

HUNGARIANS OF ROMANIA: DEMOGRAPHIC DYNAMICS FOR THE PAST ONE AND A HALF CENTURY

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Resumen: En los últimos 150 años, la dinámica demográfica del grupo de los Húngaros de Rumanía (la mayoría viviendo en la provincia histórica de Transilvania) ha sido espectacular. El artículo presenta esta dinámica analizando el contexto de los altos y bajos en cuanto al volumen y aportación de este grupo de los Húngaros de Rumanía. Los cambios demográficos naturales, la migración, la asimilación y la lógica de la clasificación étnica que sufrió varios cambios, ha determinado los cambios en volumen de esta población. Este artículo es un análisis longitudinal de la manera en el cual cada uno de los aspectos mencionados anteriormente ha contribuido a la dinámica demográfica cambiante (crecimiento y decrecimiento del volumen y de la proporción) de la minoría Húngara de Transilvania.

Palabras clave: Hungarians of Romania, demographic dynamic of the Hungarian minority in Transylvania, demographic changes, assimilation, ethnic classification.

1. LONG TERM DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS

Transylvania¹ as a medieval principality was from the beginning of its foundations (10th – 11th centuries) by the Hungarians was an ethnically rather heterogeneous structure and during its early history the ethnic landscape of this territory become even more complex. Thus beneath Hungarians, representing a considerable strata of the population, coexisted considerable segments of Romanians, different Slavic populations,

thereafter starting with the early 13th century different Germanic populations settled. Basically the pre-modern period the Hungarians, Romanians and the Germanic populations represented the most significant ethnic segments. However the later immigrant populations like the Jews (significant presence from the 16th century), the Armenians and the Roma (Gypsy) should be mentioned too.

Starting with the 19th century, the ethnic structure of the population become the object of a rigorously structured demographic discourse and mindful ethnic policies articulated within different national projects pursued first by the Hungarian state (until 1918 when Romania take control over Transylvania), thereafter by the Romanian authorities. The result was a gradual reduction of the ethnic, linguistic and religious diversity of the province, the richness of a colorful and complex ethnic map being considerably abridged to our days. Considering both: the focus of the paper (the demographic dynamics of ethnic Hungarians of Transylvania), and the fact that a detailed analysis of the process of overall ethnic diversity reduction would exceed the limits of this paper, only some aspects of the decline in diversity will be highlighted.

First we will present the long term demographic evolution of the Hungarian population in Transylvania and highlight several methodological aspects relevant for interpreting the figures as provided for different period of time. After that, in three separate subchapters (one focusing on Transylvania under Hungarian rule, the other two on Transylvania under Romanian rule) we will analyze the dynamic

and highlight the major causes of the increase or decrease of the ethnic Hungarian population of this province.

2. THE INCREASE AND DECREASE OF TRANSYLVANIA'S ETHNIC HUNGARIAN POPULATION BETWEEN 1896-2011

Starting with the mid 19th century the institution of modern census was introduced in Hungary,

and also the Romanian state systematically organized censuses after taking control over Transylvania in 1918. Thus there is a systematic, methodologically relatively consistent series of data based on which the demographic dynamic of the ethnic Hungarians can be reconstructed for the last one and a half century.

Table 1. The evolution of the number and share of the Hungarian population in Transylvania and Romania between 1869 and 2011

Census year	Hungarians in Transylvania		Hungarians in Romania	
	N	%	N	%
1869	1,052,300	24.99		
1880	1,007,425	25.10		
1890	1,198,147	27.18		
1900	1,433,252	29.56		
1910	1,653,943	31.64		
1930	1,349,563	24.45	1,423,459	9.97
1956	1,558,254	25.06	1,587,675	9.08
1966	1,597,438	23.77	1,619,592	8.48
1977	1,691,048	22.55	1,713,928	7.95
1992	1,603,923	20.77	1,624,959	7.12
2002	1,415,718	19.60	1,431,807	6.60
2011	1,224,937	18.91	1,237,746	6.50

Compiled by author. Data until 1992 based on Varga², for 2002³ and for the year 2011 used the provisory data of 2011 census published by the Romanian National Institute for Statistics⁴.

As observable in Table 1 the number of the ethnic Hungarians of Transylvania gradually started to increase in the last decades of the 19th century with a considerable increase in the first decades of the 20th century. The decrease is seemingly higher than the average population dynamic within the province since the share of the Hungarian within the province increases too. However the first (reliable) census taken after the incorporation of the province to Romania in 1930, reveals a rather dramatic decrease. Compared with 1910, in 1930 the number of ethnic Hungarians shrunk by 18.4%, and the Hungarians share within the overall population of Transylvania lowered from 31.64% to 24.45% in 1930. The data for the communist regime (lasting in Romania between 1945-1989) the number of Hungarians constantly increased, however their share within the province and compared to Romania's overall population decreased. The first census taken after the fall of the communist regime reveals a decreasing tendency of the absolute volume of the Hungarians, and also a constant decrease of their share compared both with the province and the country's overall population.

Of course such dynamic has a multitude of reasons some of them are demographic in the very strict sense of the notion, being related to changes in fertility and mortality, or related to territorial mobility. Others are related to migration, identity and/or language shift. These will be highlighted in the following subchapters. However some of the causes of the variable dynamic of the number of the Hungarians are related to the manner and logic how different censuses were taken in different period of time.

Census enjoys the aura of providing an accurate and incontestable mirror of the (ethnic) structure of a population. Nevertheless the figures provided by census are often contested especially by subordinated ethnic groups contesting the accuracy of the figures on ethnic structure. However, though not exceptional, is rare when behind such contestation is a demonstrable blatant fraud, consisting in a deliberate and systematic distortion of the reality, like altering the declaration of peoples during the registration or statistical processing of the data. States have no need of such

techniques since they not just control the infrastructure of production of ethnic statistics (successfully claiming to be decisive and legitimate authority in this field), but also they employ census not just as fact finding process, but as “technologies of truth production”⁵. Via the formulation of census questions and categories census takers are imposing a logic of definition of ethnic identity and logics of ethnically categorize the subjects⁶. This means that states decides what cultural/identity characteristics are registered, how to define ethnic belonging, what categories are considered major ethnic categories, and what group identifications are to be considered as subordinate in relation with these major categories⁷.

The series of data above presented in Table 1 are somewhat misleading (but not erroneous) because of the fact that Hungarian and Romanian census takers had different views on what ethnicity means and how should be registered. Hungary registered mother tongue as major and criteria to ascertain peoples (ethnic) identity⁸, and mother tongue was defined in terms of function and competence as the best known and/or most frequently used language. In due circumstances peoples shifting their dominant language, for example from Armenian or from Yiddish to Hungarian, (rather frequent in the second half of the 19th century) where registered as Hungarian speakers and assumed being Hungarian. On the other hand Romanian state introduced at the census a question referring to peoples (cultural) nationality⁹, meant to capture the dominant ethno-national affiliation of peoples from Romania, that (after 1918) incorporated Transylvania. Ethnicity in this case was defined in terms of descent, a sense of one’s ethno-cultural origins. Though Romanian census registered, beside nationality /ethnicity mother tongue too, this was implicitly considered as a less important indicator of peoples ethnic affiliation, especially because of the language shift processes occurred in Transylvania during the Hungarian rule. To understand the statistical significance of the different manners of defining ethnicity during the census let’s consider the case of the Jews from Transylvania! Linguistically largely assimilated during the second half of the 19th century, but in majority still of Israelite confession¹⁰ where (implicitly) counted by the Hungarian censuses as Hungarians. But at the time of the Romanian census from 1930, based on their religious affiliation, Transylvanian

Hungarian speaking Jews were directed (in some cases by using some forms of pressure¹¹) to identify as having Jewish nationality/ethnicity.

Thus the Table 1 includes the figures on mother tongue (subsumed) as ethnicity until 1910 (while Transylvania under Hungarian rule), and thereafter (from 1930) based on the declaration of nationality/ethnicity. Though Romanian census asked also for mother, it would have been a possibility to present the data series based on the similar criteria. However we prefer to assume this inconsistency while in the imagination of the states the statistics are reflecting the reality. Both Hungary and Romania not just simply registered but in a certain sense shaped the statistical realities resulted after a given census, but both states relied on the figures and advocated them as the legitimate figures based on the classificatory logic they used while planning the census. Thus in none of the cases we cannot speak of a narrow-minded manipulation of figures in accordance with a given national interest, and in both cases we can raise questions on the validity of classifications. But in none of the cases we should not make abstraction that employing these logics of classifications, states created at the censuses different constitutive contexts for the social selves¹², especially for the fluid identities. For example the Transylvanian Jews, who received during the 19th century the right to naturalize as Hungarian citizens employed as a strategy of integration the full enculturation to the Hungarian culture, even assumed, at least in political terms, a sense of Hungarian nationhood. Thus they identified at the census with the category Hungarian while behaving in the narrower linguistic and larger cultural sense as Hungarians, and having a certain sense of being Hungarian, (even if not in terms of descent, but in terms of political loyalty). However the same persons, under different state authority facing a different logic of ethnic classification, one that expressly stressed on origins, on ethnic affiliation based on descent, adopted a different strategy for ethnic identification, indicating for the census takers that they are Jews. Not these persons where insincere when shifted between categories, but the dominant identity politics of the states organizing the census was different. They just conformed to two different logics.

The purpose of excursus was not to raise questions on the reliability of the series of data

presented in Table 1, but to contextualize them and open a perspective for one of the explanatory elements of the dramatic decrease in the number of Hungarians as revealed the data of the 1910 census (taken by Hungarians) and the one taken in 1930 by Romanians.

3. DEMOGRAPHIC DYNAMICS OF TRANSYLVANIAN HUNGARIANS UNTIL 1918

In the second half of the 19th century all over Eastern Europe a rapid increase of the population was registered. Due to the improvements of the food supply, effective implementation of a set of public sanitation reforms the fertility rates increased, the life span of the peoples grew. Transylvania was not an exception, the statistics revealed the signs of the first demographic transition in this region too. Only in four decades, between 1869 and 1910, the overall population of the province increased with somewhat more than 1 million souls, from 4,210,536 persons in 1869 to 5,228,180 in 1910¹³. The rates of population increase for this forty years were rather differentiated for the major ethnic groups. While the population of the whole province increased by 24.2% in this period, the increase for Hungarians of Transylvania was outstanding 57.2%, the Romanians increased by 24.2% and the Germans by 12%. This ethnically differential increase has several different sources: ethnically differentiated fertility and migratory patterns and the direction of assimilation that favored the increase of the Hungarian speaking population.

First if we consider the Hungarian Romanian differences in fertility we should highlight that there was a difference in the rhythm of demographic transition. The increase of the birth rates manifested first among Hungarians, and only, after several decades (at the beginning of the 20th century) among Romanians. The explanation is related to the socio-economic organization of ethnic differences in Transylvania for that period. The Hungarians were more urbanized and, as a trend, lived in economically more prosperous regions than the Romanians, thus in regions where the course of the modernization (that induced the process of demographic transition) had an earlier impact¹⁴. However such explanation is not necessarily valid in the relation between Hungarians and Saxons (the earliest German colonist of the province), since Saxons were economically more prosperous group than the Hungarians.

However it seems that some explication can be made based on religious differences. The Evangelicals from Transylvania had rather low fertility rates, while the Roman Catholics and those belonging to the other protestant denominations had relative high ones¹⁵. And the bulk of the Saxons were Evangelic while the Hungarians belonged to other protestant denominations or to the Roman Catholic church.

The population increase of this period resulted a major socio-economic problem. The working opportunities offered by the local and the newly structured capitalist labor market proved to be increasingly insufficient for a dynamically growing population¹⁶. In due circumstances local societies from Transylvania get connected with the major migratory flow of the period, the migration of Europeans to United States. According to Varga between 1869-1911 from Transylvania 520 thousand peoples migrated to America and the number of returnees was estimated to be around 200 thousand¹⁷. However the population loss due to emigration was ethnically differentiated, the Germans were overrepresented within the migrant population, the share of the Romanians was proportionate with the share of this population within Transylvania's overall population, but the ethnic Hungarians were less connected to this migratory stream, at least as was predictable from their share in the population of this province¹⁸.

The second half of the 19th century represented a context of a fervent nation-building process in Hungary. However the project of the political elites was only partly upheld by the economic dynamics. The economic transformations of that period engendered a process of urbanization and other economically motivated mobility processes. However these progressions had only a limited territorial impact in general in Hungary (if compared with other Western European states engaged in nation-building process), and particularly in Transylvania. Only some regions were socially transformed by the industrial capitalism, in many parts of the province only limited impact was observable. Many local, traditional societies were virtually unaffected by this process. Nevertheless in those urban centers and regions where economic development transformed social relations, the national project was successful, at least the German and especial Jewish inhabitants responded positively to the offer to connect with the Hungarian nation, as proposed by the elites¹⁹, resulting a rather

considerable process of linguistic, cultural assimilation, and, in many cases emotional identification with Hungarian nation²⁰. As mentioned large scale economic development, and the subsequent social transformation were less specific to Transylvania, nevertheless in some urban centers and economically developing regions assimilation as a collective strategy was specific too. This was the case especially in the western part of Transylvania where especially the Jewish population, and the relatively recently colonized Germanic populations (the Schwab) shifted to Hungarian²¹. These processes in the context of the above mentioned logic of statistical registration at the Hungarian censuses (the language use was considered as the criteria for cultural nationality / ethnicity) contributed to the above average increase of the Hungarians in this period.

Thus the ethnically differentiated fertility rates and migratory patterns, the successes of nation-building process (at least in the larger urban centers) attracting other ethnic groups to become culturally Hungarians, doubled by a specific logic of registration of ethnicity at the census contributed (in the second half of the 19th century) to the prominent increase of the number and share of ethnic Hungarians within Transylvania

4. DEMOGRAPHIC DYNAMICS OF TRANSYLVANIAN HUNGARIANS IN ROMANIA BETWEEN 1918-1945

At the peace treaties concluding the First World War Transylvania was awarded to Romania. As previously presented the change of the state authority over the province generated a dramatic decrease in the number of Hungarians. The figures of the 1930 Romanian census compared with the 1910 Hungarian one reveal a decrease by 18,4% of the volume of the ethnic Hungarians and a comparable decrease as regards their proportion within the province total population. The sources for this transformation are multiple; one of them, the changes of the logic of registration of the ethnic identity was already highlighted. However this might not have been the foremost source explaining the substantial population loss. At the end of the war together with the retreat of the Hungarian army from Transylvanian territories a significant segments of civilian authorities and a part of the population withdraw too. After the end of war and instatement of the Romanian rule other segments of the population choose to secure

their existence in the territories left under Hungarian control. After the consolidation of the Romanian rule, and the legal reinforcement at the peace treaties of the status of the province, for the inhabitants was offered the possibility to opt between the Romanian and Hungarian citizenship. Again some choose the Hungarian citizenship and consequently moved to the territories under Hungarian control. Thus between 1918-1922 approximately 200 thousand peoples moved from Transylvania to the territories kept under Hungarian rule²². Though there is no evidence regarding the ethnic affiliation of these refugees, but given the circumstances is more than probable that the bulk of this population was ethnic Hungarian.

The second source of decrease was the already mentioned change in the technique of registration of ethnic identity at the census. In 1910 out of the 182,489 persons of Israelite confession from Transylvania 72-73% declared Hungarian as mother tongue, thus according to the logic of Hungarian censuses they were counted as Hungarians. But in 1930, when Romanian census takers introduced the census category (cultural) nationality/ethnicity, out of 192,833 persons assuming to belong to the Mosaic religion, going along with the classificatory logics of the Romanian state, identified mostly (92.6%) with the ethnic category of Jewish²³.

Romanian state initiated and/or supported different mobility processes of the ethnic Romanians from rural to urban centers, from the Old Kingdom (understood here as the territories under the Romanian authority before 1918) and Transylvania. These processes modified the ethnic makeup of the cities, until dominated by Hungarians. Thus in 1910 the share of Hungarians in the province was of 31.6%, but the share of Hungarians among urban dwellers was 64.6%, while the share of Romanians was only of 17.7% (while their share in the overall population of the province was above 55%). In 1930 the share of Hungarians in the urban centers fall down to 37.9%, and those of Romanian rose up to 34.9%. However even if the Romanian state succeeded to impose a military and a civilian administrative stratum marking the fact of controlling these fields, but the Hungarians and in some cities the Germans (Saxons) successfully preserved their economic and social positions. Thus the Transylvanian urban centers, at least in this period, had a peculiar logic of ethnic stratification: Romanians

being influential while controlling the administrative and military power of the state in territory, Hungarian (and in some cities the Saxon) elites maintaining their dominance in terms of wealth and prestige²⁴.

However even if these territorial mobility processes induced by the Romanian state did not affected (at least in that period) the ethnic balance of the province did induced a new process that in long term had a significant impact on the ethno-demographic composition, and subsequently on the demographic evolution of Hungarians in the province: the ethnic intermarriages. Though for the period before 1918 the phenomena of ethnically mixed marriages is documented²⁵, the incidence of this phenomena was not remarkably high and limited to some mixed areas of the province. The increase of the ethnic heterogeneity of the cities, and the above described structure of ethnic stratification contributed to the slow but steady increase of the ethnic intermarriages in the urban areas of Transylvania²⁶. Though we have no data as on the ethnic affiliation of the persons resulting from such marriages but an unbalanced scenario for ethnic socialization it seems much probable than a balanced one. The unbalanced scenario means that the share of persons born in such families assuming the ethnicity of the parent belonging to the politically dominant ethnic group was, as a trend, higher than the share of those assuming a minority ethnic affiliation²⁷. This inaugurated an enduring process of intergenerational assimilation of Hungarians²⁸, meaning that the Hungarian persons contracting marriage with a Romanian persons did not (or rarely) switched their identity, but the offspring, in most of the cases, where already registered as Romanians.

The Second World War engendered other mobility processes, contributing to further decrease of the Hungarian population from Transylvania. In August 1940 Transylvania was split in two. The northern part was reintegrated to Hungary, and the southern part kept under Romanian authority. This situation engendered a process of voluntary population exchange between the northern and southern part of the province. Thus 220 thousand ethnic Romanians fled from north to south, and 190 thousand ethnic Hungarians in the inverse direction²⁹. However after the Second World War northern Transylvania was reintegrated to Romania, and in the circumstances of the retreat of Hungarian administration and other war events another 100

thousand persons (mostly ethnic Hungarians) left Transylvania heading to Hungary³⁰.

As data presented in Table 1 reveals during the communist period (lasting between 1945-1989), as a general trend the number of Hungarians increased, but their share in the population of Transylvania decreased constantly. The other powerfully consequential demographic trend was the change of ethnic proportions of the Transylvanian cities, Hungarians becoming minority in all the major cities of the province.

As regards the three-four decade of increase of the absolute number of the Hungarians in Transylvania could be explained by the fact that in several regions inhabited by Hungarians the patterns of the first demographic transition (increasing or at least a considerably high fertility and the prolonging of the life span) life persisted. And in the mid sixties, when fertility started to drop, severe measures of population policies (severe limitations of the legal abortion possibilities) meant to boost fertility where implemented³¹. However starting with the first half of the eighties (the last years of communism), such measures proved to be ineffective, the average number of children born to a Hungarian woman dropped below replacement level (below 2.1.-2.2 children per woman)³².

However even if during the whole period the increase of the Hungarian population was the specific trend their share within the population of the province continuously decreased. One of the elements explaining this was already highlighted: within Transylvania the demographic transition had a regionally and ethnically differentiated dynamic. The regions inhabited by Hungarians where the first (starting with the second half of the 19th century) manifesting demographic patterns specific to stage two of the demographic transition model (declining death rates, relative high and increasing birth rates). In the Transylvanian regions inhabited by Romanians this process of demographic expansion manifested decidedly at the beginning of the 20th century and lasted somewhat longer than in some of the regions populated by Hungarian. In other parts of Romania the specific improvements (in terms of food supply, access to healthcare and education, etc.) engendering the demographic expansion take place even more lately. Thus in terms of overall population dynamic, both within Transylvania and in Romania, the ethnic

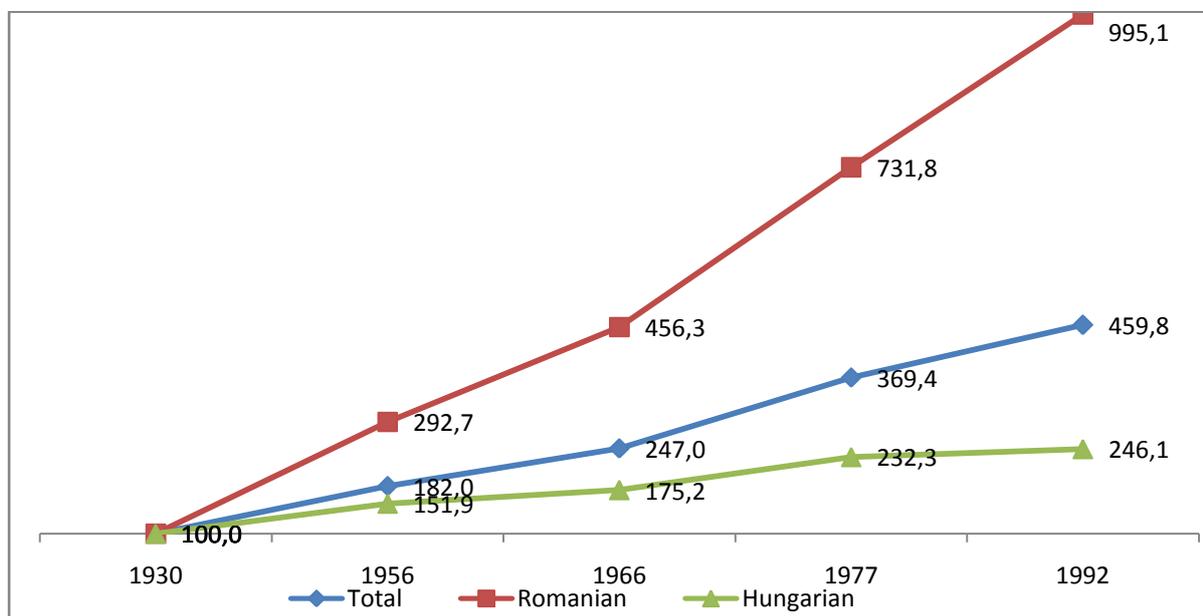
Romanians tended to have higher fertility rates than the ethnic Hungarians.

Moreover in some regions (and is especially the case of north eastern Romania), the demographic expansion was rather considerable, and here, in spite of sustained industrial investments labor force surplus existed³³. In due circumstances of the existence peripheries with excedentary labor, the population headed to more developed regions like the south western part of Transylvania, or other parts of this historical province.

These patterns of internal migration and the above highlighted ethnically differentiated fertility rates explains why in spite of the increase of the volume of the Hungarian population during the communism, they relative share within the province constantly lowered.

The other major process that had an important socio-demographic impact in this period was the radical changing of the ethnic makeup of the cities: both in terms of ethno-demographic and social structure (ethnic stratification).

Figure 1. The rate of growth of urban population in Transylvania for the period 1930-1992: total population, ethnic Romanians and Hungarians (1930 – 100%)³⁴



As seen in Figure 1 in somewhat more than a half century the growth of urban population in Transylvania was rather significant (multiplied by 4.5 times), however was rather unequal in ethnic terms. The urban population of Romanian ethnicity increased between 1930-1992 by 995%, the rate of growth for the Hungarians was only 246%. Thus if in 1910 the share of Romanians among urban dwellers was of 17.7%, to 1992 rose up to 75.6%, meanwhile the share of Hungarians of 64.6% in 1910 dropped to 20.3% to 1992³⁵. In judging this ethnically unbalanced urbanization two things should be emphasized. The first is that the ethnically selective urbanization favored Hungarians until 1918 and at the moment of Transylvania's integration in Romania the share of Romanian urban dwellers was far beyond the share of the

Romanians in the overall population (as highlighted previously). The second aspect is in relation with the ethno-demographic structure of the countryside that was the main population supplier for the urban population growth, which (again) was largely Romanian. Thus judged in terms of pure statistical probabilities, in the circumstance of the large scale urban expansion of the communist period, the change of ethnic make-up of the cities was unavoidable. Nevertheless in the circumstances of a bureaucratically coordinated centralized economic system of the communist regime, also (directly or indirectly) the labor-force territorial mobility was also controlled. Thus is more than plausible that the deliberate efforts of the communist regime, to change the ethnic

structures of the Transylvanian cities, also contributed to these changes³⁶.

But beside the change of the ethno-demographic structure of the Transylvanian cities another problem affected even deeply the situation of Hungarians of Transylvania: the weakening of the economic and social positions within the urban area. The communist regime abolished the private property over the means of production. This meant that the logic of ethnic stratification specific for the Transylvanian urban areas during the period between the two world wars was considerably reshaped. The economic pillar sustaining the position of Hungarians in the urban areas become state owned and its coordination passed to the state and party administrators. Though in the first decade of the communism Hungarians were well represented among this strata, their presence in time diminished. Thus in the circumstances in which possibility to accumulate economic capital was severely limited, the major ground for social differentiation and stratification was the closeness to the administrative and political apparatus. Since starting with the end of the fifties the ethnic selectivity of recruitment become more and more effective, the position of Hungarians within the social structure become gradually marginal.

Thus the relative fast changes of the ethnic makeup of the Transylvanian cities (actively backed by state), accompanied by a gradual exclusion from the power structures of the communist regime of the Hungarians, generated an increasing frustration in the cities, engendering enduring patterns of ethnic competition that surfaced rather passionately after the breakdown of the communism³⁷.

The increasingly mixed population structure and the above highlighted asymmetric ethnic stratification contributed to a considerable heightening of the ethnically mixed marriages. Thus 17.5% of ethnic Hungarians (marrying in 1965) get a non-Hungarian (mostly Romanian) partner. The incidence of intermarriages in the urban area being 2.3 times higher than in the villages³⁸.

During the communism not just the internal, but the external migration had too a specific ethnic dimension. In spite of the policies pursuing to impose severe limits on the international mobility of the average citizen, high amount of permanent, legal emigration took place³⁹.

Nevertheless this migration was rather selective in ethnic terms; first the Jews were allowed to emigrate, thereafter, following a bilateral agreement between Romania and Germany, the ethnic Germans started to emigrate to their kin-states⁴⁰. At the end of the period, starting with 1986/87 the Hungarians started to migrate to Hungary, however if Jews and Germans migration was regular, closely administered by the Romanian authorities, the migration of the Hungarians was largely irregular, most of the crossing illegally the borders and applying for asylum in Hungary. Thus in the last years of the communism 70-80 thousand Hungarians fled to Hungary, inaugurating a migratory process that lasted (even after the breakdown of the communism) more than a decade⁴¹.

Though the communist period represented a context of population increase for Hungarians, since the fertility of the Romanians was somewhat higher, the relative share of Hungarians within Romania's and Transylvania's overall population constantly diminished. The internal mobility processes represented an opportunity of further increase of the share of the Romanians within cities, decades before largely dominated by Hungarians. The fact that this process occurred in the circumstances of a strongly centralized, bureaucratic coordination of the state, only augmented the stress Hungarians experienced, assuming this process as a social engineering of the Romanian state, intending to marginalize the Hungarian minority. In the last decade of the 45 years period the decrease in volume of the Hungarians come to an end. The fertility rates of the Hungarian women dropped below replacement rate, and in the last years of the communism the emigration of Transylvanian Hungarians to Hungary run high.

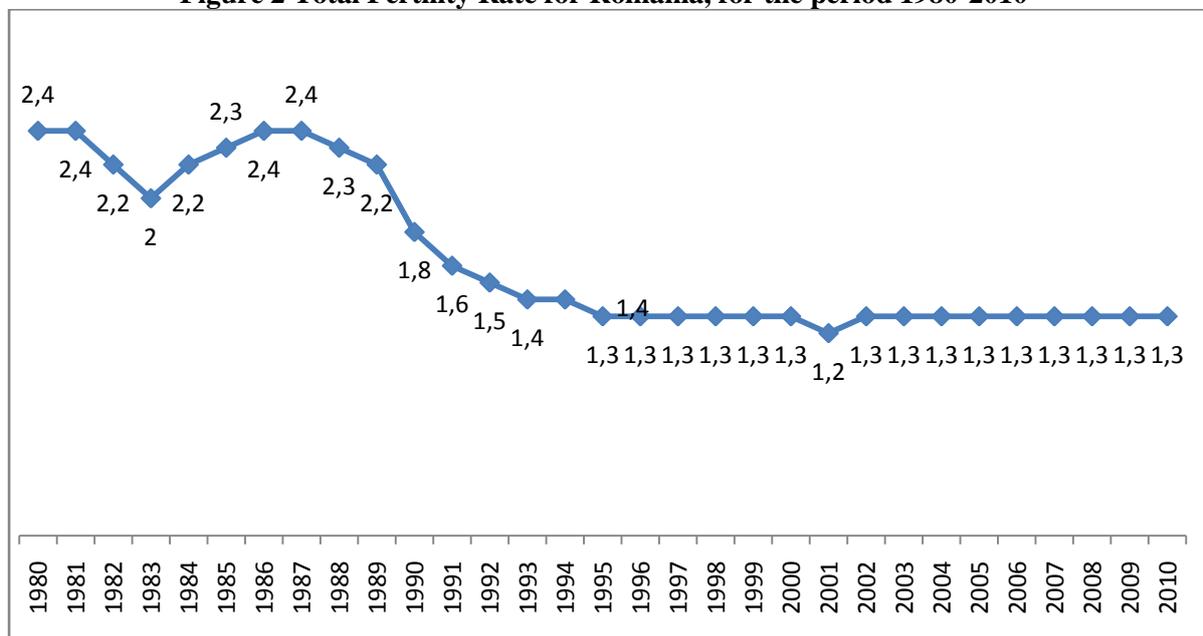
5. CURRENT TRENDS AND DEMOGRAPHIC PROSPECTS

The change of the political regime in was rather quickly followed by the change of the Transylvanian, Romanian demographic regime. And, during the nineties, a process of demographic decline inaugurated⁴². The liberalization of abortion, the eased access to various contraceptive methods, combined with the difficulties of the economic transition (harshly affecting large segments of the population) contributed to the drastic decline of the fertility (see Figure 2!), and a rather slow increase of the life span. In the context of the

liberalization of the possibilities for traveling abroad, and the gradually eased access to various Western European countries labor markets⁴³ a large scale emigration of the Romanian citizens commenced. At the end of 1910, almost 2.8 million foreign residents of

Romanian origin were registered all over the world, the bulk of them in Europe⁴⁴. Thus in two decades (between 1992-2011) the country's overall population decreased by 14.5%.

Figure 2 Total Fertility Rate for Romania, for the period 1980-2010⁴⁵



The decrease of the Hungarian population for this period was even more drastic. In almost two decades (1992-2011) the number of Hungarians drops by almost 400 thousand souls, 23.6%. The reasons for the more heightened demographic decline of the Hungarians (compared with the trends at country level) are multiple. On, one hand as an enduring trend (during the second half of the 20th century) Hungarian population, compared with the country average had lower fertility rates. But the fertility rates of the Hungarian females fall below population replacement level during the 1980's⁴⁶. While such decline under the critical level of the total fertility rate of 2.2 children per woman, become specific for the whole population of Romania only at the beginning of the 1990's (see Figure 2!). These discrepancies in fertility, cumulated in time, resulted a less favorable age structure of the Hungarian population. Compared with the general population the share of fertile age groups within the Hungarian population was lower. Thus not only that woman in fertile age delivered less and less children, but at the beginning of 1990's the share of Hungarian females in fertile age was below the Romanian average.

Emigration also contributed to the decrease of the Hungarian population in this period: first in terms of reducing the overall volume of the population, second by affecting the age structure of the population. Thus at the end of the 1980's, between 1987-1991 approximately 83 thousand Transylvanian Hungarians emigrated westward Romania, between 1992-2002 the number of emigrating ethnic Hungarians was approximately 65 thousand⁴⁷, for the period 2002-2007 the number of Transylvanian Hungarian émigrés was approximated to 111 thousand⁴⁸ Thus between 1992-2002 approximately 176 thousand ethnic Hungarians of Transylvania emigrated. It should be emphasized that émigrés as a general trend were mostly young adults⁴⁹, thus their departure affected the age structure of the Transylvanian Hungarian population, by lowering the volume of the fertile age groups, thus indirectly contributing to the further decrease of the volume of this population.

The patterns of intermarriages (already presented before) did not change significantly, after 1989⁵⁰. Between 17-20% of the Hungarians contracting a marriage in the given year choose to marry with a non-Hungarian (mostly ethnic Romanian) person. And roughly one third of the

children resulted from this intermarriages are registered as Hungarians⁵¹, meaning that the ethnic socialization within ethnically mixed families is more favorable for Romanians, than for Hungarians.

Thus in the last two decades Hungarians of Romania faced a large scale population loss. The foremost cause of this process is the taking up a demographic behavior specific to the second demographic transition, the deliberate reduction of fertility⁵².

The demographic prospects of the Transylvanian Hungarians are grimmer than the general European or the Romanian context. Demographic projections have no positive (population increase) scenarios for the following decades, foreseeing a continuous (moderate or rather severe) population loss. The moderately good news is that the fertility of the Hungarian females started to increase, from the minimal level of the total fertility rate of 1.2 children per woman (registered at the beginning of the millennium), still even the more optimistic scenarios are not predicting a higher level of 1.7-1.8 children per woman (the population replacement level would be 2.1 – 2.2). The migration of the ethnic Hungarians is less likely to radically diminish, however it seems that in the last years the, the migration rates of the Romania's Hungarian population were lower than the migration rates specific to the whole population. The rates of mixed marriages were rather constant in the last two decades and less likely to drop in the future, thus, the intergenerational assimilation via intermarriages will continue. Thus, according to a realistic scenario of population projection in 2032 the number of ethnic Hungarians of Romania will be approximately 1 million out of a 18.1 million population for the whole Romania⁵³.

NOTAS

¹ In this paper when using Transylvania I'm not limited to the medieval territory of this principality, but including all the territories that in 1918 were transferred from Hungary to Romania.

² Varga E. Árpád, *Fejezetek a jelenkori Erdély népesedéstörténetéből*, Budapest, Püski, 1998.

³ INS (Institutul Național de Statistică), *Recensământul populației și al locuințelor 18-27 martie 2002. Structura etnică și confesională*, București, Institutul Național de Statistică, 2005.

⁴ INS (Institutul Național de Statistică), *Populația stabilă după etnie, pe județe, categorii de localități și*

localități found at: <http://www.recensamantromania.ro/rezultate-2> (Visited august 2012).

⁵ Urla, Jacqueline, *Cultural politics in an age of statistics: numbers, nations and the making of Basque identity*, *American Ethnologist*, 1993, Volume 20, 818-843.

⁶ Kertzer, David I. and Arel, Dominique, *Censuses, identity formation, and the struggle for political power*, In: Kertzer, David I., et al. (eds), *Census and Identity: The Politics of Race, Ethnicity, and Language in National Censuses*, Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 2002, 1-42.

⁷ Horváth István, *Az etnikai kategóriák és a klasszifikáció változó logikái – fogalmi rendszerezési kísérlet*, *Erdélyi Társadalom*, 2006/2, 101-118.

⁸ Arel, Dominique, *Language categories in censuses: backward- or forward-looking?* In *Census and Identity: The Politics of Race, Ethnicity, and Language in National Censuses*, Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 2002, 92-120.

⁹ Understood as ethnic affiliation.

¹⁰ Gidó Attila, *Úton. Erdélyi zsidó társadalom- és nemzetépítési kísérletek (1918–1940)*, Csíkszereda, Pro-Print Könyvkiadó, 2009.

¹¹ Gidó Attila, *A kolozsvári zsidóság a két világháború között*, unpublished PhD Thesis, Cluj-Napoca, „Babeș-Bolyai” University, Faculty of European Studies, 2011.

¹² Urla, Jacqueline, *Cultural...* op. cit. 820.

¹³ Primary data from Varga E., Árpád, *Fejezetek...* op. cit.

¹⁴ Szász Zoltán, *Gazdaság és társadalom a kapitalista átalakulás korában*, In Szász, Zoltán (ed.), *Erdély története 1830-tól napjainkig*, Vol.3, Budapest, Akadémia Kiadó, 1987, 1574.

¹⁵ Idem 1573.

¹⁶ Venczel József, *Erdélyi föld - Erdélyi társadalom*, Budapest, Közgazdasági és Jogi Könyvkiadó, 1988 [1942].

¹⁷ Varga E., Árpád, *Fejezetek...* op. cit., 131.

¹⁸ Idem 154.

¹⁹ In its first stage the Hungarian idea of nation did not emphasize the importance of Hungarian origin, had no focus on ethnic component, nationhood was merely defined in cultural terms, stipulating that embracing the Hungarian language and culture was a convincing gesture of the will to be member of the Hungarian nation.

²⁰ For the case of Hungary's Jewish population see Karády Viktor, *Zsidóság, asszimiláció és polgárosodás*, Budapest, Cserépfalvi, 1997, 151-195.

²¹ For the case of the Transylvanian Jews see Gidó Attila, *A kolozsvári ...* op cit.

²² Ronnäs, Per, *Urbanization in Romania. A Geography of Social and Economic Change Since Independence*, Stockholm, 1984, 104.

²³ Gidó, Attila, *A kolozsvári zsidóság..* op cit., 35.

²⁴ Livezeanu, Irina, *Cultural politics in Greater Romania: regionalism, nation building & ethnic struggle, 1918-1930*, Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 1995.

²⁵ Pădurean, Corneliu and Bolovan, Ioan (eds.), *Căsătoriile mixte în Transilvania. Secolul al XIX-lea și începutul secolului XX*, Arad, Editura Universității Aurel Vlaicu, 2005.

²⁶ Râmneanțu, Petru, *Problema căsătoriilor mixte în orasele din Transilvania în perioada de la 1920-1937*, *Buletin eugenic și biopolitic*, 1937, Vol. 10-12.

²⁷ Since census reserved no category for those of mixed origin.

²⁸ Szilágyi N. Sándor, *Az asszimiláció és hatása a népesedési folyamatokra*, In Kiss, Tamás (ed), *Népesedési folyamatok az ezredfordulón Erdélyben*, Kolozsvár: Kriterion Könyvkiadó, 2004, 157-235.

²⁹ Stola, Dariusz, *Forced Migration in Central European History*, *International Migration Review*, 1992, Vol. 26 (1992/2), 332.

³⁰ Stark Tamás, *Migrációs folyamatok a második világháború alatt*, In *Kisebbségkutatás*, 2001, Vol. 4/2001, 37.

³¹ Kligman, Gail, *The Politics of Duplicity. Controlling reproduction in Ceaușescu's Romania*, Berkeley/Los Angeles/London, University of California Press, 1998.

³² Kiss Tamás and Csata István, *A magyar népesség előreszámításának a lehetőségei Erdélyben*, In *Demográfia*, 2007, Vol. 50(4/2007), 364.

³³ Turnock, David, *The Pattern of Industrialization in Romania*, In *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 1970, Vol. 60, (1970/3), 557-559.

³⁴ Primary data from Varga E., Árpád, *Fejezetek...* op. cit., 192.

³⁵ ibidem.

³⁶ Gallagher, Tom, *O critică a centralismului eșuat și a egoismului regional din România*, In Andreescu, Gabriel and Molnár Gusztáv (eds.), *Problema transilvană*, Iași, Polirom, 1999, 102.

³⁷ For a general overview and a revealing case study see Brubaker, Rogers, et al., *Nationalist Politics and Everyday Ethnicity in a Transylvanian Town*, Princeton and Oxford, Princeton University Press, 2006.

³⁸ For the data on mixed marriages for 1965 see Ronnás, Per, *Urbanization...* op.cit. 108.

³⁹ Horváth István, *Country profile Romania*, *Focus Migration country profiles*, 2007, Vol. 9 (September 2007), 1-10.

⁴⁰ Horváth István, *Romania and Moldova, migration mid-19th century to present*, In Ness, Immanuel (ed.), *The Encyclopedia of Global Human Migration*, Blackwell Publishing Ltd, 2013. Online version: <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/9781444351071.wbeghm460/full> (March 2013)

⁴¹ For an overview see Horváth István, *Változó környezet állandósuló trendek?*, In Horváth, István (ed.), *Erdély és Magyarország közötti migrációs folyamatok*, Kolozsvár, Scientia Kiadó, 2005, 9-132.

⁴² Ghețău, Vasile *Declinul demografic și viitorul populației României. O perspectivă din anul 2007 asupra populației României în secolul 21*, Buzău, Alpha MDN, 2007.

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Romania become EU member state, its citizens (with some, minor and transitory exceptions) could travel and work freely within the territory of other EU member states.

⁴⁴ Horváth István, *Migrația internațională a cetățenilor români după 1989*, In Rotariu, Traian and Voineagu, Vergil (eds.), *Inerție și schimbare. Dimensiuni sociale ale tranziției în România*, Iași, Polirom, 2012, 215.

⁴⁵ Sources INS, *Evoluția natalității și fertilității în România to be found* http://www.insse.ro/cms/files/publicatii/Evolutia%20natalitatii%20si%20fertilitatii%20in%20Romania_n.pdf (visited March 2013)

⁴⁶ Kiss Tamás and Csata István, *A Magyar ... op.cit.* 364.

⁴⁷ Horváth István, *Változó környezet...* op.cit. 59.

⁴⁸ Kiss Tamás and Barna Gergő, *Népszámlálás 2011. Erdélyi magyar népesedés a XXI. század első évtizedében. Demográfiai és statisztikai elemzés*, *Studii de atelier în cercetarea minorităților naționale din România*, 2012, Vol 43, 69.

⁴⁹ Gödri Irén and Tóth Pál Péter, *Bevándorlás és beilleszkedés*, Budapest, KSH Népeségkutató Intézet, 2005.

⁵⁰ Horváth István, *The incidence of Inter marriages in Transylvania between 1992-2005, Inclinations and Patterns of Inter marriage*, In Iluț, Petru (ed.), *Dimensions of Domestic Space in Romania*, Cluj-Napoca, Presa Universitară Clujeană, 2008, 107-126.

⁵¹ Kiss Tamás and Barna Gergő, *Népszámlálás 2011...* op.cit. 48.

⁵² Kaa, D. J. van de, et al., *The second demographic transition revisited: theories and expectations*, Amsterdam, Universiteit van Amsterdam, 1988.

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