April 1948.

⁴¹ Art. 1 of the 1923 Constitution of Romania, published in M.O. no. 282/29 March 1923.

⁴² Art. 22 of the 1923 Constitution of Romania, which stipulated that the „Romanian Orthodox Church is the dominant church in the Romanian State as it represents the confession of the majority of Romanians, while among the others the Greek-Catholic has priority”.

⁴³ *Apud* G. Vincze, *Illúziók és csalodások (Illusions and deceptions)*, Miercurea-Ciuc, Status, 1999, p. 196 in *Raport final al Comisiei Prezidențiale pentru studierea comunismului în România*, p. 344. See also G. Vincze, *A romániai magyar kisebbség oktatásiügye 1944 és 1989 között, II. rész: 1948-1965 (The issue of the Hungarian minority’s education in Romania between 1944 and 1989, 2nd part: 1948-1965)*, <http://www.jakabffy.ro/magyarkisebbsseg/index.php?action=cimek&lapid=7&cikk=M970327.HTM>

⁴⁴ *Raport final al Comisiei Prezidențiale pentru studierea comunismului în România*, p. 344. At the beginning of 1970s, some professional classes were created, but these were closed or transformed little by little into classes with teaching in Romanian.

Church⁴⁵. In this period (till the 1956 Revolution), a different treatment of the Catholics was applied, compared to Protestants. The last were considered loyal to the communist power and were integrated into the political life (firstly into UPM, then directly into PMR), gained official recognition of their status, and in 1948, a Protestant Theological Institute, with university degree, was created in Cluj. Moreover, the Protestant priests became remunerated from the public budget⁴⁶.

A deterioration of the protection of national minorities is observed as compared to the 1945 law on the status of nationalities. The reason is that the communist power was already consolidated in 1948 and did not need anymore to give or to maintain concessions for alien elements. These actions were part of the Romanian communist power's offensive to reduce the influence of intellectuals and to subordinate them in order to become instruments of their policies.

I will now present the main provisions of the 1952 Constitution. It covers exactly the period analyzed in my working-paper (a new Constitution entered into power in August 1965).

As far as the Hungarian minority living in Romania is concerned, the Constitution from 1952 brought a new measure aimed to solving its problems: the administrative and territorial reform. The Hungarian Autonomous Region (RAM It was created), where Hungarians living in the centre of Romania (in today's Covasna, Harghita and Mureş counties) benefited from autonomy in funds' management, public security, education and culture. USSR leaders encouraged the creation of such a structure, on a Soviet model, because they were not convinced by the Romanian communists' declarations from December 1948 that the national minorities' issue in Romania was solved.

The Soviet power played a vital role in including the concept of "Hungarian autonomous region" into the new constitution. The Italian researcher Stefano Bottoni identified some documents in this respect⁴⁷. The Romanian officials from Bucharest hurried immediately after the creation of RAM to declare that this structure was not anything else than a region where the leadership would be assured by Hungarian Stalinists⁴⁸.

⁴⁵ *Raport final al Comisiei Prezidențiale pentru studierea comunismului în România*, p. 347. For more details see the books of Ovidiu Bozgan, *Biserică, putere, societate. Studii și documente*, București, Edit. Universității, 2001; *Cronica unui eșec previzibil. România și Sfântul Scaun în epoca pontificatului lui Paul al VI-lea (1963-1978)*, București, Curtea Veche Publishing; Ioan-Marius Bucur, Lavinia Stan, *Persecuția Bisericii Catolice din România*, Cluj-Napoca, Edit. Napoca Star, 2002.

⁴⁶ *Raport final al Comisiei Prezidențiale pentru studierea comunismului în România*, p. 347.

⁴⁷ See Stefano Bottoni, *Források a Magyar Autonóm Tartomány geneziséről (Sources about the origins of the Hungarian Autonomous Region)* in „Magyar Kisebbség”, 2003/2-3, 198-240. Following the request on behalf of Gh. Gheorghiu-Dej, the draft of the new Romanian constitution was revised by Vișinschi (mai 1952), who included the terms „Hungarian autonomous region”. For details see: Stefano Bottoni, *Sztálin a székeleyeknél. A Magyar Autonóm Tartomány története (1952-1960) / Stalin at the Szeklers. The history of the Hungarian Autonomous Region (1952-1960)*, Miercurea Ciuc, Edit. Pro Print, 2008.

⁴⁸ Stefano Bottoni, *op. cit.*, p. 199.

This form of territorial autonomy based on ethnic criteria had a relatively short existence. The life of residents of this “Small Hungary”, where Szeklers became the centre of the Transylvanian Hungarian community, suffered significantly after the 1956 Revolution, when the inclusion of the Szekler community into the Romanian communist united state started⁴⁹. Although RAM was officially closed down only in 1968 (by a new administrative-territorial organization ignoring the desire of the Hungarian minority), a hard blow was already given in 1960 with its redenomination, “Hungarian Autonomous Mureş Region” (with only 61% Hungarians from the total population)⁵⁰.

Neither the Hungarian Popular Union (UPM) was anymore considered as legitimate as before. UPM was reduced gradually to a simple instrument of communication between the communist central power and the representatives of the Hungarian minority. Its servile attitude became obvious after the proclamation of the Romanian Popular Republic (RPR). After the elimination of the “bourgeois and chiabure elements” from the local leaderships, little by little it became obvious that the UPM decisions were taken in the Central Committee Secretariate of the PMR⁵¹. UPM disappeared from the political scene in 1953, by self-dissolution⁵². This was the moment when the integration of the Hungarian minority was no longer planned on a communitarian basis, but on social scales⁵³.

The boom in nationalizations meant, for the Hungarian minority, the dispossession of its private property, in connection with forbidding its civilian and political organizations. The offensive against the Hungarian civil society was based on the accusation that it was “sheltering the Hungarian resistance movement”⁵⁴.

All these measures (administrative and territorial, political, social, cultural, educational etc.) led to the formation of a new generation of Hungarian intellectuals. These *second generation* Hungarians had their own instruments of expression in their mother tongue and had the possibility to act in the state apparatus⁵⁵.

In conclusion, we note that the Hungarian minority immediately after the accession to power of the communists enjoyed a generous legal frame of rights, on the Soviet model.

Unfortunately, the Stalinist instruments were also imported; through them, the communist leadership in Bucharest was keen on having total control on society, including, of course, on the Hungarian minority. Thus, the differences between domestic regulations concerning minorities’ protection and effectively what was

⁴⁹ *Ibidem*, p. 198.

⁵⁰ See *Raport final al Comisiei Prezidențiale pentru studierea comunismului în România*, p. 349-350.

⁵¹ *Minorități etnoculturale. Mărturii documentare. Maghiarii din România (1956-1968)*, p. 17-18. Lucian Nastasă uses as sources *Stenogramele ședințelor Biroului Politic al Comitetului Central al Partidului Muncitoresc Român*, I, 1948, București, Arhivele Naționale ale României, 2002.

⁵² *Apud Stenograma ședinței conducerii UPM din 19 februarie 1953*, in *Minorități etnoculturale. Mărturii documentare. Maghiarii din România (1945-1956)*, p. 731.

⁵³ See *Raport final al Comisiei Prezidențiale pentru studierea comunismului în România*, p. 337.

⁵⁴ *Raport final al Comisiei Prezidențiale pentru studierea comunismului în România*, p. 337.

⁵⁵ *Minorități etnoculturale. Mărturii documentare. Maghiarii din România (1956-1968)*, p. 15.

applied and respected in daily life was so huge, meaning that the legal framework was a cover-up, meant only to gain the support of the Hungarians and their leaders, in the first place. This was also the case of the RAM, that didn't really enjoy autonomy, the only difference with the other regions being its ethnic structure⁵⁶.

After October 1956, a new perception of the Hungarian ethnics was noticed: they were branded "unloyal elements". The lack of trust of Romanian communist leadership with the Hungarian minority was obvious, leading to long term repercussions, affecting significantly the pillars of preserving the Hungarian national identity.

3. Hungarian minority living in Romania from the perspective of bilateral relations between P.R. Romania and P.R. Hungary (1956-1965)

The period 1956-1965 is considered by the majority of researchers as being a stage characterized by the instauration of the total control over society⁵⁷. The turning point in 1956 was represented by the revolution in Hungary, which started on 23 October 1956 and was ended by the Soviet troops' intervention, at the beginning of November 1956.

The Romanian communist leadership's reaction in this "counter-revolutionary" context from Budapest influenced the Romanian-Hungarian relations decisively, as well as the situation of the Hungarian minority living in Romania.

Due to domestic reasons, as well as ones linked to foreign affairs (fear of the impact of a successful consolidation of a non-communist regime in the immediate vicinity of Romania on the realities of the country, fear of the Hungarian

⁵⁶ Apud N. Bárdi, *Autonóm magyarok? Székelyföld változásai az „ötvenes években”* (*Autonomous Hungarians? Changes of the Szekler region in 1950s*), Miercurea Ciuc, Edit. Pro Print, 2005 in *Raport final al Comisiei Prezidențiale pentru studierea comunismului în România*, p. 350.

⁵⁷ Gábor Vincze proposes the following divisions of the period between 1944 and 1989: 1) 23 August 1944-28 February 1945 (formation of the first government of gen. Sănătescu – end of gen. Rădescu's government); 2) 6 March 1945-22 May 1947 (Petru Groza's appointment as prime-minister – Vasile Luca's article in „Igazság”); 3) 22 May 1947-12 December 1948 (beginning of cleansings after publishing V. Luca's article – decision of CC PMR's Political Bureau regarding the minorities' issue); 4) 12 December 1948-23 October 1956 (period of the Leninist-Stalinist policy regarding the nationalities – outburst of the Revolution in Hungary); 5) **23 October 1956-19 March 1965 (the revolution in Hungary – the death of Gh. Gheorghiu-Dej; period of nationalism, neo-Stalinism)**; 6) 22 March 1965-1 January 1968 (election of Ceaușescu as prime-secretary during the CC of PMR's gathering – years of cultural liberalization and building the basis of power); 7) 27 April 1968-13 May 1973 (the PCR's gathering – years of temporary concessions); 8) 13 May 1973-March 1982 (adoption of the discriminatory education law – open resistance through „Ellenpontok”/„Contrapuncte”); 9) spring 1982-16 December 1989 (the last „offensive” against the Hungarian minority, Ceaușescu's hysterical period until his removal from power). See G. Vincze, *Történeti kényszerpályák – kisebbségi reálpolitikák II. Dokumentumok a romániai magyar kisebbség történetének tanulmányozásához 1944-1989* (*Overstretched political dimensions – Minority Realpolitics II. Documents for studying the Hungarian minority from Romania 1944-1989*), Miercurea Ciuc, Edit. Pro Print, 2003, p. XV. Cf. *Raport final al Comisiei Prezidențiale pentru studierea comunismului în România*, p. 335-339. Herewith only 5 phases are proposed: 1) 1945-1948 (transition period); 2) 1948-1956 (integration period of Stalinist type); 3) **1956-1965 (period of total control over society)**; 4) 1966-1971 (period of relaxation and the appearance of liberalization); 5) 1972-1989 (period of communist nationalism).

revisionism⁵⁸; prove of the loyalty to the Soviet power and legitimization of the conservative, hostile to de-stalinization position) determined Gh. Gheorghiu-Dej to offer his support for putting end to the Revolution in Hungary⁵⁹. Moreover, during the visit to Budapest, between 21 and 25 November 1956, the Romanian communist leaders declared their support for the newly established regime lead by János Kádár. The Romanian assistance for “restoring of the order” and for the creation of the premises for the consolidation of the Hungarian communist power was well illustrated by the participation to the kidnap of the Imre Nagy group, refuged into the Jugoslave Embassy and brought to Romania, as well as by the “expertise” offered by Bodnăraş to the reorganization of the Hungarian Security Service⁶⁰. Faced to these gestures of the Romanian communists, the new leadership from Budapest would show its gratitude a long period of time, especially by its attitude of non-involvement in the issue of the Hungarian national minority living in Romania.

The Hungarian revolution affected also the potential political enemies of the Gh. Gheorghiu-Dej regime, regardless of their ethnic origin. Among the harshest measures taken between 1957 and 1962, were a new wave of arrests and cleansings, forced collectivization⁶¹, as well as establishing new forced-labour camps in the Danube Delta and introducing a rougher prison system, beginning with 1958⁶². This reaction on the Hungarian etnics was seen as a response to the previous, “much too soft” policy. And, as most of the public was consisting of students and teachers/intellectuals, the measures targeted mother tongue education, in the first place, by means of: shutting down Hungarian schools and integrating them with Romanian ones; the peak was in 1959, when Bolyai University was shut down.

We have to mention here G. Vincze’s observation: according to him, the “Romanianizing” of minority schools (Hungarian, German etc.) was not a direct consequence of the Hungarian Revolution. By July 1956 there was already a Government decision regarding establishing Romanian classes in schools where the teaching language was the minority one⁶³.

⁵⁸ G. Vincze thinks that Hungarians from Romania (especially professors and students), in solidarity with the revolutionaries from Hungary, had moderate reforming requests. Nevertheless, he admits that inside certain organizations, we can discuss about anti-regime voices (see Szoboszlai group), as well as about two cases in which Romania’s territorial sovereignty was questioned by approaching Transylvania’s division topic (group of István Dobai and Pál Fodor) – See G. Vincze, *op. cit.*, p. xxi (he refers to „Fodor Pál és társai-per első rendű vádlottjának vádirata”/, „Actul de acuzare în primă instanță în procesul Fodor Pal și partenerii săi” document., Bucharest, 22 May 1958).

⁵⁹ See Dennis Deletant, *Teroarea comunistă în România. Gheorghiu-Dej și statul polițienesc, 1948-1965*, Iași, Edit. Polirom, 2001, p. 199-200.

⁶⁰ *Ibidem*, p. 200; *Apud* Tibor Méray, *44 év után. A Budapest-Moszkva-Bukarest háromszög*, Târgu-Mureș, 2001 in Tamás Lönhárt, *op. cit.*, p. 944.

⁶¹ A first wave of collectivisation was between March 1949-March 1953, and the second one between 1958-1962.

⁶² See Dennis Deletant, *op. cit.*, p. 207.

⁶³ See G. Vincze, *op. cit.*, p. xxii.

Among other negative measures on the Hungarians was harshening of the border-passing regime, the restructuring of the RAM, the beginning of “Romanianizing” of the Târgu-Mureş Medical and Pharmaceutical Institute, by means of establishing, in 1962, of the Romanian language department, with the practical fields of study compulsory in Romanian language.

How did the Hungarian side react? Passively or totally lacking firmity, as I will show next:

As researcher Nándor Bárdi showed, the period between 1956 and 1965 was dominated, in Hungary, by the propaganda of an automatic solution to the problem of the Hungarian minorities outside Hungary, based on the internationalism principle⁶⁴. The national issue was deemed as part of the internal politics of every socialist state, while solving national conflicts will happen by means of victory of Marxism-Leninism, as they were the result of oppression on behalf of the bourgeois and feudal leadership. Therefore, the “Class struggle” gained lead over nationalism issues⁶⁵.

For a better understanding of the positions and reactions of the two communist states, we need to briefly mention the international background, together with the links of both Bucharest and Budapest with Moskow.

Following the 1956 revolution, Hungary was in isolation and doing everything to come out of it.

The J. Kádár regime had major internal lacking social basis and national legitimacy. It focused on enhancing internal control over society and ending foreign isolation. It gained support from the Soviet Union, which initiated a diplomatic offensive post-1958, aimed at rebuilding the unity of the communist block, with an eye on opening up to the West. Therefore, maintaining good relations with Romania was a guiding line of Hungarian foreign policy between 1957 and 1965, subordinating all the other Romanian – Hungarian bilateral issues⁶⁶.

Alongside the general “new image” of the USSR (based on the impression of relaxation of Soviet pressure over the Communist Camp, while opening up for the West) was the withdrawal of the Soviet troupes from Romania, in 1958. This allowed for the development of a “nationalizing” process in Romanian foreign policy. At the same time, the period was witnessing the sharpening of the Chinese-Soviet conflict, the Berlin crisis, the Cuba missiles crisis; on these lines, Bucharest’s politics was opening up for China and the West. A growing restraint towards CMEA was also noticed from the Romanian communist leadership. Internally, all these influences

⁶⁴ See Nándor Bárdi, *The History of Relations between Hungarian Governments and Ethnic Hungarians Living Beyond the Borders of Hungary* in *The Hungarian Status Law: Nation Building and/or Minority Protection*, eds. Zoltán Kántor et.al., Slavic Research Center, Hokkaido University, Sapporo, 2004, p. 62.

⁶⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 63.

⁶⁶ *Apud* István Csucsujá, *Egyetemegyesítés és szomszédási pártpolitika (Unificare universitară și politică de vecinătate a partidului)*, in *Omagiu profesorului Magyari András. Emlékkönyv*, coord. Judit Pál, Enikő Rüszt Fogarasi, Cluj, Presa Universitară Clujeană, 2002, p. 289-291.

resulted in a come-back of the national-historic legitimization speech. The Bassarabia issue came back to attention, following an article by Karl Max, discussing the Russian rights over this territory inhabited by Romanians.

Another important point was the USSR growing interest with using the Transylvanian issue as a pressure tool over Romania (in the middle 1960's)⁶⁷. The so-called "April Declaration" marked the turning point in Romania's foreign policy; it represented the Romanian Workers' Party's position over the international communist and labour movement (26 April 1964). It was emphasized in the Declaration the Leninist principle of communist parties' equality, the unity of the international communist movement and the doctrine of non-involvement in the domestic affairs, the last becoming a fundamental pillar of the Romanian foreign policy in 1960's⁶⁸.

Documents from the National Archive of Romania and at the Archive of the Romanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs show that the issue related to the Hungarian national minority living in Romania was recurrent in the bilateral Romanian-Hungarian dialogue. The general framework of discussions dealing with this issue was that of nationalism and of the fight against reactionary and chauvinist elements.

The declarations of the Hungarian delegation led by János Kádár addressed on the occasion of the visit paid in Romania, in February 1958, were in line with the attitude of Hungary's leadership over its kin-minority living in Romania: „We clearly tell you that we don't have any territorial claim. We consider that Hungary has enough land and population for building its own socialist country”.⁶⁹ Moreover, on the same occasion, the Hungarian party's delegation praised publicly the Romanian communist leadership, at Târgu-Mureş, for their policy concerning minorities (minister of state Gyula Kállai declared that “Until now, we also knew and appreciated your policy, but now we can also personally observe that in RPR the equality between nationalities was established *de jure* in all fields of the political, economic and cultural life”)⁷⁰.

The Hungarian leadership didn't actively interfere, even after finding out about the decision to merge “Bolyai” University with “Babeş” University in Cluj, an extremely powerful blow, with effects in the long run over the education in the mother tongue, as well as on the formation of Hungarian elites in Transylvania. Its passive attitude encouraged communist leaders in Romania to act freely, according to their desire. An relevant example in this regard was that of the two days discussions at Bucharest (16-17 July 1959) between Gyula Kállay and a Romanian communist delegation consisting of: N. Ceauşescu, C. Răutu, Ghizela Vass and Iosif Ardeleanu. Referring to the

⁶⁷ *Apud* Stephen Ficsher-Galaţi, *România în secolul XX*, Iaşi, Edit. Institutul European, 1998, p. 178-211 in Tamás Lönhárt 2003, p. 945-946.

⁶⁸ See Dennis Deletant, *op. cit.*, p. 215-216.

⁶⁹ This part is found in Magdolna Csegedi and Andrea Varga, *Relațiile româno-maghiare în anii '50- '60*, in „Sfera Politicii”, no. 97-98/2001, p. 80, without being indicated the primary source. I identified the fragment in the article *Kállay elvtárs beszéde / Comrade Kállay's speech*, „Vörös Zászló”/“Red Flag”, 26 February 1959, p. 4 in G. Vincze, *op. cit.*, p. 218.

⁷⁰ *Kállay elvtárs beszéde / Comrade Kállay's speech*, „Vörös Zászló”/“Red Flag”, 26 February 1959, p. 4 in G. Vincze, *op. cit.*, p. 219.

merging of universities in Cluj, the Hungarian official (who had been sent secretly to Bucharest by J. Kádár⁷¹) pointed out that the position of the Political Bureau of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party (MSZMP) was that this was an internal issue of Romania, and "...in fact, my comrades consider that the merging of the two universities is appropriate. The goal envisaged by the merging of the two universities is appropriate. According to my knowledge, the merging of the universities in Cluj doesn't affect the education in the mother tongue of students, because the education will be bilingual, and the effective merging will give the possibility for students of different nationalities to study together. I don't want to repeat, but the leadership of our party understands this measure, we understand your arguments and we agree with it." He recognized that no decision was taken in this issue at the level of Hungarian political leadership, neither publicly, nor under any other form, "because we didn't have all the details about the opinion of your party on this issue"⁷². On the same occasion the Hungarian secretary of state reiterated the message that was conveyed during the visit in Romania (February 1958) by the Hungarian delegation lead by J. Kádár, concerning the lack of any territorial claim of Hungary from Romania. Moreover, he mentioned that an article would be published shortly in the MSZMP's review, containing "an explanation why, for which reason, Transylvania belongs to Romania"⁷³.

But the issue that was raised the most by Hungarian communists in the bilateral dialogue with the Romanian side in the period immediately following the 1956 revolution was that of the border-crossing regime.

After only a couple of months following the liberalization of the visa regime at the Romanian-Hungarian border (in the summer of 1956), in the context of the revolution in Hungary in the autumn of the same year, the authorities came back to a more strict regime of trips between Romania and Hungary. Budapest's request for easing the regime of trips to Romania was included on the bilateral agenda only after the János Kádár regime tightened its grip on power, allowing to deal even the differences of opinion on the agenda with the Romanian communists (as showed before, the Hungarian leadership was indebted to Romanian communists for the support during and following the fall of 1956).

Why was this issue raised? Firstly, because it had no ideological strings. Moreover, Budapest's increasing regrets for trips regime easing were determined by the pressure of its own citizens, in impossibility to visit their Transylvanian relatives, after the events of the 1956 fall.

Therefore, already in April 1957, the Consular Department of the PR of Hungary was requesting from the Romanian ambassador to inform Bucharest about the proposal

⁷¹ See G. Vincze, *op. cit.*, p. XXII.

⁷² See the shorthand report of the discussions of N. Ceaușescu, Leonte Răutu, Ghizela Vass and Iosif Ardeleanu with Gyula Kállay, secretary of state in Hungary, about the Romanian-Hungarian issue, Arh.St.București, fond CC PCR Cancelarie, dos. 30/1959, f. 2-87, in *Minorități etnoculturale. Mărturii documentare. Maghiarii din România (1956-1968)*, p. 573. Parts of this document can be also found in Hungarian in G. Vincze, *op. cit.*, p. 249-261.

⁷³ *Ibidem*, p. 574.

for a system of granting limited trips. The arguments were linked to the improvement of the political situation in Hungary, but also to the population pressure (“The total ban on private trips started to become a negative phenomenon”)⁷⁴.

But even this Hungarian request was totally devoid of firmity. A poof of this is the failure of bilateral discussions on the occasion of János Kádár’s visit to Romania, in February 1958, considered a Romanian diplomatic victory from all points of view⁷⁵.

When did Budapest finally rediscover, officialy, the “Hungarian problem”? G. Vincze believes that only in 1964, after the so-called “declaration of independence” of the PMR, in which detachment from Moskow and the communist camp was officialized, Budapest started to realize Bucharest’s policy of minority assimilation⁷⁶.

A. Capelle-Pogăcean believes that concerns over the fate of Hungarian minority only came back starting with 1970’s, due to a group of writers, heirs of the 1930’s populists. Under Ceaușescu and the increase in nationalist speech, the Hungarian’s fate grew even more difficult. Together with the poor state of Romanian economy, this led many Hungarian ethnics to migrate to Hungary. Moreover, the increase attention to the Hungarian minority from neighboring countries was empowered by the changes on international level and the constant appearance of the minorities issue on the agenda of CSCE reunions. The author acknowledges that the differences between the two neighbours were less due to the Hungarians’ treatment in Romania, and more to the deviationist policy of Ceaușescu, especially after the non-intervention in Cehoslovakia⁷⁷.

According to Tamás Lönhárt, the national problem of Hungarian’s identity outside Hungary reappeared on public debate after 1966-1967, in analysis highlighting the interest for literature and folklore, shaping ethnic and cultural identity. The researcher points out that this increased interest must be seen in context of the dinamycs’ changing of Romanian-Hungaina relations, in the context of both countries’ ties with the Soviet Union, in the second half of the 1960’s⁷⁸.

Nándor Bárdi also believes that this was the period when the Hungarian communist leadership raised official concerns towards Hungarians outside the country⁷⁹, acknowledging that it was about a linguistic and cultural rediscovery. Just

⁷⁴ Archive of the Romanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (AMAE), dos. Problema 20/anul 956, 956, 957/țara Ungaria, doc. *Nota informativă a Ambasadei R.P.R. la Budapesta despre vizita făcută la Direcția Consulară a MAE a R.P.U. (1 aprilie 1957)*, no. 2244/1957 from 9 April 1957.

⁷⁵ See G. Vincze, *op. cit.*, p. XXII.

⁷⁶ See *ibidem*, *op. cit.*, p. XXII-XXIII.

⁷⁷ See A. Capelle-Pogăcean, „Minoritatea maghiară din România: redefiniri identitare după 1989” in *Provincia 2000. Antologie* (the article was published in *Provincia*, no. 3, June 2000), Târgu-Mureș, Edit. Pro Europa, 2001, p. 118.

⁷⁸ See Tamás Lönhárt, *op. cit.*, p. 946-947.

⁷⁹ See Nándor Bárdi, *op. cit.*, p. 64. The Hungarian researcher mentions 1964 year and make reference to Lajos Arday’s manuscript, *Magyarok a szomszédos államokban – külpolitikánk változása (Hungarians in neighbouring states – change of our foreign policy)*, Budapest, Biblioteca Fundației Teleki Laszlo, 1994/1040, 50.

as A. Capelle-Pogăcean, Bárdi pointed out the populists' activity (népi írók): they were closely following, beginning with early 1960's, the evolutions in Hungarians from abroad lives, knowing very well their situation by the contacts that they had with Hungarian writers in neighbouring countries.

They involved themselves, actively, in presenting these problems internally, in Hungary, opposing Bucharest's policies on these matters⁸⁰. In the middle 1960's began the search for a compromise between the Hungarian cultural elites and the communist leadership.

The evolution of MSZMP's policy regarding Hungarians from abroad was determined by the following: the obvious growing differences inside CMEA (at first with Romania, especially after Ceaușescu's speech in April 1964); the change of generation inside communist parties in Central and Eastern Europe, leading to a revival of national interests, including in rhetorics and projecting national symbols; a change of generation in Hungarian elites outside Hungary, with tendencies towards independent institutions (and towards which Budapest had to take a stand)⁸¹; the wave of information on the Hungarian minority situation in neighbouring socialist countries, following the decisions of the CC MSZMP Institute of Sociology (1968), that led to a close press overview in order to learn about the evolutions in neighbouring countries (the sources of media that were consulted were mainly in Hungarian)⁸². Moreover, another moment of reference was the issuing of the History of Hungarian Literature and the History of Hungary, by the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. The ideology-related obstacles in the process of preparing these studies put also pressure on the Hungarian communist leadership, in order to clarify the official position on Hungarians from abroad⁸³.

There is a significant gap between the input that came from Hungarian embassies and Budapest's policies. Based on G. Vincze's interviews and his own personal discussions with a number of Hungarian diplomats accredited to Bucharest during that period⁸⁴, N. Bárdi shows that, as insensitive as they could be on problems of the Hungarians from Romania, just by getting to know their life-changing events, they couldn't remain silent and, little by little, became "nationalized" themselves (*elnemzetiesednek*). Moreover, due to language affiliations, Hungarians from abroad (including Romania) started to activate in Hungarian diplomatic missions, bringing the influences of their own environment⁸⁵.

⁸⁰ See N. Bárdi, *Tény és való. A budapesti kormányzatok és a határon túli magyarság kapcsolattörténete (Fact and reality. History of the relation between governments from Budapest and Hungarians from abroad)*, Pozony (Bratislava), Edit. Kalligram, 2004, p. 98.

⁸¹ See N. Bárdi, *Tény és való*, p. 93-94.

⁸² N. Bárdi uses as sources Zoltán Tóth, historian/sociologist, who worked in this institution after his graduate. He reminds also that „the official experts” such as: Endre Arató, Dániel Csatári, László Kővágó prepared documents criticizing the party's leadership.

⁸³ See N. Bárdi, *Tény és való*, p. 94.

⁸⁴ N. Bárdi reminds about discussions with Péter Karikás, former diplomat in Moscow and in Bucharest.

⁸⁵ N. Bárdi, *Tény és való*, p. 92.