# Gender and Nation in East Central Europe

## An Uneasy History

Edited by
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LEXINGTON BOOKS
*Lanham • Boulder • New York • London*

Lexington Books
Bloomsbury Publishing Inc, 1385 Broadway, New York, NY 10018, USA
Bloomsbury Publishing Plc, 50 Bedford Square, London, WC1B 3DP, UK
Bloomsbury Publishing Ireland, 29 Earlsfort Terrace, Dublin 2, D02 AY28, Ireland
www.rowman.com



British Library Cataloguing in Publication information available

**Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data**

Names: Cieślak, Marta, 1979- editor. | Müller, Anna, 1975- editor.
Title: Gender and nation in East Central Europe : an uneasy history / edited by Marta Cieślak and Anna Müller.
Description: Lanham : Lexington Books, [2024] | Includes bibliographical references and index. | Summary: "This book explores the tumultuous relationships between gender and national identities during the formative period of East Central European nation-building"– Provided by publisher.
Identifiers: LCCN 2024042670 (print) | LCCN 2024042671 (ebook) | ISBN 9781666940589 (cloth) | ISBN 9781666940596 (ebook)
Subjects: LCSH: Women–Europe, Eastern–Social conditions. | Women–Europe, Central–Social conditions. | Sex role–Europe, Eastern–History. | Sex role–Europe, Central–History. | National characteristics, East European. | National characteristics, Central European. | Europe, Eastern–Social conditions. | Europe, Central–Social conditions.
Classification: LCC HQ1590.7 .G454 2024 (print) | LCC HQ1590.7 (ebook) | DDC 305.409437--dc23/eng/20241021
LC record available at https://lccn.loc.gov/2024042670
LC ebook record available at https://lccn.loc.gov/2024042671

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# Contents

*Chapter 1*

# "She Sang Her Child to Sleep in Wallachian"

## *Imagining and Living Romanian–Magyar Intermarriage in Late Habsburg Hungary*

Ágoston Berecz

Although Hungary gained extensive autonomy with the 1867 Ausgleich and only the army, the diplomatic service, and the central bank remained under shared Austro-Hungarian control, this did not satisfy many Magyar patriots who could not settle for more than a personal union with Austria. They continued to look up to old Lajos Kossuth, the leader of the 1848–1849 revolution living in Italian exile, as a beacon and took his public letters as marching orders.

In early 1877, Kossuth received a letter from a supporter in Hungary, the biologist Ottó Herman. Enclosed as a clipping were Herman's travel notes on Central Transylvania from Hungary's most popular illustrated magazine. In them, Herman described his visit to a village where he had hoped to find Magyar (native Hungarian-speaking) locals. His trip dashed his hope, and "a little girl whose face unmistakably showed the Magyar type" even recoiled uncomprehendingly when addressed in Hungarian.[1] Later Herman also learned that the last Calvinist Magyars in the village had converted to the "Wallachian faith" during the civil war of 1848, supposedly clinching their language shift. This experience, which he immediately associated with a popular narrative scheme about the ongoing Romanianization of Transylvania's Magyar peasantry, coincided with his reading of Darwin and Ernst Haeckel. Painting Romanians with strong racial brushstrokes as barbarians inherently unfit for progress, he interpreted the adoption of Romanian language, faith, and customs as an uncanny form of atavism, a reversion to a primitive stage of civilization.[2]

An ongoing fundraising campaign for the benefit of a reported fifteen thousand "Romanianized" Magyars in Transylvania's Hunyad County had set the tone for Kossuth's response. He knew his Darwin but disagreed with Herman's reasoning: if the Calvinist Magyars had fallen into atavism, he argued, that would logically have made them Central Asian nomads. He repeated the explanation he had given a month earlier to fundraisers from Hunyad County, who sought to prop up the local Hungarian high school.[3] While Herman blamed proselytizing by Romanian priests, the decline of the Magyar landowners, the devastation of 1848, and the lack of Hungarian cultural institutions, Kossuth saw Romanian women as the root of the problem:

> I will tell you what caused it [the Romanianization of Hunyad County Magyars], sight unseen. The fact that the heirs of 120 of the 130 homesteads married Wallachian girls. And of course the Wallachian woman made family life Wallachian in these 120 homes; she sang her child to sleep in Wallachian . . .[4]

While neither man bothered to ask locals whether and how often such intermarriages occurred in either region of Transylvania, Kossuth's argument disarmed Herman as they continued this exchange.[5] Herman visited Kossuth later in 1877 and passed out Kossuth's letters in 1886, when the founding of the semi-governmental Hungarian Cultural Society of Transylvania (EMKE) further publicized the supposedly precarious situation of Transylvanian Magyars. This publication went through at least three editions and was widely echoed in the Hungarian-language press, which reproduced the excerpts about assimilation losses due to ethnic intermarriage. In the meantime, Herman and other visitors to Kossuth's house in Collegno must have spread the idea privately.[6] It had not cropped up before 1877, but Scottish-born Emily Gerard, who had lived in Transylvania in 1883–1885, already presented it as generally accepted wisdom.

Hungarian political literature quickly adopted the theme of widespread Magyar–Romanian intermarriage as a matter of complaint, accompanied by stereotypes about Romanians, women in particular, as being too stupid or stubborn to learn a second language. "But the Romanian, especially the Romanian woman, is a real language disseminator. She speaks nothing but Romanian, 'even if she gets killed'," as a ministerial councilor and popular playwright had it in an editorial in Hungary's most widely read daily.[7] The idea that women presented a danger through asserting their language in the domestic sphere could build on the gender differences in linguistic repertoires that contemporaries noted across rural East-Central and Southeastern Europe. While peasant men were less sedentary and had more opportunities to practice second and further languages, women often spoke only the local vernacular.[8] The theme was integrated into the master narrative of



ethno-demographic decline that developed in part out of local traditions in the 1870s, at a time when Magyar/Hungarian nationalists felt in control and increasingly saw the ethnically non-Magyar half of the citizenry as a security problem.

This chapter explores the topos about the perils of Romanian–Magyar connubiality in Dualist Hungary in its socio-cultural context, paving the way for broader insights about gender and class in contemporary social imaginaries. I will interpret this topos as indicative of the anxieties felt by upper-class males regarding the potential loss of their social control not only over their female conationals but also over the rural masses. My contention is that upper-class male nationalists perceived both women and peasants as precious yet irrational and unreliable bearers of the national essence, possessing the nation's vital energies but only serving the collective when upper-class men created the proper conditions and guided them in the right direction. In addition, there was a distinct tendency among Magyar writers to feminize the socially and politically subordinate Romanian minority, attributing to it a demographic threat characterized by stereotypically feminine traits. Conversely, the Romanian minority elite drew on similar stereotypes and placed women at the forefront of discussions about cultural self-reproduction. The interplay and different permutations of these gender and class stereotypes gave rise to a multifaceted discourse on both sides, shaping perceptions and interactions within the broader society.

After a brief historical background, I will first set the topos against concrete evidence of the frequency of Romano–Magyar intermarriages. Next, I will examine how Romanian elite discourses dealt with the issue and bring in narrative sources about middle-class interethnic families. Finally, I will return to Magyar depictions of intermarriage, but from the slightly later and different angle of a successful Hungarian novel that centers on the relationship of a middle-class couple without abandoning the same class-based distinctions. Treating imaginaries and social realities separately is not tantamount to claiming that they can be neatly disentangled. Only the distance between the regional and rural subjects and the broader middle-class and predominantly urban audience provides a basis for my approach.

Historian Alexander Maxwell discerned a double standard in the way Romantic nationalist writings from East Central Europe treated women and men marrying ethnic others. He highlighted a glaring incongruity in the writings he chose for analysis: "our" women were to be protected from "their" men, but "our" men were granted more freedom since they did the nation a service by converting women from other camps.[9] While this sounds intuitively appealing, it does not hold true for my narrower and somewhat later context. Throughout its career, the condemnation of intermarriage referred to Romanian–Magyar unions irrespective of the gender configuration involved

(perhaps in line with Kossuth's intention). Emily Gerard's account provides a poignant description:

> Thus the Hungarian woman who weds a Roumanian husband will necessarily adopt the dress and manners of his people, and her children will be as good Roumanians as though they had no drop of Magyar blood in their veins; while the Magyar who takes a Roumanian girl for his wife will not only fail to convert her to his ideas, but himself, subdued by her influence, will imperceptibly begin to lose his nationality. This is a fact well known and much lamented by the Hungarians themselves, who live in anticipated apprehension of seeing their people ultimately dissolving into Roumanians.[10]

Indeed, more sententious formulations tended to reserve the male (and losing) side for Magyars. Both opposing nationalisms addressed the issue of ethnic mixing from a male position and attributed the assimilation of outsiders to women rather than men, through the power of inertia and linguistic autarky. This perspective was rooted in the traditional tracing of family lineages through male descent and placed emphasis on surnames as indicators of ethnic origins, which effaced assimilated maternal lineages. Beneath the veneer of such discourse, most nationalists condemned all outmarriages, whether contracted by ingroup men or women. At the same time, an unmistakable class bias permeated the discourse of Magyar/Hungarian nationalists in their treatment of ethnic intermarriage among different socioeconomic strata. At least tacitly, they always denounced peasant connubiality, despite the little reliable information they had on it.

After assuming power in 1867, Magyar/Hungarian nationalists soon envisioned the Kingdom of Hungary within the Hungarian subempire of the Dual Monarchy as a French-style nation-state. The blueprint of a Magyar/Hungarian nation relied heavily on the early modern nobility, the so-called *natio Hungarica*. The national project was double-barreled, however, envisioning the state-bearing nation in both a narrow, ethnic Magyar guise and a more ambitious Hungarian form that embraced all citizens. The two notions were conveniently covered by the single term *magyar* in Hungarian. While demanding patriotic loyalty from all citizens, the ruling elite firmly entrenched Magyars at the apex of the symbolic hierarchy and securitized the mismatch between the civic and ethnic nations.

By the 1880s, the political imaginaries of the ruling elite often revolved around the concepts of assimilatory gains and losses, reflecting the influence of Social Darwinism, a theoretical framework gaining traction in the 1870s. Social Darwinism, with its reliance on biological analogies, notably the theory of evolution, portrayed social dynamics as an endless struggle between individuals and groups. Although "Magyarization" became a buzzword of



the era, people who rejoiced in the spread of Hungarian as a first and second language often had misgivings about extending membership to religious and ethnic groups traditionally viewed with disdain.

Ethno-national distinctions drew to varying degrees on social realities and vernacular categories in different contexts. The division between Magyars and Romanians more specifically rested on the boundaries between Protestant or Latin-rite Catholic Hungarian-speakers and Byzantine-rite (Orthodox or Greek Catholic) Romanian-speakers. These linguistic and religious cleavages fit together well in most contexts and were sometimes reinforced by status differences.[11] At the same time, Hunyad County, which Kossuth had in mind, was considered an area of utmost concern partly because this neat ethnic distinction clearly broke down there. On the one hand, many rural Calvinist "Magyars" in this predominantly Romanian-speaking county spoke obsolescent or no Hungarian. On the other hand, the southern part of the county was home to a large community of petty nobles of the Byzantine-rite who had no memory of ever using Hungarian but shunned the ethnonym "Romanian" (*rumân*) because of its connotation as a serf. Typically, Magyar nationalists regarded all these people as alienated Magyars.

Transylvania was hastily re-annexed to the Hungarian Kingdom in 1867, after three centuries of separate existence. While the majority of its population were Byzantine-rite Romanian-speakers, most of its elites were not, and the Magyar/Hungarian national memory glorified the province as a bulwark of the Hungarian language and the Protestant faith during the turbulent era of the Ottoman–Habsburg wars. Writers capitalizing on this collective memory could rely on their readers to imagine the province as culturally Magyar, only to shock them with modern population figures. Central to this narrative was thus the question of how Hungary's eastern fringes, including Transylvania, had shifted from their perceived Magyar identity over the centuries. This transformation was often portrayed as the assimilation of erstwhile Magyar inhabitants into a Romanian mass. Contemporary accounts frequently cited "Hungarian" surnames, a nebulous and malleable category, as well as physical features as evidence of modern inhabitants' forgotten Magyar origins.[12] Moreover, Magyar peasants' supposed "Romanian" traits (in reality, their distance from an idealized national peasant culture), such as their bilingual practices and use of Romanian loanwords, were interpreted as contemporary manifestations of the same multi-secular decay.

By blaming ethnic intermarriage, Kossuth and his followers added a new dimension to the master narrative of demographic decline. Their emphasis on mixing and their portrayal of ethnic categories as fluid aligned seamlessly with an assimilationist agenda that measured realities against the aim of turning the entire citizenry into Hungarian-speaking patriots. Within this framework, Hungary's two-and-a-half million Romanians emerged as the quintessential internal

Other, simultaneously imagined as strangers and an alienated part of the collective self and subjected to an ambiguous blend of inclusion and exclusion.

However, the idea of assimilation, whether through intermarriage or not, was not necessary to the story of vast swathes of land gradually becoming Romanian over the centuries. As a new generation of Magyar political writers began to doubt the feasibility of assimilating ethnic minorities or even integrating them politically after the turn of the century, they also recalibrated their perspective on the past. No longer portraying Romanians as erstwhile Magyars, they instead envisaged them as an inherently foreign population who had replaced the original inhabitants after the devastating military raids of the early modern period. This shift in narrative underscored a broader disillusionment with the assimilationist project.

The paradoxal nature of public concern surrounding the perceived decline of Magyar communities in the eastern regions becomes apparent upon examining the demographic trends revealed by decennial censuses spanning from 1880 to 1910. Contrary to prevailing anxieties, these censuses indicated a notable increase in the proportion of Magyars in Transylvania, rising from 30% to 34% in thirty years.[13] Granted, this increase was due in part to the real or statistical Magyarization of Jews and other in-betweeners but also to a combination of higher birth rates and lower mortality. Such upbeat statistics were eagerly commented on in the press and sparked optimism, although even optimistic commentators seldom touted intermarriage as a tool of Magyarization.[14] However, these statistics did little to discredit the opposite narrative of ethnic decline; instead, both narratives coexisted, each perpetuating its own discourse.

Just as remarkably, accounts of pro-Magyar activism in the countryside contain little evidence of a need to counteract actual Romanian–Magyar intermarriages. The Calvinist Church and later the EMKE placed language revitalization at the forefront of their campaigns aimed at safeguarding Magyar peasants from assimilation with Romanians.[15] These efforts included arranging marriages with more robustly Hungarian-speaking communities, with initiatives such as Count Kocsárd Kún's offering of fifty forints to Magyar peasant youths in Hunyad County who married Hungarian-speaking women.[16] However, notably absent from these initiatives was any concerted effort to dissuade unions with Romanian Orthodox or Greek Catholic brides. Calvinist priests and other activists liked to exaggerate the ongoing language shift, but the pervasive Romanian linguistic environment offered them a tangible and sufficient explanation.

## STATISTICAL QUANTIFICATION

The literature indicates that people in nineteenth-century East Central and Southeastern Europe tended to marry along confessional rather than



ethno-linguistic lines. Unsurprisingly, early Bulgarian nationalists were not too concerned about the attraction of Muslim women, although they saw Greek women in Constantinople and Romanian and Gagauz women in the Dobruja as a threat to their fellow-Bulgarian men.[17] The ethnic cleavage between Romanian and Magyar peasants, however, coincided with the divide between Eastern and Western Christianity, which drew a more rigid boundary.

Three types of sources shed light on the patterns of exogamy: aggregate data compiled by the contemporary Hungarian statistical service from church records, recent historical demographic studies, and local histories. Their main conclusion is that marriages between Magyar and Romanian peasants were rarely common enough to warrant the attention that the Magyar public poured on them.

One out of every five or six marriages was confessionally mixed in the twenty-one eastern counties of Hungary in 1900–1903.[18] This area is not confined to historical Transylvania but roughly corresponds to the larger area where ethnic Magyars and Romanians regularly interacted. Significantly, marriages between members of the two ethnic Romanian churches (the Romanian Orthodox and Greek Catholic) were twice as common as those between either of these denominations and the ones specific to Magyars.[19] This pattern persisted throughout the era, challenging the notion that religious affiliation always superseded ethnicity. In fact, the boundary between Orthodoxy and Greek Catholicism was permeable for religious and ethnic motives alike because the liturgy and the calendar mattered much more to ordinary people than the differences in doctrine. These were essentially identical in both churches, which also explains why peasants regularly threatened unpopular priests to convert to the other flock.[20] Therefore, marriage across this boundary constituted a milder transgression compared to marriage outside the Byzantine-rite. The frequent intermarriages between Hungarian-speaking Latin-rite Catholics and Protestants, which had a long tradition then, confirm the role of the ethno-linguistic factor.

In 1902, a mere 3.2% of couples in the narrower Transylvania and 7.5% in the broader eastern Hungary reported different mother tongues to the registrars.[21] These figures are consistent with the greater ethnicization of religion in Transylvania and are substantiated by the confessional data. In the same year, self-identified Magyars across Hungary contracted four times as many marriages with native Germans, with whom they often shared the same religion, as with the more numerous Romanians.[22]

While couples could circumvent religious barriers by having one partner convert to the other's denomination before marriage, the data on individual conversions corroborate rather than refute the evidence gleaned from marriage statistics.[23] Conversions were too infrequent to really matter. Only

Romanian Orthodox passed to Greek Catholicism with any regularity, and vice versa. The annual number of conversions between Romanian and Magyar denominations remained in the double digits between 1896 and 1902, figures dwarfed by the however scant number of Romanian–Magyar marriages. Furthermore, a micro-level study found that in most such unions neither partner changed religions.[24]

These aggregate figures, while indicative of pronounced connubial segregation between eastern and western Christianity, fail to consider other significant constraints within the marriage market, such as residential segregation between denominations. Fortunately, the meticulous efforts of historical demographers in reconstructing marriage patterns using surviving parish records have yielded a fine-grained longitudinal picture of marital dynamics in the western counties of present-day Romania and two patches of Transylvania.[25]

Their findings show a pronounced tendency toward local endogamy and confirm that most interfaith marriages occurred between Romanian Orthodox and Greek Catholic worshipers, even in locales where either church claimed few members. In Alsó-Fehér County in Transylvania, for instance, the number of such marriages surpassed those between Romanians and Magyars by a ratio of three to one between 1876 and 1910.[26]

In villages with sizable Magyar and Romanian communities, marriage rates between the two groups fluctuated in the range of 4–14%, typically tending toward the lower end. While local patterns varied, it is notable that at least as many Magyar women married Romanian men as vice versa. Despite the doctrinal congruity between the Byzantine and Latin rites, marriages between Catholics of these differing traditions occurred relatively frequently only in select localities in Szatmár County.[27]

Local studies and accounts by local intellectuals provide insights into Romanian–Magyar intermarriages beyond the scope of existing research.[28] Indeed, dissenting local voices emerged early on to challenge Kossuth's assertions as reproduced in the press. A Calvinist pastor from Hunyad County, speaking from firsthand experience, contended that it was "extremely rare for a young Magyar peasant to marry a young Wallachian girl," so rare that he personally knew of no such case.[29] These voices, however, found little resonance in the political press, where Kossuth's conjectures held sway.

In some remote villages nestled in the valleys of central Transylvania, interethnic marriages appeared to be somewhat more prevalent—but the proportion of Magyars grew from one census to the next in these places, rather than diminishing. Remarkably, the best-studied case resulted in a language shift toward Hungarian in two Romanian rural communities situated on the edge of the Szeklerland.[30]



Numerous sources attest to the role of peer group pressure and other boundary maintenance strategies in keeping the numbers of such marriages low. A short story by Endre Ady highlights the ostracism faced by impoverished Calvinist noblewomen from Szilágy County who dared to wed Romanians. Similarly, in a village inhabited by Saxons and Romanians, the most respected heads of families reportedly joined forces to prevent intermarriage.[31] Despite the existence of ethnically exclusive spaces, there were abundant opportunities for peasant boys and girls to socialize across ethnic lines. Barn dances, for example, were often held together, especially during the summer season. However, it was up to the families on both sides to sanction the romantic relationships resulting from such encounters.[32]

Ironically, urban areas were the hotspots of intermarriage, despite being the epicenters of sensationalist narratives about Romanianization. In the city of Nagyvárad/Oradea, one-third of Greek Catholic (between 1860 and 1910) and Orthodox marriages (between 1880 and 1910) involved Magyar partners, while in Szászrégen/Sächsisch Regen/Reghinul Săsesc between 1911 and 1914, the majority of Romanian bridegrooms married non-Romanians, and more than one-third of Magyar bridegrooms married non-Magyars.[33] Although Romanians constituted a minority in these places, similar minorities in the villages were more endogamous. A parallel trend was observed in the Polish provinces of Prussia, where intermarriage between Catholic Poles and Lutheran Germans was four times more common in the cities than in the countryside.[34]

## THE UPPER-CLASS ROMANIAN POINT OF VIEW

One of the main reasons for greater intermingling in urban areas was that middle-class people identifying and identified as Romanians were a minority among their social peers. Romanian parents may have wanted Romanian in-laws but had to balance this preference against the fear of "marrying down," since candidates who met both conditions were in short supply. Consequently, many prioritized marrying within their own social category over marrying someone of Romanian descent, viewing it as a means of consolidating their newfound social status with an appropriate partner.

Byzantine-rite middling nobles had similar concerns. The Romanian prime minister Alexandru Vaida-Voevod's recollections of his childhood in rural northwestern Transylvania reveal a tightly woven web of kinship linking Greek Catholic and Calvinist noble families. Consider the following passage, in which he lists the Calvinists in and around his family:

> Calvinists were: Julia Gracza, [. . .] Zefi, my Vaida grandfather's mistress. Then my mother's stepmother, Julianna Csoma, and her mother, still alive back then.

> Likewise, my father's aunt, Teréza Mohay, Bonţan's [Ioan Vaida's] wife, his friend Andrei Frâncu's wife, "Lila Frink," that of his brother Ioan Jr, Johanna Butyka etc.[35]

Further up the social ladder, the Mocsonyis, one of a handful of Orthodox large landowning families in the Banat and the only one unabashedly identifying themselves as Romanians, were married to titled aristocrats through and through. Romanian-born military officers also looked beyond Romanian women for spouses. Ironically, a granddaughter of Count Kocsárd Kún, the same magnate who awarded prizes to Calvinist bridegrooms, married a Romanian hussar officer. Even Greek Catholic priests were open to unions with Latin-rite Catholics. The father of vice bishop and Romanian folklore collector Tit Bud was connected to a Latin-rite bishop through marriage, and not far from his seat, priest Ştefan Bilţiu's daughter Irina married the leading impressionist painter Béla Iványi-Grünwald, a Jewish-born convert to Catholicism.[36]

In contrast to their Magyar counterparts, Romanian authors' condemnations of intermarriage were directed toward the emerging Romanian middle class instead of the peasantry. Due to their smaller numbers, middle-class Romanians were more likely to engage in interethnic alliances, which may explain the heightened concern surrounding the issue within the Romanian national agenda. Romanian nationalism, which portrayed Romanians in Transylvania and Hungary as an oppressed group and advocated for political autonomy, seemed to exert great influence among both Romanian clergy and non-peasant believers. So, how did Romanian nationalism frame this question, and how did it manifest in actual attitudes and practices?

Historian Sorin Mitu identified two somewhat conflicting strands of discourse among the nascent Romanian intelligentsia in the Hungarian lands in the first half of the nineteenth century: one applauding Romanians' rock-solid tradition of endogamy, the other warning of the dangers posed by foreign women.[37] Mitu argues that the former initially aimed to bolster the idea of the pure Roman origins of modern Romanians. In a book from 1881, the prominent writer Ioan Slavici advanced it as an ethnographic observation:

> Everywhere, Romanians regard marriage with foreigners as something contemptible. [. . .] A priest who does not have a Romanian woman for a wife is unheard of because no congregation would tolerate him. An educated Romanian who has a foreigner for a wife loses the trust of the people and has difficulties maintaining relations with other educated Romanian families. [. . .] Women are reprimanded even more severely if they marry a foreigner; it is as if the marital relationship were illegal, and such a marriage is treated with leniency only in those cases in which one would also draw a veil of leniency over concubinage. With such a woman, however, relationships usually break up.[38]



In light of the data presented, his first assertion appears to be broadly accurate only when applied to peasants. The latter part of the quote may have a hidden autobiographical side, possibly reflecting Slavici's quarrels with or because of his Magyar wife, from whom he would eventually divorce.[39]

As for the peasantry, Romanian authors during the late Habsburg era gleefully appropriated the theme of Romanians' demographic expansion vis-à-vis their Magyar adversaries, imbuing it with a sense of collective narcissism. Writing for Romanians from Romania, newspaper editor Ioan Russu-Şirianu cited with gusto the dilettante Magyar statistician Pál Balogh's warnings about the Romanian "demographic miracle" of the past two centuries and the danger it posed, plundering Balogh for census data and the often eccentric interpretations he made of them.[40] In an earlier essay on the Magyar national character, Slavici himself waxed optimistic that "the foreigners who have crept" into the compact mass of Romanians "are few in number" and "are in the process of being wiped out."[41] His colleague George Coşbuc, one of the leading Romanian poets of his generation, seconded:

> And their complaint that the Magyars of Transylvania are being Romanianized, that they are losing ground, is not unfounded. They know full well that while the Hungarian state is shouting from the rooftops that it wants to Magyarize the Romanians, the Romanians are quietly and—above all—unconsciously and unknowingly Romanianizing the Magyars.[42]

Quotes could be multiplied.[43] Russu-Şirianu also echoed Balogh's claims about the consequences of Romanian–Magyar intermarriage, though he represented a minority viewpoint. For most Romanian writers, conquest through numerical superiority and the inherent qualities of their language, as espoused by Coşbuc, were the primary means of asserting Romanian dominance. They viewed this perceived demographic expansion as further justification for the Romanian claim to the territory as a nation.

Historian Mitu traces the other, more sinister Romanian topos about intermarriage back to an 1819 letter penned by a leading Romanian activist born in a multiethnic Hungarian town. In the letter, the author railed against foreign women whom he believed were on a mission to lure Romanians (implied to be male) away from their roots.[44] A staunch Orthodox, he denounced the Greek Catholic Church as a Viennese scheme to assimilate Romanians by opening the floodgates to marriages with Catholic Germans and Magyars. He also added Serb women to his list of perils. Until separating along ethnic lines in the 1860s, the Romanian-speaking Orthodox in narrower Hungary lived under a culturally Serb church hierarchy, and early Romanian nationalists from this milieu considered Serbs their primary adversaries.

Transylvanian-born Ioan Budai-Deleanu shared similar views regarding Magyar women as instruments of assimilationist powers. Assuming that Romanians were the indigenous population, he had as many Transylvanian magnate families as possible descend from Romanians who had been Magyarized in the late medieval or early modern period. This narrative was meant to explain the absence of a long-established Romanian elite, although it unintentionally contradicted the idea of national endogamy.[45]

The belief in the Romanian ancestry of Transylvanian aristocrats (on the paternal line, that is) persisted widely in Romanian nationalist literature, alongside repeated emphasis on the importance of choosing Romanian partners. Novelist Iosif Vulcan put the following words in the mouth of a Magyar count, no less: "Until now, every Romanian who has married a Magyar woman ended up becoming a Magyar himself."[46] Or, if neither spouse yielded, the marriage ought to become unhappy. An interwar recollection recounts how Ioan Ciordaș, a lawyer and national activist from Belényes/Beiuș, sternly advised his younger sister against accepting a proposal from a Magyar man. He argued that Romanians and Magyars had opposing innermost convictions, which would inevitably surface over time. Worse, Magyars' innate desire to lord it over other nationalities would likely turn conjugal life into a perpetual rivalry.[47]

The preoccupation with foreign women leading the national body astray may have been more apt in the first half of the nineteenth century when Romanian nationalism did not extend beyond an all-male intellectual network. In any case, it later took a back seat to the concern about the national education of middle-class children, especially girls, and the transmission of the language in social environments dominated by non-Romanians. Among other things, (male) Romanian observers often viewed girls as more susceptible to foreign influences, given the limited availability of Romanian middle schools for girls in turn-of-the-century Hungary. Instead, girls from middle-class households were usually sent to Catholic nuns' schools to receive the standard fare of girls' education, prominently featuring French and needlework. A case in point is Irina Bilțiu, mentioned earlier as a Greek Catholic priest's daughter who married a Magyar painter.[48] While this upbringing made girls more desirable as wives, critics in a nationalist mood accused them of adopting Hungarian or German language and customs and sneaking them into their families.

For Romanian national activists, the situation looked particularly bleak in the regions bordering historical Transylvania to the northwest. When a Romanian girls' middle school opened in Belényes in 1896, the economic and cultural center of the predominantly Romanian southern half of Bihar County, teachers devoted much of their efforts to getting the mostly middle-class students to converse in Romanian. Although it is not clear how exactly



students thwarted their educators' linguistic expectations, hardly any girls came from exclusively Romanian-speaking households, even if both parents were Romanian.[49]

Romanian visitors to the region were dismayed by what they perceived as the widespread use of Hungarian in Romanian intellectual circles, including individuals with nationalist credentials.[50] Among these visitors, historian Nicolae Iorga denounced the prevalence of Romanian–Magyar marital alliances in the same breath.[51] These were indeed numerous in the region, and the likely majority of Belényes students came from ethnically diverse backgrounds (all the more remarkable given that their parents were the most likely supporters of Romanian national culture).[52] However, the use of Hungarian in the salon was not confined solely to ethnically mixed families or the northwest region. Even after the war, Hungarian remained the main language spoken at gatherings of the upper-class Romanian maternal family of movie director Miklós Jancsó, in the heart of a predominantly Romanian-speaking part of Transylvania.[53] The habit of linguistic border crossing among the Romanian elite stood in stark contrast to the habitual monolingualism of the Romanian peasantry in most regions.

Marrying ethnic others may have helped the prevalence of what more fervent nationalists condemned as "alien" cultural practices, but it did not prevent the social reproduction of a distinct Romanian minority elite. As the case of Vaida-Voevod illustrates, leading Romanian activists could arise from families full of Calvinist nobles. The baptismal certificate played an important role in determining national affiliations within cross-ethnic families, if only because of the national indoctrination taking place during Orthodox or Greek Catholic religion classes. As a general rule, sanctioned by a poorly enforced law, children were baptized in the denomination of the parent of the same sex.[54] Translated into ethnic terms, this meant that Magyar husbands and Romanian wives raised their sons in a Magyar faith and their daughters in a Romanian one. However, there were many exceptions. Wedding ceremonies between Roman and Greek Catholics were usually celebrated according to the rite of the groom, while the offspring were baptized in the rite of the wife.[55] Some mixed couples also entered prenuptial agreements (*reverzalis*) regarding the religious upbringing of their future children, often at the behest of a Catholic priest. The Catholic clergy's insistence on baptizing all parishioners' children transformed prenuptial pledges into the focal point of a milder Hungarian version of the German *Kulturkampf*, which further spurred public interest in intermarriages. Going by data from 1900 to 1902, Roman Catholics usually prevailed in such contracts, and in cases not involving Roman Catholics, it was typically the husbands who imposed their confession on the children. On the whole, the two Romanian cults neither gained nor lost much with prenuptial agreements.[56] As family names were

commonly perceived as indicating ethnic origins, individuals with Romanian mothers might have had more flexibility in shaping their social identity than those with Romanian fathers. However, this had only an indirect influence on the children's identity choices.[57]

The available evidence is too sparse and anecdotal to allow for generalizations about the daily lives of multiethnic elite families or how they differed from ethnically homogeneous ones. In his memoir depicting the patrimonial world of the landed gentry in the 1880s, Alexandru Vaida-Voevod describes two such families. His maternal grandfather, Alexandru Bohățel, previously active in politics, married Julianna Csoma as his second wife, a physician's daughter from Kolozsvár/Cluj. She led a secluded life in their country mansion, reading novels in Hungarian and German and seldom receiving Calvinist Magyar relatives or Greek Catholic Romanian in-laws. For her part, the widowed mother of Ludovic and Iulia Frâncu, a noblewoman from the Calvinist Daday family, became a true matriarch despite losing her sight around the age of forty, keeping the entire family under her thumb. Both ladies spoke flawless Romanian, with Julianna Csoma even corresponding in the language.[58]

Sometimes middle-class Romanians found it difficult to present themselves as true Romanians due to a Magyar spouse or son-in-law. But their reflections suggest that they kept their nationalist persuasions remarkably distinct from their choice of partners, with class and status trumping ethno-national allegiances. An example of this is seen in the case of the elderly physician Pavel Vasici from Temeswar/Temesvár/Timişoara in the Banat, who was deeply dedicated to Romanian causes. Nonetheless, not only was he married to a Magyar woman, but he also wrote in a casual style to the leading nationalist intellectual George Bariț about his daughter Iza's engagements to Magyars.[59] He described her first fiancé to Bariț as the son of a district administrator murdered by Romanian peasant rebels in 1848, a "young-young man" who spoke and wrote Romanian well and was praised by several fellow-Romanian nationalists. "On the one hand I am glad," Vasici wrote, "but on the other I am displeased that I have to separate from her," since the couple was going to settle in Transylvania.[60] After this first marriage ended in divorce due to the husband's declared impotence, Vasici introduced Iza's new fiancé as "a teacher at the Realschule named Szalkay, of Lutheran religion, a pleasant man with nice qualities." In the same letter, he lamented the unfortunate demise of his other daughter's socially equivalent Romanian suitor due to tuberculosis: "Such is my fate: I was happy to get a Romanian son-in-law, and providence wanted otherwise."[61]

Contemporary accounts do mention political disagreements between mixed couples. A Romanian memoir describes one Mărioara Brânduşa, the daughter of a Romanian coal miner, and her husband, the civil servant Gyárfás. Living in a Magyar milieu in Kolozsvár, the two primarily conversed in Hungarian, although Gyárfás also knew both languages. If we are to believe the Romanian narrator, their opposing political views often came to light, extending beyond matters concerning the education of their daughter Irén/Irina.



> I often witnessed sometimes heated arguments between husband and wife in their home over matters of national politics. (. . .) You see, Costi, I have to back down in my own country! That's great! You Romanians are more chauvinistic, more fierce and stubborn than us Magyars—said Gyárfás, smiling serenely under his mustache.[62]

After the war, the English traveler Patrick Leigh Fermor witnessed similar scenes in the castle of Count Jenő Teleki and his Romanian-born wife Tinka Mocsonyi:

> Count Jenö, scion of one of the great Hungarian houses of Transylvania, was as deeply rooted in post-war resentment as any backwoods squire, though he was not emphatic in expressing it; while Countess Tinka, when occasion arose, was discreetly eloquent on the opposite side; and when one of them uttered controversial views, the other would later make it privately clear to a guest that they were nonsense. ("What a pity! Jenö's such a clever man, but so biased," and, "Well, I'm afraid Tinka was talking through her hat again") They were extremely fond of each other and far too civilised for public contradiction.[63]

What both descriptions have in common—and Miklós Jancsó's family recollections agree with them—is that affection or self-irony took the sting out of such spats between spouses, making them more like banter about musical tastes or disagreements about the merits of alternative medicine.[64] Unpleasant, but—as long as the couple could agree on their children's confessional belongings—it is questionable whether they could undermine a marriage on their own.

## THE HUNGARIAN *OSTMARKENROMAN*

The fear of mixing with and assimilating to an inferior "race" bore obvious colonial analogies. In fact, Hungarian ethnographic depictions feminized Romanian peasants as a whole with sometimes deep-seated Orientalizing tropes. For Magyar commentators, Romanian women were beautiful when young but grew old early—an established stereotype by 1848.[65] While Romanian men were depicted as lazy, Romanian women spun their distaffs even as they cared for their children. By reversing gender roles and presenting women as the more hardworking, such portrayals cast the entire people in a shameful

light. Moreover, Romanians were commonly viewed as stubborn monolinguals, a feminine attribute. Even the terms used to characterize the language reflected the perception of Romanian women: melodious, easy to learn, and therefore contagious. A kind of perfidious beauty was attributed to both the language and the young women.[66] The Orientalist undercurrent did not escape the observation of an English visitor in 1877, who noted that Romanians were "looked upon by the Hungarians about the same light that the British have hitherto been in the habit of regarding the people of India."[67]

Hungarian authors could draw inspiration from extra-European travelogues and the colonialist motif of "going native," expressing concern over the plight of white men who married indigenous women. More commonly, however, they encountered such tropes second hand. Notably, turn-of-the-century Magyar discussions of Romanians were visibly influenced by their quasi-colonial German counterparts about Poles. German anxieties regarding the perceived threat of Polish fertility had spawned a distinct literary genre known as the *Ostmarkenroman*, named after the eastern, Polish-inhabited provinces of Prussia where these stories unfolded. Although these novels insinuated that the offspring of Polish–German intermarriages became Polish regardless of the gender configuration, they focused on relationships between German men and Polish women.[68] Among the forty identified by historian Mark Tilse, all but one deal with such relationships.[69] Their demonic Polish female characters seduce the protagonists as part of a premeditated national scheme, often concocted by rogue Catholic priests. She spells degeneration and eventually ruin for the German male protagonist.

It has escaped the attention of literary and other historians that a bestselling Hungarian novel of the early twentieth century, Viktor Rákosi's *Elnémult harangok* [Bells fallen silent], was a derivative of this genre. First serialized in the ultra-nationalist daily *Budapesti Hírlap*, it went through seven editions between 1903 and 1919, and a stage version at the Budapest National Theater ran for at least fifty consecutive performances and was made into a film three times.[70] Part of the interwar right-wing canon, the novel later faded into obscurity until experiencing a minor resurgence after 2000. With inferior literary craftsmanship, the narrative depicts a fin-de-siècle Transylvania in which the Romanian elite is in control as the Hungarian establishment capitulates cowardly to a cabal orchestrated from Bucharest. Implicit but unmistakable is the suggestion that Hungarian assimilatory efforts have failed and the Magyar elite should strike back against the Romanians, who plot Hungary's undoing with impunity. Against this background, an ill-fated love story is told between a Calvinist pastor and the daughter of a Romanian priest.

Rákosi's departure from the typical Ostmarkenromane protagonist—a colonist—stemmed from the emphasis that Magyar nationalism placed on indigeneity. His hero Pál Simándy, an Utrecht graduate who takes up office in



a tiny, unremunerative congregation of Hunyad County with just 120 souls, is a missionary of sorts. Selfless, forthright, and brave, Simándy stands in stark contrast to his Orthodox counterpart in the village, Todorescu, who fits the stereotype of the devilish Polish priest. Todorescu exploits the people's gullibility to amass a fortune and even admits to his obscurantism in a drunken state: "I am in charge here. Stupidity holds more sway than intelligence," he hurls at Simándy.[71] Unlike his Polish models, however, Todorescu opposes his daughter Florica's growing affection for Simándy and makes his national apostasy the condition of their union rather than its goal: "Don't even speak to him until he becomes Wallachian."[72]

Historian Kristin Kopp distinguishes between assimilationist and exclusionist Ostmarkenromane based on whether they believed in the feasibility of Germanizing the Poles (presumably through means other than intermarriage).[73] In assimilationist Ostmarkenromane, Polish peasants physically resemble Germans but are culturally inferior to them and live amid squalor and disorder. Many bear German family names, hinting at their German ancestry. Exclusionist Ostmarkenromane, on the other hand, racialize ethnic boundaries and dehumanize Poles. While Poles in assimilationist texts are capable of learning German, in exclusionist ones, they are unable or unwilling to do so.

Rákosi blends together assimilationist and exclusionist elements. Romanian peasants appear brutal, cowardly, and benighted, with Todorescu himself struggling with Hungarian. His wife and daughter are portrayed as Orientals with swarthy complexions, supine and drawn to luxury, although they Orientalize Magyars back as boorish Tatars—the reason Florica initially snubs Simándy. There are references to Romanianized paternal lines among the peasants, and the village's name is prefixed with *Magyar*—despite its Romanian majority. Yet, at one juncture, Romanians are emphatically described as former highlanders who overran the valleys after the earlier Magyar population had been decimated.

Florica Todorescu has just returned from a girls' school in Bucharest, and Simándy is the first Magyar gentleman she has met—unusually for a Romanian priest's daughter in Transylvania. While the milieu is tinged with foreboding, Florica is naive and spontaneous, lacking the wicked schemes of the Polish women in the original Ostmarkenromane. Only once does she take on a demonic persona. Evocations of the massacre perpetrated by rebellious Romanian peasants in 1848 on the burghers of Nagyenyed/Aiud are overlaid on a Romanian ball scene in the neighboring town: "Like a fury, Florica danced the dance which the unruly beasts had also danced in the evil old days, by the flames of Nagy-Enyed, over the corpses of Magyar women."[74] Her role is subordinated to that of her father. Simándy's demise at the end lacks psychological and narrative depth, but it seems to be partly due to Florica's

revelation of her father's ties to a Bucharest-based irredentist organization, coupled with the county administration's hushing up of the matter.

It also contributes to the tragic denouement that Simándy finds himself abandoned by his own flock. Eastern-rite Christianity and Romanian superstitions exert such an influence over the minds of Calvinists that Simándy must compete with his Romanian counterpart from the moment of his arrival in the village. While the Romanian majority fiercely protects their ethnic purity, Calvinist Magyars do not attach such great store to their Magyar identity. Conversely, Florica's education clearly sets her apart from the Romanian rural milieu. While cross-ethnic attraction is a prerequisite of the genre, the inner monologues of the two lovers also affirm that each sees the other as the only suitable partner in the village. Florica feels stifled in her father's rectory, and both she and her mother, despite their aversion to Magyars, expect the Calvinist pastor to pay them a visit. Class boundaries tacitly take precedence over ethnic ones, and socializing with peasants on equal terms, let alone contemplating marriage with them, is out of the question.

The rhetorical feminization of the internal Other can be interpreted as an act of symbolic emasculation. However, nineteenth-century femininity was not always gentle and submissive; it also had a dark, fearful aspect, and the fear of women's power was grafted to the fear of assimilatory threats, the flip side of Magyarizing ambitions. Anxious about the perceived decline of the Magyar ethnic element and the Hungarian language in the Transylvanian countryside, Magyar nationalists seized on miscegenation discourses with colonial overtones, conveniently projecting their fears onto Romanian women. While young and beautiful Romanian women may not have prowled on Magyar men the way Polish female characters did in Ostmarkenromane, their supposed steadfast attachment to their language and religion (both feminized) allegedly ensured that their offspring would be lost to Magyardom. Such fears revealed the Magyar elite's insecurity regarding their hold on Hungary's other-language periphery.

The ethnic Magyar nation itself was in the process of being redefined from the top down. Despite Calvinism being considered quintessentially Magyar, nationalists deemed the actual Calvinist peasants in western Transylvania as too culturally hybridized. Outsiders like Kossuth assumed that such hybridization presupposed intermixing, leading public writers to exaggerate the prevalence of Romanian–Magyar intermarriages among the peasantry. The peasants involved, of course, had limited access to the networks reshaping the nation, which, in turn, knew little about them. Just as important as their ignorance was their expectation that peasants in particular should embody national virtues.

The assigned social roles reflected gender norms, with both women and peasants viewed as passive conveyors of national identity, to be guided by



paternalistic upper-class men. Peasants, like women, were not to be left alone, lest they succumb to irrational impulses and descend into an uncivilized state. The irony was that the paternalistic upper classes entered into far more ethnic intermarriages than the peasants.

Membership in the Magyar nation was highly negotiable for the privileged classes. Herman came from a German-speaking family, Rákosi was born *Kremsner*, and it can be assumed that the audience of *Elnémult harangok* [Bells fallen silent] at the National Theater consisted largely of first- or second-generation Magyars. Rákosi, himself a Roman Catholic, offered them the opportunity to identify with Calvinists and feel unquestioningly Magyar in the face of Romanian danger. He even exposed rituals that Roman Catholics also practiced—like fasting, crossing oneself, and exorcism—as Byzantine superstitions. Urban Jewish audiences, another popular internal Other, were particularly likely to take pleasure in their rightful national membership.

The majority of aspiring, upwardly mobile Romanians found themselves in social worlds where the majority of potential partners hailed from a different religious-ethnic background. Romanian nationalist discourses downplayed familial ties with the Magyar elite and dramatized the extent to which upper-class Romanians lived in an ethnic enclave. A glimpse into the lives of mixed families reveals that national belongings could act similarly to divergent party affiliations. Unlike their Magyar counterparts, charges against ethnic intermarriage among Romanian nationalists targeted the elite, reflecting latent anxieties about social reproduction or authenticity. Nonetheless, similarly to their Magyar adversaries, Romanian nationalists shifted the duty of endogamy to the peasantry as part of the nation's biological reproduction.

## NOTES

1. While working on this paper, the author received generous support from the Imre Kertész Kolleg, Jena, and the National Scholarship Programme of the Slovak Republic (SAIA). This paper was also supported by the Bolyai János Research Grant (BO/00110/22). Ottó Herman, "Ez is egy mérges csók: az elolláhosodásról" [This is a poisonous kiss, too: on Wallachianization], *Vasárnapi Újság* 24 (1877): 121.

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3. Lajos Kossuth, *Iratai* [Writings], vol. 9 (Budapest: Athenaeum, 1902), 157–60.

4. Ibid. 171. All translations are mine.

5. Ibid. 195–6.

6. Györgyi Sáfrán, "Herman Ottó és Kossuth Lajos" [Ottó Herman and Lajos Kossuth], *Magyar Tudomány* 67 (1960): 429; Ottó Herman, *Kossuth és Erdély ügye* [Kossuth and the cause of Transylvania], 2nd ed. (Budapest: Franklin-társulat, 1886); *Református Lapja* (Satu Mare), October 15, 1892, 8.

7. Árpád Berczik, "A főváros magyarsága" [The Magyar character of the capital], *Budapesti Hirlap*, July 16, 1902, 1.

8. For the narrower context, Ágoston Berecz, *The Politics of Early Language Teaching: Hungarian in the Primary Schools of the Late Dual Monarchy* (Budapest: Pasts, Inc., Central European University, 2013), 43 and the literature listed there.

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10. Emily Gerard, *The Land Beyond the Forest: Facts, Figures, and Fancies from Transylvania* (Edinburgh: Blackwood, 1888), vol. 1, 304–5.

11. Ágoston Berecz, *Empty Signs, Historical Imaginaries: The Entangled Nationalization of Names and Naming in a Late Habsburg Borderland* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2020), 12–17.

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13. Anonymous, *Az erdélyi kérdés* [The Transylvanian question] (Budapest: Fritz, 1917), 2–3.

14. For a few exceptions, Mózes Gaál, *Hogyan lett a szász menyecskéből székely asszony: magyar ember mulattatására* [How the Saxon bride became a Szekler wife: amusing reading for Magyars] (Budapest: Méhner, 1887); *Református Lapja* (Satu Mare), October 15, 1892, 8; Anonymous, "Polgári házasság és nemzetiség" [Civil marriage and nationality], *Pesti Hirlap* March 9, 1894, 1–2; Gergely Moldován, *A magyar nemzeti állam nemzetiségi feladatai* [The nationality tasks of the Hungarian national state] (Zrenjanin: Pleitz, 1895), 512.

15. Berecz, *The Politics of Early Language Teaching*, 181–9.

16. Lajos Réthi, "A magyar nemzetiség Hunyadmegyében" [The Magyar nationality in Hunyad County], *Vasárnapi Ujság* 20 (1873): 587.

17. Evguenia Davidova, "'Graecomans' into Bulgarians: Shifting Perceptions of Greek-Bulgarian Interethnic Marriages in the Nineteenth Century," *Balkanologie* 14(1–2) (2012): 13.

18. *A Magyar Korona országainak 1900., 1901. és 1902. évi népmozgalma* [Vital statistics of the lands of the Hungarian crown in 1900, 1901 and 1902] (Budapest: Magyar Királyi Központi Statisztikai Hivatal, 1905), 32–3, 40–1, 48–9.

19. Ibid. 36–7, 44–5, 52–3.

20. Macarie Drăgoi, *Ortodocși și greco-catolici în Transilvania (1867–1916): convergențe și divergențe* [Orthodox and Greek Catholics in Transylvania, 1867–1916: Convergences and divergences] (Cluj-Napoca: Presa Universitară Clujeană, 2011).

21. *A Magyar Korona országainak 1900., 1901. és 1902. évi népmozgalma*, 64–5.

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26. Holom, *Individ, familie, comunitate.*

27. Brie, *Căsătoria*, 110, 177.

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44. Mitu, *National Identity of Romanians in Transylvania*, 33–4.

45. Ibid. 151.

46. Iosifu Vulcanu, *Ranele natiunii: romanu* [The wounds of the nation: a novel] (Budapest: Kocsi, 1876), vol. 2, 144.

47. Petru E. Papp, *Din trecutul Beiuşului: pagini de glorie şi de jertfe* [From the past of Beiuş/Belényes: Pages of glory and sacrifice] (Beiuş: Doina, 1928), 163–4.

48. Józsi Jenő Tersánszky, *Életem regényei* [Novels of my life] (Budapest: Magvető, 1968), 56.

49. Iudita Căluşer, *Liceul român unit de fete din Beiuş 1896–1948: monografie istorică* [The Uniate girls' lycée in Beiuş/Belényes, 1896–1948: An historical monograph] (Oradea: Logos 94, 2011), 88, 151, 172.

50. Keith Hitchins, *A Nation Affirmed: The Romanian National Movement in Transylvania, 1860–1914* (Bucharest: Encyclopaedic Publishing House, 1999), 212; Artemie Anderco, *Un student în străinătatea acum o jumătate de veac: Maramureşanul Artemie Anderco; jurnalul său* [A student abroad half a century ago: Artemie Anderco from Maramures; his diary] (Vălenii-de-Munte, 1934), 95; Ion Muşlea, "Cercetări folklorice în Ţara Oaşului" [Folklore collections in the Oaş Region], *Anuarul Arhivei de Folklor* 1 (1932): 133; Mihai Bésán (pseud. Bihoreanul), "Reminiscenţe jubilare," *Viitorul* 2 (1884): 2–3, quoted in Constantin-Tufan Stan, *Mihail Bejan: Autorul primei traduceri în limba română a Cronicii notarului anonim al regelui Béla* [Mihail Beşan/Bésán: the first Romanian translator of the chronicle of King Béla's anonymous notary] (Timişoara: Eurostampa, 2012), 14; László Gáldi, "A magyarországi román költészet a mult század második felében" [Romanian poetry in Hungary in the second half of the past century], *Magyarságtudomány*, new series, 1 (1942): 282; Octavian C. Tăslăuanu, "Asociaţiunea la Maramurăş" [The Association in Maramureş], *Luceafărul* 10 (1911): 415; Ferenc Fodor, *Az elnemsodort falu* [The village that was not swept away] (Budapest: Athenaeum, 1942), 101.

51. Iorga, *Neamul românesc în Ardeal şi în Ţara Ungurească*, vol. 2, 638.

52. Căluşer, *Liceul român unit de fete*, 172.

53. Erzsébet Bori's interview with Miklós Jancsó, *Magyar Narancs*, March 21, 2002, https://magyarnarancs.hu/film2/nem_ok_a_nep_jancso_miklos_filmrendezo-63739.

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55. Ilyés, "A görög katolikusok," 94.

56. *A Magyar Korona országainak 1900., 1901. és 1902. évi népmozgalma*, 94–99.

57. Gheorghe Lanevschi, "Identitate etnică şi confesională în condiţiile căsătoriei mixte: familie Bodea–Vaina" [Ethnic and confessional identity in mixed marriages: The Bodea–Vaina family], in *Regiuni, etnii şi identităţi regionale: lucrările Simpoziunului Internaţional de Antropologie Culturală din 17–19 mai 2006* [Regions, ethnies and regional identities: Proceedings of the International Symposium of Cultural Anthropology, May 17–19, 2006], edited by Elena Rodica Colta, 438 (Arad: Complexul Muzeal Arad, 2007); Nicolae Brătianu (Bretan)'s letter to Octavian Goga about Amália Hidasi (née Brückner), Hunedoara, August 4, 1908, in *Octavian Goga în corespondenţă: documente literare* [Octavian Goga in correspondence: Literary documents], edited by Daniela Poenaru, Mihai Bordeianu, and Ştefan Lemny, vol. 1 (Bucharest: Minerva, 1975), 152.

58. Vaida-Voevod, *Memorii*, 239, 245.

59. On Vasici's wife, Mitu, *National Identity of Romanians in Transylvania*, 155.

60. Pavel Vasici to George Bariţ, October 28, 1869; Ştefan Pascu and Iosif Pervain, eds., *George Bariţ şi contemporanii săi* [George Bariţ and his contemporaries], vol. 2 (Bucharest: Minerva, 1973), 171.

61. Vasici to Bariţ, June 12, 1872; ibid. 182.

62. Constantin Stanca, *Îngerul de pe cupola: memorii* [The angel on the vault: memoirs] (Petroşani: Fundaţia Culturală "Ion D. Sîrbu," 1997), 93.

63. Patrick Leigh Fermor, *Between the Woods and the Water: On Foot to Constantinople; The Middle Danube to the Iron Gates* (New York: New York Review of Books, 2005), chap. 5, Kindle.

64. Péter Bacsó, "Csendes kiáltás: Bacsó Péter beszélgetései Jancsó Miklóssal" [Quiet shout: Péter Bacsó's interviews with Miklós Jancsó], in *Jancsó Miklós életműve* [The oeuvre of Miklós Jancsó], CD, https://mek.oszk.hu/00100/00124/00124.htm#1.

65. Melinda Mitu and Sorin Mitu, *Ungurii despre românii: Naşterea unei imagini etnice* [Hungarians about Romanians: the birth of an ethnic image] (Iaşi: Polirom, 2014), 307, 318, 347–52.

66. Cf. Davidova, "'Graecomans' into Bulgarians," 13.

67. George Browning, "My Hungarian Diary" (unpublished manuscript, University Library, Cluj-Napoca, Mss 2,527), vol. 5, unpaginated.

68. Kristin Kopp, *Germany's Wild East: Constructing Poland as Colonial Space* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2012), 128.

69. Tilse, *Transnationalism in the Prussian East*, 117.

70. Aladár Schöpflin, ed., *Magyar színházművészeti lexikon* [Dictionary of Hungarian theatre], vol. 1 (Budapest: Országos Színészegyesület és Nyugdíjintézete, 1929), 403.



71. Viktor Rákosi, *Elnémult harangok* [Bells fallen silent] (Budapest: Franklin-társulat, 1905), 224.

72. Ibid. 237.

73. Kopp, *Germany's Wild East*, 63–81.

74. Rákosi, *Elnémult harangok*, 251.

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## *Chapter 2*

# Max Pleschner

## *Women, Family, and Nation in Czech-Jewish Identity*

Maeva Berghmans

Missing documents, omitted names, or discarded records continue to challenge historians devoted to women's and gender history. Paradoxically, the absence of women in archival materials can sometimes be used to highlight their presence. Just as the shadows in a photograph are revealed in its negative, the missing mentions of women uncover the space they take in history. Historians can also gain insight into certain facets of women's lives by analyzing the writings of men. Like Jewish men, Jewish women, whether through their physical existence, social behavior, or political activities, played an important role in the Czech (Czechoslovak) nation-building and identity-building processes. Nevertheless, their designated and traditional role in the Jewish community often confined them to the household. Not only did some Jewish women resent this situation, but some men with progressive and feminist opinions also sought to change the status quo through advocacy and acts of support. One such man was a Czech-Jew, Max Pleschner.

Thanks to published and unpublished sources, I therefore show how intertwined the questions of gender and nation were for Pleschner.[1] This cross-examination of two types of sources reveals his very sharp criticism against his own community, and how crucial unpublished material can be to accurately interpret published material. In the first part of this chapter, I demonstrate how an article written by Max Pleschner and published in *Rozvoj* in 1928 under the title "I can count on my daughter" could easily be seen and interpreted as traditionalist without his unpublished and handwritten text, as well as a few of his editorial choices in another newspaper, *Tribuna*. In this article, Pleschner focused on Jewish girls' education and how families can best raise them for their role within the Jewish community. I then discuss