

HUNGARIAN CSÁNGÓS IN MOLDAVIA

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Essays on the Past and Present
of the Hungarian Csángós in Moldavia

Edited by Diószegi László

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The Hungarians of Moldavia (Csángós) in the 16th–17th Centuries

by Benda Kálmán

The present study attempts to cast into relief the 16th–17th century history of the Hungarians living in Moldavia. First, however, it is necessary to present some well-known facts.

The borders of the Moldavian voivodship, which was one of the two Romanian principalities until 1859, and since then a part of the unified Romanian state, were changed several times in the course of history.¹ This paper deals with the whole of historical Moldavia, which comprises a large territory from the eastern slopes of the Carpathians to the River Dnester. This includes the areas beyond the River Prut: Bessarabia and Budzsák, which were both assigned to Russia in the Treaty of Bucharest in 1812, as well as Bucovina in the north, which was brought under Austrian rule in 1775. In the south, this entire territory is bordered by the lower reaches of the River Szeret/Siret, the Lower Danube, and the Black Sea.

BRIEF HISTORY OF MOLDAVIA

For over a millennium, this 93,000 square km flat area—there is only a strip of hilly region along the western border—was the military springboard for equestrian-shepherd peoples coming from Asia and heading west. Some of them merely crossed the area in question, others settled for a shorter or longer period.² First were the Huns, followed by the Avars and some Bulgarian tribes. In the second half of the 9th century came the Hungarians; then it was the turn of the Pechenegs and the Uz. Finally, in the 11th century, came the Cumanians who were stopped by the frontier defences of the Hungarian kingdom. While the Pechenegs and the Uzes were dispersed by the battles, the Cumanians were forced to settle down in Moldavia and Wallachia. Nevertheless, later in the 1240s, they were not only dispersed, they were destroyed as a nation by the great Mongol-Tartar invasion. The several century long period of warfare and its effects—destruction and uncertainty—ended only in the 14th century when, under the command of András Lackfi—bailiff of the Székelys—the army of Nagy Lajos [Louis the Great], King of Hungary, forced the Tartars back to the River Dnester (1345) once and for all.

In the 1350s, Voivod Dragos and his Romanian escort marched on Moldavia from Máramaros/Maramureş—with the assent of Nagy Lajos [King Louis the Great]—and founded the Moldavian State. The first Moldavian coins—displaying the coat of arms of the Anjou—were minted in 1370. They demonstrate evidence of the Moldavian dependence on the Hungarian Kingdom, but also testify to the existence of a separate Moldavian State. In a few years this new state extended its boundaries to the Lower Danube and the River Dnester.

The 15th century was the Golden Age of Moldavia. The Moldavian princes—their official title was *hospodar*, in Latin: *voivoda*, in Hungarian: *vajda*—achieved a kind of autonomy by shrewdly playing off the two powerful neighbours, Poland and Hungary, against one another. In fact, under the reign of Voivod Nagy István [Stephan the Great] (1457–1504), Moldavia achieved independence.³ By contrast, at the end of the 15th century the weakened Poland and Hungary were replaced by a militarily far stronger power: the Ottoman-Turk Empire. In the middle of the 15th century Wallachia, too, was forced to recognise the suzerainty of Constantinople, and at the end of the century accept that its voivods be appointed by the Sultan. Moldavia—due to its more favourable geographical location—became a tributary state of the Sultan only in the 16th century. At the beginning of this next century southern Bessarabia, the Budzsák, was invaded by the Tartars of Crimea, and in 1538—when the Tartar khanate was subdued—this area became part of the Ottoman Empire. Although the greater part of Moldavia continued to maintain a certain autonomy—sometimes strongly, sometimes lightly bound to the Ottoman Empire—it threw off the yoke of the Turks only in the 19th century.⁴

During the course of history the resident peoples of the country or at least their proportions changed several times. According to the toponyms a number of Slavic people must already have been living here before the great migrations, but there is no further information about their destiny. The early equestrian-shepherd peoples—Huns, Avars, Bulgarians, and Magyars—only passed through Moldavia, while the next—Uzes and Pechenegs—were partly dispersed, while some fragments of them demanded and were granted refuge in Hungary. The most persistent were the Cumans, who mainly settled in Wallachia and also the southern parts of Moldavia between 1100 and 1241 (the Mongol invasion of Hungary). The King of Hungary went so far as to found a bishopric in Milkó/Milcov to convert them to Christianity.⁵

The first reference to the presence of Romanians in this area traces back to 1164. Niketas Khoniakes, a Byzantine historian, mentions that when the nephew of the Byzantine Emperor, Manuel, was fleeing, he was captured by “Wlachs” near the border of Halics/Galicia.⁶ The next information dates from almost one hundred years later: in 1234, Pope Gregory IX mentions in a letter written to King Béla IV that “a people called Wlach” live in the Cuman bishopric of Milkó/Milcov, which is in the immediate foothills of the south-east Carpathians, and that, having left the Hungarian kingdom, some Hungarians and Germans joined

them, having converted to the Greek Orthodox religion and “live with the Wlachs as one people”.⁷

The slow infiltration of the Wlach (Romanian) population from Wallachia to Moldavia had obviously started earlier, mainly focusing on the area lying between the Carpathians and the River Szeret/Siret. Although they only immigrated in masses from the south, the west, and from Máramaros/Maramureş when the Moldavian State had already been founded, the Wlachs became a majority in Moldavia by the 15th century.

According to descriptions from between the 14th and 18th centuries, the population of Moldavia was varied and ethnically mixed.⁸ Although the population of Moldavia had a Romanian basis, the Ruthenians (Russyns) constituted the majority in Bucovina. In Bessarabia, the Tartar and Ukrainian immigration—coming from the southeast, and the east, i.e. the other bank of the Dnester, respectively—was growing. The number of Gypsies was becoming especially high in the southern parts of Bessarabia. The towns were populated by Armenians, Poles, Jews, Turks, Greeks and even by a small number of Italians. Some of these residents were permanent, others were just temporary. Besides the (agrarian) market towns of homogeneous German (Transylvanian Saxon) population, the most significant non-Romanian people of inner Moldavia were the Hungarians.⁹ The linguistic-ethnic variety was enhanced by the religious disparity: the Romanians, Ruthenians and Ukrainians were Greek Orthodox; the Hungarians (many of whom followed the Hussite doctrines in the 15th century), the Saxons (a significant portion of whom accepted the doctrines of Luther during the Reformation), the Poles, and the Italians were Roman Catholic; the Turks and Tartars were Muslims; and, lastly, the Armenians were Armenian-Catholic. The Eastern Church, also called the Greek Orthodox Church, was the dominant Church of the country, and its official language, Old High Church Slavonic. The official language of the state was a Romanian dialect, which is called by our contemporaries “the Moldavian language.”

Sources mention the Hungarians of Moldavia as early as the 13th century, some of whom may have lived here even earlier. According to linguistic research the river and creek names of Moldavia, especially in the area lying between the Carpathians and the River Szeret/Siret—even in places which had a Romanian population for hundreds of years—originate either from a Turkish language, or from Hungarian or Slavonic. In the latter case the appellations were transmitted into the Romanian language through Hungarian¹⁰, proving that the Hungarians preceded the Romanians in this area. Although the territory of the Hungarian settlements shrank by the 16th century, it still formed an almost closed unit between Szucsava/Suceava and Románvásár/Roman in the north, in the south, in the vicinity of the town of Bákó/Bacău, along the River Tatos/Trotuş, and also along the right bank of the River Szeret/Siret.¹¹ There were also some scattered villages in the area lying between the Rivers Szeret/Siret and Prut, and also along the banks of the River Dnester.

A REVIEW OF HISTORICAL RESEARCH

For a long time, the origins of the Hungarians of Moldavia (according to the terminology used in the literature earlier, the Csángós¹²) had been enshrouded in the mist of legend and conjecture, and even now have not been adequately clarified.¹³

Apart from early reports by various travellers, scholarly interest in the Hungarians of Moldavia first arose in the mid-eighteenth century, and for more than a century thereafter attention was directed solely towards their origins and descent. Initially, the prevailing opinion was that Csángós were the descendants of Cumanians. The science of the time held that not only were the Cumanian and Hungarian peoples related, but that they were also kindred peoples, with identical languages—i.e. Cumanians spoke Hungarian. This hypothesis became logically indefensible in the 1880s, when—with the discovery and publication of the first linguistic records—it became evident that the language used by Cumanians was Turkish. Some scholars, however—including the well-known linguist Munkácsi Bernát,—still insisted on the validity of the theory of Cumanian descent. Munkácsi based his argument on the sibilant language (i.e. the use of the sound “s” instead of “sh”) still used in Moldavian Csángó villages. Based on the research of Professor Gustaw Weigand from Leipzig, Munkácsi deduced that this was a characteristic Cumanian feature.¹⁴ It was only at the beginning of the 20th century that it was proved that there is no trace of the sibilant pronunciation in the language of the Cumanians. The same holds true for the language of the Uz and the Pecheneg peoples, too.

The proponents of another theory—still met with sporadically—advocated the notion that the ancestral seed of Hungarians in Moldavia is comprised of those Hungarian fragments that remained outside the Carpathian Basin following the Hungarian Settlement.¹⁵ In addition to the archaic language, they cite the scattered archaeological findings of the 9th century as proof of their theory. However, this argument in itself does not amount to a conclusive proof—as has been pointed out by a number of people. As some of the first Hungarian settlers from the East passed through these regions, it is evident that material remains may be present in the area. Although not impossible, it cannot be proved that certain small Hungarian groups had indeed lagged behind, and settled down in what is now Moldavia. However, there is no evidence that these supposed villages, dating from the time of the Hungarian Settlement, had continued to exist, or that the Csángós living there today would be the descendants of these 9th century settlers. However, it is also true that until now archaeological excavations in these regions have been scarce. Nevertheless, if one considers the fact that the Uz, Pecheneg and Cumanian villages proven to exist in Moldavia had been totally eradicated during the tumultuous later period of migration, it is hard to imagine that only the Hungarians had been able to survive.¹⁶ Toponyms also contradict the idea of

settlements dating from the time of the Hungarian Settlement, as well as the notion of the continuity of the villages. Throughout the first few centuries, Hungarians settling in the Carpathian Basin used to denote their settlements by mere proper names (Solt, Tass, etc.) or—at the very most—they would add a “d” diminutive suffix to the name (Álmosd, Szepesd, etc.). In contrast, no such early forms of toponyms—similar to the above—have been found in Moldavia¹⁷, even though it is recognised that toponyms persist even if there is an exchange of populations inasmuch as the new population adopts the name from the preceding one. Instead of toponyms based on mere proper names, there is a preponderance of toponyms ending in *-falva* or *-vására* (meaning “village” and “market place”, respectively). This nomenclative practice, however, points to the 13th–14th centuries.¹⁸ Moreover, there is no trace—in popular memory—of anything that would allude to the time of the Hungarian Settlement.

By the 1920s, the debates about the theories of origin of Csángós—that is, whether they originated from the Cumanians or the first Hungarian settlers—characterising the turn of the century eventually subsided.¹⁹ It came to be generally accepted that the Moldavian Hungarians who settled in their current location—sometime during the Middle Ages—came not from the East but from the West, i.e. the Carpathian Basin. From then on, scholars were primarily concerned with establishing the date of the first wave of emigration (or systematic resettlement). In addition, they also wanted to determine what the ensuing waves of migration had been, who had migrated, from where, and why to Moldavia. By this time, the issue of the dialect and popular culture of Moldavian Hungarians had already been raised in relation to the extent to which one could regard these as homogeneous. Answering this question required both historical and ethnographic research as well as linguistic analysis.

First and foremost, one has to mention the work of Carol Auner, a Catholic priest from Bucharest, who—most probably—was of German descent. Auner, who published his work only in Romanian, wrote several studies that primarily summarised the medieval history of Catholic Moldavians and Wallachians, thereby providing the first outline of Hungarian emigration and the earliest portrayals of the strong ties between the life of the Hungarians in Moldavia and the Catholic Church. His research was based on already published deeds and documents from Church Archives in Moldavia.²⁰

In the realm of Hungarian research—excluding several publications which have often clarified some important details—the work of Domokos Pál Péter in the field of ethnography, folk music and history should be mentioned first. In writing his historical studies, Domokos relied on documents from the Vatican Archives amongst other sources. He wrote about the missionary work of the Hungarian Catholic Church among the Cumanians, and—within the same context—also described the emigration of Transylvanian Hungarians and Saxons, the organisation of their Church and—later on—their fate. Yet, one must treat with

caution Domokos's data (which were often obtained second- or third-hand) as well as the conclusions he drew from them. Nonetheless, Domokos deserves credit for calling attention to several issues which previously had been ignored.²¹

In the 1930s, Lükő Gábor was the first person to divide—based on ethnographic and linguistic research—the Hungarians of Moldavia into two distinct strata.²² Separated by its dialect, physical culture, and intellectual as well as material ethnography, the first group is present in the North, at the mouth of the River Moldavia, around Moldvabánya/Baia and also further south, around Bákó/Bacău. Members of this group called themselves Hungarian (and even approved of being called Csángó). Around Bákó/Bacău, they partially mixed with the other, more populous, group, the villages of which were scattered along the Szeret/Siret and the Tatros/Trotuş Rivers. Members of the latter group called themselves Székely (i.e. Hungarians of eastern Transylvania), and did not approve of being called Csángó. Indeed, their language and ethnographic features related them to Transylvanian Székelys. Based on factual ethnographic material, Lükő concluded that the northern Csángó group (which forms the oldest ancestral seed of Hungarians in Moldavia²³) is ethnographically related to the region of Partium—north of historical Transylvania—and the Hungarians of the Szamos/Somes valley, whereas the group spread along the River Szeret/Siret and the River Tatros/Trotuş is related to the region of Székely land.

Another important period of research spanned the 16th–18th centuries, the main sources of information being missionary reports. Originally, it was the Austrian Academy of Sciences which drew attention to these reports when, in 1880, it published the biography and reports of Archbishop Parčević, Moldavia's apostolic vicar.²⁴ In 1893 the Romanian Academy of Sciences published—both in the original language and in Romanian translation—the 1648 extensive report of the Archbishop and apostolic administrator Marcus Bandinus on his canonical visitation of 1664. This report also provides an account of the history of Hungarian villages in Moldavia, describing their conditions and giving a register of Catholics in each village.²⁵ In 1913 several official documents (in the Vatican Archives) were published on the ecclesiastical history of Moldavian Catholics.²⁶ The establishment of the Romanian School in Rome (*Scola Romăna din Roma*) in the 1920s marked the beginning of a new era in the historical study of Moldavian Catholics. A series of documents were published in the School's yearbook, the *Diplomatarium Italicum*. These documents primarily originated from the Archives of the Roman Missionary Centre, the Holy Congregation of the Propagation of the Faith (*Sacra Congregatio de Propaganda Fide*), and were supported by serious scientific studies.²⁷

During the late 1920s, Veress Endre began to collect material which would eventually become an archive of Csángó documents. He had 16th–17th century documents transcribed in handwriting or typewritten. In addition, he also had copies made in archives of Rome and Vienna—although not on a systematic but

merely a random basis. This material was never published, but is currently available in the collection of manuscripts of the Library of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences.²⁸

Research on the history of Moldavian Csángós was summarised first in 1934, in an excellent study by Gh. I. Năstase²⁹, who taught at the University of Jászvásár/Iași, and later (in 1941) by the young researcher from Kolozsvár/Cluj, Mikecs László (who died of typhus in the Soviet prison camp of Taganrog), who compiled an extensive monograph on the history of the Csángós.³⁰

The conclusions reached by the two authors are essentially the same, and they can be summarised as follows. The first parochial records about Hungarians in Moldavia date back to the 13th century. Their first villages were established on the right bank of the Szeret/Siret at sites of military significance; the ruins of ancient fortresses can still be found in some of these places. This makes it all the more likely that these settlements were established by Hungarian kings specifically as frontier sentry settlements against the Tartars. The colonisation of the northern parts involved people from the Szamos/Somes valley, whereas the southern regions were colonised by people from Székely land. In the decades that followed, the population gradually increased as a result of voluntary emigration. The ranks swelled in the 15th century as Hussites from southern Hungary migrated there—persecuted by the Inquisition; in the 16th–17th centuries, as Székelys tried to escape from serfdom and during the 18th century, after the devastation of Madéfalva/Siculeni, when Székelys fled from the frontier guard service. Based on current knowledge, these conclusions are sound and accurate.

Following World War II, historical study and research shunned the Csángós for more than 30 years, and historians shifted their attention towards this issue again only during the 1970s.³¹ Instead of historical research, linguistic and ethnographic studies began. Throughout the 1950s and 1960s, under the auspices of Bolyai University in Kolozsvár/Cluj an extensive linguistic data-collection programme was implemented at relevant locations.³² As a result, a complete geographic separation of Székely and Non-Székely (Csángó) dialects was accomplished. Still, the ultimate goal (i.e. the compilation of an Atlas of Moldavian Csángó dialects) has not been achieved to date, despite the vast amount of data collected.³³ In the 1960s, the work that had come to a halt in Kolozsvár/Cluj was resumed—under the given circumstances—by the Department of Linguistic History and Dialects at Eötvös Loránd University in Budapest. Analysing linguistic phenomena, Department scholars came to the conclusion that the establishment of Csángó settlements in Moldavia dates back roughly to a period referred to in linguistic history as ancient Hungarian, i.e. the era preceding the 15th century. As regards emigration or resettlement, the places of origin could have been the Szamos/Somes valley and—or rather—the Upper-Tisza region.³⁴ The work of the Department's toponym research team is also worthy of mention in terms of history. Their publications are primarily lists of toponyms in Hungarian

settlements of Moldavia, but their introductions also include a collection of data relating to regional history.³⁵

It was in the 1950s that organised ethnographic research—again supervised by Bolyai University—began to take shape. The results of the collection process were published in a volume entitled *A moldvai csángó népművészet* (Moldavian Csángó Folk Art). From the work carried out in the field of folklore, the collections of folk songs and folk-ballads are the most noteworthy.³⁶ As regards the realm of ethnography, folk art and folklore, these are the first publications based on material collected which intend to be complete. To date, the two segments of the Hungarians in Moldavia have not been dissociated, and no comparison has been drawn between this group and Hungarians living in Hungary or Transylvania.

During the 1980s a new theory of origin emerged in Romania. According to this theory, the Moldavian Csángós are Magyarised Romanians. Even though previously these views had already been aired sporadically by dilettants³⁷, in 1985 they were scientifically sanctioned and—within the course of a few months—became the only acceptable official view within Romanian scientific circles.³⁸ According to the first variations of the theory, at the time of the Great Schism, after 1053, some of the Romanians living in Moldavia remained members of the Western Roman Catholic Church and were Magyarised (in Moldavia!) by the Hungarian Church. This highly improbable hypothesis was then modified by Dimitru Mărtinaş³⁹, who claimed that Orthodox Romanians were forcibly converted to Christianity and partially Hungarianised in Transylvania⁴⁰—the region from which they moved to Moldavia in the 17th–18th centuries to escape from Hungarian oppression. Proof of their Romanian origin is primarily provided by the name Csángó, the meaning of which—according to Mărtinaş—is “mongrel Hungarian.” Other proofs include their Romanian consciousness and the fact that they have not forgotten their Romanian mother tongue. Their version of the Hungarian language, which is referred to in Hungarian linguistic studies as archaic Hungarian, is actually the sub-standard Hungarian speech of people whose original mother tongue is Romanian. Mărtinaş maintains that the notion of Romanian origin is also supported by the fact that there has never been any substantial difference between Greek Orthodox Moldavians or their Catholic counterparts as regards the respective archaeological remains⁴¹, or the clothes, traditions and instruments of husbandry of these two groups. Accordingly, the proper term used to denote the religion of Csángós should be “Romanian Catholic” or “Catholic Romanian” instead of “Roman Catholic”.

This theory—which openly attempts to justify the “re-Romanianisation” of Csángós—has no scientific basis. The historical, linguistic and phonetic arguments, as well as the ethnographic conclusions, contradict every single finding based on research conducted thus far. It is for this reason that Mărtinaş and his followers regard contemporary documents, facts, and data as non-existent.⁴²

In Hungary, too, the 1980s saw an increase in interest in the past and present of Csángós. However, there was hardly any new research in this field.⁴³ Instead, previous historic findings were once again summarised—for the most part—to inform the public.⁴⁴

Taking into account the results of the relevant literature, what follows is an attempt to describe the population figures, status, living conditions as well as the cultural and religious features of Moldavian Csángós in the 16th–17th centuries, based primarily on missionary reports.

MOLDAVIA IN THE 16th AND 17th CENTURIES

At the turn of the 16th–17th centuries the political situation and the balance of power had both undergone significant changes, which in turn had an impact on Moldavia's fate. After the death of King Hunyadi Mátyás, as a result of the rapid internal decline of the Hungarian state, the downfall of the medieval Hungarian Kingdom (in 1526) and eventually the country's break up into three parts, Hungary—as a power to be reckoned with—disappeared from the international political scene for quite a while. Although Moldavia was freed from the previous Hungarian pressure, at the same time it was now lacking the presence of a military power, which had provided a degree of protection for the voivodship against relentless attacks by the Tartars and the Turks. The advanced strongholds of the Hungarian line of defence—set up by King Sigismund of Luxembourg to keep out the Tartars—stretched up to the Dnester. In the middle of the 15th century, János Hunyadi fortified Dnyesztefnehérvár/Akkerman/Cetatea Albă, Kilia/Chilia and Braila (all in the east) and set up a Hungarian garrison against the increasingly menacing advance of the Turks.⁴⁵ As the Hungarian state failed, so did these fortified castles, one by one, falling into the hands of first the Tartars, then the Turks.

From 1538 onwards, Moldavia was open to attacks by both the Tartar and the Turkish troops equally. The successive marauding campaigns led by these troops were the source of great agony for the country, especially in the late 17th century. Quirini, the bishop of Arges/Arghes, reported in 1602 that—as a result of constant warfare, i.e. the military campaigns of Michael (the voivod of Wallachia), and the repeated destruction caused by the Tartars—Moldavia had been virtually depopulated. In 1604, he wrote that the Tartars had killed a great number of people (he himself had barely escaped), carried 100,000 from the two voivodships into captivity, and driven off countless animals. Quirini also reported that famine was causing devastation amongst those who had survived.⁴⁶ Although the above figure is obviously grossly exaggerated, it is unquestionable that the country was unable to recover from this devastation for decades. Agriculture and farming declined, and the significant export of cattle, which had been characteristic of earlier times, became temporarily non-existent.

Following some quiet years, in the 1650s Wallachian, Transylvanian and Cossack armies once again ransacked the country; during a period of Moldavian history characterised by constant struggle for the throne, eight voivods succeeded each other within the span of seven years, between 1653 and 1661. In 1658, the Tartars reappeared, heading for Transylvania across the territory of Moldavia. Part of the population fled to the mountains, while others were hiding in Székely land or Poland. In some villages it took years for the inhabitants to filter home. These events culminated in the destruction witnessed throughout the 1680s and 1690s. As the Christian forces of Europe launched their massive attack against the Turks, and Budavár (the Royal Castle of Buda) was reconquered in 1686, the declining Ottoman Empire was prompted to initiate desperate vindictive campaigns in places (such as Moldavia) where it still had the opportunity to do so. According to a report by the bishop's vicar, Piluzzi, two-thirds of the population of Moldavia fled from the Tartars advancing towards Vienna in 1682. The majority of those who had stayed met with death. Regions which were once populous now lay desolate for years. People were starving, as they were afraid to sow and did not have anything to reap. There was no public order, and across territories beyond the Prut, marauders and bandits pillaged in gangs. Those who had to travel dared to set out on their journey only as night fell, and even then they had to be accompanied by armed escorts.⁴⁷

The era of tranquillity dawned on Moldavia only after the war had ended in 1699, following the signing of the peace treaty of Karlóca/Karlovac. However, this constitutes another period altogether.

The number of inhabitants in Moldavia at the beginning of the 16th century—as well as the changes in these figures which took place by the 18th century—can only be calculated roughly, based on estimates and by drawing conclusions from later data. In 1782, Brognard, an officer in the Emperor's army, estimates the number of inhabitants in historical Moldavia at 300,000 individuals. At the beginning of the 19th century, Fedor Karatzay gives a figure of 600,000, while Georg Rassel's estimate is 730,000.⁴⁸ In his work published in 1939, based on the above figures and on additional data⁴⁹, Helmuth Haufe estimates the population of Moldavia around the turn of the 18th–19th centuries at exactly 500,000. The findings of Ștefan Pascu essentially tell the same story. Based on a 1772 census (which gives an account of 66,524 heads of family), he estimates the population at 322,629 persons, and later—based on a similar census from 1803—arrives at a figure of 528,920.⁵⁰ Presuming that during the relatively calm course of the 18th century there was an increase in the population of the voivodship—even in spite of the fact that emigration was quite significant⁵¹—the number of inhabitants in Moldavia around the early 1700s can be estimated roughly at 200,000–230,000.

Dating from the late 16th century (1591), there are tax assessment data available from every county in the whole of Moldavia, which allows us to roughly estimate

the number of tax-paying households at the time.⁵² Two people have calculated the population based on this data. The first, H. A. Mohov (a Russian historian), multiplied the number of tax-paying households by 5.5 then added to this figure 15%—the proportion of Boyar inhabitants and town-dwellers, according to his estimates—which yielded a final figure of 300,000.⁵³ In our view however, Mohov had overestimated the number of households (at 47,217).⁵⁴ Moreover, multiplication by a factor of 5.5 is unwarranted as in the tax assessments we know of (to be elaborated on) the average number of persons in a family was between 4.5 and 5. Estimating the proportion of Boyars (noblemen) and town-dwellers at 15% also seems to be an exaggeration; 7–8% is justified, at the most.⁵⁵ Taking all of the above into account, we have to reduce Mohov's final figure by a third.

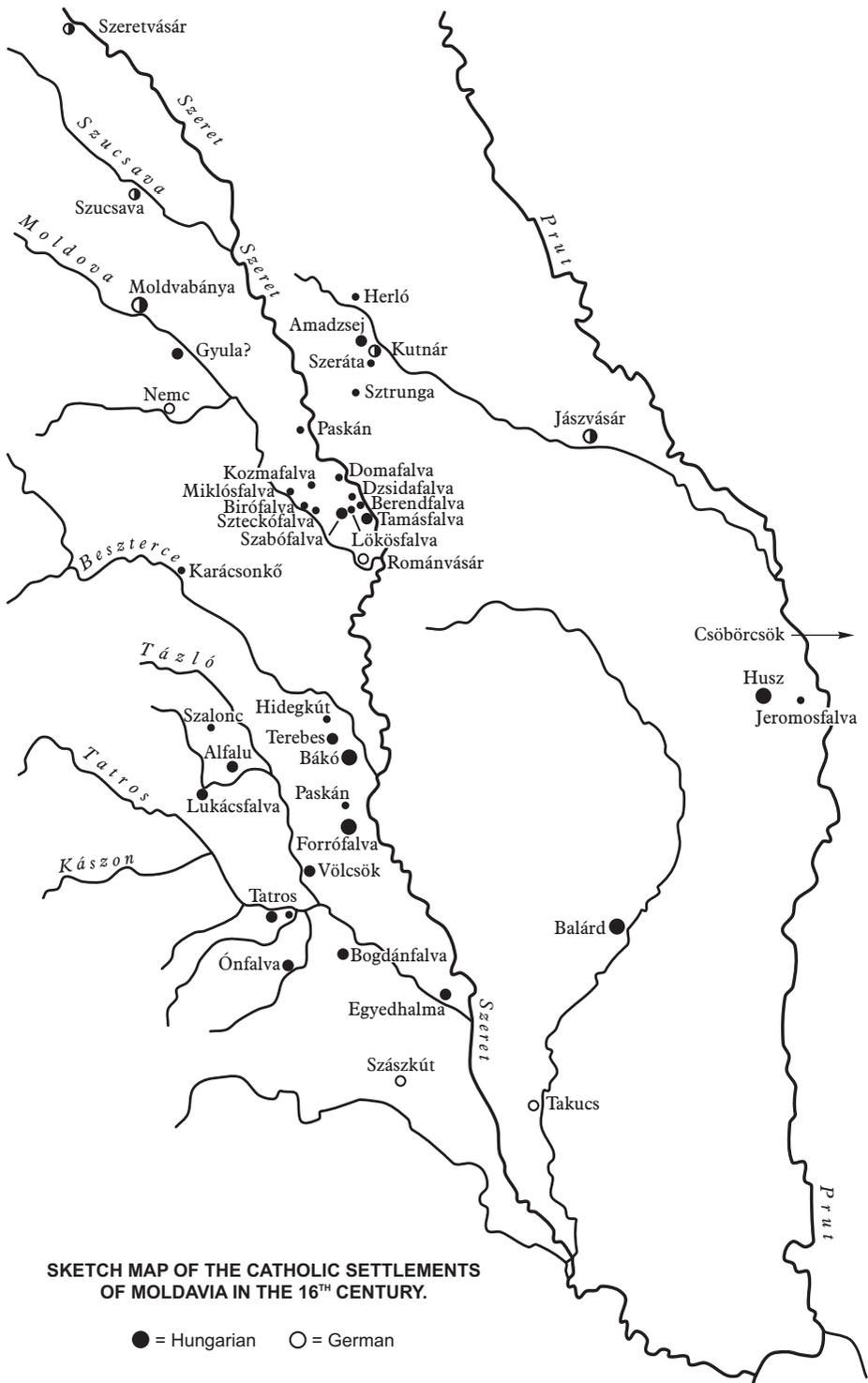
The other noteworthy calculation was performed by Ștefan Pascu, independent of Mohov. Pascu based his calculations on 31,959 tax-paying units, which he then multiplied by 5 to arrive at a figure of 159,275 persons. However, this number seems too low. This may partly be due to the fact that Pascu did not take into account those who were not paying taxes.⁵⁶

Taking into consideration all of the above, we may estimate the population of Moldavia in the late 16th century at 200,000.⁵⁷ Yet the distribution of this population was by no means even. Two-thirds of the people lived in regions west of the Prut, while east of the Prut the network of settlements was quite scattered, and the distance between two villages—in many cases—required a foot-journey of several days. The population of the northern regions and Bucovina was also quite thin.⁵⁸

GEOGRAPHICAL ARRANGEMENT OF THE HUNGARIANS OF MOLDAVIA

It has already been mentioned that the Hungarian settlements of Moldavia—except Csöböröcsök/Ciuburcin along the River Dnester and the few surrounding small villages⁵⁹—were situated in the middle and the southern parts of Moldavia, to the west of the River Prut, and mainly between the Carpathians and the River Szeret/Siret. We have no information of Hungarian settlements in Bucovina in the 16th–17th centuries.

Archbishop Bandinus' report of the canonical visitation of 1646 includes the most complete list of Hungarian settlements in Moldavia.⁶⁰ Bandinus recorded the names of 42 Hungarian settlements, of which 29 lie west of the River Szeret/Siret, out of which 14 are located in the immediate proximity of the river. These settlements form a chain (with two interruptions) between Szucsava/Suceava and the mouth of the River Tatros/Trotuș. According to linguistic research there are also many place names of Hungarian origin in regions where Bandinus did not indicate Hungarians in 1646.⁶¹ Considering this it is proper to presume that earl-



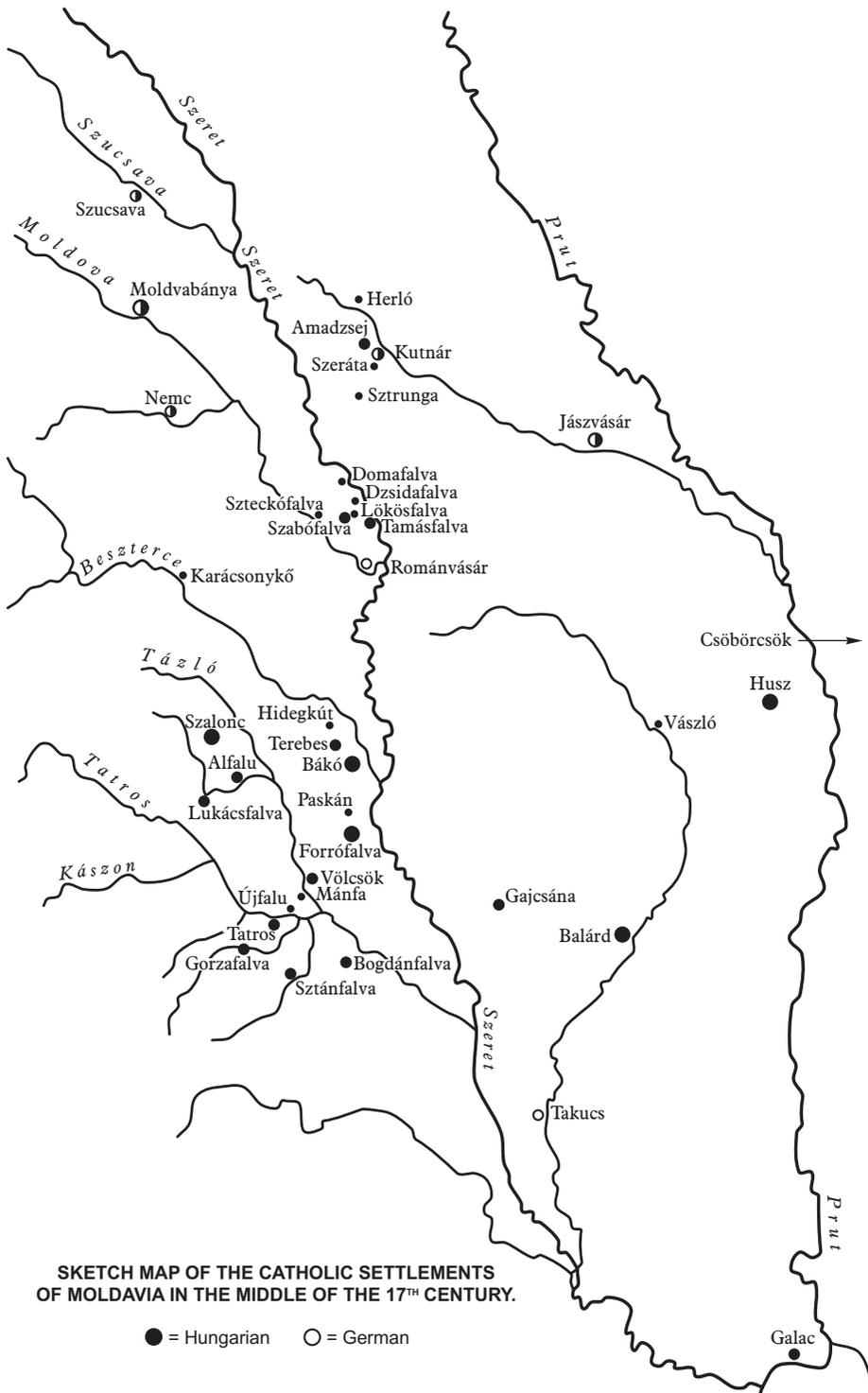
ier these regions were populated by Hungarians, which means that the settlement chain was continuous.⁶²

Beyond linguistic evidences this assumption is supported also by other data. Documents dating from the 15th century mention several Hungarian villages along the River Szeret/Siret, which are not included in the list of Bandinus. Some thought that these Hungarian villages still existed in the time of Bandinus, but for some reasons he avoided them. The truth is that none of the 17th century censuses include these villages in their lists of Catholic settlements. It is obvious then that the Catholic Hungarians either perished or left these places. The villages in question include Bírófalva/Ghirăești in the vicinity of Románvásár/Roman, Kozmafalva/Cosmești, Miklósfalva/Miclăușeni, Halas/Hălăucești, Berendfalva/Berindești near Szabófalva/Săbăoani, and finally Acélfalva/Oțleni and Egyedhalma/Adjud along the River Tatros/Trotuș.⁶³

Archbishop Bandinus visited the Catholic settlements of Moldavia four decades after the great devastation, which took place around the turn of the 16th and 17th centuries. Bandinus describes in his report the state of each and every village and market town. He states that in almost all cases the number of Catholics had earlier been much higher. In some villages he was confronted with total destruction.⁶⁴ It is improbable that some villages were still populated by Catholics but, having been misinformed, Bandinus avoided them. As the report often reveals Catholic Hungarians used to keep in touch with each other, and there would have been absolutely no point in misleading the archbishop. In conclusion, there were probably no or only very few Catholics living in the villages avoided by Bandinus. Later, in the 18th century, some of these villages were repopulated by Hungarians. Actually they even moved into villages where—as far as we know—no Hungarians had previously lived, in the Middle Ages. This must have misled the researchers.

Bandinus prepared his census immediately following one of the major disasters which befell the Hungarians of Moldavia. At the time, they still had not recovered from the effects of the devastation, and the population and the size of the settlements were decreasing. The annihilation of the Catholic community of Vászló/Vaslui was described by Bandinus as follows: “part of the Catholic population died of Black Death, while others were miserably enslaved by the Tartars or were converted by the heretics [i.e., the Orthodox Romanians].”

Bandinus quotes several examples of such conversions as when lonely Catholics joined the Orthodox Church and became assimilated to the coexisting Romanian population.⁶⁵ This trend was also supported by the conversion politics of the Orthodox Church, which was especially strong in the vicinity of the episcopal towns: Szucsava/Suceava, Husz/Huși and Románvásár/Roman, and in the villages owned by Greek Orthodox monasteries.⁶⁶ In addition, emigration must have been significant as well. When too few to form a viable parish community, a part of the reduced number of Catholics moved to places where the Catholic community was still active.



SKETCH MAP OF THE CATHOLIC SETTLEMENTS OF MOLDAVIA IN THE MIDDLE OF THE 17TH CENTURY.

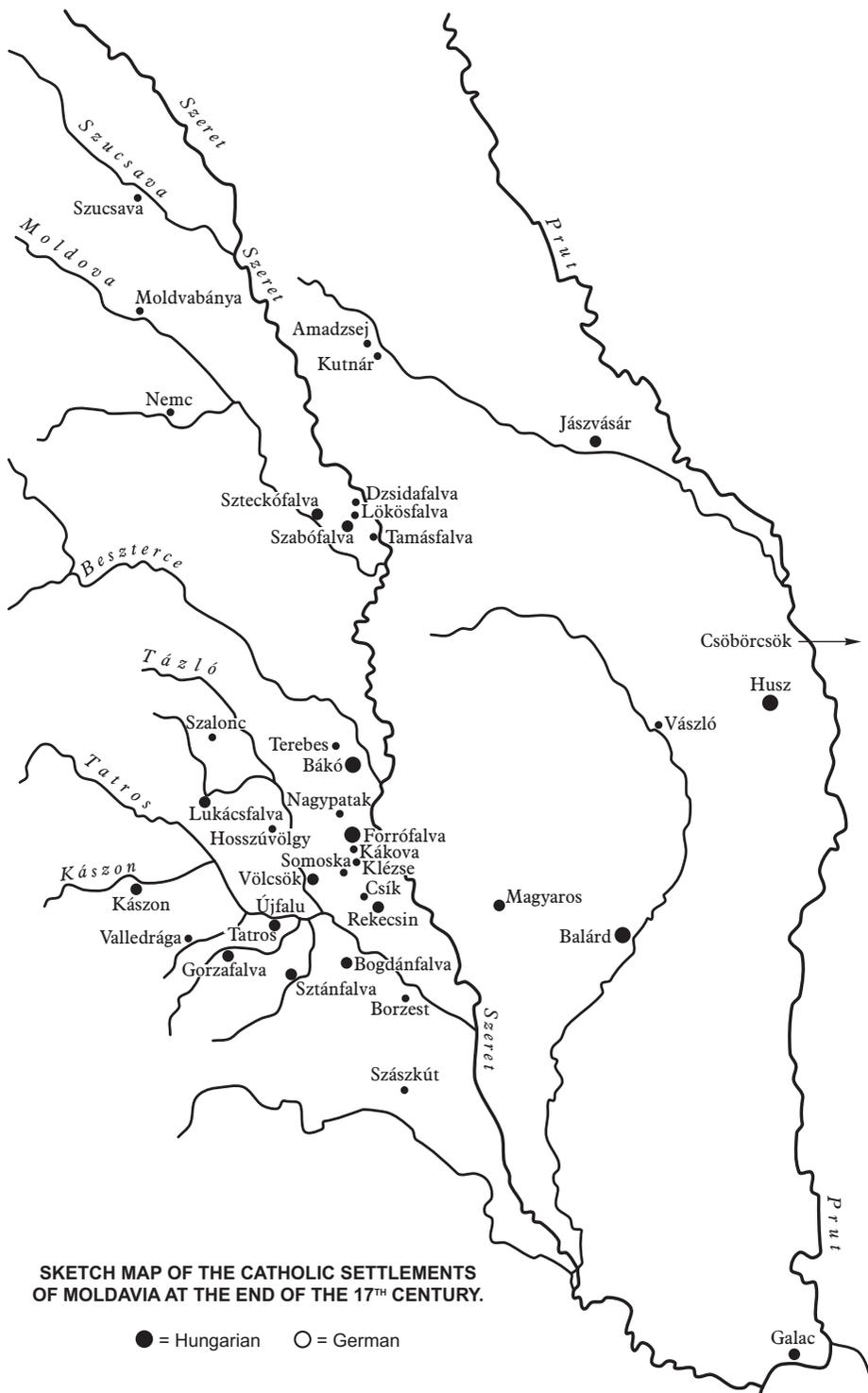
● = Hungarian ○ = German

Bandinus himself relates that the Catholics of Szeretvásár/Siret moved to Moldvabánya/Baia and Kutnár/Cotnari because they were harassed in their former village. The reason for this harassment was that the miracles occurring in the Catholic Church had a tremendous effect on the Orthodox residents, which seriously irritated the popes of the Orthodox Church who, in consequence, turned against the Catholics, with the consent of the voivod. Those who did not leave embraced the Greek Orthodox religion.⁶⁷ This immigration may have had some economic reasons too: growing taxes, diverted trade-routes, vineyards destroyed by war, etc.⁶⁸ On the lists prepared by Bandinus, Mikecs László noticed several family names that were current in villages situated on the right bank of the River Szeret/Siret and that also appeared in settlements across the river. Family names formed from place names were also common, which is a proof of internal migration.⁶⁹ Mikecs affirms the conclusion that—"we can state positively"—the residents of the Hungarian settlements situated to the east of the River Szeret/Siret in 1646 mainly migrated from the west side of the river in the 16th century.

Nevertheless in the second half of the 17th century the course of migration turned to the west: Hungarians were moving to the eastern slopes of the Carpathians, perhaps because this region was safer from Tartar raids. A census prepared in 1696 mentions eight villages in the region of the Tatros/Trotuș and Lukácsfalva/Lucăcești which were populated or partially populated by Hungarians. Earlier these villages had never been listed among the Catholic settlements. As the census gives the name of the head of each family, and also includes the number of family members, it is clear that these settlements are not small. The census lists 76 residents in Klézse/Cleja, 91 in Kászón, 125 in Vallemáre/Vallemare, and 206 in Kákova/Cacova.⁷⁰ Some may have come from inner Moldavia and others from Transylvania, but there is no information about their numbers.⁷¹ However, the census shows that the inhabitants in question were young settlers: there were almost no widows, and only a few parents living with their married children or older relatives.

It is clear that there were only a few children—on average two per family—which also indicates that these settlers were young couples.⁷²

According to the information mentioned above, it can be stated positively that the Hungarians of Moldavia had not always been living in the same area, as has been believed until now. It seems that in the Middle Ages the majority of the Hungarian population (and in the north the German, too) lived in a continuous chain of villages on the right bank of the River Szeret/Siret.⁷³ The Hungarian migration heading east—to the region lying between the River Szeret/Siret and the River Prut, and even to the Dnester—started at the end of the 15th century and lasted throughout the 16th century. Their abandoned villages were populated by Romanians. In the second half of the 17th century this tendency was replaced by a wave of migration heading west. Although the Hungarian population of some settlements decreased or even disappeared, in the meantime the Hungarian popula-



tion of other, earlier insignificant villages increased. In fact, some new villages were founded.

In later times the Hungarian population was still mobile, but everything points to the strengthening of the tendency which had begun in the 17th century. The region lying between Bákó/Bacău and Tatros/Tg. Trotuș is the centre of the Hungarian settlements of Moldavia since the 19th century.⁷⁴

Ever since records have been available about the Catholic settlements in Moldavia, i.e. since the second half of the 16th century, Hungarians lived side by side with the Romanians of Greek Orthodox religion, in the towns—without exception—and in some of the market towns and villages, as well. When they settled, in the 13th and 14th centuries, not only the Roman Catholic and the Orthodox people, but also, within the Catholic group, the Hungarians and Germans (Saxons)—the latter occupying the northern area—founded separate villages. From the 1400s on, the Saxons had no more inflow from Transylvania, and since they had no self-government, as the Saxons in Transylvania had, they could not prevent the arrival of non-Catholic and non-German settlers. More and more Catholic Hungarians and Greek Orthodox Romanians diluted the population. Decreasing in number and abandoned to themselves, the greater part of the Saxons adopted the Orthodox faith and became assimilated to the Romanians, the smaller part to the Hungarians. In Bandinus' time, in 1646, the German population of the one-time Saxon market towns of Szucsava/Suceava and Nemc/Târgu Neamț had already disappeared, while in Moldvabánya/Baia, Kutnár/Cotnari and Románvásár/Roman it had become a minority in relation to the Hungarians. After the devastation by the Tartars at the end of the 17th century the Saxon settlements were unable to recover. By the early 18th century the Germans had completely disappeared from Moldavia.⁷⁵

According to a report written by bishop Quirini at the end of the 16th century, the Hungarians who originally might have settled in separate villages were living alongside the Orthodox Romanians, mainly in the northern area, e.g. in Szabófalva/Săbăoani, Berendfalva/Berindești, Tamásfalva/Tămășeni, Lökösfalva/Licușeni, Dzsidadfalva/Agiudeni, and temporarily even in Bákó/Bacău and Tatros/Tg. Trotuș. By 1646, quite a number of villages became mixed in population, for example, Vásló/Vaslui, Takucs, Paskán/Pășcani, Herló/Hârlău and Bogdánfalva/Valea Seacă. At the end of the 17th century, several formerly Hungarian villages had only Orthodox inhabitants; these are not mentioned in the census.⁷⁶ However, the houses were never integrated, even in the mixed-population villages: there were separate rows, streets or quarters for Hungarians, Romanians, Saxons, and for the infrequently occurring Armenians.

NUMBER OF HUNGARIANS IN MOLDAVIA

From the late 16th century onwards there are several reports and censuses of the number of Hungarians in Moldavia. All of these were prepared by clerical people, high-ranking priests or missionaries. Some of them also give lists of names, others record only the number of Catholics, village by village. This data can be tabulated as follows:⁷⁷

Number of Catholics in Moldavia

1587	(Bruti)	15,000
1591	(Bruti)	20,000
1599	(Quirini)	10,704
1623	(Bogoslavić)	4,480
1631	(unknown)	3,690
1636	(Remondi)	2,240
Around 1640	(unknown)	3,715
1641	(Deodatus)	3,963
1643	(Bassetti)	4,540
1646	(Bandinus)	5,577
1661	(Koičević)	2,366
1696	(unknown)	2,799

The data listed in the table above are obviously of rather heterogeneous value, and do not meet the requirements of modern statistics. Nevertheless, regarded as a whole, they provide us with a clear picture of the changes in the number of Moldavian Catholics. In the 17th century it is apparently decreasing—with some fluctuations—similar to the total population of Moldavia. The decrease and the previously mentioned internal migration can be fairly well traced by comparing the changes in the number of inhabitants of the individual villages.⁷⁸

The Catholic population, and within it the Hungarian, continued to increase until the end of the 16th century, when it began to decrease. In addition to natural demographic growth, immigration from Hungary significantly contributed to the increase witnessed in the 16th century. For half a century, from 1436, Hussites persecuted by the Inquisition came first from the Szerémség area and South Transylvania; later, in the 1480s, according to the notes by Bandinus, from the north-western frontier areas of Hungary, and from the surroundings of Pozsony/Bratislava. Not even approximate data about their number exists, but it might have reached several thousand. This assumption is made probable by a report written in 1571 by Vásári György, Secretary to the Bishop of Kamenyec, stating that Thabuk Mihály, Vicar of Tatros/Tg. Trotuş, had reconverted about 2,000 Hussites to the Catholic faith, and the Bishop sent 12 priests from Poland to Moldavia in order to assist him.

Settlement	Number of inhabitants								
	1599	1623	1631	1641	1646	1661	1670	1682	1697
1. Románvásár/Roman	138	[360]	[320]	31	22	20	[5]	0	0
2. Karácsonkő/Piatra Neamț	–	–	–	195	16	4	–	0	0
3. Szalonc/Solonț	–	–	–	80	105	–	–	0	0
4. Herlő/Hârlău	–	–	?	16	19	20	10	0	0
5. Nemc/Târgu Neamț	383	–	[175]	92	30	109	[20]	15	0
6. Szucsava/Suceava	153	340	–	50	25	46	[25]	1	10
7. Moldvabánya/ Baia	[316]	–	[200]	220	78	189	–	0	140
8. Kutnár/Cotnari	1600	[1300]	–	494	276	199	[250]	0	300
9. Amadzsej/	–	–	–	102	99	[80]	30	0	
10. Szabófalva/Săbăoani	1400	–	[500]	159	163	287	200	?	152 ⁷⁹
11. Bákó/Bacău	1000	[560]	[500]	520	310	326	200	200	250
12. Terebes/Trebișu	[250] ⁸⁰	–	–	[125]	155	421 ⁸¹	–	0	
13. Forrófalva/Fărăoani	–	–	–	260	214		0	0	120
14. Tatros/Tg. Trotuș	394	[350]	[120]	122	125	121	[80]	15	38
15. Bogdánfalva/ Valea Seacă	–	–	–	50	55	–	–	0	79
16. Sztánfalva/Stanești	–	–	–	106	150	98	–	[150]	–
17. Galac/Galați	–	–	[80]	51	70	126	–	30	54
18. Barlád/Bârlad	–	–	200	162	150	74	–	[35]	98
19. Vászló/Vaslui	–	–	–	29	16	14	–	0	0
20. Husz/ Huși	435	[400]	[300]	445	682	–	[150]	[150]	–
21. Jászvásár/Iași	–	[420]	[300]	202	300	226	–	–	116
22. Kászón/	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	91
23. Rekecsin/Răcăciuni	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	165
24. Valledrága/	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	101
25. Nagypatak/Valea Mare	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	125
26. Kákova/Cacova	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	206
27. Magyaros/	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	63
28. Klézse/Cleja	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	76

The Hussite refugees might have founded several settlements, e.g. Husz/Huși the very name of which is eloquent, Jeromosfalva named after Jeromos (Jeremias), the leader of the Prague Calixtines, and several more villages in that area. Hussites settled also in Románvásár/Roman, Tatros/Tg. Trotuș and elsewhere.⁸²

Emigration from the frontier areas of Hungary adjacent to Moldavia continued during the 15th–16th centuries, too.⁸³ In the 1560s, when János Zsigmond, Prince of Transylvania, forced the Székelys to pay taxes, disregarding their privileges, those who refused to accept serfdom started fleeing to Moldavia in masses. Their number particularly increased after 1562, when the revolt of the Székelys was quelled. From that date their emigration continued uninterrupted. In the 1590s, upon the order of the Prince, the mountain passes leading to Moldavia were guarded. In his letter to the town of Beszterce/Bistrița on behalf of Prince Báthory Zsigmond Bocskai István wrote: “it is ordered herewith that the roads and paths

be guarded, because we do not want our people to leave the country for Moldavia; in fact, there are rumours that some of them intend to do that.”⁸⁴

While in the 16th century everyone was free to move to the service of the Voivod of Wallachia or Moldavia, e.g. as a mercenary,⁸⁵ from the 1600s on this was prohibited by decrees of the National Assembly (the “Diet”). Its effect must have been rather poor, since the prohibition was repeated several times. As the meeting at Lécfalva declared: “We have decided that from now on nobody be allowed to go to the two Wallachian countries....Whoever does so in spite of this, let him lose his head and wealth.”⁸⁶ In 1607 a law was passed to prevent the serfs from fleeing to Moldavia, noting that “in the past, due to the misery and decay of our poor country, many poor people fled, especially to Moldavia.” Therefore, the Prince should write to the Voivod and request that “he should threaten the runaway serfs in his country, urging them to return to they came from, under pain of severe punishment.”⁸⁷ In 1612 a severe resolution was adopted about “guarding the roads and paths that lead to Moldavia”, and it was ordered that “anybody wishing to leave Transylvania together with his belongings and wife due to poverty should not be allowed to do so, but should be arrested and returned to his landlord”.⁸⁸

All those decrees and orders had virtually no effect. Serfs—Hungarians, mainly Székelys, but also Romanians—continued to flee to Moldavia, especially in hard times. Between 1662 and 1676 the decrees concerning the guarding of the borders and the “cutting” of the roads issued by the National Assembly and the Prince in order to detain “the poor from going unhindered to Moldavia instead of paying taxes” multiplied.

They take all kinds of “secret roads”; if any of them get caught, they pretend “they are going to visit their cattle” on the pastureland over there, or they refer to an order given by their landlord. “Credit should be given only to those who are in possession of a valid and proper letter from their landlord, duly stating that they have been allowed to go freely.”⁸⁹ In 1698, the village of the runaway serf is obligated “to pursue him for two days walking distance, to catch and reduce him”; otherwise “the village is obligated to pay the taxes owed by the runaway and perform also the labour due to the landlord”.⁹⁰

Thus far the focus has been on the emigration to Moldavia of the serfs called “the poor”. During the War of Liberation led by Ferenc Rákóczi II, however temporarily, most of the emigrants to Moldavia were noblemen. In the autumn of 1707, a few months after the solemn investiture of Ferenc Rákóczi II as Prince of Transylvania at Marosvásárhely/Tîrgu Mures, Transylvania was occupied by the Austrian General Rabutin. The “kuruc” army of several thousand soldiers defending the Székely land, with their Commander-in-Chief, General Mihály Mikes, Count of Háromszék, was forced to retreat to Moldavia during September and October of 1707. Smaller groups went to Wallachia and Hungary. Along with them, a considerable number of noblemen also fled to Moldavia, in order to avoid

retaliation by the imperial Austrians. The fleeing kuruc sought refuge on the eastern slopes of the Carpathians, in the area of Ojtoz and Tatros/Tg. Trotuş, and partly along the River Szeret/Siret, and dispersed in the Csángó villages. They lived there in great misery. Only after the peace treaty signed at Szatmár/Satu Mare in 1711 could they return home; some of the soldiers might have been stayed in Moldavia. However, it cannot be assumed that this political emigration would have considerably increased the number of Hungarians in Moldavia. Its importance consisted rather in the fact that it made the Transylvanians aware of the existence of Hungarians in Moldavia.⁹¹

Concurrent with the migration to Moldavia, there was also movement in the opposite direction. Primarily during the time of the Tartar raids, especially in the 1680s, entire villages fled to Transylvania, to the Székely land. Some years later most of them returned, but others might have stayed.⁹²

It has been clear that during the entire 17th century there was a current of migration, now weaker, now stronger, from Transylvania to Moldavia. Even so, the number of Hungarians in Moldavia was decreasing. In the 16th century, of the 15,000–20,000 Catholics, 11,000–15,000 might have been Hungarians, 4,000–5,000 Saxons. One hundred years later virtually all of the slightly less than 3,000 Catholics were Hungarians. The decrease is over 75 percent. Compared to the total population of Moldavia, in the 1590s the Hungarians represented 7–8 percent, while in the 1690s only 2–2.5 percent.⁹³

The table presenting the population of the towns also shows that it was mainly the Hungarian settlements situated along the River Szeret/Siret, less protected by the geographic environment, that were hit more severely; the villages located in the Tatros/Trotuş area and at the foot of the Carpathians were much less affected. The fact that the total decay of the Hungarian villages was several times higher than that of the Romanian settlements was obviously due to their geographic position.

SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC STATUS OF THE HUNGARIANS IN MOLDAVIA

Hungarians and Germans played a very important part in the economic development of Moldavia. Urban life, more advanced craftsmanship, and commerce evolved thanks to their activities in the 14th and 15th centuries.⁹⁴ In Jászvásár/Iaşi, the capital of the country founded by the Jász/Jazygian ethnic group that emigrated from Hungary under the leadership of Dragos in the middle of the 14th century,⁹⁵ most of the tradesmen were Hungarians and Germans even in the 15th–16th centuries, and foreign trade was almost exclusively in their hands. The situation was similar in the other urban-type settlements of the country as well: Moldvabánya/Baia, Szucsava/Suceava, Kutnár/Cotnari, Szeretvásár/Siret, Ro-

mánvásár/Roman and Nemc/Târgu Neamţ in the North, which were inhabited mainly by Germans, and Tatros/Tg. Trotuş, Bákó/Bacău, Barlád/Bârlad and Husz/Huşi in the South, inhabited by Hungarians. The beginnings of urban development in Moldavia are not known in detail even today. However, it is telling that the Rumanian word “oras” is a modified version of the Hungarian word “város” (city), and that the town council was headed, just as in Hungary, by the “bíró” (judge, called also “jude”, a loan word from Latin used in Hungary). In the settlements founded by Germans the holder of the same office was termed “soltuz”, corresponding to the Hungarian term “soltész”, which in turn is derived from the German “Schulteiss.” The advanced status of the German and Hungarian towns is well characterised by the fact that in the 15th and 16th centuries only these were entitled to use seals with city arms in Moldavia.⁹⁶

These Moldavian cities (according to the terminology adopted in Hungary they should be termed “agrarian towns” rather [mezőváros], i.e. market towns), had close links with the towns of Transylvania and Galicia. At the fairs that were held at Tatros/Tg. Trotuş, Románvásár/Roman, Barlád/Bârlad and Bákó/Bacău, the Moldavian merchants met with foreign traders, and often paid with, instead of money, wares or animals as late as in the 16th century. Trade continued with Beszterce/Bistriţa, Brassó/Brasov, Szeben/Sibiu in Transylvania, Ilyvó/Lvov-Lemberg in Galicia, with more distant Polish and German regions, and even with the Balkans and Asia Minor.⁹⁷

The towns had populations ranging from a few hundred to more than two thousand inhabitants.⁹⁸ They were surrounded by hedges. Inside, the streets were wide but not always well ordered; the houses were of rural type, with stables, cowsheds etc., and farm yards. Outside the hedge was the “hotar” (from the Hungarian word “határ”, range), the area of agricultural activity.

The first data about guilds date from the 15th century. These were organised and run by the carpenters, potters, tailors, and occasionally locksmiths. This is reflected also by the family names registered by archbishop Bandinus.⁹⁹ At the same time the majority of the urban population, partly also the tradesmen and craftsmen, made their living by agriculture and animal husbandry. Due to the country-wide importance of these settlements, in 1591 of the twenty “tinut” (districts) of Moldavia, the “capital,” i.e. the administrative centre, of nine was one of these German or Hungarian market towns.¹⁰⁰ Near Tatros/Tg. Trotuş a salt mine was in operation even as late as the 17th century. Bandinus prepared a detailed report about the obligation of the inhabitants of the town to deliver salt; it contains several mentions of mills. The income of the Bákó/Bacău water mill went to the bishop.¹⁰¹

The 17th century raids of the Tartars and Cossacks decimated, above all, this population of traders and craftsmen of the agrarian cities, which consisted mainly of Hungarians. In 1670 it was reported that only one centre of crafts and commerce existed in Moldavia: Galac/Galaţi.¹⁰²

In the 15th century the noblemen surrounding the vajda (voivod) always included some Hungarians. In the 16th and 17th centuries among the officials and bodyguards at the Court in Jászvásár/Iași there were always individuals with Hungarian names. From the mid-17th century their number decreased; and they were replaced mainly by Poles, later often by Ruthenians and Ukrainians.¹⁰³

However, the great majority of the Hungarians were farmers and animal keepers. All documents state unanimously that the villages, in most cases located upon some river or brook, were mostly orderly. There were orchards, plough lands, pasture lands, and on the hills—vineyards.

The reports written by the missionaries contain virtually no information about the modes and methods of agriculture. Nonetheless they often mentioned that the soil was very fertile, and there was plenty of game, bird and fish. Cultivation was done most probably collectively, in a rural community. In 1644 Beke Pál, a Jesuit, wrote that people had become lazy, since the soil was producing almost by itself. He disapproved of the fact that no ploughing was done in autumn, only in springtime; even then “they are merely pricking the soil”; nevertheless, he added, even so they have a rich harvest. Beke may have had in mind the hard labour of cultivating the mountain soils in Székely land, when he condemned the “undiligence” of the Hungarians in Moldavia. At any rate, the reports provide a picture of a rather varied agrarian culture. The main products were wheat, barley and oats; rye was subordinate. Millet, growing abundantly, enjoyed particular preference. Mush and griddlecake made of millet were favourite foods; however, according to Beke, they were consumed mainly by Romanians.¹⁰⁴ It becomes clear from the reports and inventories, that people established fish ponds, kept bees, and grew vegetables; they dried the fruit or distilled liquor from it.¹⁰⁵ Except for the years of war, there was abundance. Animal husbandry was significant, leading to financial differences among the residents. Prior to the end of the 16th century, when the Tartars drove away most of the cattle (a heavy blow that was hard to survive), the long-horned iron-grey oxen were driven by the thousands to Transylvania, and from there farther to the West. They were also famous for their horses, which were in great demand by the Turkish army and the Court of the Prince of Transylvania as well. The animals were kept in a semi-nomadic manner on the pasturelands around the villages; only the draught animals spent the winter in stables.

Viticulture flourished in some restricted areas only, mainly along the northern section of the River Szeret/Siret, at Moldvabánya/Baia, Szabófalva/Săbăoani, and primarily Kutnár/Cotnari villages, as well as in the surroundings of Bákó/Bacău. These areas produced considerable amounts of wine; in the 16th century part of it was being exported to Poland and Transylvania.¹⁰⁶ In the 17th century neglected or destroyed vineyards are mentioned more and more often, e.g. Bandinus mentions them in several places.

From the late 16th century, the recurrent wars, the repeated Tartar and Cossack

incursions, and general insecurity, etc. destroyed the agriculture and the livestock of the country. By the end of the 17th century the missionaries report misery and famine.

The inhabitants of the Hungarian Csángó villages in Moldavia lived as free farmers. This represented another great attraction, along with the fertility of the soil, for the serfs and even for the free Székelys of Transylvania. The voivods and the Moldavian administration welcomed the Hungarian settlers, who introduced more advanced agriculture and rural crafts. This is reflected by the fact that the Hungarian villages, unlike the Romanian, were not subordinated to landlords; they were “razas”. This term derives from the Hungarian word “részes”, meaning “shared”. They were subordinated directly to the voivod, and had to deliver a determined portion (quota) of their produce to him. They were entitled to address complaints to the voivod himself, who adjudicated their disputes and quarrels. There is not a single word about landlords and “robot” (toil, compulsory labour). From time to time it occurred that the voivod rented—or eventually donated—a village to one of his court officials. At the end of the 16th century Terebes/Trebișu was donated to the Roman Catholic Church of Moldavia. Bákó/Bacău and its surroundings belonged to the Franciscan monastery. Voivod Jeremias Movila, with a charter dated 12 May 1606, donated the villages Szabófalva/Săbăoani and Berendfalva/Berindești to the Greek Orthodox monastery of Secul. Consequently, the inhabitants became serfs. The result was that most people left Szabófalva/Săbăoani; and Berendfalva/Berindești—as already mentioned—was completely abandoned and empty by the middle of the 17th century.¹⁰⁷

The reports contain no information about the self-administration of the villages. It is known only that the “bíró” (judge) and the jurymen were elected. In almost every village there was a “deák” (clerk), a more or less educated man. His duties included the performance of certain ecclesiastical acts and rites, from ringing the bells to praying at funerals; and he was also required to instruct the children. The settlements employed and paid their priests and schoolmasters themselves, and even wrote letters on their own behalf to Rome, to the Pope himself, or to the *Congregatio de Propaganda Fide*.¹⁰⁸ This leads to the conclusion that they must have enjoyed relatively great independence.

Fairly little is known about the arrangement of the settlements, except for the fact that they were invariably along some watercourse. In several of them, the brook flowed right through the middle of the village. The houses and churches as well were built of timber, occasionally of compressed earth, and the roofs were thatched; only the major towns had churches made of stone. A Jesuit report notes that the houses of Hungarians were easy to recognise, since they were better constructed and nicer than those of the Romanians.¹⁰⁹

In the conscriptions there is no trace of the extended family system. In both the villages and in the agrarian towns small families were registered. It was unusual for a widowed parent to cohabit with his or her married children.¹¹⁰ Families had,

on average, 2.5 to 3 children, but 5 to 6 also occur. Mentions of the age of individuals are very rare; however, in most cases it was noted if someone was sixty years old or older; this must have been extraordinary.¹¹¹

There is no evidence of the existence of a social hierarchy within the individual settlements. It was, however, occasionally noted by the census-makers that one, more rarely two, servants, mostly women, were living with some of the families.¹¹² Accordingly there must have existed some kind of social stratification based on differences in wealth.

SELF-CONSCIOUSNESS AND EDUCATION OF THE HUNGARIANS OF MOLDAVIA. THE PROMINENT ROLE OF THE CHURCH.

In the Middle Ages, the Csángós always maintained active connections with Hungary. The towns of Moldavia had commercial links with those of Transylvania; their councils kept regular correspondence with each other. These links were reinforced by personal acquaintances and marital ties. Such connections can be traced in the 16th century too, but they completely disappear by the 17th century.¹¹³ It can be observed from the very beginning that these isolated Moldavian groups, which had been cut off from the development of the Hungarian state and society, living in an ethnically, linguistically and religiously alien environment, very consciously adhered to their language, traditional way of life, and Roman Catholic religion, even in formalities. The latter distinguishes them from the Orthodox religion, i.e. non-Hungarians, and embodies their separate traditions. Although they always defined themselves “Catholics” (and not as Hungarians), they were always conscious of their Hungarian identity and persisted in it.¹¹⁴ The people of the village of Csöbörcsök/Ciuburciu, as late as 1709, still preserved the tradition that they had been settled on the bank of the River Dnester by King László (Ladislás) to guard the border of Hungary.¹¹⁵ Nevertheless, in the villages of mixed population the Roman Catholic Csángós lived in perfect harmony with the Orthodox Romanians.

Since the Hungarians of Moldavia had neither a state, nor an intelligentsia of their own (the latter being restricted to a few half-educated clerks),¹¹⁶ they expected guidance with regard to matters of life and the world from the Church, the priests. To attend holy mass, to make confession and take communion represented to them not only obligations imposed upon them by their faith, but also conscious acts of distinction from the surrounding Orthodox world: an open declaration that they were different. The Roman Catholic religion and Church provided their communities with a remarkable cohesion. As long as this tradition-safeguarding religious community existed, they were capable of maintaining their language, customs, and Hungarian identity. When this community disintegrated or ceased to exist, then all its members sooner or later followed the path of reli-

gious and ethnic assimilation. This was felt, however, unconsciously, by the Hungarians of Moldavia; and when they had no Catholic priest, they stubbornly refused to allow their children to be baptised and their dead buried by the Orthodox priest. As the ambassadors to Tartarstan from Ferenc Rákóczi, Prince of Transylvania, Bay Mihály and Pápai Gáspár, noted about the Hungarians of the village of Csöbörcsök/Ciuburciu: “They are *duri* (hard) to that extent that although there is a Rumanian (Greek Orthodox) priest in their village, they prefer to bury their children unbaptised than to let them be baptised by the Rumanian priest.”¹¹⁷

To supply priests to the Hungarians of Moldavia represented no problem as long as the medieval Hungarian state flourished. The Franciscan monastery of Bákó/Bacău, a succursal of the renowned monastery of Csíksomlyó/Șumuleu Ciuc in Transylvania, where eight to ten monks usually lived, was able to care for the spiritual needs of a large region. The bishops of the dioceses of Szeretvásár/Siret (founded in 1370) and Argyes/Arghes (founded in 1382) appointed by the King of Hungary, organised the life of the Church.¹¹⁸

The immigration of the Hussites caused certain problems. When the generation of Hussite pastors who had fled from Transylvania passed away, they could not be replaced. The Hussite communities were left to themselves, which contributed to the historical fact that during the 16th century they were easily reconverted to Catholicism. Although in 1592 Voivod Áron reinstated a number of earlier-confiscated churches, according to a report by Bogoslavac dating from 1623 there were some eighty families in the town of Husz/Huși still practising the Hussite religion. They can be traced to the middle of the 17th century. Bandinus recorded that in Husz/Huși during the holy mass the community sang the hymns in Hungarian. At his request they agreed to discontinue this practise; they sang in Hungarian only before and after the service.¹¹⁹

The real crisis came about with the Reformation. By the mid-16th century the majority of the population of Hungary had adopted Protestantism. The Csíkszék region along the eastern border of Transylvania, however, adhered to Catholicism. The Csíksomlyó/Șumuleu Ciuc monastery existed without interruption, but was inhabited by very few monks, at times only two or three; and it became increasingly impossible for them to continue the mission in Moldavia. When the Papal Legate reported that in all of Hungary there were no more than 300 Catholic priests, not one of them could be charged to go to Moldavia.¹²⁰ As a result, the Catholic Hungarians of Moldavia were abandoned.

The question arises, then, of how it is possible that the Hungarians of Moldavia, with rare exceptions, succeeded in remaining Catholics, in spite of the fact that the current of the Reformation reached Moldavia, and in the 16th century had adherents among the German and Hungarian craftsmen, e.g. in Jászvásár/Iași.¹²¹ The explanation can be found, at least partially, in their isolated position. In the alien world they insisted on their old traditions, which were embodied for them

above all by the Roman Catholic religion and Church; to avoid losing these, they stubbornly refused any innovation. Another factor might have been that the Protestant Churches of Hungary and Transylvania did not intend to win over the Csángós; even the Lutheran and Calvinist pastors passing by did not perform any missionary work. Nobody else cared for them, only Rome, the *Congregatio de Propaganda Fide*. Furthermore, in the second half of the 16th century the voivods, with one exception, did not disturb or hinder them in the practise of their confession. On the contrary, they even protected them, if necessary, against the Orthodox Church. In order to obtain alliance with the Holy See, they were anti-Protestant, and repeatedly declared that they would not tolerate Lutherans or Calvinists in their country. In any event, the main point is that the Hungarians of Moldavia remained Catholics, and the immigration of Székelys from Transylvania in the 16th–17th centuries further strengthened this Catholic element.

At the turn of the 16th–17th centuries there were almost no Catholic priests left in Moldavia. The diocese of Argyes/Arghes had been destroyed by the Tartars. Bishop Quirini moved to Bákó/Bacău in 1597; from this date one can speak about a Bákó/Bacău bishopric. Finally the Hungarians addressed themselves directly to Rome, requesting Catholic priests or missionaries. In fact, the newly established *Congregatio de Propaganda Fide* did send missionaries beginning in 1622. These were Croatian, Bosnian, or Italian monks of the Franciscan Order, who were sent to Moldavia on missions at first for three years, later for longer times. They were promised, as their only reward for this difficult three-year mission, the rank of Bachelor. However, this was often delayed, a reason for the missionaries' complaint. They were supposed to get regular financial support from the *Congregatio de Propaganda Fide*, but as this was often delayed for months and even years, the priests had to rely fully on their flock. Since in the 17th century these communities were already very poor, the Franciscan friars had to share their misery.

The difficulties of the very difficult missionary work were compounded by the fact that the monks found themselves in a completely alien world, far less advanced than what they had experienced in Rome, Italy or Dalmatia. In order to survive, they were forced to farm for themselves. Accordingly, they petitioned to change some of the monastic rules.¹²² Most significantly—this was the greatest tragedy for them and for the Catholic Hungarians—they did not understand the language spoken by the members of their congregation, so contacts with them was confined to the religious ceremonies. With time, some of the missionaries learnt some Romanian (which was easier because of their knowledge of Italian), but very few of them learnt Hungarian. As a consequence, confession and communion became mere formalities (in some cases, however, interpreters were employed). No substantial congregational life could evolve, the culture and the spiritual needs of the Hungarians of Moldavia were not nurtured or satisfied, and eventually the missionaries were left to themselves. They felt hardly any solidarity with their believers. They persisted, motivated by their sense of duty or voca-

tion, but their activities were carried out rather mechanically. The situation was made even worse by the fact that they received no support or encouragement from Rome. They complained repeatedly of being abandoned. As a matter of fact, the monks sent to Moldavia were far from being the élite of the Franciscan Order. In the complete desolation some of them fell into depravity. The reports of the Apostolic Administrators and Visitators sent from Rome are full of complaints about their immorality and unworthy conduct.¹²³ All this damaged the Hungarian communities very seriously. In utter desperation they wrote repeatedly to the *Congragatio de Propaganda Fide*,¹²⁴ but without success. Rome was incapable of changing the situation. From time to time one or another monk was rebuked, or even revoked, but most of the reporting Visitators expressed the opinion that as they could not be replaced, it was better to let them stay, than to have nobody there.¹²⁵ Their number continued to decline. In the middle of the 17th century there were still seven to ten missionaries in Moldavia, later only two or three.

The situation was aggravated by the frictions and conflicts among the Franciscan monks themselves. The Franciscans coming from Rome and Poland belonged to the so-called Conventual, less rigorous branch of the Order (Minorites, in Latin: *Fratres Minorum Conventualium*, and Bernardines, respectively), while the Bulgarian or Bosnian Franciscans arriving from monasteries in the Balkans were observant (in Latin: *Fratres Strictioris Observantiae*), observing the strict Regulation. The Hungarian Franciscans of the Csíkksomlyó/Şumuleu Ciuc monastery (Salvatorians) belonged to this latter group. The hostilities within the Order in more than one case resulted in mutual slander. All this did great harm to the common objective: the reinforcement of the Church and the Catholic religion, but above all to the Catholic communities.

The inhabitants of the Hungarian-speaking villages insisted on requesting Hungarian-speaking priests. As the people of Csöbörcsök/Ciuburciu told Beke Pál, a Jesuit missionary, in 1644: “Have mercy on us, have mercy, at least you, our Christian brethren, and send us a priest, to become our saviour.” This request was renewed on every possible occasion, e.g. in 1706 (toward the end of the epoch dealt with by the present study) to the delegates of Prince Ferenc Rákóczi II: “It was our duty to report to our Lord—his Excellency, the Prince, and we are now duly fulfilling our obligation—their request to send them a Father; they are ready to pay as they can, and to sustain him; but they need a Father who speaks Hungarian.”¹²⁶

The missionaries and Visitators reported innumerable times that it created an absurd situation that the priests and monks were unable to communicate with their flock. This situation was given the strongest wording by Archbishop Petrus Parcevic in 1670: In Moldavia almost the entire Catholic population is Hungarian, they speak Hungarian and are asking aloud for Hungarian priests. They do not go to confess to priests who understand only Romanian, because they cannot express themselves in that language. They do not listen to the non-Hungarian

sermons. To support the community, to educate the young people in Moldavia would be possible only by Hungarian priests. Consequently, Parcevic signed a contract with the Franciscan Custodiate of Transylvania, which provided that the monks of the Csíksomlyó/Șumuleu Ciuc monastery undertake the missionary service in Moldavia. For this purpose, he would have reinstated their ancient Bákó/Bacău monastery. Unfortunately, the Vatican refused to ratify the contract because it was opposed by the King of Poland. He claimed primarily that Moldavia belonged to the competence of the Polish Catholic Church.¹²⁷ Accordingly it can be stated that European politics in general also played a part in the abandonment of the Hungarian Catholics of Moldavia.

In addition to the Franciscans, mention should be made of the Jesuit mission, which had started earlier, but was not as continuous, and which had a different character. The arrival of a Franciscan monk was never announced in advance; he came on foot, in most cases through Austria, Hungary, and Poland, or from the Balkans by way of Constantinople. All of a sudden, one day he appeared in the country, presented himself to the head of the Mission, and went to the agrarian town assigned to him; from there he visited the villages of the region. He lived with the people; when Tartars or Cossacks attacked, he ran with his flock to the nearby forest. (Several were killed.) He did not register with the local authorities, nor did he visit the Court of the Voivod, who took notice of him only if he became involved in some lawsuit.

In contrast to this, the arrival of Jesuit Fathers was always announced to the Court of Moldavia by the Head of the appropriate Province of the Order, in some cases by the General Head of the Order residing in Rome. The voivod granted them an audience upon their arrival, provided them with accommodation and financial support. They negotiated with the high officials, and drafted plans for the establishment of schools and convents, but they organised missions only in a few major towns outside the capital. The Jesuit mission was started by the Head of the Polish Province of the Order in the autumn of 1588, upon the initiative of Voivod Péter the Lame, who intended to move politically closer to the Vatican. At the beginning of 1589, when the National Assembly which convened at Meggyes/Medias expelled the Jesuits from Transylvania, several of them sought refuge in Moldavia; but they stayed only for a short time. All of them settled in Jászvásár/Iași, visiting the villages only from time to time.¹²⁸ At the beginning of 1591 there was only one Jesuit missionary in Moldavia, and even he left very soon.¹²⁹ The Order made a new attempt in the 1610s; the next Jesuit missionaries did not appear again until the 1640s. Those Jesuit missionaries came from the Austrian Province; they were Hungarians, but even so they could not take root in Moldavia. In the late 1660s some Jesuits arrived again from Poland, and served Jászvásár/Iași and Kutnár/Cotnari. In Jászvásár/Iași the Order founded and maintained a Latin-language school for a few years, which educated primarily the children of Greek Orthodox Romanian noblemen. The Hungarian-language sermons

of the Jesuits were very much appreciated by the local Catholic Hungarians. However, the main goal of the Jesuits was not to take care of the poor, but to win over the noblemen and to consolidate the position of the Order.

There was no co-operation between the Franciscan and the Jesuit missions. On the contrary, there was a certain animosity between them. They were particularly opposed to each other in the capital, Jászvásár/Iași. The Jesuit fathers despised the Franciscan monks, who had no higher education. The latter accused the Jesuits of aspiring to political power and wealth. This obviously harmed the Catholic community to a great extent.

By the 17th century the situation had become even worse, due to the controversy over the canon law of supremacy in Moldavia. In the Middle Ages the entire region was subordinated to the Church of Hungary, as the supreme authority was the Archbishop of Esztergom. In the 16th century it was attached to the Archbishopric of Sofia, along with Wallachia. This fact explains why archiepiscopal supervision came to Moldavia from Sofia, and why monks from the Bulgarian Province of the Franciscan Order were assigned to Moldavia. In 1644 the diocese of Sofia was divided into two. Wallachia remained subordinate to the archbishop of Sofia, while Moldavia was attached to the newly created archbishopric of Marcianople in Serbia. It was from Marcianople that Marcus Bandinus visited Moldavia. At the same time the Catholic Church of Poland also claimed the region, which was warmly supported by the King of Poland, whose aim was to conquer Moldavia. The conflict between the monks from Rome and the monks and secular priests from Poland became more and more serious.

In the early 17th century the Polish Church succeeded in taking possession of the bishopric of Bákó/Bacău. From that time until the end of the epoch dealt with by the present paper the bishops were Polish priests. Neither the Polish priests nor the bishop resided in Bákó/Bacău. From time to time they travelled from nearby Galicia to collect the tithes and whatever else could be taken away, and returned to Poland. The resulting complaints were innumerable. Franciscans and Polish priests accused each other; the negative consequences, however, were born by the Hungarian Catholic communities of Moldavia. The Vatican, intending to maintain the alliance with the Catholic State of Poland, always accepted the bishops nominated by the King of Poland. The bishops literally persecuted the Franciscan monks, who refused to subordinate themselves to him, pointing out that they were responsible only to Rome. By the end of the 17th century the Catholic Church of Moldavia became completely disorganised.

How did the Catholic parishes in Moldavia survive under such adverse circumstances? Since many villages saw no Catholic priest for years or even decades, the crucial ecclesiastical functions were performed by the already mentioned “deáks” (clerks), who were cherished by the people because they spoke Hungarian. They celebrated weddings, funerals and baptisms, directed the singing in church, and if they were literate, instructed the children. Many of them did a respectable, hon-

est job. Nevertheless, the missionaries' reports often complained about their ignorance in ecclesiastical matters and their "heretical" views.¹³⁰

The parishes were ready to make sacrifices in order to sustain a spiritual life and to have their children instructed in the elementary subjects. As a Franciscan missionary Blasius Koicevic reported in 1661: "In the Hungarian villages, if there is no priest, in most cases there is a schoolmaster or a bell-ringer; these conduct the singing of hymns in the church, read aloud the Gospel, and teach the children."¹³¹ At the end of the 16th century a certain Petrus Elmon of Transylvania, who possessed three Hungarian-language books and a Bible, established a Hungarian and Latin-language school in the village of Kutnár/Cotnari.¹³² This functioned for several decades. A common characteristic feature was the immense effort to keep and educate the children in the Catholic faith and in the traditions of their forefathers. When no monk or priest was available, the communities employed a schoolmaster or a clerk, and endeavoured to secure a midwife to baptise the new-born babies, when necessary. These efforts deserve even greater appreciation, as it is a known fact that the Greek Orthodox Church maintained not a single school in Moldavia.¹³³

The missionary monks continued to lament that the Catholic people left to themselves were uneducated, and full of superstitions; they had adopted exorcism from the Greek Orthodox Church, tried to heal their sick by means of quackery, did not respect the sacraments, and were inclined to heresy. Their moral attitudes were often criticised by the Church. They neglected marrying in the church; men often simply left their wives and took a new woman without any ceremony. All this in spite of the fact—they added—that these people were essentially religious, full of goodwill, diligent, and honest, but without anyone to direct them.¹³⁴ In the village of Tatros/Tg. Trotuş a series of miracles occurred in the church consecrated to St. Cosmas and St. Damian: in the night, a "choir of angels" could be heard; and a torch-like light appeared, moved round the church, and disappeared towards the mountains. These events had already been mentioned by Archbishop Bandinus in his report. In 1641 they were confirmed by an Italian Franciscan monk and by the Guardian of the Csíksomlyó/Şumuleu Ciuc Franciscan monastery. They added that the voices and the light had been experienced by several inhabitants of the village, and as a result of the miracle a Saxon Lutheran passing by was converted to the Catholic religion.¹³⁵

The more the Hungarians of Moldavia were left to themselves, the more the phenomena of popular religiosity dominated. The reports written by priests and missionaries in the 18th century deal with this in great detail.¹³⁶

Ferenc Rákóczi II, Prince of Transylvania, moved by the petition submitted by the inhabitants of the village of Csöböröcsök/Ciuburciu, sent a Catholic priest to Moldavia.¹³⁷ No Hungarian statesman had done anything similar before, or since. The conscience of the Hungarian Catholic Church was to awaken only in the second half of the 19th century.

As far as the attitude of Rome is concerned, a new era began with the 18th century. The Vatican turned towards the New World, America. Earlier there had been a slight hope that, starting from Moldavia, the Orthodox Church might be won back to the Roman Church. By that time it had become evident that this was an illusion. The Jesuits abandoned the mission in Moldavia completely, and even the Franciscans came to the region only occasionally.

By the end of the 18th century the abandonment of the Hungarians of Moldavia had become complete.

NOTES

- 1 G. I. BRĂTIANU: *La Moldavie et ses frontières historiques*. Bucharest, 1941.
- 2 For the following see Constantin C. GIURESCU: *Istoria Românilor*. I. *Din cele mai vechi timpuri pînă la moartea lui Alexandru cel Bun* (1432). Bucharest, 1937; CZEGLÉDY Károly: *Nomád népek vándorlása Napkelettől Napnyugatig*. Budapest, 1969; LÜKŐ Gábor: *Havaselve és Moldva népei a X—XII. században*. (*Ethnographia* 1935. pp. 90–105.).
- 3 For this and the following see GIURESCU *ibid.* and Ladislaus GÁLDI—Ladislaus MAKKAI: *Geschichte der Rumänen*. Budapest, 1942. p. 58. and ff.
- 4 For the debates on the extent and nature of Moldavia's Turkish dependence see TÖRÖK Attila: *Retusált tusák... Megjegyzések a balkáni török hódoltság néhány kérdéséhez*. (*Mozgó Világ* 1987. No. 6. pp. 40–44.).
- 5 Carol AUNER: *Episcopia Milkoviei* (*Revista Catolică*. Bucharest, 1912. pp. 533–551.) and MAKKAI László: *A milkói (kun) püspökség és népei*. Debrecen, 1936.
- 6 A. D. XENOPOL: *Istoria Românilor din Dacia Traiana*. I² Madrid, 1953. p. 200.
- 7 *Urkundenbuch zur Geschichte der Deutschen in Siebenbürgen*. I. Ed. Von Franz ZIMMERMANN—Carl WERNER. Hermannstadt, 1892. No. 69.
- 8 According to the manuscript description—dating from the 18th century—by a certain Brognard, half of the Moldavian population was Wlach, and the rest was Hungarian, Greek, Armenian, Gypsy, German, and Jewish. (Quoted by Helmut HAUFE from the manuscript collection of the Haus- Hof- und Staatsarchiv in Vienna: *Die Wandlung der Volksordnung im rumänischen Altreich*. Stuttgart, 1937. p. 67.).
- 9 For the ethnic composition of the population see the report of the Jesuit Johannes König-Schonovianus, 30. September, 1588. (*Archives* No. 41); Report of the Franciscan friar Benedetto Emanuel Remondi, 4 May 1636. (*Archives* No. 42).
- 10 Gustav WEIGANG: *Ursprung der südkarpatischen Flussnamen in Rumänien*. (XXVI–XXIX. *Jahresbericht des Instituts für rumänische Sprache*. Leipzig, 1921. pp. 70–95.; GYÖRFFY István: *Rumänische Ortsnamen*. (*Ungarische Jahrbücher* VI. 1926. pp. 146–149.).
- 11 This study uses the 16th–17th century Hungarian names of the Moldavian settlements and rivers. For their Romanian equivalents, see the concordance list in the Appendix.
- 12 The earliest occurrence of the name Csángó dates from 1560. There is a record of a person called Csángó András in the village of Maksa, Transylvania (*Székegy Archíves*. Ed. SZABÓ V. Károly. Kolozsvár, 1896. p. 76.) Although in 1591 we come across this word again designating the residents of county Tatros/Trotuş in a Moldavian assessment, it is written as “saigai”, and the editors of the document interpreted it as “sangai.” (HURMUZAKI XI. p. 219.) To date the meaning of this word has not been adequately explained.
- 13 The fact that several bibliography lists have already been published concerning the origin of the

- Hungarians of Moldavia removes the obligation of enumerating the significant number of Hungarian and—mainly recent—Romanian works. The first work to note is that of MIKECS László (*Csángók*. Budapest, 1941. pp. 330–398.), which lists 242 studies and books in chronological order with short, evaluative comments. At the same time DOMOKOS Pál Péter published *A moldvai magyarság*. (Kolozsvár, 1941. bibliography: pp. 7–18.), which also enumerates a number of newspaper articles not included by MIKECS. The post-1945, mainly Hungarian, bibliography is reviewed by GUNDA Béla: *A moldvai magyarok néprajzi kutatása. (A határainkon kívüli magyar néprajzi kutatások*. Ed.: MÁTÉNÉ SZABÓ Mária Rózsa. Budapest, TIT, 1984. pp. 66–112.). For the Romanian bibliography see Dumitru MÁRTINAS: *Originea ceangăilor din Moldova*. (Bucharest, 1985. pp. 181–192.) See also Olga Valeria ZOBEL: Szekler (Csangonen) in der Moldau und in der Bukowina (*Zeitschrift für Siebenbürgische Landeskunde* 72., 1978. pp. 155–165.). Also of note is that the full bibliography concerning the Csángó issue is edited by LENGYEL Zsolt (Munich).
- 14 MUNKÁCSI Bernát: A moldvai csángók eredete. (*Ethnographia* 1902. pp. 433–440.); Gustav WEIGAND: *Der Ursprung der s-Gemeinden. (Neuntes Jahresbericht des Instituts für Rumänische Sprache zu Leipzig*. 1902. pp. 131–137.).
 - 15 Summary of the arguments of the theory: RUBINYI Mózes: A Moldvai csángók múltja és jelene (*Ethnographia* 1901. pp. 115–124, pp. 166–175.) GUNDA Béla supports the same opinion today. In *Egy csángó könyv jubileuma. (Magyar Nemzet* 22 July 1986.) reviewing and partly criticising the book of LÜKŐ Gábor—see note 22.—he writes the following: “The Hungarians living in the vicinity of Bákó/Bacău and Románvásár/Roman are the descendants of the Hungarians who remained outside the Carpathian Basin following the Hungarian Settlement.”
 - 16 Based on the most recent archaeological evidence, Fodor István believes that in the 10th–11th centuries the Hungarian border-land lay east of the Carpathians. According to Fodor these early Hungarian settlements—situated between Pr emyšl and Wallachia, including Moldavia—were erased by the Cumanian invasion. FODOR István: *Zur Problematik der Ankunft der Ungarn im Karpatenbecken... (Interaktionen der mitteleuropäischen Slawen und anderen Ethnika im 6–10. Jahrhundert. Symposium* 1983. Nitra 1984. pp. 100–102.).
 - 17 Although Marcus Bandinus mentions in his census (1648) a market-town called Gyula/Giulești: “Erat oppidum in Gyula capitaneo in sui nominis memoriam extractum,” but the census-takers found only the ruins of the Church. The settlement itself—which lay along the River Moldva/Moldova, between Moldvabánya/Baia and Nemeč/Târgu Neamț—was gone: “jam finditur aratro.” URECHIA, the publisher of Bandinus’ report, could not identify the name of the settlement anywhere (see note 25, p. 242.), and we never come across its name again. It is very likely that the companion of Bandinus, the Jesuit Beke Pál, misheard or misinterpreted the name. It is also probable that the pedantic explanation concerning the name of the market town was invented by him as well. (Report of Bandinus of the canonical visitation in Moldavia in 1646, 2 March 1648—in the following: Bandinus, 1648—under Gyula.—*Archives* No. 76.).
 - 18 Benkő Loránd also referred to this during the debate of the meeting of the Hungarian Philology Society in Budapest, autumn 1986.
 - 19 VERESS Endre was the only exception; as the last militant, he still supported the theory of the Cumanian origin in 1934: A moldvai csángók származása és neve (*Erdélyi Múzeum*, 1934. pp. 29–64.). In general, public opinion still sustained the theory of a “Proto-Hungarian” origin, which was also manifested in nationalist declarations. Cf., i.e. SICULUS [=BESENYŐ Sándor]: *A moldvai magyarok őstelepiülése, története és mai helyzete*. Pécs, 1942.
 - 20 His summarising work was published in Hungarian translation too: AUNER Károly: *A romániai magyar telepék történeti vázlata*. Temesvár, 1908.
 - 21 Works of DOMOKOS Pál Péter: *A moldvai magyarság*. Csíksomlyó (Șumuleu Ciuc), 1931. (Third extended edition: Kolozsvár, 1941. also includes the Hungarian translation of Bandinus’

- report of 1648. See the comments of MIKECS, *Csángók* *ibid.* p. 391.); *Mert akkor az idő napkeletre fordul.* Cluj-Kolozsvár, 1940. (Hungarian folk ballads of Moldavia); A moldvai magyarság történeti számadatai. (*Hütel*, 1938. pp. 295–308.; unchanged edition: *Honismeret* 14. 1986. No. III. pp. 16–22.); *Adalékok Moldova történetéhez.* Cluj-Kolozsvár, 1940.; *Csángó népzene.* I–II. Budapest, 1956. (In co-operation with RAJECZKY Benjamin); “Édes hazámnak akartam szolgálni.” Szent István Társulat, Budapest, 1979. (Following the historical summary, it includes the work of KÁJONI János: *Cantionale Catholicum*, and also the reports of PETRÁS Incze János concerning the Csángós of the 19th century.); *Bartók Béla kapcsolata a moldvai csángó-magyarokkal. Népdalok, népmesék, népszokások, eredetmondák a magyar nyelvterület legkeletibb részéről.* Szent István Társulat, Budapest, 1981.
- 22 LÜKŐ Gábor: *A moldvai csángók. I. A csángók kapcsolatai az erdélyi magyarsággal.* Budapest, 1936.
- 23 This is also supported by the documents which mention the names of many northern Hungarian villages from the beginning of the 15th century. (Many of these are quoted by LÜKŐ *ibid.* p. 26. and ff. too.) In addition, later linguistic research established that this group is not familiar with the modern Hungarian vocabulary, but has preserved medieval particularities—which fell out of use everywhere else—in its grammatical structure, vocabulary and pronunciation (BENKŐ Loránd: *Magyar nyelvjárástörténet.* Budapest, 1957. p. 72.). Although WEIGANG (*Der Ursprung*, *ibid.* p. 136.) discovered that there are anthropological differences between the northern and southern groups, LÜKŐ (*ibid.* p. 41.) questioned this statement. Since then no expert has examined this issue.
- 24 Gr. Julian PEJACSEVICH: Peter Freiherr von Parchevich, Erzbischof von Martianopel, 1612–1674. (*Archiv für österreichische Geschichte* LIX. 1880. pp. 337–637.).
- 25 V. A. URECHIA: *Codex Bandinus. Memoria asupra scrieri lui Bandinus dela 1646 urmatu de textu, inso țitii de acte și documente.* (Analele Academiei Române. Serie II. Vol. XVI. 1893–94. Memoriile Sectiunii Istorice pp. 1–335.) Moreover, the significant representative collection of sources—hallmarked with the name of HURMUZAKI—also published several documents with regard to the Catholics of Moldavia (*Documente privitoare la istoria Românilor.* Publicate sub auspiciile Academiei Române. Bucharest, 1876–1903.).
- 26 I. C. FILITTI: *Din archive Vaticanului. I. Documente privitoare la episcopatele catolice din principate.* Bucharest, 1913.
- 27 The most significant publications are: Gh. CĂLINESCU: *Alcuni missionari cattolici italiani nella Moldavia nei secoli XVII. e XVIII.* (Diplomatarium Italicum. I. Roma., 1925. pp. 1–213.); Gh. CĂLINESCU: *Altre notizie sui missionari cattolici nei paesi romani.* (Diplomatarium Italicum. Roma. II. 1930. pp. 305–514.); Francisc PALL: *La controversie tra i minori conventuali e i gesuiti nelle missioni di Moldavia* (Diplomatarium Italicum. IV. Roma, 1940. pp. 1–268.; cf the review by JÓSA János: *Magyar kisebbség.* 20. 1941. pp. 300–305.); G. VINULESCU: *Pietro Diodato e la sua relatione sulla Moldavia.* 1641. (Diplomatarium Italicum. IV. Roma, 1940. pp. 75–126.) See also BARTA István: *Az 1743. évi moldvai jezsuita misszió.* (*Regnum.* Budapest, V. 1942–43. pp. 70–90.)
- 28 Shelf mark of Veress Endre’s collection of documents: Library of MTA Ms. (Unfortunately the copies are full of sense-distorting mistakes, blanks, and senseless abbreviations. Veress consistently disregards the list of names of the census.)
- 29 Gh. I. NĂSTASE: Ungurii din Moldova la 1646 după “Codex Bandinus” (*Arhivele Basarabici* VI. 1934. pp. 397–414 and VII. 1935. pp. 74–88.); We only had access to an abridged German edition: Die Ungarn in der Moldau im Jahre 1646, nach dem “Codex Bandinus” (*Extras din Buletinul Institutului de Filologie Romînă.* Vol. III. Iași, 1936. P. 12 + 1 sketch map of the Hungarian and German villages mentioned by Bandinus. See also the comments of LÜKŐ: *ibid.* pp. 40–41.) The later Romanian historians killed this work of NĂSTASE by a conspiracy of silence. The name of NĂSTASE is not even mentioned in the encyclopaedia of Romanian historians.

- (Ștefan ȘTEFĂNESCU coord. științific: *Enciclopedia istoriografiei românești*. Editura Științifică și Enciclopedică, Bucharest, 1978.)
- 30 Works of MIKECS László: *Csángók*. Budapest, 1941. (Including several hardly interpretable sketch maps; the historical parts mainly rely upon the work of AUNER: *A romániai magyar telepek* *ibid.*); *A Kárpátokon túli magyarság* (DEÉR József–GÁLDI László, eds.: *Magyarok és Románok*. I. Budapest, 1943. pp. 441–507. Including very good sketch maps. In addition to the history of the Hungarian settlements in Moldavia, these last two works also summarise the history of the Hungarian settlements in Wallachia.); *A moldvai katolikusok 1646–47. évi összeírása*. (*Erdélyi Tudományos Füzetek*, Kolozsvár, 1944. p. 171.). cf. CSIKESZ Ferenc: *Mit hagyott ki a cenzúra Mikecs László Csángók-jából 1941-ben*. (*Confessio*, 1982. pp. 104–112.); BODRI Ferenc: *Tűnődés Mikecs Lászlóról és a csángók csonka monográfiáiról*. (*Élet és Tudomány*, 17 April 1987. p. 8.); GUNDA Béla: *Csángó monográfia*. (*Élet és Tudomány*, 1 May 1987. p. 2.)
 - 31 We only know about one historical work relating to the subject, but this was not published in Hungary: Lajos PÁSZTOR: *L'attività missionaria del P. Bernardino Silvestri Min. Conv. E la sua relazione sulla Moldavia. 1688–97*. (*Archivum Franciscanum Historicum* XLIII. 1949. pp. 257–277. and Sep. Florentiae, Collegium S. Bonaventurae ad Claras Aquas, 1950.).
 - 32 Summarised review of the linguistic research: SZABÓ T. Attila: *A moldvai csángó nyelvjárás-kutatás története*. (*Magyar Nyelvjárások*. Budapest, 1959. pp. 3–38.; Second edition: SZABÓ T. Attila: *Nyelv és Irodalom. Válogatott tanulmányok, cikkek*. V. Bucharest, Kriterion Kiadó, 1981. pp. 480–527. and the notes: pp. 594–609. There is also a list of villages in which the residents still speak Hungarian today.)
 - 33 See GÁLFFY Mózes–MÁRTON Gyula–SZABÓ T. Attila: *Tájékoztató a moldvai csángó tájnyelvi térképről*. (*Nyelv- és Irodalomtudományi Közlemények*. Kolozsvár, 1963. pp. 215–268.)
 - 34 BURA László: *A moldvai csángó nyelvjárás a-zása*. (*Magyar csoportnyelvi dolgozatok* No. 28. Budapest, 1986. p. 17.)
 - 35 Publications relating to the subject and published in the series *Magyar személynévi adattárak* by the Magyar Nyelvészeti Tanszékcsoport Névkuató Munkaközössége of Eötvös Loránd University of Sciences: HAJDÚ Mihály: *Az 1646–47. évi Bandinus féle összeírás névstatistikái*. 1980.; Cf. the works of HALÁSZ Péter: *Magyarfalu helynevei*. 1981.; *Lészped helynevei*. 1983.; *Ónfalva (Onyest) helynevei*. 1983.; *Klészse helynevei*. Budapest, 1986.
 - 36 Dr. KÓS Károly–SZENTIMREI Judit–Dr. NAGY Jenő: *Moldvai csángó népművészet*. Kriterion, Bucharest, 1981.; KÓS Károly: *Csángó néprajzi vázlat (Tájak, falvak, hagyományok*. Kriterion, Bucharest, 1976. pp. 103–217.); FARAGÓ József–JAGAMAS János Eds.: *Moldvai csángó népdalok és népballadák*. Bucharest, 1954.; KALLÓS Zoltán–SZABÓ T. Attila: *Balladák könyve*. Kriterion Bucharest, 1970. (Most of the documents originate from Moldavia. The introductory study of SZABÓ T. Attila reviews the full history of the Transylvanian and Moldavian collection. The same material, identical title, but partly different structure, and including more tunes: Budapest, 1970. and also 1977.) BOSNYÁK Sándor published a very interesting work: *A moldvai magyarok hitvilága*. (*Folklor Archivum*. Budapest, 12. 1980.)
 - 37 Joșif Petru M. PAL: *Catolici din Moldova sunt români neaoși* (*Almanachul... Viața*. 1941. pp. 56–60.); Joșif Petru M. PAL: *Originea catolicilor din Moldova și Franciscanii pastorii lor de veacuri*. Sabaoni–Roman, 1943.; Petru RÂMNEŢU: *Die Abstammung der Tschangos*. Sibiu, 1944.; *Bibliotheca Rerum Transsilvaniae* II. Centrul de Studii și Cercetări privitoare la Transilvania.—RÂMNEŢU (based on the then fashionable racial theory) declares on an anthropological basis that the Csángós are of Romanian origin.—M. GĂRNITEANU: *Catolici din Moldova sunt Daci*. (originally published in *Moldova*, 26 January 1944; also published in *Lumina creștinului* XXX. February 1944. pp. 4–5.)
 - 38 Although Prof. Gabriel Țepelia stated in a lecture note (*Istoria limbii române*. 1971.)—written together with Radu POPESCU—that the Csángó language is a Hungarian dialect, later he had to

- publicly retract his “error”. (Published: *Luceăfarul* 15 February 1966. p. 4.) Nevertheless an English essay published in 1986 is still unaware of this theory, and briefly mentions that besides Germans, Hungarians too moved to Moldavia from Transylvania. (Victor SPINEL: *Moldavia in the 11th–14th centuries*. 1986. Editura Academiei Republicii Socialiste România. *Bibliotheca Historica Romaniae*. Monographs XX. pp. 139. and 141.)
- 39 Dumitru MĂRTINAȘ: *Originea ceangăilor din Moldova*. Editura Științifică și Enciclopedică, Bucharest, 1985.; (Reviews: Ovidiu PAPADIMA: *Luceăfarul* 15. February 1985., p. 3.; POMOGÁTS Béla: *Vigilia* 1986. p. 634.); *Originea Românească a ceangăilor*. Masa rotunda (*Luceăfarul* 15 February 1986. 1. pp. 3–6. Participants of the round-table talks published in the official paper of the Romanian Writers’ Association: Ion COJA, Mihail DIACONESCU, Valeriu RUSU, Gabriel ȚEPELEA, M. UHGHEANU and V. M. UNGUREANU); Anton DESPINESCU: Chi sono i cattolici dalla Moldavia (*Balcanica*, Roma, 1984. No. pp. 117–123.) See also Mihai CAITAR: Die Tschangos sind Rumänen. (*Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 29 May 1981.—Response: SÓTI György: *Die ungarische Herkunft der Tschangos*. *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 9 July 1981.); ÖSZ ERŐSS Péter: Ginduri pe marginea unui articol. (*Flacăra*, Bucharest, 6 August 1981. Referring to a Hungarian article concerning the Romanian origin of the Csángós); GELLÉRT Györgyi: Cui prodest? A români ai magyar néprajzi kutatás problémái. (*Mozgó világ*, VIII. 1982. issue 10. pp. 30–35.).
- 40 According to MĂRTINAȘ (ibid. p. 45.) the “official statistics of the period” [?] state 372 partly or fully Romanian villages in Székely land in the 17th century. In a hundred years 242 of these villages were Magyarized and converted by force to Catholicism. MĂRTINAȘ refers to the work of G. POPA-LISSEANU (*Secuii și secuizarea românilor*. Bucharest, 1932.)—*Luceăfarul* considered these data as facts and integrated them: 15 February 1986. p. 5.)
- 41 The work of Iași Eugenia NEAMȚU–Vasile NEAMȚU–Stela CHEPTEA was published in 1980: *Orașul medieval Baia în secolele XIV–XVII*. This book does not take notice of the extended and thorough work of Hugo WECZERKA (*Das mittelalterliche und frühneuzeitliche Deutschtum im Fürstentum Moldau*. München, 1960.), which, among others, deals with the history of Baia (in German Molde, in Hungarian Moldvabánya, from which was derived the name of Baia), and gives evidence (public records, censuses) of the German and later German-Hungarian mixed population of the town. According to the three Romanian authors’ research, although there were “strangers” in the town (their nationality is not specified), the archaeological and especially the ceramic findings prove that the Medieval founders and the majority of the population throughout the centuries were “autochthonous Romanians”. (pp. 151 ff.)
- 42 An example: although the bibliography of MĂRTINAȘ ibid. includes the book of AUNER (*A români ai magyar telepek* ibid. see note 20.), which is mainly based on the data of the church archives of Jászvásár/Iași, he does not make use of these data in the text. Moreover MĂRTINAȘ does not even mention the work of NĂSTASE (see note 29).
- 43 BENDA Kálmán: Csöbörcsök. Egy tatárországi magyar falu története a 16–18. században. (*Századok*, 1985. No. 4. pp. 895–916.); BENDA Kálmán: A csöbörcsöki magyar katolikusok összeírása 1969-ből. (*Magyar Nyelv*, 1987. pp. 240–243.).
- 44 See the works of DOMOKOS Pál Péter (note 21), and the summary of GUNDA Béla (note 13); DÁVID Zoltán: Magyarok határaink mentén (*Mozgó Világ*, 1982. No. 7. pp. 38–50.); BENDA Kálmán: A moldvai csángó-magyarok (*Confessio*, 1986. No. 3. pp. 59–65.) KISS Károly: A moldvai csángók (*Új Tükör*, 1985. Nos. 18–25.); KISS Károly: A megmaradás esélyei. Emlékezés a moldvai csángó iskolákra. (*Magyar Nemzet*, 5 September 1987. p. 9.).
- 45 Detailed information presented by BENDA: *Csőbörcsök* ibid. pp. 902–903.).
- 46 Reports sent by bishop Quirini to Pope Clement VIII—10 May 1602 and 24 June 1604—(*Archives* Nos. 27 and 31) and also to the Papal under-secretary Aldobrandini—5 March 1604—(*Archives* No. 29).

- 47 The reports of the missionaries—especially in the 1680s—give us a shocking picture of the devastation. See the reports of Antonio Angelini, Vito Pilutio, Johannes Berkuce, Giovanni Battista Volponi or Francesco Antonio Ceccangeli. (*Archives* No. 124 and No. 125) Moreover, all historical summaries mention this devastation. See Andrei OȚETEĂ ed.: *Istoria poporului Român*, Bucharest, 1970. pp. 162. ff.; A OȚETEĂ—D. PRODAN—M. BERZA eds.: *Istoria României*, III. Bucharest, 1964. pp. 198. ff.
- 48 BROGNARD: *Statistische Ausarbeitung*, *ibid.* (see note 8).
- 49 Helmut HAUFE: *Die Wandlung*, *ibid.* (see note 8) pp. 59–68. See also N. V. MICHOFF: *La population de la Turquie et de la Bulgarie au XVIII^e siècle*. Sofia, 1915.; I. NISTOR: *Die Bevölkerung Bessarabiens, 1812–1918*. (*Arhiva pentru știința și reforma socială*. Bucharest, 1919. p. 91.); Ecaterine NEGRUTI: Situația demografică a Moldovei în secolul al XIX-lea. (*Revistă de Istorie*, 1981. pp. 243–257.)
- 50 Ștefan PASCU: *Demografia istorică* (Ștefan PASCU ed., *Populație și Societate. Studii de demografie istorică*. Vol. I. Cluj, 1972. p. 73.) It must be mentioned that the data of the same two counties are missing from both censuses.
- 51 “Il est affligeant qu’un pays [Moldavia] si beau, d’un sol si fertile, sous un ciel heureux... soit si peu peuplé,... et le pis est qu’il se dépeuple de plus en plus, surtout depuis trente ou quarante années.” (MONSIEUR de B.: *Mémoires historiques et géographiques sur la Valachie*. Frankfurt and Leipzig 1778. Author: BAUER, Russian general. See HAUFE: *Die Wandlung* *ibid.* pp. 66. and 291.)
- 52 HURMUZAKI *ibid.* XI. pp. 221–230.
- 53 H. A. MOHOV: *Moldavia epohi feudalizma*. Kishinyov, 1964. p. 219.
- 54 See below the calculations of Ștefan PASCU.
- 55 For a comparison, the population of Hungary in 1787: 92% peasant, 4% noble, 2.5% townspeople. It is barely credible that two centuries earlier there were more urban citizens in Moldavia than in Hungary. (THIRRING Gusztáv: *Magyarország népessége II. József korában*. Budapest, 1938. pp. 55–81. and BENDA Kálmán: *Emberbarát vagy hazafi? Tanulmányok a felvilágosodás korának magyarországi történetéből*. Budapest, 1982. pp. 22–25; also L. ROMAN: Sezările rurale ale Țării Românești în sec. XVI–XVII. *Revistă de Istorie*, 1978. pp. 1391–1404.)
- 56 Later in the text—disregarding his own figures established for each county—PASCU declares that the population of Moldavia reached 400,000 at the end of the 16th century; it is interesting that some pages later this number becomes 450,000. (Ștefan PASCU *ibid.*, table p. 74., the two other data: pp. 46 and 61).
- 57 Based on a sketchy family register (attributed to Voivod Péter Sánta) from 1591, DOMOKOS Pál Péter estimates the population of Moldavia at 47,167. The basic mistake of DOMOKOS’ calculation is that he did not consider the uncertainty of whether the number of persons or the number of families had been registered. (DOMOKOS: *A moldvai magyarság történeti számadatai* *ibid.* p. 296.; in all of his later works, and finally “Édes hazámnak akartam szolgálni...” *ibid.* p. 58.—MIKECS *ibid.* p. 246 had also refused to accept his calculations.—The source itself: HURMUZAKI *ibid.* XI. pp. 219–220.)
- 58 See the already cited tax assessment of 1591: HURMUZAKI *ibid.* XI. pp. 221–230.
- 59 BENDA: *Csöbörcsök* *ibid.* pp. 897. and 898.
- 60 See note 25. (and *Archives* No. 76). In the following: Bandinus, 1648.
- 61 NĂSTASE *ibid.* pp. 7–10.
- 62 The settlement chain originally included a number of Transylvanian Saxon settlements, too, such as Szucsava/Suceava, Nemc/Târgu Neamț, Románvásár/Roman and Moldvabánya/Baia. Although the first three settlements were only scarcely populated by Germans in the 17th century, Moldvabánya/Baia and Kutnár/Cotnari on the other side of the River Szeret/Siret were still populated by German and Hungarian (and also Romanian) residents. The German popula-

tion can be traced back to the end of the 17th century, but then it became extinct or was assimilated.

- 63 See NÁSTASE *ibid.* p. 9. and especially LÜKŐ *ibid.* p. 24. who also cites the earlier documents. Nevertheless, Lükő is wrong when he infers the continuity of the Hungarian population from the fact that later in the 19th century Hungarians, too, lived in the above-mentioned villages, and when he thinks that they had already been there in 1646 and were simply avoided by Bandinus. As he puts it: “one will be disappointed if one considers [Bandinus]... as a reliable source of information,” and it is high time “to examine closely from this point of view” the reports of Bandinus. (MIKECS, too, shared the opinion of Lükő: *Csángók* *ibid.*, p. 80., and added Egyedhalma/Adjud to the list. MIKECS: *A Kárpátokon túli magyarság* *ibid.*, p. 458, note 3.) We have to clear Bandinus of Lükő’s charges: between the end of the 16th century and the end of the 17th century, none of the known censuses include these villages in the list of Catholic settlements; in conclusion, they simply had no Hungarian population. The supposition that the Hungarian population migrated to these places in the 19th–20th centuries is reinforced by the fact that e. g. the name of Kozmafalva (in Romanian: Cozmești) sank into oblivion, and the new settlement is called Jugán (adopting the Romanian name: Jugani). Although Mikecs mentions that Dormánfalva/Dărmănești, situated along the River Tatros/Trotuș, was omitted too (*Csángók* *ibid.* p. 80.), this is a double mistake: first, Mikecs refers to Lükő who does not mention it, second, as far as we know none of the old documents mention it either. Moreover, it is improbable that Hungarians lived here in the time of Bandinus or earlier. In the case of Ónfalva/Onești, which disappeared after the 16th century, we are inclined to accept the theory of Halász Péter, who supposes that this village is identical with the later-appearing Sztánfalva also described by Bandinus. (HALÁSZ Péter: *Ónfalva* *ibid.* see note 3, pp. 3–4. This theory is supported by the fact that “ón” (which means “tin” in Hungarian) stands for “stania” in Romanian, which gives the Romanian place-name: Stanești. (DOMOKOS: *A moldvai magyarság*. 1941. *ibid.* pp. 41–42.) Geographically the two settlements are situated at the same place.
- 64 A few examples: “In earlier times Alfalu was a famous village of the Hungarians. Today it is completely deserted.”—Szeretvásár/Siret: the Catholic Church ceased to exist, it had no more followers.—Vászló/Vaslui: earlier there were 300 Catholic Hungarian houses and they had their own Church, their own vicar and teacher. Today there are only four houses with 16 Hungarian dwellers left.—Takucs: earlier there were 200 Hungarian houses and they had their own Church, priest and teacher. Today no Catholics live in the village.—Karácsonkő/Piatra Neamț: “earlier it was populated by only Hungarians, today there are no more than three houses with 16 Hungarian dwellers left.”—Herlő/Hărlău: five were left of the 500 houses with 19 dwellers.—Szucsava/Suceava: there were more than 8,000 Hungarian and German Catholics, but today there are only 25 left, etc. (Bandinus, 1648., the cited villages.)
- 65 Bandinus, 1648: Karácsonkő/Piatra Neamț, Szucsava/Suceava, Bogdánfalva/Valea Seacă, etc.
- 66 NÁSTASE *ibid.*, pp. 10–11.
- 67 Bandinus, 1648: At Szeretvásár/Siret and Moldvabánya/Baia.
- 68 The reasons for the immigration are detailed by WECZERKA *ibid.* pp. 214–215. According to Bandinus, the population of three Hungarian villages had to leave the region of Husz/Huși because of the high taxes. Most of them moved to Csöbörccsök/Ciurburciu, Tartarland. (Bandinus, 1648.: Husz).
- 69 E.g.: Herlai, Huszti, Vászlai, Tatrosi, etc. (MIKECS: *A moldvai katolikusok* *ibid.* pp. 113–115.).
- 70 Census prepared by an unknown missionary among the Catholics of Moldavia between February and November of 1696. (*Archives* No. 135.) For a comparison, we give the number of inhabitants of the most significant Catholic settlements, compiled by a Franciscan friar, Giovanni Baptista del Monte: Jászvásár/Iași—600, Kutnár/Cotnari and Amadzsej combined—300, Bákó/Bacău and Terebes/Trebișu combined—250, Moldvabánya/Baia—140, Szabófalva/Săbăoani and

- five neighbouring villages altogether—152, Forrófalva/Fărăoani—120, Csöböröcsök/Ciuburciu —90, Barlád/Bârlad —50, Románvásár/Roman —10, Szucsava/Suceava—10 (report of Vito Pilutio, 26 August 1671. *Archives* note No. 115); concerning Szabófalva/Săbăoani, census of 1616.)
- 71 Some names supporting the theory that the Hungarians were moving south and west: Újfalú: Valentinus ex Saboana/Szabófalva, Michael ex Saboana; Tatros: Catherina Bálint vidua ex Catinario (Kutnár) cum tribus prolibus. (Census of 1696.)
- 72 The average number of children in Kászón is 1.4, but e.g. in Csöböröcsök/Ciuburciu —also in 1696—the proportion of widows is 25%, and there are 103 children in 33 families which gives an average of 3.1. (BENDA: *Csőböröcsök* *ibid.* p. 900.)
- 73 MIKECS (*Csángók* *ibid.* pp. 40–92.) believed that this chain of settlements was consciously developed by the military and frontier defense politics of the Hungarian Kingdom.
- 74 The ethnographers of the University of Kolozsvár/Cluj studied 49 villages between 1949 and 1957. Out of these, only 6 are lie north of Moldvabánya/Baia, and the same number on the left bank of the River Szeret/Siret. 37 settlements lie south of Bákó/Bacău. The map published by the ethnographers indicates well that there is no Hungarian settlement worth mentioning between Bákó/Bacău and Moldvabánya/Baia, the continuous chain of settlements on the right bank of the River Szeret/Siret has completely vanished. Out of the settlements they investigated, 19 are not even mentioned earlier than the 18th century, while in 8 settlements mentioned by Bandinus, there are no longer any Hungarians. (KÓS et. al., *op.cit.* pp. 12–13). The same picture is supported by the linguistic study done on 94 Moldavian settlements, including 20 where only a few Hungarian-speaking people were found, even those “in the latest stage of Romanianisation”. (The 94 villages are enumerated in SZABÓ T. Attila: *A moldvai csángó nyelvújítás kutatása*, *op.cit.*, ed. 1981. pp. 518–520.)
- 75 Detailed numerical data are available in WECZERKA, *op.cit.*, pp. 201–209. About the coexistence of mixed populations in the villages, see BINDER Pál: *Közös multunk. Románok, magyarok, németek és délszlávok feudalizmuskori falusi és városi együttéléséről*. Bucharest, 1982. pp. 108–127.
- 76 Report by Bernardino Quirini, 1599 (*Archives* No. 25). According to Bandinus 1648, out of 37 villages, 20 were entirely Hungarian, and in 15, the Hungarians were already a minority. See the population table of the individual towns... An anonymous report dated February–November 1697 (*Archives* No. 135).
- 77 The table was compiled on the basis of the following reports and censuses, respectively: Bartolomeo Bruti, 15 September 1587 (*Archives* No. 8); Bernardino Quirini, 1599 (*Archives* No. 25); Andres Bogoslavac, summer 1623 (*Archives* No. 35); unknown author, ca. 1631 (*Archives* No. 37); Benedetto Remondi, 4 May 1636 (*Archives* No. 42); unknown author, ca. 1640 (*Archives* No.46); Petrus Deodatus, end of 1641 (*Archives* No. 47); Bartolomeo Bassetti 4 June 1643 (*Archives* No. 52); Marcus Bandinus, 1649 (*Archives* No. 76); Blasius Koicevic, 19 July 1661 (*Archives* No. 97); unknown author, February–November 1696 (*Archives* No. 135). In compiling this table, we omitted those censuses which did not concern the whole of Moldavia, or omitted some important settlements, as well as the registers written from memory in Warsaw for the Polish Province of the Jesuit Order and by Vito Pilutio in Rome, since their data are unreliable. These are: Bonaventura da Campoformio, 1650 (*Archives* No. 80); Polish Jesuit Province, 1652 (*Archives* No. 86); Vito Pilutio, 17 December 1663 (*Archives* No. 99); Vito Pilutio, 14 December 1668 (*Archives* No. 104); Antonio Angelini, October 1670 (*Archives* No. 113); Vito Pilutio, 26 August 1671 (*Archives* No. 115); Antonio Angelini, 12 June 1682 (*Archives* No. 124); Antonio Ceccangeli, January–August 1696 (*Archives* No. 133); Bernardino Silvestri, 28 June 1697 (*Archives* No. 137).
- 78 The sources of the data are identical with those mentioned in note 77. The numbers of people

given in parentheses were obtained by multiplying by five the number of families or houses given by the sources.

- 79 1682: “some”; 1696: altogether with the four neighbouring villages (Tamásfalva/Tamașeni, Lökösfalva/Licușeni, Dzsidaľfalva/Agiudeni, Szeckófalva/Tețcani).
- 80 Data from 1588: Bartolomeo Bruti, 14 January 1588 (*Archives* No. 9.).
- 81 Together with the villages Forrófalva/Fărăoani, Paskán/Pașcani, Hidegkút and Szalonc/Solonț.
- 82 The emigration of Hussites is dealt with in depth by KARÁCSONYI János: *A moldvai csángók eredete*, Századok 1914. pp. 545–561. He grossly exaggerates the importance of this emigration; he even considers the totality of the Hungarians in Moldavia as being descendants of the Hussites.—AUNER, op.cit. pp. 12–17; Bandinus 1648: under Hus; King Mátyás I punished the Hussites by confiscating their lands; Article 13 of Law II of 1462; about place names referring to the presence of Hussites: LÜKŐ op.cit. pp. 63–64; note 142, report by the Jesuit Johannes Kunig-Senonovianus, 30 September 1588 (*Archives* No. 12) and Bandinus, 1648; about the villages and conversion of the Hussites: report by Vásári György, 20 August 1571 (*Archives* No. 5). About the people of Tatros/Tg. Trotuș: GÁLOS Rezső: Legrégibb bibliafordításunk. Budapest, 1928. (*Irodalomtörténeti Füzetek* No. 9).
- 83 See the letter written by the council of the market town of Sziget/Sighet, Máramaros County, 23 September 1585. (*Archives* No. 6)
- 84 “Nolumus ut ex hac ditione nostra nostrates transeant in Moldaviam, ut fertur non deesse plurimos qui haberent animum illuc transeundi. Itaque mandamus nobis firmiter, út a parte vestra vias semitasque, per quas in Moldaviam transire possent, diligenter custodiatis et observetis, ne quis nostrorum... in Moldaviam transeat, sed transire volentes retraahntur”. Bocskai István to the council of the town of Beszterce/Bistrița, Gyulafehérvár/Alba Iulia, 11 January 1596. *Archives* of the town of Beszterce/Bistrița, Missiles 1596, No. 7, Box No. 439 of the film collection of the National *Archives*).
- 85 “Everybody was allowed to leave the Székely land freely, if he wanted... If any Székely wanted to go to serve, even to an other country, he was free to do so.” Municipalis consuetudo Siculorum ex iudiciis. The resolution of the Székely national assembly in Székelyudvarhely, 28 April 1555, *Székely Oklevéltár*, ed. SZABÓ Károly, II. Kolozsvár, 1876. p. 124, items 63–64. (These and part of the following are cited by MIKECS: *Csángók*, op.cit., p. 114.).
- 86 National Assembly at Lécfalva, 25 October–4 November 1600. *Erdélyi Országgyűlési Emlékek* (hereinafter EOE) Ed. SZILÁGYI Sándor, IV. Budapest, 1878. p. 556, item 13.
- 87 National Assembly at Marosvásárhely, 18–25 March 1607.: EOE V. Budapest, 1879. p. 472, art. 18.
- 88 National Assembly at Szeben/Sibiu, 15–25 May 1612; EOE VI, Budapest, 1880. p. 227, art.7.
- 89 National Assembly at Meggyes/Medias, 20 October—November 1662; EOE XIII, Budapest 1888. p. 192; art. XXII; order given to the “harmincados” guards at Töröcsvár/Bran, 15 August 1672; EOE XV, Budapest, 1892. p. 291, item 19; National Assembly at Gyulafehérvár/Alba Iulia, 21 November–21 December 1676; EOE XVI, Budapest, 1893. pp. 333–334, art. I.
- 90 National Assembly at Gyulafehérvár, 8–18 April 1698; EOE XXI, Budapest, 1898. p. 343, art. V–VI.
- 91 See CSUTAK Vilmos: Bujdosó kurucok Moldvában és Havasalföldén 1707–11-ben. In *Emlékkönyv a Székely Nemzeti Múzeum 50 éves jubileumára*, Sepsiszentgyörgy/Sfintu Gheorghe, 1929. The names of the noblemen who fled are listed, as well as the villages where they found refuge.—*Ráday Pál iratai*. Eds. BENDA Kálmán and MAKSAJ Ferenc, Budapest, 1961. mainly p. 317, doc. No. 50, and p. 401, doc. No. 63. See also the letter by Kálnoki Sámuel in DOMOKOS: *Édes hazámnak akartam szolgálni*, op.cit., pp. 79–84.
- 92 See above all the following reports: Antonio Angelini, 12 June 1682 (*Archives* No. 124); Jakub

- Franciszek Dluski, 19 July 1683 (*Archives* No. 126); Viot Pilutio, the end of 1686 (*Archives* No. 127).
- 93 Their number will be increased again by the great emigration of Székelys during the rule of Maria Theresa in the 18th century.
- 94 See WECZERKA op.cit. p. 38 ff.; same author. *Die deutschrechtliche Stadt des Mittelalters und das Städtewesen in der Walachei und der Moldau*.—Paul PHILIPPI, ed.: *Siebenbürgen als Beispiel Europäischen Kulturaustausches*. Köln-Wien, 1975. Siebenbürgisches Archiv Bd. 12.1–10.—C.C. GIURESCU: *Tirguri sau orase si cetate moldovene din secolul al X-lea pina la mijlocul secolului al XVI-lea*. Bucharest, 1967. (Bibliotheca Historica Romaniae, 2).
- 95 St. S. GOROVEI: *Dragos si Bogdan, intemeietorii Moldovei. Problemele ale formarii statului feudal Moldova*. Bucharest, 1973. pp. 86–87.—Renate MOHLENKAMPF: *Contributii la istoria orasului Iasi in secolele XIV-XV*. Anuarul Institutului de Istorie si Arheologie “A.D. Xenopopol”. Iasi, XXI. 1984. pp. 61–72.
- 96 Renate MÖHLENKAMP: Die ältesten Siegel moldauischer Städte. *Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas*, Wiesbaden 29, 1981. pp. 337–365.
- 97 Trade by barter at fairs: WECZERKA: *Das mittelalterliche...Deutschum*. op.cit. pp. 64–65. About the commerce with Beszterce/Bistrița there is a wealth of data in A. BERGER: *Urkunden Regesten aus dem Archiv der Stadt Bistritz*. Ed. Ernst WAGNER, I-II. Köln-Wien, 1986. Cf. Index.
- 98 The previously cited report of Bernardo Quirini (1599) and the description given by Dimitrie Cantemir in the 18th century, give largely exaggerated data. *Demetri CANTEMIRII Descriptio...Moldaviae*. Bucharest, 1973. pp. 72 and ff. The work *Istoria Romíniei III.*, op.cit., pp. 49 and ff., accepting those data, confers incredibly high numbers of houses and inhabitants. E.g. Galac/Galați 5,000 houses, i.e. 20,000 inhabitants; Sucsava/Suceava 16,000 houses, i.e. 64,000 inhabitants, etc. However, his map on p. 50. is very instructive: there are 49 settlements in Moldavia indicated and named, being of some importance for trade and crafts. Of these, 21 are partially or fully inhabited by Hungarians.
- 99 E.g. in Husz/Huși: Lakatos, Szabó, Fazekas, Kerekes, 2 Szócs, Mészáros; at Barlád/Bârlad: Mészáros, 2 Fazekas, 2 Kádár; at Domafalva/Răchiteni: 3 Kádár, Szócs, Fazekas, Áros; at Kutnár/Cotnari: 4 Lanio, Sutor, Tálás; Jászvásár/Iași: 5 Mészáros + 1 Lanio; Bognár, Kádár, Szócs, Csizmadia, Kocsmáros, Haláros, Varga, etc. See MIKECS: *A moldvai katolikusok*, op.cit. p.40 and ff., and HAJDU Mihály: *Az 1646–47. évi Bandinus féle összeírás*, op.cit., see Note 35.
- 100 HURMUZAKI XI. CCCLIV. No. 4. pp. 221–229.
- 101 BANDINUS 1648: Tatos/Tg. Trotuș, Bákó/Bacău. There are several reports about the mill that had been swept away several times by the Beszterce/Bistrița brook.
- 102 An anonymous report, dated 23 May 1670 (*Archives* No. 106).
- 103 Data concerning times prior to the 16th century: DOMOKOS: “Édes hazámnak akartam szolgálmi”, op.cit. p. 44 and ff. (not always exact); LÜKŐ, op. cit., dispersed, mainly in the notes. A wealth of data are provided also by the reports of missionaries. In the 1648 census of Bandinus, for instance, at Jászvásár/Iași: Benedictus Dobos, Joannes Trombitás, Petrus Bárdos, Gregorius Darabant, Nicolaus Puskás, etc.
- 104 Report by Beke Pál, after 31 July 1644 (*Archives* No. 56).
- 105 See the letter by Váradi János, 14 June 1610 (*Archives* No. 33), the Inventory made at Bákó/Bacău on 26 November 1677 (*Archives* No. 121), or the report of Vito Pilutio, prior to 17 December 1663 (*Archives* No. 99).
- 106 WECZERKA: *Das mittelalterliche...Deutschum*, op.cit. pp. 48 and ff.
- 107 Concerning donations: Bartholomeo Brutti, 14 January 1588 (*Archives* No. 9); AUNER: *A romániai magyar telepek*, op.cit. p. 28; about the general situation of the Catholic Hungarian villages see in general the reports of missionaries, moreover Radu ROSETTI: *Pamantul, Satenii and Stapanii in Moldova*. Bucharest, 1907.

- 108 Letter by the inhabitants of the village of Kutnár/Cotnari, 20 July 1671 (*Archives* No. 118); Letter by Szabófalva/Săbăoani and the surrounding five villages, 1 October 1671 (*Archives* No. 119).
- 109 Report of the Austrian Province of the Society of Jesus, 1647 (*Archives* No. 75).
- 110 The ethnographic field reports carried out in the Csángó villages in the 1950s repeatedly mention dead-end “clan estates”: KÓS et. al., op.cit., p. 91. There is no mention, however, whether the clans live in an extended family system.
- 111 See the census cited in Note 77.
- 112 See e.g. the 1696 census (*Archives* No. 135).
- 113 Description given by Antonio BONFINI about the campaign of Mátyás Hunyadi, King of Hungary, in Moldavia (*Archives* No. 1); certificate of the council of Sziget/Sighet, a town in Máramaros/Maramures County for the Council of Románvásár/Roman, 23 September 1585 (*Archives* No. 6.); Certificate of the Románvásár/Roman Council, 24 July 1588 (*Archives* No. 10); a book printed at Hagenau in Alsace and sent to Moldavia from the Transylvanian monastery of Fehéregyháza in 1511 (*Archives* No. 2). See further the correspondence with the Council of the town of Beszterce/Bistrița, the regests of which were published by BERGER: *Urkunden*, op.cit. Nos. 405, 534, 940, 945, 1308, 1535, 2291, 2678, 3597, etc.
- 114 Letters by the Catholics of Bákó/Bacău, Tatros/Tg. Trotuș and Románvásár/Roman from 1 to 8 April 1653 (*Archives* No. 87); Letters by Szabófalva/Săbăoani and the five villages, 1 October 1671 (*Archives* No. 119). The identification of “Catholic” with “Hungarian” was accepted by the Moldavian region, too. Archbishop Parcevic noted in 1670 that in Moldavia the Roman Catholic priest is called “Hungarian priest” also in the case when he happens to be Polish or Italian. See Petrus Parcevic, 12 July 1670 (*Archives* No. 109). Concerning the coexistence in mixed-population villages, see BINDEAR op. cit. and Note 75.
- 115 BENDA: *Csöbörcsök*, op. cit. pp. 900–903.
- 116 It seems that in the mid-1460s, thanks to the Hussite refugees, the market town of Tatros/Tg. Trotuș for some time became a centre of Hussite Hungarians, where educated lay people were also living. Such an individual might have been “Németi György, Hensel Emre fia”, who copied there the first Hungarian translation of the Bible, known as the “Hussite Bible”, in 1466. See GÁLOS op.cit and *Müncheni Kódex (1466), A négy evangélium szövege és szótára*, edited by SZABÓ T. Ádám, Budapest, 1985. This intellectual centre was rather ephemeral, in the 16th century there is no trace of it. In the second half of the 17th century, in the school run by the Franciscans in the Transylvanian village of Esztelnek, a Moldavian student appears every two-three years, but it is not known whether they returned home. E.g. in 1694: “Elias Szóc, libertinus Moldavus, Hustvariensis, annorum 13”; in 1689. ”Martinus Baltea (?), nobilis Moldavus,” etc. APF Ung.-Trans vol 1, pp. 262 and 341.
- 117 BENDA: *Csöbörcsök*, op.cit. p. 900.
- 118 The list of the Medieval bishops of Moldavia is in DOMOKOS: “Édes hazámnak akartam szolgálmi”, op. cit. pp. 39. and ff.; Romulus CANDEA: *Der Katholicismus in den Donaufürstentümern*. Leipzig, 1917; AUNER: *A romániai magyar telepek*, op.cit. pp. 17 and ff.; Gh MOISESCU: *Il cattolicesimo nella Moldavia alla fine del secolo XV*. Bucharest, 1942; GYETVAI Péter: *Egyházi szervezés főleg az egykori déli magyar területeken és a bácskai Tisza mentén*. München, 1987 (*Dissertationes Hungaricae ex Historia Ecclesiae VII*). To Moldavia, pp. 94–96.
- 119 Concerning the conversion of the Hussites: Report by Vásári György, 20 August 1571 (*Archives* No. 5), Voivod; Áron: Report by Edward Barton, 19 September 1592 (*Archives* No. 23); Report by Bogoslavic, summer 1623 (*Archives* No. 35); Bandinus 1648: Husz. TIMÁR Kálmán: *A moldovai husziták és csángók miséje. Százéves történelmi hazugság*. Kalocsa, 1931.
- 120 Cited by KÁROLYI Árpád: *Magyar Országgyűlési Emlékek XI*. Budapest, 1899. p. 230. According to TÓTH Zoltán, the report was written by Verancsics Faustus, Bishop of Csanád. *A Bécsi Magyar Történetkutató Intézet Évkönyve*, III. 1933. pp. 155 and ff.

- 121 Report by the Jesuit Giulio Mancinelli, 1585–87 (*Archives* No. 7).
- 122 See the Memorandum of the meeting of Moldavian priests, September 1642 (*Archives* No. 48).
- 123 In addition to the previously cited works on the general history of the Church, the Reports deposited in the *Archives* deal abundantly with this problem in the entire 17th century.
- 124 See the Hungarian-language Letter of Complaint written by Szabófalva/Săbăoani and the surrounding five villages, 1 October 1671 (*Archives* No. 119).
- 125 In several places, Marcus Bandinus describes that he scolded the monks who had neglected their duties, practised trade, got drunk, were having concubines or were even married, and made them promise to change their manner of living, but he left them in their posts (*Archives* No. 76).
- 126 The people of Tatros/Tg. Trotuș told Archbishop Bandinus that he should not send them a missionary who does not speak Hungarian (Bandinus 1648: Tatros/Trotuș. See also the declaration of the inhabitants of Csöböröcsök/Ciuburciu in 1644. BENDA: *Csöböröcsök*. p. 907, (*Archives* No. 56), and the Report of Bay Mihály and Pápai Gáspár, 1706 (*Archives* No. 141.).
- 127 For the proposals of Archbishop Parcevic, the contract signed with the monastery of Csíksomlyó and its fiasco in 1670 see *Archives* Nos. 107–109 and No. 117.
- 128 In a general regulation issued on 12 May 1590, Claudius ACQUAVIVA, the General of the Jesuit Order, instructed the Jesuit missionaries to visit the villages and look for people in need of spiritual comfort. (*Epistolae praepositorum generalium ad patres et fratres S.J., editio altera*. T. I. Rolarii. 1909. p. 223 and ff. At any rate, the members of the Jesuit mission in Moldavia virtually ignored these instructions.
- 129 Jacobus WUJEK, Vice-Provincial of the Jesuit mission in Transylvania, reported to General Acquaviva as early as 18 January 1590, that in Moldavia, the missionary work produces no results, “*quia et illis tribus qui ibi sunt, non satis provisum est de necessariis et pestis grassatur et gens dicitur esse barbara et a latinam linguam prorsus abhorrens, et quod caput est, frequens ibi est principum commutatio et quod unus statuit, alter destruit. Unde nihil stabili ibi sperandum est.*” *Monumenta Antiqua Hungariae*. Ed. Ladislaus LUKÁCS S. I. III Roma, 1981. pp. 380–381. At the end of the year 1589, P. Campana, head of the Polish Province, also reported that the situation in Moldavia is very unstable. It is feared that the Turks will make war on Voivod Péter the lame, whom they intend to replace. Therefore, he recommended to the Fathers of the mission in Moldavia that “*ne se grecs opponant, sed alios haereticos et catholicos excolant.*” *ibid.*, p. 519. It should be noted that no political considerations of this type were raised in the Franciscan mission. At the beginning of 1590, P. Campana decided to terminate the mission. Accordingly, in the spring and summer of 1591, he ordered the Jesuits still persevering in Jászvásár/Iași to come home.
- 130 Their activity is dealt with in more detail by TÓTH István György: *A diákok (licenciátusok) a moldvai csángó magyar művelődésben a XVII. században*. (Presentation at the conference “A magyarországi értelmiség a XVI-XVII. században. Szeged, 10–11 November 1987. Under publication.)
- 131 Report by Blasius Koicevic, 29 July 1661 (*Archives* No. 97).
- 132 Report by Bishop Quirini, 1599. He says about Elmon that he had been a Transylvanian Lutheran but upon his request he abrogated his confession (*Archives* No. 25). St. BIRSANESCU: *Schola Latina de la Cotnari*. Bucharest, 1957. There are no data available about the schools of the Greek Orthodox villages. In his reports, Bandinus mentions 10 schools to exist in Jászvásár/Iași, adding that they have rather few pupils. (BANDINUS 1648. Jászvásár, para 5.).
- 133 Report on Moldavia, May 1624 (*Archives* No. 36).
- 134 See e.g. Bruti, December 1588 (*Archives* No. 16); Bandinus 1648; Husz/Huși, Lukácsfalva/Lucăcești; the 1645 report of the Austrian Province of the Jesuit Order (*Archives* No. 67); Report by Koicevic, 29 July 1661 (*Archives* No. 97), etc.
- 135 Bandinus 1648: Tatros/Trotuș, Hilip; Report by Bernardino Valentini and Somlyai Miklós, af-

ter 2 March 1651 (Archives No. 83). Concerning the superstitions and exorcisms, see e.g. the 1645 report of the Austrian Province of the Jesuit Order.

- 136 See the report of Zöld Péter, parson of the Transylvanian village of Csíkdelne, who fled to Moldavia with his flock after the massacre of the Székelys committed by the Austrian Army at Madéfalva (the Siculicidium) addressed to Ignác Batthyány, bishop of Transylvania, in 1767. Published in *Veszely, Imets, Kovács utazása Moldva-Oláhhonban 1868-ban*, Maros-Vásárhely, 1870. pp. 61 and ff.
- 137 Report of Bay Mihály and Pápai Gáspár, and a letter by Lippay István, a Catholic priest, of 1706 (*Archives* Nos. 140–141.).

An Overview of the Modern History of the Moldavian Csángó-Hungarians

by Vincze Gábor

As of yet, no one has processed the 19th and 20th century history of the Moldavian *Csángó-Hungarian ethnic group*¹ with scientific thoroughness. While research concerning their history in the Middle Ages is quite substantial, the same cannot be said for studies about the subject over the last two hundred years. The exposure and publication of the most important sources² concerning the Moldavian Csángós are lacking; therefore, they are not accessible to those wanting to do basic research. Even data regarding changes in the actual numbers of the Hungarian-speaking population are scarce. For these reasons we are not able to present the modern history of the Moldavian Csángó-Hungarians in detail. This study is merely an outline of sorts, with which we hope to prompt readers interested in this subject to pursue further research.

1. THE CSÁNGÓ-HUNGARIANS IN BOURGEOIS-NATIONALIST ROMANIA

1.1 Changes in the populations of Catholics and Csángó-Hungarians

When attempting to analyse the population of the Moldavian Hungarians, the researcher is confronted with many difficulties. The only information we can rely on from the times before the first population statistics were drawn up, are the reports of those diplomats, travellers, researchers, or local ministers who came into contact with the Csángós. However, it is often the case that these sources make no distinction between *Roman Catholics* and Hungarians; every Catholic is automatically counted as Hungarian regardless of what language he or she speaks. From the very beginning the problems of an organised, government census were obvious in the published reports; either the data concerning mother tongue and nationality were missing (before 1918) or religious data were missing (after 1945). When all of these data are presented together, it can be seen that nationalist officials who were interested in presenting national minorities as “disappearing in statistics,” always manipulated the statistics to show the *less than actual* numbers of Csángós speaking Hungarian in Moldavia.

Based on the reports of contemporary Austrian consuls in Jászvásár/Iași, Auner

Károly, a Roman Catholic parson in Bucharest, estimated the population of Roman Catholic Hungarians living in Moldavia in 1807 to be 22,000 souls. While relying on “trustworthy church statistics,” he claimed seven years later, in 1814, that there were 23,331 “Hungarians in Moldavia.”³

A few years later, Petrás Incze János, a Csángó-Hungarian parson in Pusztina/Pustiana, estimated the number of Csángós living in Moldavia to be 45,000 in 1830, and 57,300⁴ in 1839, though he did add that “many among these 30, 40, or 50,000, speak Hungarian better or worse even today; while the others like calling themselves Hungarian, but can only speak one or two words, often nothing at all, and when they are spoken to by people in the ancient language, they blush with shame and reply in Oláh [Romanian] ‘I don’t know.’”⁵

The first government-organised population census in which the identity of the mother tongue was asked was in 1859, in the newly established unified principality of the two sides of the Danube. At this time in Moldavia there were 52,811 Roman Catholics, of which 71.5%—37,823 individuals—were listed as having Hungarian as a mother tongue.⁶ It is interesting to note that in those days 86.6% of the Catholics in Bákó/Bacău County and 94.6% of Catholics in Román/Roman County claimed to speak Hungarian as a mother tongue.

Later population statistics (until 1930) did not include mother tongue and nationality data,⁷ and for this reason a scientific publication that deals with this question would be very important. In the *Great Dictionary of Romanian Geography* at the turn of the 20th century, among others, it is admitted self-evidently that of 26,000 Catholics living in Bákó/Bacău County, *every single person is Hungarian*.⁸

After the foundation of Greater Romania, the first census was in 1930. At this time the statistics showed 109,953 Catholics in Moldavia, of which only 23,800 had Hungarian as a mother tongue. However, if we take a closer look at the published data, it becomes obvious that the nationalist officials seriously *forged* the data. For example, in Onyest/Onești, at the turn of the century, half of the population was still Hungarian; but in 1930, of the 2,945 people living there, 1,236 described themselves as Roman Catholic, but only 672 of those listed Hungarian as a mother tongue, and only 57 claimed to be of Hungarian nationality.⁹ Even more disturbing is the case of Külsőrekecsin/Fundu Răcăciuni, where the researchers couldn’t “find” a single person of Hungarian nationality, even though 833 individuals claimed to have Hungarian as a mother tongue. Another strange case is the village of Somoska/Șomușca, which can be considered a purely Csángó-Hungarian settlement; according to the census bureau, not one resident with Hungarian mother tongue lived there and in Klézse/Cleja there was only one such individual.¹⁰ (In the latter—according to the *Great Dictionary of Romanian Geography*, published 30 years previously—there were about 2,400 Hungarians!) Based on the calculations of Tánzos Vilmos—ethnographer and professor in Kolozsvár/Cluj—during that time there were some 45,000 Csángós who spoke Hungarian.¹¹

1.2 The reasons for the language switch among the Hungarian Catholic population

In the middle of the 19th century, two Hungarian ethnic groups lived outside the boundaries of the Hungarian Kingdom: the *Székelys of Bukovina* and the Csángós of Moldavia. Though there were some traces of common heritage (the ancestors of the Bukovina Székelys also fled to Moldavia in 1764 after the Székely massacres of Madéfalva/Siculeni; but later, in the '70s and '80s, they moved to Bukovina, which was under Austrian rule), with regard to their identities and language situation, the difference between them is *substantial*. Since the Bukovina Székelys were not exposed to conscious assimilation efforts, they were able to preserve their strong Hungarian identity all along,¹² while the situation of the Csángós—as a result of the developments of the previous centuries—was quite different.

In our opinion, the language and identity switch among the Catholic population of people with Hungarian mother tongue can be explained by three factors.

One factor is the nature of the *structure of society*: in the age of “national rebirth” the Moldavian Hungarians constituted a virtually *homogeneous* feudal society, therefore we may call this an *incomplete society*. (At the end of the Middle Ages, Hungary was a *stratified* society: there was a layer of Hungarian noble landowners, there were free peasants—the so-called “részes”/razes/share-farmers—while the population in the mining and farming cities consisted of mostly Hungarian—and some Saxon—miners, industrial workers, and merchants. This type of society—for reasons we cannot elaborate on in this study—gradually “disappeared” between the 15th and 18th centuries.) Therefore, the social layer (middle-class city dwellers, a lesser noble layer, ecclesiastic intelligentsia) that might have been the preserver and cultivator of the Hungarian national spirit, a social layer that could have mediated the elements of modern national culture forming in Hungary during the Age of Reform, was *missing*.

The *lack of ecclesiastic intelligentsia* of national spirit can be traced to the fact that institutionalised use of the Hungarian language in the Roman Catholic Church in Moldavia was non-existent; over the course of the Middle Ages the building of a church union with a strong, organised-power structure was unsuccessful. In Szeret/Siret an episcopate was indeed established (later the headquarters were moved to Bákó/Bacău, but for centuries the post of the head of the church was filled by bishops of Polish descent, who were not concerned with finding Hungarian speaking priests for the Hungarian speaking congregation. The constant shortage of priests could never be eased by Hungarian missionaries; moreover, in the 16th century, Polish, and later Italian, missionaries arrived in place of the diminishing number of Hungarian monks. None of these foreign missionaries knew Hungarian or was willing to learn it. (There were a few rare exceptions. One was Pusztina/Pustiana's Italian parson, Filippo Corridoni, who learned Hungar-

ian, “for which he is highly regarded by his congregation,” wrote Kovács Ferenc during his visit to Moldavia in 1870.¹³) Throughout the centuries, the Csángó-Hungarians wrote letters to the popes and the Hungarian heads of church asking for Hungarian priests instead of the foreign priests who did not speak their language.¹⁴ Often their efforts were supported by Hungary. But because of the plotting of the Italian missionaries, Hungarian priests could only remain for a short time. (Not only did the Italian missionaries, in protecting own livelihood, scheme against the Hungarian priests working in Moldavia, but Austrian consuls had their part in the plot as well. The Austrian point of view in the 18th, and even the 19th century was that sending Hungarian missionaries to preach to subjects who had fled to another country would only be supporting illegal migration.¹⁵)

Not only was there a lack of priests who spoke Hungarian, but in Moldavia—as opposed to Bukovina—*there were no schools teaching in the Hungarian language*. There were a few places that taught Hungarian on some lower level (mostly catechism classes), but after modern Romanian nationalism became stronger—from the middle of the 19th century—the government put an end to even these Hungarian classes.¹⁶

1.3 The tools of Romanian assimilation politics

The *conscious* assimilation of the Moldavian Catholic population—the Csángós—can first be witnessed in the 19th century when the practice (at first only in certain settlements) of *prohibiting masses in Hungarian* began. The first news of this was recorded in 1845 by Petrás Incze János, parson of Pusztina/Pustiana: upon highest order, every second Sunday in Szabófalva/Săbăoani—one of the largest settlements of the so-called Northern Csángós—mass must be conducted in Romanian. This is the same situation in Bákó/Bacău—he writes—in the south, while in Ploszkucény/Ploscuțeni the situation is even worse; there the cantor is only allowed to sing in Hungarian with the congregation every third Sunday. The Csángó-Hungarian Minorite also noticed that: “it seems that the most and greatest attention is given to Oláh-ization.”¹⁷

In 1881, the Romanian government requested that the Vatican set up a Roman Catholic diocese in Jászvásár/Iași. The reason for this was because they realised: the only way to assimilate the Csángó-Hungarians clinging fanatically to their faith was with the help of the Roman Catholic Church and foreign priests. In 1884 they organised the Jászvásár/Iași episcopate (the Pope appointed the Italian Minorite Nicolao Giuseppe/Nicolaus Josephus Camilli, who had previously served in Tamásfalva), and two years later established a seminary where they reformed the Csángó youths of originally Hungarian identity into becoming fanatic *Romanian priests*. The chief warriors of this forced Romanian assimilation project were these new “Janissary priests.” (The method was to enrol the still Hungarian-speaking Csángó children in the seminary at age 7 or 8, and when they graduated

they would speak Romanian and have Romanian identities. Over the course of their studies, they were not allowed back to their homes for even a single day.¹⁸⁾

The *banishment* of the Hungarian language from within the walls of the church, directed by the words of authority, had already taken place during the times of Bishop Camilli: in the 1889 Episcopal letter, he ordered that “the required prayers in the churches of the parsonage can not be recited in any other language except Romanian...”¹⁹ Five years later, in 1894, the bilingual catechism in use until then was prohibited.

Since the residents of Lujzikalagor/Luizi-Călugăra refused to accept the fact that Hungarian was not allowed in the church, the head priest—who was of Italian descent but had succumbed to the service of Romanian chauvinism—in May 1915 declared the following to the Hungarian congregation: “...in Romania the language of the people is Romanian and cannot be anything else. It would be an act of injustice against its own nation, [...] it would be shameful if a Romanian citizen would want to speak a foreign language, like Hungarian, in his own country. Now I ask the residents of Lujzi Kaluger: [...] are they Hungarian, or are they Romanian? If they are Hungarian, let them go to Hungary where people speak the Hungarian language, but if they are Romanian, as they truly are, then they should be ashamed that they don’t know the language of their country.”²⁰ This point of view haunts the whole 20th century history of the Csángós.

The *solution* to the Csángó question was probably most openly expressed by a Transylvanian Romanian chauvinist journalist in 1880: “In two of the most beautiful and largest counties in Moldavia, namely in Bákó/Bacău and Román, the farmers—meaning the peasants with smaller areas of land—speak only Hungarian. [...] Mr. Nicolae Cretulescu, Minister of Religion and Public Education, [...] please try to achieve the goal of persuading the population of these villages [...] to be of one language and heart, for it is by reaching this goal that the fate of our country is determined; for this reason, make these Csángós Romanian; free them from this abhorred name, one they do not even wish to have themselves, and we will be grateful to you forever. In order to reach this goal, the following needs to be done: schools must be established in every Hungarian settlement, even in the most remote of valleys; the children must be taken to school with the help of enforcement in winter and summer, especially the girls, who will become mothers and will teach their children Romanian; secondly, priests must be brought in from Transylvanian-Romanian communities who will preach and read to them in Romanian. When the priest blesses them in Romanian then the cantor will sing in Romanian, and when the mothers will sing their children lullabies in Romanian, that’s when we will have reached our goal.”²¹

The chauvinistic Romanian officials did indeed do everything in their power to *make Romanians* of the Csángós living in “the heart of Moldavia:” people who spoke Hungarian and considered themselves to be Hungarian. Besides the Catholic priests, the strongest power of the assimilation politics, as Ioanu Polescu, the

author of the above quoted article suggested, were the *village teachers*. In the decades following the founding of the modern Romanian state, a whole string of Romanian government elementary schools were established in the regions where the Csángó-Hungarians lived. However, since the schools were to serve the goal of forming Romanians of its students, Bucharest sent teachers who did not speak Hungarian (and were Orthodox to boot!); therefore, it is not surprising that they had little result in teaching the children the art of reading and writing, especially those children who didn't speak any Romanian to begin with. The punishment for speaking Hungarian in school was a whipping. It is no wonder that many children fled from school; in addition, many parents were unwilling to send their children to a school where they were at the mercy of brutal teachers who were unable to communicate with their students. (This is part of the reason why, even in the years between the two world wars, 60–65% of the people in Csángó settlements were illiterate.)

When the modern Romanian state administration began, starting from the structuring of the population census, the project to make the Csángó-Hungarian *family names into Romanian names* began. The names either were written using the Romanian phonetic system or re-structured into the mirror-image of the name. Often the Csángós were given new names that “sounded Romanian,” but which had nothing to do with the original meaning of their family names. And so “Bordás became Spataru, László became Laslau, Veress became Rosu—explains Bartha András’s village monograph published after 1989. Becze could not be translated into Romanian and so it stayed the same but was spelt with Romanian letters: Beta.”²² It must be mentioned, however, that after the incorporation of the government “Romanian-ized family name,” “parallel christenings” were still a common practice in Csángó-Hungarian communities. The new “Romanian name” was only used at official places and events, while in everyday use, various other Hungarian names were used in the villages. (The people regarded these Hungarian names as their “real” names.)

1.4 The connection of the Moldavian Csángós to Hungary

The connection of the Moldavian Catholic Csángós to the Hungarian Kingdom was quite *intense* in the Middle Ages. However, after the fall of the independent Hungarian state, their only connection with the Hungary under Hapsburg rule was through the missionaries arriving from Hungary. For various reasons we cannot elaborate on in this essay, it was only after the “national awakening” in the ‘20s and ‘30s of the 19th century that Hungarian “public opinion” became aware of the fact that there were Hungarians living beyond the Carpathian Mountains. From this point on, several scientific studies (especially in the Scientific Collection and elsewhere) dealt with the danger of assimilation that the Moldavian Hungarians were exposed to. Under the Batthyány and Szemere

governments in 1848–49, this was one of the circumstances that contributed to the idea of *relocating* the Moldavian Csángós to *Hungary*. But because of the unsuccessful Revolution, this idea could not be realised.²³

The unfortunate fate of the Csángó-Hungarians, however, was not forgotten. Many travellers visited them, among them Kovács Ferenc, Professor of Roman Catholic Theology in Gyulafehérvár/Alba Iulia. He was the one who pointed out, after the year following the 1867 Austrian-Hungarian reconciliation, that “there is a party in Moldavia-Oláh country that does not recognise any foreign elements, and attacks everything that is not Oláh with fire and flame.” Kovács suggested that the Hungarian government persuade Bucharest and the Holy See to set up an *independent, Hungarian-directed Moldavian diocese* and place it under the direction of the Gyulafehérvár/Alba Iulia diocese, which would then be raised to the level of an episcopate.²⁴ His suggestion was not accepted by the leaders in Budapest, but knowing the “assimilation zeal” of the politicians in Bucharest, it was unlikely that the Romanians would have allowed the establishment of a Catholic diocese under Hungarian direction in Moldavia.

By the 1870s and ‘80s, authorities in Budapest realised the endangered state of the Csángó-Hungarians, but the Hungarian liberal political elite was thinking in terms of *citizens*, and the Csángós (contrary to the Bukovinians, and the Székelys who had migrated to Regát in the 1880s) were Romanian citizens. As a result of this negligence,²⁵ while Romanian propaganda made known to the whole world how Romanians²⁶ were “oppressed” in Hungary, Budapest was not concerned about the brutal assimilation politics against the national minorities—including the Csángós—in the country next door. By the time Gyórfy István—in the middle of World War I—pointed out what the previous governments in Budapest had ignored, it was too late. (“While Romania declared to the world how their blood-relatives were being oppressed, they were oppressing the relatives of the Hungarians with a premeditated cruelty that had no similar example in Europe.”²⁷)

Interestingly, it was during World War I, for the first time in the 20th century, that Hungarians fought against Hungarians. After Romania joined the war in August of 1916, the Hungarian-speaking soldiers of the Austro-Hungarian Empire and the Romanian Kingdom shot at one another at the bloody battles in Transylvania and later at Ojtoz and Marasesti as well...²⁸

1.5 The Moldavian Csángós in Greater Romania

Paradoxically, the Trianon Peace Treaty had a positive effect on the Hungarians in Moldavia, since their *artificial isolation* from the Transylvanian Hungarians ceased to exist. Now it was easier to travel to the Pentecost Pilgrimage in Csíksomlyó/Șumuleu Ciuc. (Previously it had been very difficult to obtain a passport, since the Romanian officials tried to keep the Csángós away from Csíksomlyó/Șumuleu Ciuc.) Now the Transylvanian Hungarian monks and

Catholic priests could *travel to Moldavia* much easier. (For example, P. Kukla Tarzícus traveled from Csíksomlyó/Șumuleu Ciuc, through the Hungarian speaking Csángó villages at Christmas, Easter, and in the summer months for a decade beginning in 1923.²⁹ Dr. Németh Kálmán, parson in Józseffalva in Bukovina, also held regular masses and confessions in Hungarian in several villages in Bákó/Bacău County.³⁰)

Naturally, Romanian officials were not too happy about the regular meetings taking place between the Csángó-Hungarians and their Transylvanian language-relatives. In the '30s, the gendarmerie had orders to *escort* any “suspicious strangers” out of Csángó-Hungarian settlements, whether they were Hungarian or Transylvanian (!) ethnographers (namely Lükő Gábor and Szabó T. Attila³¹), or Transylvanian-Hungarian tourists. (Baumgartner Sándor, who was a Professor of Theology in Jászvásár/Iași until the 1930s, personally saw the order given to the gendarmes to send away any Hungarians arriving in the Csángó-Hungarian villages.³²)

Hungarian ethnographers, linguists, and journalists who visited the Moldavian Csángós unanimously described how the Csángós who still speak Hungarian, living in *extreme poverty*, are very dejected by the fact that in spite of all their pleas, the establishment of a Hungarian church ministry was rejected by the head of the church.³³ (In those days only Neumann Péter, pastor from Bogdánfalva/Valea Seacă, held masses and confessions; the other Hungarian priest, Ferencz János, was relocated by his bishop to a village where there were Catholics who spoke only Romanian.) The authorities even stopped the children from going to non-denominational schools in Transylvanian-Hungarian villages—as there were no Hungarian schools in Moldavia. Based on the Anghelescu chauvinistic education law, the right to publicity of those schools that enrolled Csángó children was revoked, since the Csángós were considered Romanian, and therefore could not study in Hungarian non-denominational schools.³⁴

By the 1930s the situation had become so bad that, for example, in the purely Hungarian villages of Forrófalva/Fărăoani and Kákova/Cacova, the parson, Romilla Bonaventura, declared the following from the pulpit: “Let the Hungarian language and all those who speak it be cursed!” In the village he closed down spinning-rooms and forbade voluntary co-operative peasants’ work, because the participants usually passed the time singing Hungarian songs; moreover, he threatened not to wed those young couples who did not know their catechism in Romanian.³⁵ Before the outbreak of World War II, the prefect of Bákó/Bacău County ordered that “in Catholic churches masses will be conducted in Romanian and Latin only. Priests and cantors cannot sing any hymns except in Romanian and Latin. [...] We will severely punish anyone who does not follow these orders.”³⁶ This order was a severe blow to several Csángó-Hungarian villages not only because sometimes—as mentioned earlier—masses were conducted in Hungarian by visiting Franciscans from Csíksomlyó/Șumuleu Ciuc, but also because

in places where the “deák” (cantor) was allowed to sing at least some of the hymns in Hungarian, this practice was stopped. (The cantors who spoke Hungarian and shared Hungarian sympathies were persecuted not only by the priests but also by secular officials. One cantor, who led the congregation for years at the Csík-somlyó/Șumuleu Ciuc Pilgrimage, was threatened by the head magistrate that he would be “broken” if he did not stop his actions...³⁷)

On the eve of World War II, when the government turned to right-wing internal politics, anti-minority hysteria reached its peak and the situation became even worse for the Csángós. There were probably a few “renegades” who did not pay heed to the 1938 order, for in the next few years the Romanian government summoned all the cantors to the gendarme headquarters “at the request of the Bákó/Bacău County church,” where they were “threatened with imprisonment if they continued their practice of Hungarian masses and singing of Hungarian hymns.”³⁸

1.6 Attempt at the relocation of the Csángó-Hungarians to Hungary during World War II

During the autumn and winter of 1940, about 13–14 thousand Hungarians—the Székelys of Bukovina—decided to free themselves from Romanian rule and “move home” to Hungary. This decision was based on circumstances too complex to elaborate on in this essay, but was also based on the persuasion of Németh Kálmán, parson in Józseffalva.³⁹ Since more and more people fled to Hungary each year, the government in Budapest, which had been hesitant up to that point, concluded an agreement with Bucharest and *organised the transfer* of all the Székelys to Hungary. Besides a few families, the only people who remained in Bukovina were the priests left without congregations. The latter were appointed by the Jászvásár/Iași bishop Mihail Robu—a man with Csángó-Hungarian parents—to serve in a few Moldavian parsonages. (The bishop probably sent these priests to the Csángó-Hungarian villages because, due to the lack of priests in the churches of these villages, it was the “deáks” or cantors who were leading the masses.⁴⁰)

But soon enough the bishop regretted his decision. The Catholic priests who came in from Bukovina tried to convince the congregations to follow the example of the Bukovina Székelys and *move to Hungary*.⁴¹ In the end it was not the bishop who commanded the priests to leave; they fled of their own accord. The parsons of Romanian identity who spoke Romanian—partially because of the agitation of the Hungarian priests, and partially because they felt them to be their rivals—started to report the actions of the Hungarian priests to the military courts; for this reason the Hungarian priests were forced to flee to Hungary.

Not that the Csángó-Hungarians needed persuasion, for when in 1941 they heard about how the Székelys who left Bukovina were granted land and houses in

Bácska—an area that had been reoccupied from Yugoslavia in the spring of 1941—the desire to “go home” grew within them.⁴²

At the beginning of September 1941, a delegation appeared at the Hungarian Diplomatic Agency. It consisted of the representatives of two Csángó-Hungarian villages, Lábnik/Vladnic and Gajcsána/Găiceana-Magyarfalu/Unguri who asked for permission for the members of their villages to *emigrate to Hungary*. Upon hearing this, Nagy László, Ambassador in Bucharest, reported to the Hungarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs that the desire to *move to Hungary*, especially in certain villages, was *very strong*. “This can especially be witnessed among the poor and among the younger generation, the latter wanting to escape from the encumbering duty of their army requirement.”⁴³ (In addition, the Ambassador had heard from the priests from Bukovina who had served for a few months in Moldavia that in spite of the scheming of the Romanian priests the local officials “had gotten used to the idea of the Csángós moving to Hungary, and would not make great efforts to hinder this cause.” And so he explained that in the event of the repatriation of the Csángós, the same method must be followed as that with the Székelys: the “slow filtering in” of the people.)

The “slow filtering in” of the Csángó-Hungarians, therefore, began in 1941. By February of 1942, about 100–110 families had received repatriation papers, but as it turned out later, only 32 heads of families (with 119 family members) and 17 “individual persons” left Moldavia. The rest—though they had renounced their Romanian citizenship and sold their homes and land—*did not leave Moldavia*.⁴⁴ Several contemporary sources state that originally, many more people had planned to emigrate than the actual number of people who did leave their homes.⁴⁵ The reason for not leaving, among those who had received their repatriation papers, was that the male members of the family had been called in to complete their service in the army, and the family did not want to leave without them. In addition, for two years starting from the summer of 1941, *journeys within the country* were limited so some people could not even travel to Bucharest in order to reach the Hungarian Embassy. There were also examples of *Romanian officials stepping in*: three farmers from Klézse/Cleja were arrested because they were “spreading Hungarian propaganda” by preparing the Csángó-Hungarians for their repatriation into Hungary.⁴⁶

In the end, by the spring of 1942, a minute number of Csángó-Hungarians settled in Hungary: according to various data, their numbers were not more than 40 families: some 160 individuals.

After the spring of 1942, for two years the emigration of Csángó-Hungarians to Hungary *almost completely stopped*. The reasons for this were the restrictions on internal travel and the fact that the Hungarian officials stopped issuing repatriation papers (for those *ca.* 40 Csángó-Hungarians who could not receive their papers to leave Romania because of the travel restrictions⁴⁷).

Therefore, until the beginning of 1944, the Hungarian government did not

deal with the question of the repatriation of the Csángós. But 1944 seemed to be the right year to begin attempts at the *mass repatriation* of the Moldavian Csángós once again. The Russian front began to approach the eastern border of Romania, and the news reached Budapest that the Romanian authorities had ordered the evacuation of Bessarabia and Bukovina;⁴⁸ moreover, according to confidential information, the Bucharest government had given the order to people living east of the Szeret/Siret River that “anyone having any possibility to move to the right side of the Szeret/Siret—to relatives or anywhere else—quickly do so.”⁴⁹

At first the idea was that with a *mutual agreement* between Romania and Hungary this question might be resolved (as it happened with the Székelys of Bukovina in May of 1941). The Hungarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, however, was not sure that they could come to agreement with Bucharest on this question. They believed that the Romanians would only agree to take those people into account who were listed as of Hungarian nationality or Hungarian mother tongue in the 1930 population census. They were afraid that the Romanians would not even let *those* individuals out, “not only because they made up a significant number of the working population, but also because they did not want the number of Moldavian Roman Catholics they deemed to be Romanian to diminish...”⁵⁰ It must be noted, that because of the aggressive assimilation politics, the *consciousness of belonging to the Hungarian nation* faded among many Csángós; therefore, it was questionable how many people would be willing to voluntarily emigrate to Hungary amid possible anti-propaganda from the chauvinist-spirited priests.⁵¹ (The Director of the Hungarian Commission of the Repatriation of Foreign Hungarians, Commissioner Bonczos Miklós, estimated in February that “15,000 Csángó families are to be expected, which comes to about 75,000 individuals.”⁵² In July, however, an anonymous report stated that “according to the Moldavian Csángó-Hungarians who came over in the last weeks, if it is possible, the arrival of some 50,000 souls can be expected.”⁵³ Though Commissioner Bonczos reported in his transcription to Kállay Miklós, dated February 21, that [he] “would be willing to raise the Csángós of Moldavia from their homes with the right propaganda without the consent of the Romanian government...”⁵⁴ such open agitation in certain settlements of Moldavia would obviously not have been tolerated by the Romanian officials.

Following the German occupation on March 19, 1944, the newly formed Sztójay government gave its consent to the *secret organisation work* of the Commission in the beginning of April. The main source of information and one of the key figures in the organisation was the information officer of the Hungarian consulate in Brassó/Braşov, Baumgartner Sándor (Besenyő, after 1940). He had extensive knowledge of the area since, as mentioned earlier, he taught Catholic theology at Jászvásár/Iaşi University until the middle of the 1930s. In April, he secretly visited the Csángó-Hungarian villages in Bákó/Bacău County and in the more important centres he set up a web of “cells” or “reliable men” who would

help in forming a unit of all the villages still inhabited by Csángó-Hungarians; but they had to do it in such a way that the Romanian officials would not know about it.⁵⁵ Then when the officials order the evacuation of these specific counties, the greatest number of people should be “directed towards” Hungary.

Besenyő's plan was based in part on the theory that as the front approached, the evacuation of Bákó/Bacău County would be as substantial as the evacuation had been in Bessarabia and Bukovina. He was also hoping that his men would be able to go about their business without the knowledge of the Romanian officials and would be able to win the Csángó-Hungarians over to the idea of moving to Hungary.

During this time, it was not only Besenyő Sándor who worked among the Csángós, but as we know from a strictly confidential report,⁵⁶ the *Hungarian army reconnaissance* officials also sent in a few of their men. However, according to the writer of the report, the situation was not quite as reassuring as Besenyő reported earlier. The same problem arose as before, when the mass repatriation of Csángó-Hungarians began: almost everyone has been summoned for Romanian army duty and so “that same layer of men are missing who would be fit, through their age, to decide the fate of their family. [...] The opinion of our reconnaissance men is that Csángó-Hungarians welcome the idea of moving to Hungary, but in the absence of a father, husband, son, etc. they will only be able to reach a decision with some difficulty.”

Though, for the above-mentioned reasons, the organised, mass repatriation did not begin in the summer of 1944, the infiltration of Csángó-Hungarians into Hungary was *continuous*. There are no reliable statistics with regard to the number of Csángós repatriated, but according to partial sources it seems that some 250 *individuals* crossed the Hungarian-Romanian border during the summer of 1944.⁵⁷ Because of the attitude of the Romanian officials, the morale in Pusztina/Pustiana (where most of the emigrates came from) was so dejected that—as may be read in a contemporary report—“the whole community is packing, everyone wants to go, even the priest.”⁵⁸

While the Moldavian Csángó-Hungarian families slowly filtered into Hungary, plans were still underway to determine how it would be possible to move at least the residents of Bákó/Bacău County “home.” The plan of the Hungarian Commission of the Repatriation of Foreign Hungarians was based on the following: 1. if the time came for a possible forward assault of the Russians, then the greater part of the residents of Moldavia would be resettled in Muntenia or Oltenia; 2. in this instance, the refugees would flee along the shortest path,⁵⁹ through Háromszék, which would bring them back to Romanian territory; 3. at this point “our Csángó brethren would also arrive inconspicuously,” but they would stay in Hungary. The optimism of the workers of the Commission was strengthened by the fact that all those Csángó-Hungarians who had settled in Bácska in Hungary, and had received houses, land, supplies, and tools, had cor-

responded regularly with the people at home, who—according to their replies—“were ready to depart for Hungary as soon as an opportunity presented itself.”⁶⁰

But the preparations were in vain, for an unexpected event in Bucharest upset all calculations. On August 23, Mihály I arrested Marshall Antonescu, “leader of the nation,” in the Royal Palace in Bucharest, and announced that Romania would break with all previous allies and become the ally of the victorious party. From the point of view of our discussion, this meant that the military resistance against the Russians came to an end, and hence the evacuation of Bákó/Bacău County was not needed.

And so the plans could not be realised: those same plans that in 1848–49 would have helped the Csángós of Hungarian tongue and identity *settle back into Hungary* from where their ancestors fled at the beginning of the New Age. Only 141 families,⁶¹ some 400 individuals, were able to cross the border during the War, to find new homes and till new land after 1945 in the emptied villages of the relocated Germans on the far side of the Danube. However, as soon as word spread that the fate of the Csángó-Hungarians who had settled in Hungary had turned out well, many of those who had stayed home wished to follow their families and friends.

2. REPATRIATION OR EMANCIPATION? MOLDAVIAN CSÁNGÓ-HUNGARIANS IN THE YEARS OF THE “PEOPLE’S DEMOCRACY” (1945–1959)

2.1 The continuation of emigration fever after World War II

Despite the fact that the Hungarian government supported the repatriation of Csángó-Hungarians in Hungary—as has been demonstrated—only a few could benefit from the opportunity offered. Those who were forced to remain at home were justified in thinking that, if they had not yet succeeded in emigrating to Hungary, their chance finally came when “democratic” (Soviet friendly) governments were in power in both countries. However, they could not have known that the order of the Hungarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs was that *no one should be allowed into Hungary* from Romania. The new government, under the leadership of the Smallholders’ Party representative Nagy Ferenc, had received information that Romanian officials claiming to be “Hungarian friendly,” were planning as much as possible to “rid Transylvania of Hungarians” before the closing of peace talks.⁶²

For this reason, in May 1946, a Csángó-Hungarian from Pusztina/Pustiana and a Csángó-Hungarian from Lészped/Lespezi went to the Hungarian Mission⁶³ in vain. They were given no more than encouraging words when inquiring about how the residents of the two villages “as well as the majority of Csángós living in other communities”⁶⁴ “could move to Hungary.”

Several factors encouraged Csángó-Hungarians to emigrate to Hungary. One of them could have been the usual: *the prohibition of the use of the Hungarian language in church* and the lack of priests who spoke Hungarian. In addition, if the congregation dared to request that a Hungarian pastor be sent, “the priest did not refrain from using the name of Christ to declare that this request brings shame to Jesus and the faith.”⁶⁵

After the end of World War II, however, new problems combined with the old ones. The flames of anti-Hungarian nationalism reached the ethnic group living in Moldavia as well; in consequence, Csángó-Hungarians were bombarded with *threats* that, like the Germans, they too would be deported to the Soviet Union.

During the land reform, Csángó-Hungarians were *deliberately excluded* from the land grants.⁶⁶ The question of land was a centuries-old problem in that region (this is why so many Csángó villages took part in the Romanian peasant revolt in 1907), and so this was a serious problem for Csángó-Hungarians who were struggling to earn their livelihood. In addition, in 1946–7 a serious drought forced many people to make their living elsewhere. During this time, Csángós went to work in Bánát, a Hungarian region in Transylvania, where the drought was not as severe, while others would rather have moved to Hungary as a result of the long-term dry spell.

Finally, let us not forget, that the example of those Csángó-Hungarians who had succeeded in emigrating to Hungary in 1941–44 was very positive. As mentioned earlier, during the War (and after 1945) those people who had settled in Hungary kept up a regular correspondence with relatives and friends who stayed home; though they had to leave the Southern regions of Hungary along with the Székelys of Bukovina at the end of the war, they found permanent homes and land on the far side of the Danube in the villages of the relocated Germans.

The Foreign Ministry in Budapest was worried about the news concerning the willingness of masses of Csángó-Hungarians from Moldavia to move to Hungary. By allowing them to come, they would be creating a *precedent* that would make it easy for the Romanians to execute their plans of “ridding Romania of Hungarians.” Therefore, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs ordered the diplomats of the Hungarian Mission not to make any concrete promises to any Csángó-Hungarians seeking information about repatriation in Hungary. For this reason, they tried to reassure the farmers from Pusztina/Pustiana and Lészped/Lespezi ed that “after the peace talks are over, the Hungarian Republic will represent them. They will do everything in their power for the Csángó villages to receive Hungarian priests, notaries, and teachers.”⁶⁷

However, after the peace talks were over, the case of the Moldavian Csángó-Hungarians was not taken up. In the beginning, Hungary wanted to incorporate *modified borders* but when it turned out that the greater powers didn’t support this idea, at the last minute they tried to add a *minority protection clause* (which might

have improved the situation of the Csángós if the law had been *applied* as well), but this last effort was too late and nothing came of it.⁶⁸

Csángó-Hungarians—unaware of these activities—still hoped that somehow, in some way, they would be able to move to Hungary. In October 1946, other Csángó-Hungarians appeared at the Hungarian Mission and informed the diplomats that *half of Puszтина/Pustiana would like to settle in Hungary*. They also said that in spite of the “Hungarian-friendly” propaganda of the Groza administration, the *situation is unchanged*: “In the name of 400 souls, the Roman Catholic Church Committee of the Csángó Hungarians in Lészped requested from the Bákó/Bacău County Roman Catholic Archdeacon that the Hungarian mass be reinstated in the churches, as they had been informed that Romania denied minority rights to minorities. The archdeacon answered this request by saying that they would not receive a Roman Catholic priest, not even in 10 years. As for masses in the mother tongue, the dialogue was over. Masses must be conducted in Romanian...”⁶⁹

It is no wonder that, following these events, many people in the villages were *very ready* to go to Hungary, especially after so many of their friends and relatives had already made their new home there during the War. Unfortunately, they had to realise bitterly that the Mother Country—who had already taken so many of their relatives under her wing again after centuries of separation—did not want them.⁷⁰ Their pain was even greater, for in many situations, the emigration to Hungary would have meant the *reunification* of parted families; family members who stayed home wanted to join their parents, siblings, children, etc. who had gone to Hungary after 1941. Though many wished to go, only 22 families from Lábnik/Vladnic succeeded in leaving in January and July of 1947.⁷¹

With regard to the repatriation intentions of Csángós, the attitude of Romanian officials can be said to be *contradictory*. Through letters⁷² written between 1946–48 to relatives, friends, and acquaintances who lived in Hungary from people still living in Moldavia, as well as from published memoirs, it turns out that it was not only the Hungarian Political Mission that *rejected* the emigration requests, but often the Romanian officials as well. In other instances, the Romanians *blatantly supported* the emigration of Csángó-Hungarians by spreading “whispered propaganda:” Hungary awaits the Csángós in the vacated houses of the Germans. The Csángós who were “led on” were given *one-sided repatriation papers*: even though the Romanians allowed them to leave, since Hungary did not give them entry visas, they were not allowed into the country.⁷³

2.2 The Csángó Politics of Stalinist Romania

In 1947, when hundreds of Csángó-Hungarians pleaded with Hungarian foreign affairs officials for repatriation permits, a *visible change* came to pass in Bucharest’s Csángó politics. This of course was not independent of the political changes going on in the country itself. This was the year when (with great

fraud) the Romanian Communist Party (RKP) won the November 1946 parliamentary elections, and began to liquidate civilian opposition and started to *battle* with the Roman Catholic Church, who were very much against them.

At the beginning of this “anticlerical war,” the RKP found an exceptional ally in the Hungarian People’s Union (MNSZ), the organisation for the protection of their interests led by the Communist Hungarian Minority. The re-awakening of the Csángó question was convenient for the MNSZ, because they had to stop the work they had done in more-or-less representing interests in 1945–46 because of the decision of the RKP.⁷⁴ In the summer of 1947, therefore, they began the re-establishment of local organisations in villages where Csángó-Hungarians lived as well. There were places where the MNSZ was popular because it supported the incorporation of mass in Hungarian, but in other places it was popular simply because it was “a Hungarian organisation.” However, our theory, based on the few sources we have, is that the MNSZ organisation was established not because of the needs of the people, but because of a *higher will* that desired it. The reason for this assertion is that the Csángós (also) knew that on a national as well as a local level, it was the communists who were leading the union,⁷⁵ and it was known that communists were *opposed* to the Catholic Church.

The RKP supported not only the agitation-organisation work of the MNSZ among the Csángós in the beginning, but also the establishment of schools teaching in Hungarian, because they thought that by reducing the severe illiteracy rate and by teaching children in their mother tongue, they would be able to awaken in the Csángós an inclination to *spread communist propaganda and conduct political work amongst themselves*.

The organisation of the first Hungarian schools began in the autumn of 1947, and classes began in the first days of 1948. In the beginning, each school in Lészped/Lespezi and Klézse/Cleja had three teachers, while in Újfalú (Ferdinánd) and Kűlsőrekecsin/Fundu Răcăciuni each school had one teacher; but in a few weeks, another eight complemented the already existing eight teachers. Because of the lack of detailed sources, we do not yet know how the Moldavian Hungarian school system was built step-by-step. But we do know that two years after the establishment of the first schools, in September 1949, classes in 22 Hungarian-language elementary schools in Moldavia were begun. According to the January 25, 1951 report of the Statistics Bureau of the Ministry of Education⁷⁶, there were Hungarian-language kindergartens in 10 villages of Bákó/Bacău Province,⁷⁷ and Hungarian-language elementary schools in 31 settlements (24 schools with grades 1–4, and 4 with grades 1–7, with three different faculties). From a report made presumably in 1952,⁷⁸ we know that there were 32 settlements in Bákó/Bacău Province where Hungarian schools were in session.

At *first glance* these seem like excellent results, but a few things must be mentioned. 1. Establishing schools outside of Bákó/Bacău Province was unsuccessful. Therefore, the northernmost Csángó village, Szabófalva/Săbăoani, did not have a

Hungarian school, and neither did the southern villages of Magyarfalva and Vizánta/Vizantea Mănăstirească. 2. The few school statistical data available give very little detail about how the numbers of Hungarian-language schools changed from year to year (or during the school year). It happened that within one year *a Hungarian school was closed in one village*—as in Bogdánfalva/Valea Seacă, where the school was open for only 2 years—while in another village *another school opened*. (Naturally, contemporary communist media did not notify its readers about the closing of a school; it only wrote about the newly opened ones.) 3. According to the aforementioned report, in the almost purely Csángó-Hungarian Buda, there were *only Romanian schools*, while in Lujzikalagor/Luizi-Călugăra, only 12 students attended the Hungarian school, and 399 students were enrolled in the Romanian school. In Újfalva/N. Balcescu there were 8 in the Hungarian school and 130 in the Romanian; in Kűlsőrekecsin/Fundu Răcăciuni the proportions, respectively, were 13 to 112, and in Ojtoz there were 63 to 266.

The question obviously arises: what can account for the fact that in those settlements where mostly Csángó-Hungarians lived, the parents *sent their children to Romanian language schools rather than to Hungarian schools*?

While the school statistics allude to the fact that Hungarian-language education in Moldavia was developing apace from 1948, contemporary documents⁷⁹ suggest that Hungarian schools had quite a number of problems.

One of the obvious reasons for being *wary* of a Hungarian language education had a material-technical base. The newly-organised Hungarian schools did not have proper facilities, and for this reason, classes were taught in places not fit for the purpose (sometimes the school moved from one private home to another), until a new school building was erected with great difficulty. The question of school buildings also showed that oftentimes local governments and party organisations *did not treat* Hungarian and Romanian schools *equally*, even though they received support from the Csángó-Hungarian citizens. Very often there was not enough fuel for heating, there were no books and supplies. This poverty was then used by the “ecclesiastic opposition” to point out the shortcomings of the Hungarian schools...

But let us not forget the individual problems in addition to these financial problems.

Though the original concept was that only voluntary workers would go to Moldavia, some of the teachers went to serve the Csángós out of *constraint*. Having finished teacher training school, some of the teachers had to move to Moldavia because of the resolution of the educational officials; some teachers decided it was better to “disappear” from Transylvania because of their “bad” family background (children of “kuláks” [wealthy peasant farmers] or army officers, etc.) and so they went to teach in Moldavia.⁸⁰

There were others who felt as if they had been “banished to Siberia” and tried to escape with whatever excuse they could.⁸¹ We must not forget that some teach-

ers wished to go back to Transylvania because they were unaccustomed to the previously unimaginable poverty in Moldavia. Kerekes Irma, the School Commissioner of the Hungarian schools of Bákó/Bacău County, wrote in a letter dated January 6, 1952,⁸² that 4 more schools had to be closed because of the lack of teachers.

It should be mentioned that the higher-level officials tried to compensate the almost *constant lack of teachers* by training the Csángós themselves to be teachers. For this reason, in the winter of 1951–52, 25 Csángó youngsters were volunteered to take part in an 8-month “crash course” in teaching in Székelykeresztúr/Cristuru Secuiesc. In the end, only 18 took part, of whom later many acquired their teaching certificate through their own efforts.⁸³ But by the time these teachers of Csángó origin could have joined the teachers’ work force, the Hungarian language schools had been closed down.

Another crucial problem was that teachers who had no training were teaching at Csángó-Hungarian schools and could not deal with the problems facing them. In addition, a great many teachers (especially the Székelys) did not speak Romanian well, and for this reason they could not “win the confidence of the people” Bakcsi Miklós and Varga Jenő, ministry representatives, wrote in a report.⁸⁴

The *attitude* of the Hungarian teachers also provided a reason for the parents to turn their backs on the Hungarian education they may have wanted in the past. (In one of the villages, because of the “immoral attitude” of the principal, half of the 180 students in the school were enrolled in the Romanian school the following year.)⁸⁵

In the *agitation* against Hungarian schools, the Catholic priests were the leaders of the “clerical opposition” (who announced not once that “the Hungarian language is the devil’s language”)⁸⁶, but a number of Romanian teachers were also against the Hungarian schools. They were afraid of losing their jobs, so they did everything they could to convince the parents not to enrol their children in Hungarian-language schools.

In the end, *the attitude of Csángó-Hungarians* towards the Hungarian schools was widely diverse. The two ministry representatives mentioned earlier also had to admit: “it would be an exaggeration to say that the Csángós of Hungarian mother tongue unanimously want, or demand, the incorporation of Hungarian-language education.” They saw the reasons for this to be the denouncement of the “kuláks” and the “clerical opposition” of the Hungarian schools. From other documents, we learn that the problem was much more complex; added to these factors was that many people were *afraid to openly admit their Hungarian nationality*. For this reason the number of children enrolled in the Hungarian schools was always fluctuating, determined by how many people could be convinced. The parents had to be visited regularly in order to put them at ease that “they would not go to hell,” nothing would happen to them if they enrolled their children in Hungarian schools...

Added to this was the *unstable national identity* of the Csángós; for various reasons⁸⁷, the Hungarian identity of even those people who spoke Hungarian was weak and had faded.

In the end, however, it was not because of the aforementioned reasons that the communist officials closed down the Hungarian schools in Moldavia. After the 1952 power struggle, elements of traditional Romanian nationalism combined with rigid Stalinism and with Gh. Gheorghiu-Dej as their leader, the party established its adamant power. After the death of Stalin, the “lenient” minority policy—“developed by the great Stalin”⁸⁸—ended abruptly. They forced the MNSZ to “dismantle itself” (even though it was only the party’s mouth-piece for half a decade) and stopped Hungarian-language engineer training; this was the fate that awaited the Hungarian schools as well. In the autumn of 1953, with the exception of the Lészped/Lespezi and Gyimesbükk/Ghimeş⁸⁹ schools, *all the Hungarian schools were eliminated in one blow*.

According to various scattered sources, including information from those who remember these times, it seems obvious that besides the problems listed, the attitude of chauvinist Catholic priests (some of Csángó descent), the methodical, years-long psychological terror of the Romanian teachers, as well as the whispering propaganda and the repressing apparatus were needed to reach the goal: *the parents themselves requested*⁹⁰*the closing down of the Hungarian school*.

A few years later there was a glimmer of hope that the Moldavian Hungarian-language schools could be re-established, at least in part. In the autumn of 1956, the party directors were informed of the general dissatisfaction among the Hungarian intelligentsia, and so they decided to be a little bit more lenient. A sign of more relaxed minority policies was that the Ministry of Education set up a nationality Board of Directors, appointing as the head Bányai László, who had already supported the Moldavian Hungarian schools as the advisor of the Ministry. As a first step, Bányai tried to introduce *the Hungarian language as a school subject* in Szólóhegy/Pârgăreşti-Alfalu, Bahána/Bahna, Diószeg/Tuta, Lilijecs/Lilieci, Pusztina/Pustiana, Gajcsána/Găiceana-Magyarfalu/Unguri, and Külsőrekecsin/Fundu Răcăciuni. They also established the Hungarian language 5th grade in Lészped/Lespezi and Bákó/Bacău (the latter was in the Bákó/Bacău Romanian School of Pedagogy under the direction of Albu Zsigmond).

However, these efforts proved to be *transitory*. From the effects of the Hungarian Revolution of 1956 on Transylvania, the Romanian party leaders drew the conclusion that the “lenient” policies towards Hungarians were a mistake.⁹¹ The “obvious” consequences of this radical change were not only the dismantling of Bolyai University of Sciences (and the Hungarian faculty of the Agricultural College) but also of the Hungarian schools still in existence in the Csángó-Hungarian villages.

3. THE “VIRTUAL DISAPPEARANCE” OF CSÁNGÓ-HUNGARIANS IN THE DECADES OF NATIONAL-COMMUNISM

The “statistical disappearance” of Hungarian-speaking Csángós—paradoxically—did not cease even when the activists of MNSZ were organising Hungarian schools in Moldavia. The 1948 census showed even fewer Hungarians—some 6,600 people⁹²—than the 1930 census. (Experts on the Csángó question and activists who were in Moldavia at this time estimated the number to be more like 60,000.) The later population counts were not much more reliable either. While in 1956, compared to earlier, the number of people who spoke Hungarian increased (18,817), ten years later the statistics—which had become one of the “tools of battle” for Romanian nationalism—“found” 9,516 people who spoke Hungarian, while in 1977, there were only 3,813 people who claimed to be Hungarian by nationality. (The number of Catholics living in Moldavia at this time was estimated to be 150,000.)⁹³

The “virtual disappearance” of Csángó-Hungarians is proportionate to the growth of the brutality of the Romanian communist regime. In the 1950s, Bolyai University of Sciences and the Folklore Institute of Kolozsvár/Cluj organised several ethnography collection trips in the whole of the Csángó region. One of the representative results of the research (*Moldavian Csángó Folk Songs and Folk Ballads*) could still be published in Bucharest in 1954, though a few years late. However, the changes in the Csángó-policies of the communist powers were signified by the fact that the planned historical section of the book could never be finished, while an extensive folk art summary (*Moldavian Csángó Folk Art*) was published two decades later, in 1981, by Kriterion Publishing House in Bucharest. It is also interesting that it was at the end of the 1960s and beginning of the 1970s that the Hungarian-language media wrote the most about the Hungarian-speaking Csángós living in Moldavia—naturally without even the possibility of mentioning their greatest problems (mother-tongue education and the prohibition of Hungarian language use in church).⁹⁴ As the minority policies of the Ceaușescu regime became harsher⁹⁵, the Csángó nation also “disappeared” from the media. Scholarly studies about the Csángós from 1982–83 were published only accidentally or not at all. The only book that could be published was the *botched unscientific work* that was first published in Romanian in 1985 (then later translated into various western languages) and was rejected for years by even Romanian scholars who had any respect for their profession: the work of Romanian Dumitru Martinas, of Csángó descent, the book entitled “Originea ceangailor din Moldova” (*The Origins of the Moldavian Csángós*) about the Romanian origins of the Csángós.⁹⁶ The goal of the chauvinist powers with this was to *manipulate* the historical knowledge of those Csángós who spoke only Romanian.

In addition, Csángós who openly professed their Hungarian nationality (by representing the Moldavian Hungarian culture, etc.) were *regularly harassed* by po-

lice and national security officials.⁹⁷ Those Csángó-Hungarians who were in regular contact with Transylvanian or Hungarian ethnographers or inquiring tourists were also at the mercy of Romanian officials. The officials already exercised persecution against one of the most renowned researchers of Csángó folklore, Kallós Zoltán, who was *tried before court* under various fabricated charges.⁹⁸ In the 1980s, the harassment of researchers and those interested in the fate of the Csángós was a regular occurrence.⁹⁹ In 1985, there were site reports which claimed that the Csángó settlements could not even be approached since members of government security were guarding the train stations and the roads, stopping anyone from entering.¹⁰⁰

This *hermetically sealed* life only brought those Csángós who still retained their Hungarian identity even more under the will of those against them. However, there were those who kept their Hungarian nationality through thick and thin, who never gave up the fight for the church emancipation of the Hungarian language. In 1982, they turned to the Pope, just as their ancestors had done centuries earlier. “We unfortunate villages of Kákava and Nagypatak and other villages and Hungarians—in our language—Csángó-Hungarians [...] are greatly troubled, for they wish to prohibit the Hungarian mother Language, because the prayer before the holy mass is said in Oláh (Romanian) by the cantor, and the hymns are also sung in the same way, and the youth do not know how to pray in the Oláh language, so they cannot be married, and especially other elderly and young women who do not speak Oláh, go to have their confessions, all of them are cast away from the confession and so they do not go to church on Sundays and holidays... when before we went to [the priests] and asked them to give us back our mother language, they said that they would report us to the ministry that we don’t want to give up our Hungarian language. [...] We often plead with the Bishop of Jás, Vicar of the Holy Earth [...] to have mercy on us and give us a Hungarian priest of our own language. [...] Holy Father, please grant our attachment to the Transylvanian diocese, or order a Hungarian priest to be sent to us from there.”¹⁰¹

We must mention here that the number of Csángós who kept their Hungarian identity and language seriously *diminished* due to the chauvinist, anti-minority policies, as well as the Stalinist-type, distorted modernism. The Ceaușescu regime in the ‘70s and ‘80s continued the industrialisation begun in the ‘50s. After forced collectivisation ended at the beginning of the 1960s, a great number of Csángó men (also) ended up working in the city industries or factories. Away from the closed world of the villages, they were in a strong Romanian environment, which furthered the flow of language and identity switch. (Since the women usually stayed home, their role in passing on the Hungarian language became crucial.) In addition, those bilingual, dual-identity Csángós who went to work in Transylvania, partially in cities with Hungarian residents, did not “assimilate back” to the Hungarians, but permanently *melted into the Romanian language and cultural environment*.

When the Ceaușescu regime fell at the end of the 1980s, the many-century long course of events *almost* completely ended: most of the Csángós of Moldavia assimilated into the Romanian majority, “not only in financial, linguistic, and cultural ways—explains a researcher on this subject—but on a level of consciousness as well, on a level of national identity.”¹⁰²

Today, there are only a few villages in which we can still find people who have preserved their mother tongue and original identities; sometimes it is only a few members of a family. Their struggle is now helped and directed by a handful of intellectuals of Csángó origin. But that is another story.

4. THE EMANCIPATION STRUGGLES OF CSÁNGÓ-HUNGARIANS IN POST-COMMUNIST ROMANIA 1990–2000 (A PERSPECTIVE)

By looking at the developments of the 1990s (and today) we can see that the emancipation of Csángó-Hungarians has not finished *entirely*.

In the euphoric days of December 1989, members of the Transylvanian and Bucharest Hungarian intelligentsia founded a minority interest protection union: the Romanian Hungarian Democratic Union. Partly influenced by this, a few Csángó-Hungarians living in Sepsiszentgyörgy/Sfântu Gheorge, the capital of Kovászna/Covasna County, established the *Moldavian Csángó-Hungarian Union* (MCSMSZ) in January and February of 1990. (They also founded a Hungarian-Romanian bilingual newspaper, called *Csángó Újság/Csángó News*, which was later renamed *Moldvai Magyarág/Hungarians of Moldavia*.) Their goal was to unify those Csángós who live in Transylvania or Moldavia and still speak Hungarian, to “awaken in them [Hungarian] national identity, [...] to serve the interests of raising their cultural, social, economic, and spiritual lives; to assist and make easier the Hungarian-language education of the children [...], and with this, to help intellectuals to develop themselves [...], to draw the attention of Hungarians at home and abroad to the abandonment and forced assimilation the Hungarians of Moldavia have been subjected to...”¹⁰³

In the beginning of the 1990s, the Union supported a project to enrol as many school-aged Csángó-Hungarian children as possible in *Transylvanian Hungarian Schools*. (A few were even able to study at Hungarian colleges and universities.) As a result of this, *hundreds* of Moldavian children were able to study in primarily Hungarian-language elementary schools, and a few in bilingual schools, in Csíkszereda/Miercurea-Ciuc, Sepsiszentgyörgy/Sfântu Gheorge, and other places. However, there were many problems with this mode of education. It turned out that the Csángó-Hungarian children, arriving in the Transylvanian and Hungarian schools without pre-selection and a proper educational background, and confronting the sudden change in the language of education and the cultural surroundings, were unable to fit in and study properly. In addition, the chauvinist Romanian priests—

who had already inflamed the assimilated Csángós—excluded and stigmatised those families that had sent their children to Transylvanian or, God forbid, Hungarian colleges! However—without forgetting the good intentions of those who organised the Transylvanian education of the Csángós—we have to admit that there were no prospects for those Csángós who had finished their studies in Hungarian. (This had already been a problem in the 1950s!)¹⁰⁴ At the beginning of the 1990s, there were local initiatives—of good intention—in a few villages (Klézse/Cleja, Lészped/Lespezi) where they tried to do as much as they could to satisfy the needs of reading, writing, and Hungarian cultural knowledge in Hungarian; but the effects of these attempts were minimal because of the teachers' lack of professional training; in addition, because of the constant harassment from officials, the classes conducted in private homes *ended* after one or two years.

Only one or two hundred people went to study in Hungary; however, *thousands* went to work there. The unemployment rate at home prompted even those Csángós of Moldavia who spoke only Romanian and were full of anti-Hungarian prejudice because of the influence of chauvinist propaganda to engage in illegal work in Hungary. Since it was possible to acquire prestige-elevating (in Moldavian relations) luxury goods by working only a few months in Hungary, the *value of the Hungarian language grew*, since those who could speak even some Hungarian could get jobs more easily. (There were those who took their families out as well, and stayed in Hungary for years, until the prospect of working illegally became impossible.)¹⁰⁵

Not only did the Csángós go to school in Hungary, but they also worked there. When Pope John Paul II visited Hungary in the summer of 1991, more than a thousand Csángós from thirty villages travelled to Hungary to see him; many among them no longer spoke Hungarian. Naturally, the local “Janissary priests” did not look favourably upon this, and it often happened that after their return home, the local priests labelled the pilgrims *traitors*.¹⁰⁶

Those people were labelled with this word who followed the example of their ancestors and requested the reinstatement of Hungarian-language worship. A group of pilgrims had already made a “humble plea” to the Pope in the summer of 1991. This led to no result; and for this reason, they sent yet another request in the spring of 1998, this time to the head of the diocese, the bishop of Csángó descent, Petru Gherghel. However, the result of the petition signed by 160 Csángó-Hungarians of Pusztina/Pustiana was the same as it had always been: the local leaders of the church made various excuses and *rejected* the plea.¹⁰⁷ Had they allowed the practice of religion in Hungarian, because of the advanced state of the language switch and fragile national identity, only *very few* (perhaps only a few thousand) would have been able to take advantage of this option.¹⁰⁸

A census completed in a valid manner would not have shown more than *a score-or-two thousand* people of Hungarian mother tongue in Moldavia¹⁰⁹—partly due to the aforementioned causes; nevertheless, the Romanian state was not willing to

acknowledge the existence of this Moldavian Hungarian minority: even in the census of 1992 nothing was left to chance. The interviewers were given strict orders that no one was to be counted as Hungarian. In those villages where the people refused to be listed as anything but Hungarian (Pusztina/Pustiana, Klézse/Cleja, Lujzikalagor/Luizi-Călugăra, Trunk/Galbeni), the interviewers threatened them with jail or said they would call the police. Following the orders of the circular of the episcopate of Jászvásár/Iași, the congregations of Szabófalva/Săbăoani, Lujzikalagor/Luizi-Călugăra, Klézse/Cleja, and Somoska/Șomușca, among others, were asked to describe themselves as Romanian since, after all, they were “*Romanian Catholics*.”¹¹⁰ (The parson of Szabófalva/Săbăoani threatened to *deport* those who didn’t claim to be Romanian. In response to this, Perka Margit, local census taker, quit her job and wrote an open letter as a protest against this corruption.¹¹¹) It is no wonder that under such circumstances only 1,800 people claimed to be Hungarian. (In addition, only 500 of these lived in authentic settlements: the villages.¹¹²)

In the second half of the 1990s, the struggle continued for Hungarian-language education. It grew ever more obvious that the nationalist surroundings could not accept any civic initiatives that might lead to Hungarian education or the strengthening of Hungarian identity in Moldavia; to exercise its power, the authorities used any and all methods to repress these initiatives. From this point of view—as the events show—after the new government took power in 1996, no real change occurred. Despite the fact that RMDSZ was part of the new, centre-right government coalition, it was not possible to launch optional Hungarian-language education in a single village, even though the Education Law of 1995 provided for it. In July of 1996, 29 residents of Klézse/Cleja requested, in a petition to the county board of school supervisors, that the subjects of *Hungarian Language and Literature* as well as *The History of National Minorities* be added to the local school curriculum. They received no answer. At this point 13 parents went to the Ministry of Education; even though between 1997 and 2000 the Ministry ordered the local authorities to comply with the petitions, the county’s head school inspector and the principal of the school *sabotaged* the program. (The parents and their children, who were only exercising their constitutional rights, were constantly harassed and threatened.) The same thing happened to the parents of Lészped/Lespezi and Pusztina/Pustiana.¹¹³

The “Csángó question” however, *could no longer remain the internal affair of Romania*. People in western countries heard about the scandals too,¹¹⁴ and the news reached the European Council as well. In May of 2000, the Culture and Education Committee of the European Council discussed the report of Tytti Isohookana-Asunmaa, from Finland, on the cultural situation of the Csángó minorities. In September, the Committee’s head secretary, Joao Ary and Komlóssy József, the Vice-president of the Federal Union of European Ethnic Groups, went on a fact-finding trip to the Csángó-Hungarian villages to see for themselves.

While a few important western councils looked into the educational problem of the Csángós as a human rights issue, certain movements began in 1999 on a local level as well. The Union of Moldavian Csángó-Hungarians moved their headquarters from Transylvania (Sepsiszentgyörgy/Sfântu Gheorge) to Bákó/Bacău, and appointed new leaders. A new, *younger generation* began work, among whom many had studied in Transylvania or Hungary. These people had a wider outlook and range of connections than their predecessors and bravely used the tools of the post-modern era, such as the Internet.¹¹⁵ New civic groups were organised (the Via Spei Csángó Youth Organisation in Bákó/Bacău, and the Szeret-Klézse Foundation in Klézse/Cleja), and full-houses were started; out of constraint they began an *alternative form of education*.

The MCSMSZ decided that they would wage no more futile battles with the Bákó/Bacău County school board in order to have Hungarian taught in school. In 2001, with the help of twelve teachers, alternative classes were begun in various private homes in the following seven Moldavian settlements: Klézse/Cleja, Buda, Somoska/Șomușca, Pusztina/Pustiana, Külsőrekecsin/Fundu Răcăciuni, Diószén, and Trunk/Galbeni.¹¹⁶

Though the local officials did everything to prevent these initiatives, the genie was out of the bottle. As the Csángó-Hungarian cultural case had already reached European forums (the Ministry Committee of the May 2001 parliamentary meeting of the European Council made various recommendations to Romania in November, which included reforms calling for the introduction of mother tongue education and religion for Moldavian Csángós) it was impossible to employ the means the far right had suggested in the Bucharest parliament.

The years to come will show whether those efforts, which hope to save the Hungarian language in Moldavia in the last hour, will succeed. Only fraction of the communities which still spoke Hungarian 100–150 years ago still speak the language; however, those who still speak the language *have the right* to preserve it and develop it. The future will show whether they have the *opportunity* to do this. Will the central and local governments stop them? This will be one of the tests of Romanian democracy.

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NOTES

- 1 We will not go into the problems concerning the etymology of the name Csángó, for that would steer the topic away from its original goal. However, it must be mentioned that the name Csángó is not restricted to the Hungarian ethnic group living in Moldavia, as there are "hétfalusi" and "gyimesi" who are called Csángós as well. In addition, with regard to the Hungarians living on the eastern side of the Carpathian Mountains, the use of the name Csángó spread in the second half of the 18th century. Though the Székelys who moved to Moldavia did not call themselves Csángós for a long time, in every-day use this term is generally used to signify the Catholic population living in Moldavia. When we speak of the Csángó-Hungarians in our essay, we mean the Catholic population that spoke Hungarian and regarded themselves as Hungarians during the age discussed here. For more information see *Pávai 1999*.
- 2 Among others the material from the archives of the Jászvásár/Iași Episcopate, as well as the reports of the Austrian consuls of Jászvásár/Iași from before 1918, and the papers of the Romanian gendarmerie and Siguranța from the times after W.W.I, and the police and the Securitate after 1945, in addition to the those of the Communist party.
- 3 *Auner* 1908. pp. 66–67, 79.

- 4 In this instance Petrás Incze's data are not reliable, as Domokos Pál Péter—based on church schematics—establishes the number of Catholics to be 45,752 in 1851 (*Domokos* 1987. pp. 116–119.), while Kovács Ferencz gives the number 45,184. (*Kovács* 53.) Auner Károly recalls that the 1854 church report mentions 50,500 Catholics (*Auner* 1908. p. 77.) while Kovács, also referring to the church member list, only lists 51,049 Catholics 4 years later. (*Kovács ibid.*)
- 5 The answer written by Petrás Incze János to Döbrentei found in *Domokos* 1979. p. 1322.
- 6 *Szabados* 1989. p. 91.
- 7 In the 1905 census volume a unique reason is given for why the mother tongue and nationality data are missing: “Nationality is not a topic! Even the term cannot be used in a strict scientific sense! It is impossible to research the topic of heritage because the greater part of those persons who are non-Romanian live under such circumstances and in such a condition that they would be unable to answer the questions asked even with the greatest amount of well-meaning and effort on the part of the researcher. Similarly, the research of mother tongue would not be much more successful.” Quoted by: *Csoma-Domokos* 1988. p. 140.
- 8 *Marele Dicționar Geografic al României*. I. Eds. G. I. Lahovari–C. I. Brătianu–Gr. G. Tocilescu. București, 1898. pp. 157–179.
- 9 HALÁSZ Péter: *Ónfalva/Onyest helynevei*. Budapest, 1983. pp. 7–8.
- 10 See Domokos Pál Péter's table about the population of Roman Catholic, Hungarian nationality and mother tongue individuals in villages belonging to the Bákó/Bacău County political community. Hungarian National Archives (MOL) Küm PO, K 63, 259. pack, 1940–27/7. t. and Baumgartner Sándor: Ó-romániai magyarok statisztikai adatai az 1930-as román statisztika alapján. Stencilled manuscript MOL, the reserved papers of the Political Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, K 64 90. pack, 1941–27. t., 131/res.pol.
- 11 *Tánczos* 1997. p. 381.
- 12 For more information see: *Vincze* 2001. pp. 141–145.
- 13 *Kovács* 1870. p. 13.
- 14 Such pleading letters can be read in Kovács Ferenc's travelogue as well. See: *Kovács* 1870. pp. 66–90.
- 15 For this reason, the Austrian consuls of Jászvásár had hostile views of the arrival of Hungarian priests and missionaries from the very beginning, moreover, in 1807 they protested against Hungarian priests coming to Moldavia. For more see *Auner* 1908. pp. 59–65, 69, *Mikecs* 1941. pp. 207–208. and HEGEDŰS Lórándt: A székelyek kivándorlása Romániába. *Budapesti Szemle*, 1902. Volume 110. p. 61.
- 16 *Jerney* 1851. pp. 111–112.
- 17 *Domokos* 1979. p. 1431. This same opinion is shared by Jerney János (*Jerney* 1851. p. 25.) and Barabás Endre in an article from 1911. Published by: *Harangozó* pp. 35–43.
- 18 MOL, the papers of the Szent László Society, P 1431, 19. sheaf, 416 pack (1934), 307. This is reinforced a half-century later by Eröss Péter, who was a seminary student for a year in Jászváros after W.W.II. See: *Sylvester* pp. 18–20.
- 19 Quoted by *Domokos* 1979. p. 94.
- 20 *Ibid.*
- 21 *Amicul Familiei* 1880, IV. 2. Quoted by Pozsony 2001.
- 22 BARTHA András (Borto Andrei): *Pusztina-Pusztina. Gondolatok egy csángó falu múltjáról és jelenéről*. Balatonboglár, 1989. p. 22.
- 23 SPIRA György: A magyar negyvennyolc és a csángók. In: *A tudomány szolgálatában. Emlék könyv Benda Kálmán 80. születésnapjára*. Ed. GLATZ Ferenc. Budapest, 1993. pp. 305–318.
- 24 *Kovács* 1870. pp. 91–93.
- 25 The Csángó-Hungarians were hoping for the help of Hungary and wrote many pleading letters

- to church leaders over the course of the 19th century. The letters of the villagers of Gorzafalva/Oituz to the Archbishop of Esztergom in: *Domokos* 1987. pp. 180–181.
- 26 For information on the situation of the Romanians in the age of dualism, and the efforts of the irredentists see: BÍRÓ Sándor: *Kisebbségben és többségben. Románok és magyarok 1867–1940*. Bern, 1989., and POLÓNYI Nóra: *A Liga Culturală és az erdélyi román nemzetiségi törekvések*. Budapest, 1939.
- 27 GYŐRFFY István: *A moldvai csángók*. A Magyar Földrajzi Intézet 1917-iki zsebatlasza. pp. 68–70.
- 28 *Gazda* 1993. pp. 41–59. (The Csángós had already fought bravely in the 1877 Revolution, proving their loyalty in opposition to the Romanian state...)
- 29 MOL, P 1431, 20. sheaf 171. pack (1937), 35/937. Sz. memoir of Németh Kálmán from September 5, 1937.
- 30 MOL, P 1431, 19 sheaf 1 pack (1928), no number. “Magyar Katolikus Misszió Ó-Romániában,” and also, 19 sheaf, 416 pack (1934), report of an unknown person about the situation of the Székelys of Bukovina and the Csángós of Moldavia, and *Siculus* 1942. p. 93.
- 31 LÜKŐ Gábor: A moldvai csángók. A csángók kapcsolatai az erdélyi magyarsággal. (*Néprajzi Füzetek* 3., 5). Budapest, 1936. and SZABÓ T. Attila: A moldvai csángó nyelvjárás kutatása. In: *Nyelv és Irodalom. Válogatott tanulmányok, cikkek V*. Bucharest, 1981. p. 501.
- 32 *Baumgartner* 1940. p. 27.
- 33 In the middle of the ‘30s, a Csángó from Bogdánfalva/Valea Seacă (who could read Hungarian) said to a renowned Hungarian ethnographer: “The most painful for us is the fact that the Holy Pope has the money and attention to make believers of wild men, but has no attention to give us, the Moldavian Hungarians, who are the most devout believers representing the faith on the easternmost edges of the world.” CSÚRY Bálint: Úti benyomások a moldvai magyarok (csángók) közt. *Debreceni Szemle*, June 6, 1934, 250.
- 34 See Sebestény Antal’s letter to Krywald Ottó dated March 18, 1939. Published in: *Albert* 1983. pp. 296–300.
- 35 *Csúry* 1934. pp. 249.
- 36 The document published in: *Domokos* 1987. p. 195.
- 37 *Siculus* 1942. p. 92–93.
- 38 Tolna Megyei Levéltár (TML) the material of the Bonyhád Székely Museum, the papers of the Commissioners responsible for Repatriation of Foreign Hungarians, 19 box, 3249 No., memoirs of Németh Kálmán.
- 39 For more information see *Vincze* 2001.
- 40 The names of the Moldavian Roman Catholic parsonages, filiates, and parsons, are listed in a 1941 report by Csopey Dénes, Consul of Brassó/Braşov: MOL 64, 90 pack, 1941–27. t., 131/res.-pol.–1941.
- 41 The wife of soldier Laczkó István, who was home on leave, greeted her husband with the following news upon his arrival home: László Antal held mass (in Romanian, “naturally”) and when he finished, he spoke to the congregation in Hungarian: “My dear brethren! I ask of you, if you want, go to Hungary, and there you will receive homes, land, and anything you need. [...] I’ve been to Gajcsána, and people from there will go, too. I have been beyond Szeret, and they, too, will go.” Quoted from his father’s autobiography *Laczkó* 1999. p. 195.
- 42 MOL, the papers of the Department of Minorities and Nationality of the Prime Ministry, K 28, 9 pack, 38. t., the closing report of the government commissioner from December 19, 1941. No. 3.
- 43 TML 19 box, 3249. No. 6.597/pol.–1941.
- 44 One example of this was the following: Demse Péter, who had taken his post in Pusztina/Pustiana, informed the Repatriation Commissioner in October that 50 families from

- Gorzafalva/Oituz are “ready to depart for Hungary,” however, these families could not leave. In Gajcsána/Găiceana-Magyarfalu/Unguri, of 260 Hungarian families, 80 received their repatriation papers, and a further 150 families had applied for them. Nevertheless, by the end of the World War, only a few dozen families succeeded in emigrating to Hungary. TML 16 box, 319/928. No. the Feb. 28th report of the Bucharest Hungarian Embassy concerning the repatriation of the Moldavian Csángó families, No. 209/biz.–1942.
- 45 TML 16. box, 319/468. No. Notation by Szabados Mihály on October 23, 1941 concerning the Csángó-Hungarians. It could not be discerned from the report, which village residents were the ones who emigrated.
- 46 From among these three men, one of them escaped from prison and fled to Hungary.
- 47 MOL K 28, 158 pack, 334. t., R 28.086., 515/res./10–1943.
- 48 MOL K 28, 65 pack, 135. t., the papers of the Hungarian Monarchy’s National Central Authority for the Supervision of Foreigners of the Minister of Internal Affairs, Transylvanian Branch, No. 2/3–1944, January 25, 1944.
- 49 MOL K 28, 133. pack, 262. t., the transcription of Horthy Miklós Jr. to Prime Minister Kállay Miklós on March 2, 1944.
- 50 MOL K 28, 133. pack, 262. t., 121/res.pol.–1944.
- 51 In a letter dated June 27 to Bonczos Miklós, Szabó Sándor—lieutenant colonel and director of the Intelligence Bureau of the 9th Corps—also stated that “according to information we received, the Romanian government will never comply with the repatriation of the Romanian Csángó-Hungarians under diplomatic protection.” He also added that in many cases, the Csángó-Hungarians themselves don’t want to move to Hungary, either because “there is no one to awaken their feelings of national standing,” or because of financial reasons, or because they are under the spell of Romanian propaganda. TML, 20. box, 535/1944., 2234. No.
- 52 TML, 20. box, 535/1944, 2234. No. notary register.
- 53 TML, 20. box, 535/1944, “Summary on the Moldavian Hungarians.”
- 54 MOL K 28, 133. pack, 262. t, 1944–20.022. No.
- 55 TML, 20. box, 535/1944, 1210/1944. No. Report to Bonczos Miklós from Besenyő Sándor dated April 28, 1944.
- 56 TML, 20. box, 535/1944, no number. Letter to Commissioner Bonczos Miklós from Lieutenant Colonel Szabó Sándor dated May 12, 1944.
- 57 For source, see: *Vincze*, 2001.
- 58 TML, 20. box, 535/1944, 245/1944. Om.
- 59 With the Vienna ruling, Székely-land was returned to Hungary. For this reason, if someone wanted to go to southern Romania from Moldavia, the shortest route would be through Háromszék, an area that was under Hungarian jurisdiction. Therefore, through a mutual agreement between the two countries, in May of 1944, the refugees from Bessarabia and Bukovina could get to Muntenia via this path.
- 60 TML, 20. box, 535/1944, 2480. No.
- 61 TML, the estate of Bodor György, 1. box, typed manuscript, critique of Thiery Árpád’s book, 6–7. According to the Bureau of Public Welfare, only 110 families were settled in Baranya and Tolna Counties in the autumn of 1945, but it is possible that the data of the bureau was not up-to-date. MOL, the papers of the Department for the Preparation of Peace of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, XIX-J-1-a, 14. box, II–28. pack. 40.986/Bé.–1945. The Csángó-Hungarians arrived from the following villages: Csumás, Funtinel (a part of Szászút/Sascut-Sat), Gyoszény/Gioseni, Klézse/Cleja, Lábnik/Vladnic, Lészped/Lespezi, Magyarfalu/Unguri (part of Gajcsána/Găiceana), Pokolpatak/Valea Rea, Pusztina/Pustiana, Somoska/Șomușca.
- 62 For details see: *Vincze*, 1999, 72–74.
- 63 Until the signing of the peace treaty, the two defeated countries, Romania and Hungary, could

- not have official diplomatic relations, therefore they set up so-called political missions in the capitals of the respective countries.
- 64 MOL, the papers of the Romanian Administration of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, XIX-J-1-k, 18. box, 16/a pack, 97/pol.-1946. The report published in: *Vincze* 1999. pp. 213–214.
- 65 *Ibid.*
- 66 The Romanian neighbours of Laczkó István, a resident of Lábnik/Vladnic, who emigrated to Hungary after 1945, said the following to him: “Pista, go to Hungary and get land there, for if you didn’t know, this here is Romanian land.” *Csángók a XX. században. Élettörténetek.* Ed. Forrai Ibolya. Budapest, 1994. p. 154.
- 67 MOL XIX-J-1-k, 18. box, 16/a pack, 37/pol.1946. Published by: *Vincze*, 1999. pp. 213–214.
- 68 For more information see *Vincze* 1999. pp. 5–28.
- 69 MOL, Romanian TÜK papers, XIX-J-1-j 17. box, 18/b pack, 3198/46. Published by: Fülöp-Vincze, *ibid.* p. 216.
- 70 Ignác István from Lészped/Lespezi, wrote a letter lamenting the situation to Domokos Pál Péter in November of 1947: “I wish I knew why we cannot go?” See: *Vincze* 1999. p. 305.
- 71 *Sylvester*, 2001. p. 51.
- 72 See the Manuscript files of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, 120 contemporary letters in the Domokos Pál Péter estate. Ms. 5172.
- 73 Százegy pusztinai hányódásairól: MOL XIX-J-1-k, 44. box, 30/d, 2484/pol.-1947.
- 74 For more information, see *Vincze* 1999.
- 75 According to Demse Ádámné from Klézse/Cleja: “The people did not much care for the Hungarian Union. [...] They were Communists!” *Gazda* 1993. p. 145.
- 76 Archives of the Institute of Political History (PIL), Bányai estate, 923. fond, 3. ő. e., hand-written note by T. Marinescu: “Regiunea Bacău, l. maghiară”
- 77 The administration reform of 1950 eliminated the traditional system of counties and established provinces on the Soviet model. Bákó/Bacău Province included the previous Bákó/Bacău County but also included Gyimesbükk/Ghimeş from the liquidated Székely County, separated from Csík, of Hungarian majority, as well as a few settlements from the Havas mountains where so-called Csángós of Gyimes/Ghimeş lived.
- 78 Ráday Archives, Bányai estate, C/189. fond, 1. box, no number.
- 79 See *Vincze* 1999. *Csángósors.* pp. 235–246.
- 80 *Sylvester* 2001. 142 skk.
- 81 PIL, 923. fond, 3. ő. e., statement by Ambrus Berta on June 11, 1951.
- 82 Ráday Archives, Bányai estate, C/189. fond, 1. box, noted without date. (It is interesting that in the interview conducted with Kerekes Irma, she remembered that she went back to Transylvania on September 1, 1951, while contemporary official papers show that she was still in Moldavia in 1952...)
- 83 PIL, 923. fond, 3. ő. e., the notation of Bartis Árpád, the overseer of the Ministry of Education’s Nationality Managing Department: “*A moldvai csángók anyanyelvű iskolai oktatásának és művelődésének távlatai.*” as well as the report of László István from January 15, 1952 about the “recruitment” of young people. Ráday Archives, Bányai estate, C/189. fond. 1. box.
- 84 *Vincze* 1999. *Csángósors.* p. 228.
- 85 PIL, 923. fond. 3. ő. e., the December 4, 1951 report of Ráduly Mihály: “*Bákó tartományban a magyar tannyelvű iskolákkal kapcsolatban fennálló kérdések.*”
- 86 This is how a Csángó woman from Klézse/Cleja explained thirty years later: “The teachers took the children to the church to pray and sing hymns. [...] Then someone spread the news that we shouldn’t enrol our children in Hungarian schools because Hungarians don’t believe in God. And it went by word of mouth, and then one of them stopped going to the Hungarian school,

- and then another, and since there were so few children left in the schools, they closed them down.” *Gazda*, 1994. p. 147.
- 87 For more information see TÁNCZOS Vilmos: Hányan vannak a moldvai csángók? *Magyar Kisebbség*, 1997/1–2. pp. 383–385.
- 88 “The possibility to build Csángó-Hungarian language schools was granted by the victorious Soviet Army, while the road was designated by the nationality policies developed by the great Stalin.” KOVÁCS György: *A szabadság útján. Moldvai csángók között*. Bucharest, 1950. p. 11.
- 89 Gyimesbükk/Ghimeș, an area settled by so-called Csángós of Gyimes, for the most part consisted of Hungarian speakers; this was an area that was detached from Csík County by the administrative reform of 1950.
- 90 In an interview a writer from Budapest conducted with the parson of Klézse/Cleja, the parson admits that he went from house to house escorted by 2 policemen and talked parents into signing the petition asking for the Hungarian school to be closed. It is possible that in several other villages this was the method used to “convince” parents. CSERES Tibor: Őszi beszélgetés Klézsen, néhai Petrás Incze parókiáján. *Mozgó Világ*, October 1982. pp. 24–29.
- 91 For more information see VINCZE Gábor: Változás a Román Munkáspárt magyarságpolitikájában: a kolozsvári magyar nyelvű felsőoktatás felmorzsolása (1950–1959). *Korunk* 1997. 4. sz.
- 92 VINCZE Gábor: *A romániai magyar kisebbség történeti kronológiája 1944–1953*. Szeged–Budapest, 1994. p. 64.
- 93 Szabados 1989. pp. 98–101. (The population statistics between 1945–89 do not indicate religion.).
- 94 The journalist who published the most on this subject was Beke György from Kolozsvár/Cluj. It is very characteristic of the age that his collected works on this subject were only published in Budapest. See *Beke* 1988.
- 95 VINCZE Gábor: A nemzeti kisebbségtől a “magyar nemzetiségű románok”-ig. Negyvenöt év romániai magyarságpolitikájának vázlata. In: *Kötődések Erdélyhez (Tanulmányok)*. Tatabánya, 1999. pp. 230–250. (In Romanian: De la minoritate națională la »români de naționalitate maghiară« *Altera* 2000. No. 15. pp. 85–127.).
- 96 See the report of the illegal Erdélyi Magyar Hírügynökség/Hungarian Press of Transylvania No. 1985/58.
- 97 Pozsony Ferenc: *Szeret vize martján. Moldvai csángómagyar népköltészet*. Kolozsvár, 1994. pp. 7–9.
- 98 MOL, Romanian TÜK-1974, XIX-J-1-j, 99. box, 128–75. No.
- 99 Hungarian Press of Transylvania No. 1985/50 (September 15.) and *Pozsony* 1996. p. 176.
- 100 Hungarian Press of Transylvania No. 1985/67. (August 21)
- 101 The letter written to Pope John Paul II. published in: *Életünk* (Szombathely), 1990, July-August.
- 102 *Pozsony* 1996. p. 177.
- 103 *Moldvai csángómagyar kalendárium az 1992-es esztendőre*. H.é.n, [Sepsiszentgyörgy, 1992], p. 41.
- 104 PÁLFFY Zoltán: Moldvai csángó fiatalok erdélyi iskolákban. In: *Csángósors. Moldvai csángók a változó időkben*. Budapest, 1999. pp. 179–191. and TÁNCZOS Vilmos: *Bevezető javaslat a moldvai csángó kérdés politikai rendezésére*. Csíkszereda, 1994. May, typed manuscript. (In the author’s possession.)
- 105 OZSVÁTH Gábor: *Székelyek és csángók a kiskunsági homoki gazdaságokban*. http://primus.arts.u-szeged.hu/doktar/texts/osvath_csojos.html. (The Csángós worked not only in Hungary. In the second half of the 1990s thousands went to work in Israel.)
- 106 20 residents of Trunk/Galbeni who went to see the Pope were humiliated from the pulpit by the priest who said: “they sold the country for a bowl of lentils.” CSOMA Gergely–BOGDÁN-FALVY János: Népszámlálás a moldvai csángó falvakban. In *Megfog vala apóm szokor kezem-tül...* *Tanulmányok Domokos Pál Péter emlékére*. Budapest, 1993. p. 163.

- 107 *Háromszék* (Sepsiszentgyörgy). March 7, 1998.
- 108 For more information see *Tánczos* 1996. pp. 174–189.
- 109 The Vice-president of MCSMSZ, Csicsó Antal, counted thirty thousand Csángós who wished to preserve their knowledge of the Hungarian language. (*Szabadság* July 27, 1999.) Researchers know that the statistical data concerning the Moldavian Hungarian Catholics cannot be relied on, but they also know that those numbers that claim 100–150,000 Hungarian speakers have no basis either. Partially due to this, the Hungarian ethnographers of Babeş-Bolyai University, Kolozsvár/Cluj, began research on identity and language knowledge, which finally showed that, at the beginning of the 1990s, there were 62,000 Csángós who spoke the Hungarian language on any level at all. *Tánczos* 1997. pp. 379–382.
- 110 The term “Romanian Catholic” appeared at the end of the 19th century, when the priests who wished to assimilate the people tried to manipulate them with the false word etymology according to which *Roman Catholic* (in Romanian: *romano catolic*) really means *Romanian Catholic* (in Romanian: *român catolic*), and so the Csángós must call themselves Romanian.
- 111 *Romániai Magyar Szó*, January 23, 1992.
- 112 *Tánczos* 1997. p. 383.
- 113 KÖTŐ József: New Siculicidium. In: *Romániai Magyar Évkönyve 2001*. Ed. Bodó Barna. Temesvár–Kolozsvár, 2001. pp. 170–175.
- 114 In 1995, Csicsó Antal had already held lectures in Brussels on the true state of Moldavian Csángó-Hungarians.
- 115 It is also interesting to note what a wide range of activity the Csángó e-mail list has: csango-magyar@yahoogroups.com
- 116 *Krónika*, (Kolozsvár) December 31, 2001.

Church Life in Moldavian Hungarian Communities

by Pozsony Ferenc

During the Middle Ages, the Hungarians who settled in Moldavia kept contact with the Hungarians living in the Carpathian Basin through their economic and family connections. This natural connection is shown by the regular correspondence of family members, merchants, local city councils, as well as members of church congregations. At the same time, the Moldavian Hungarians consciously retained their own religion, language, and traditions throughout the centuries. An important part of their identity was their connection with the Roman Catholic denomination, which basically separated them from the Romanians of Orthodox faith.

The first Hungarian Catholic episcopate in Moldavia was founded by the Hungarian king in the city of Milkov in 1227, in order to convert the pagan Kuns to Christianity.¹ Pope Gregory IX (1227–1241) first sent Dominican monks into this dangerous area; influenced by the missionaries, one of the most prestigious Kun dignitaries, along with 15,000 of his people, converted to Christianity. The Pope's delegation included Prince Béla, successor to the Hungarian throne, Róbert, then Archbishop of Esztergom, and the Bishops of Veszprém and Transylvania, who went to Milkov to ordain Teodorik, Dominican monk, as bishop. The construction of the episcopate's church was taken on by Béla, the young Hungarian king. From a letter of the Pope written on November 14, 1234, we know that in addition to the Kuns, many Catholic Hungarian and German settlers, whose numbers had diminished greatly due to the Tartar invasions of 1241, also lived in the area of the episcopate. The Bishop of Milkov was a member of the Hungarian Council of Bishops and took part in their meetings on many occasions. The list of head priests who directed this episcopate of Hungarian establishment was published by Domokos Pál Péter.²

During the rule of Lajos the Great, the episcopate of Szeretvásár/Siret was established in 1370 in Moldavia, where in the beginning bishops appointed by the Hungarian king directed the church life of the region.³ The foundation of the episcopate was requested by Laczkó (Latcu, 1365–1375), Voivod of Moldavia; through his delegation, he asked Pope Urbanus V to raise Szeret/Siret to the rank of city and the church to a cathedral. On March 9, 1371, the Franciscan András (confessor of Lajos the Great's mother) was ordained Bishop of Szeret/Siret in Krakow. The list of names of bishops who served the diocese for 125 years was

published by Domokos Pál Péter. When the city of Lemberg was ordained an archbishop's see in 1412, Szeretvásár/Siret came under its jurisdiction. The Vatican hoped that this new archepiscopate would become the centre of the expansion of the Roman Catholic Church in Moldavia and eastward. However, Voivod Laczkó's wife and daughter turned adamantly against the Catholic Church, and so it could not expand into the Romanian communities of Moldavia; its believers were from among Hungarians and Saxons of the Carpathian Basin. Seventy years after its foundation, the episcopate ceased its work.⁴

After the death of Lajos the Great in 1382, several Roman Catholic episcopates were functioning in Moldavia. This supports the assertion that a significant number of Hungarians were living in this area. Among his descendants, only his daughter Hedvig (wife of the Polish King Ulászló) played an important part in caring for the spiritual life of the Moldavian Hungarians. In the province's first headquarters in Moldvabánya/Baia/Moldenmarkt, she founded the next episcopate between 1417 and 1420 (probably in 1418). The episcopate church erected in the 1410s in honour of the Virgin Mary was one of the most monumental buildings in the voivodeship. Bánya/Baia was most likely founded by Transylvanian Saxon and Hungarian settlers in the years before the 1241 Tartar invasion, who probably mined gold and silver. They built the city's first church where later there was a Franciscan monastery. After the foundation of the episcopate, Dominicans also arrived who built a new church and monastery for themselves. On the medieval seal of the city, St. Hubertus's reindeer with the cross is between the words *SIGILIUM CAPITALIS CIVITATIS MOLDAVIE TERRE MOLDAVIENSIS*. The city was not only a significant economic centre, but also played an important role in the ecclesiastic and cultural spheres. In the beginning of the 15th century, the names of many students from Moldvabánya/Baia appear on the contemporary matriculation lists of the Universities of Prague, Krakow and Vienna, and many also made their way to Rome. After finishing their theology studies, they returned and served in Moldavian cities (e.g. Kotnár/Cotnari, Szucsáva/Suceava, etc.). The spreading of Hussitism and later Protestantism caused many problems for the Catholic episcopate of Moldvabánya/Baia. Unfortunately, the episcopate's church burned down on December 14–15, 1467, during a battle between King Matthias and Voivod István the Great. The armies of Turkish Sultan Mohamed II also pillaged it in 1476; after these events the slow regression of the city began.⁵ Losonczi Margit, of Transylvanian descent, the wife of the Voivod of Moldavia, was buried here; she played an important part in the life of the Moldavian Catholics. She had many grand Gothic Catholic churches built in the principality, and appointed many Transylvanian Hungarian officials to the court.⁶

The independent Medieval Hungarian kingdom continuously provided the Hungarians living in Moldavia with priests and monks until the 16th century (1541). The bishops of Szeretvásár/Siret in Moldavia and Árgyes/Arghes in

Wallachia, appointed by the Hungarian kings in the 14th and 15th centuries, made sure that properly trained priests lead the Hungarian congregations living beyond the Carpathians. Even during the age of the centralised Hungarian Kingdom, the Franciscans of Csíksomlyó/Șumuleu were the leaders and directors of the spiritual life of the Moldavian Hungarians until 1574. The affiliate church of the monastery was in Bákó/Bacău, next to Szeret/Siret; the 8–10 friars arriving from the Carpathian Basin spent their time guiding the spiritual lives of the Hungarian communities of the area. Jó Sándor (Alexandru cel Bun) had a church built for the Franciscans of Bákó/Bacău. At the beginning of the 16th century, the Father Superiors of the Franciscans in the Bákó/Bacău monastery were all still Hungarian; therefore they understood the language of the congregations under their leadership.⁷

In the 14th and 15th centuries the development of the Roman Catholic Church in Moldavia was supported first by the Hungarian Kingdom, and later Poland. When the political connections of the Moldavian principality with a particular kingdom deteriorated, the persecution of the Catholic Church also began. For example, in order to weaken the Roman Catholic Church, Voivod Jó Sándor harboured the Hussites who were labelled heretics and had to flee from the Hungarian Kingdom. Here the worldly powers did not stop them from practising their faith even in their mother tongue. With the permission of the Voivod of Moldavia, Hussites who spoke Hungarian and German settled in Kotnár/Kotnari in 1420.⁸ The princes of Moldavia gladly welcomed the refugees from western countries who had more a developed economic culture; they were allowed to live in peace and in the beginning even to spread their ideas freely with the permission of the voivods. In a letter from the Catholic Bishop of Krakow dated 1432, the quick spread of Hussitism is explained by the weakness and disorganisation of the Catholic Church and the anti-Polish attitude of the Moldavian Voivod (Alexandru cel Bun) in welcoming the Hussites.⁹

The settlement of the Hussites was described in the 1446 bull of Pope Eugene IV,¹⁰ and a 1571 report. Their resettlement had a duration of approximately fifty years. First they arrived from the south—Szerémség—and southern-Transylvanian areas, and in the 1480s from the country's north-western border areas—the vicinity of Pozsony. We find it likely that Saxons and Czechs also came along with the large numbers of Hungarians to the northern parts of Moldavia, where the refugees founded several significant settlements with telling names, such as Husz/Huși and Jeromosfalva, named after Jerome of Prague. They also settled in significant numbers in Románvásár/Romau, Tatros/Tg. Trotuș, Kotnár/Cotnari, and Szászkút/Sascut-Sat. They had an important role in founding new villages or in strengthening the already existing Hungarian language communities in Csöbörcsök/Ciuburciu,¹¹ Szentpéter, Szentjános, and Szentantal. Pécsi Tamás and Újlaki Bálint, Franciscan monks who became Hussite priests, had just translated the books of the four evangelists from the Bible for the first time into Hun-

garian in the city of Tatros/Tg. Trotuş in Moldavia; this translation was preserved in a copy by Németi György and is known by the name of the München Codex (a.k.a. the Jókai Codex).¹² The scribe also noted in Hungarian after the closing sentence of the Book of John that the translation was made in *The City of Tatros* in 1466.¹³

Despite the increasing offensives of the Roman Catholic Church, the Hussite communities in Moldavia could develop in peace during the rule of Voivod István the Great (1457–1504); moreover, their development was aided by the conflicts between the Moldavian Orthodox Church and the Hungarian Minorite monks in 1462. In 1481, King Matthias occupied Moravia and forced the Hussites living there to leave their homelands. For this reason, new Hussites arrived primarily from Moravia at the end of the 15th century, who settled in a dispersed manner throughout Moldavia. However, they did not find a great number of followers among the Orthodox Romanians.¹⁴

Around the end of the 16th century, during the reign of Voivods Bogdan Lăpuşneanu and Petru Şchiopul, the battle against the Hussites was raised to the level of a national political cause through the encouragement of Bartolomeo Brutti, representative of the Vatican. One of the most important political counselors of the Moldavian Voivod Sánta Péter was the aforementioned Brutti of Albanian descent, who convinced the ruler to ask for Jesuit monks to repress the growing numbers of Hussites and Protestants. In 1588 the first Jesuit fathers arrived from Poland; their goal was to push back the dangerous “heretic” sciences coming in from Transylvania and to set up a permanent college. In many places, they drove out those parsons who had taken wives, and took on the responsibilities of the village priests: leading worship, giving blessings, etc.¹⁵ This warlike mission was hindered in many places by the fact that the Jesuit priests could speak to the Moldavian Hungarian congregations only with the help of an interpreter; nevertheless, many written sources claim their success. For example, Vászari György (Secretary to the Catholic Bishop of Kamenyec), in a letter to the Papal Legate in Poland, dated 1571, reports with pride that Mihály Thabuk, the parson of Tatros/Tg. Trotuş, converted nearly 2,000 Hungarian Hussites to the Roman Catholic faith from Husz/Huşi, Románvásár/Roman, and the neighbouring villages. However, he urgently requested parsons to aid their spiritual development, since, without the priests, the believers returned to their heretic beliefs. At the request of Thabuk, the Polish bishop sent twelve ordained priests to help with the Moldavian missionary work. Bogdan, the Voivod of Moldavia, also admitted the significance of the missionary work of the Tatros/Tg. Trotuş parson, and suggested that he be given a higher church title as acknowledgement.¹⁶

The Hussite communities had a difficult time in the middle of the 16th century: their own priests died out and none came from the Carpathian Basin. Part of the abandoned congregations converted to the then-expanding Protestant faith. A small group remained steadfast in their reformed faith and Hungarian identity,

even into the 20th century, in Szászkút/Sascut-Sat. The settlement of the Hussite communities caused temporary confusion in Moldavia, but later, most assimilated slowly into the Roman Catholic faith. Deodatus, Catholic Bishop from Sofia, found a few Hussite families in the town of Husz/Huși 1641; a great many years after their Catholicising occurred they still followed the Hussite ways and sang in Hungarian during the mass during the visit of Bandinus in 1648. The presence of the Hussites in Moldavia was important primarily because they strengthened their mother tongue church life. After they were re-Catholicised, usually priests who spoke only foreign languages arrived, and because of a lack of deeper communication, many Moldavian Hungarians converted to the Orthodox faith.¹⁷

Over the course of the 16th century, there were several religious reform trends in Moldavia at the same time. Besides Hussitism, the teachings of Luther and Calvin became popular among the middle classes of the cities. We have heard many reports of how often the Hussites and the Protestants were mixed. In other places, influenced by the Reformation, many Roman Catholic priests married and established families, while also keeping their religion and faith. Oftentimes the syncretics of the Moldavian religious life were complicated by the fact that in many instances, after re-Catholicising occurred, Hussites adopted the Lutheran or Calvinist faith.¹⁸

In the middle of the 16th century, a significant number of Hungarians living in the Carpathian Basin converted to the Protestant faith. Since only a small area of Transylvania stayed Catholic, and only a few monks remained in the monastery in Csíksomlyó/Șumuleu, the Moldavian Hungarians did not receive priests or Franciscan friars sent from Székely land. The Saxons as a whole in the independent Transylvanian principality adopted the Lutheran faith, while the Hungarians (with the exception of the settlements of Csík/Ciucani, Gyergyó, Felső-Háromszék, and Felső-Nyárád) adopted the new Calvinist and Unitarian teachings. The new faith did not stop at the eastern Carpathian Mountains, for it spread into the Hungarian and Saxon communities of Moldavia. The Transylvanian Hungarians and Saxons¹⁹ played an important role in the spreading of Protestantism among a majority of the Orthodox population, since the teachings of Martin Luther spread quickly only in those Moldavian areas where a significant number of Transylvanian Hungarian and Saxon citizens lived, in other words, those people who had intense trade and family connections with the Transylvanian Protestant centres. The spread of the new faith was aided by the fact that in Moldavia there was a great lack of priests, and for this reason, Lutheran priests who preached in their mother tongue were welcomed with open arms.²⁰

Interestingly, the Protestants living in Transylvania did not pay too much attention to the organised conversion of the Moldavian Catholic Hungarians. In spite of this, a significant part of the Catholic residents in Moldavia converted to

Protestantism in the 1540s. At the same time, the more conservative village Moldavian Hungarians preserved their Roman Catholic faith to this day, keeping their earlier sacred traditions. After the fall of the central Hungarian kingdom (1541) and the quick spread of Protestantism in the 16th century, the Vatican designated the Wallachian Mountains and Moldavia as a mission area, and transferred it to the Catholic archbishopate of Sofia; for this reason, most of the missionaries who arrived came from the Bulgarian Franciscan diocese, who were under the direction of the *Holy Congregation of Missionaries* established in Rome in 1622. In 1644, a new change came about: Wallachia stayed under the jurisdiction of the archbishopate of Sofia, while Moldavia was listed under the newly established Serbian archbishopate. It is from there that Marcus Bandinus arrived for his Moldavian visitation tour. Meanwhile, Poland, which wished to conquer Moldavia, supported the spread of the Polish Catholic Church, which ended with the take over of the Bákó/Bacău episcopate in the 1600s. However, the Polish head priests who were appointed to the post were never continuously in Moldavia, as they were used to the pomp at home; and so they remained in Galicia from where they directed the collection of church taxes out of the poor diocese that had been plundered so many times. At the same time, there were constant conflicts between the Franciscans (who acknowledged only Rome) and the Polish bishops.²¹

For the insurance of winning converts in non-Catholic majority (Orthodox) countries and for the liquidation of eastern-European Protestantism, the Vatican worked out a new strategy in the 16th century.²² The first aim was to drive back Protestantism; by that time it had developed a very lenient diplomatic and political interaction with the Orthodox Church. The special training of the missionaries going to Moldavia was directed by the *de Propaganda Fide* at the Vatican. Starting in 1622, Rome appointed a leader of the mission (*a prefect, visitor, bishop*) in Moldavia, and sent primarily Minorite monks to the principality. Between 1622 and 1812 there were altogether fifty mission directors in Moldavia, but not one of them spoke Hungarian. The monks usually arrived for only a short period of time and did not understand the mother tongue of the local communities (most of them did not even bother to learn), and for this reason, they could not form intimate relations with the congregation. The directors of the mission regularly sent reports to the Vatican about church life and the number of members in their congregation. The archives of the *de Propaganda Fide* contain a rich amount of material concerning the religious and every day lives of the Moldavian Hungarian Catholic communities during the 17th and 18th centuries.²³

The spread of Protestantism in Moldavia was watched intently by western reformers. They saw a possible ally in the Orthodox Church, which was independent of Rome, and wished to win them over in order to achieve the goal of a global church reform and the unification of European Christian Churches. In the beginning, Petru Rareș, Voivod of Moldavia (1527–1538 and 1541–1546), assisted the

spread of the Reformation with his tolerant church policies. Since he needed the support of the Hungarian and Saxon citizenry in order to realise his internal-political plans, he allowed them complete religious freedom. He was patient with the Reformation, similarly to the Turks, and thus he could count on the significant support of the western Protestant world.²⁴

During the short-lived rule of Ștefan Rares (1551–1552), a true persecution of non-Orthodox Churches began in Moldavia: churches were plundered, ecclesiastic objects and scriptures were burned. A letter dating from 1552, relates how the voivod wanted to force all Moldavian Hungarians to convert to the Orthodox faith, but his anger also reached as far as the Saxons who were Lutherans as well. He did not have any sympathy for the Roman Catholics either; he had demolished the episcopate's church in Szeretvásár/Siret. His aggressive and merciless behaviour can be explained by the fact that in order to keep the unstable throne of Moldavia, he needed the obvious support of the Orthodox Church.²⁵ Alexandru Lăpușeanu also wished to win the support of the Orthodox Church, and especially in the beginning of his reign (1552–1561) he began a harsh battle against the Protestant movements, who were accused of heresy.²⁶ The religious intolerance observed during their rules often led to the demolition, burning, and pillaging of Roman Catholic churches in many places, and then the forceful conversion and re-baptism of Hungarians to the Orthodox faith.²⁷ Quirini, the leader of the Moldavian Catholic mission, in his report to the Vatican, also explained that from a denominational perspective, the Greek Orthodox priest forced the non-Orthodox Hungarian partner in a mixed marriage to convert before the pair could be wed. Since there were very few ordained priests in the Moldavian Catholic communities, many Moldavian Hungarians had to go to Orthodox priests for the sacraments, which meant the adoption of many of the elements of the Orthodox Church.²⁸

The spread of Protestantism in Moldavia was aided by Despot Voda (1561–1563) of Greek descent, who incorporated religious tolerance in the whole principality as soon as he took the throne. Since he did not countenance Roman Catholic parsons and monks, he had Protestant missionaries come from Poland in 1562, and tried to convert his people. His Polish Protestant counsellors played an important role in forming his views of the church and state. Among his counsellors were Jan Lusinski and the German Johann Sommer, etc.²⁹ He established a Protestant school in the city of Kotnár/Cotnari which soon became the centre of new religious ideas.³⁰ The economically stable Saxon and Hungarian citizens of Moldvabánya/Baia had all become Protestant by the middle of the 16th century; this fact is illustrated by the motifs on the contemporary gravestones. The tolerant measures of Voivod Despot generated grave negative feelings in his own environment and in the princes following him.

Sánta Péter (Petru Șchiopul) who was ruler of Moldavia for several periods of

time (1574–1577, 1578–1579, and 1582–1591) showed his respect towards the Vatican by sending away the German and Transylvanian heretic priests and welcoming the Jesuits fleeing from Transylvania. Because of his strict orders, the Moldavian Protestant priests who preached in Hungarian fled to Transylvania. Voivod Péter even instructed his bodyguards, consisting of 500 Hungarian soldiers, that if they wanted to remain in service to him, then there was no place for any heretics in his court.³¹ Instead of the Hungarian Protestant priests he brought in Catholic monks who spoke only foreign languages, so could not speak to the believers at all. For this reason, the voivod requested friars who spoke Hungarian and German from the Polish Papal Legate in 1587. But the situation was further complicated: because of the violent pressure, the seemingly newly Catholicised congregations usually joined those Protestant priests who—when the believers were re-Catholicised—came to their settlements and preached in their mother tongue.³² The same thing was reiterated by Petrus Deodatus, Catholic Bishop of Sofia, who visited Moldavia in 1641, and saw that in the area of Tatros/Tg. Trotuş, “many become heretic because of the close proximity of Transylvania.”³³

During the rule of Voivod Aron (1591–1595) a basic change came for a short time concerning the Protestant Churches of Moldavia. England, primarily through its Ambassador to Constantinople, Edward Barton, placed pressure on the church policies of the Moldavian Voivod. The English, who were looking for contacts with the Turks, clearly saw that the objective of the Vatican with its counter-reformation, was to find an ally in the Orthodox world, and for this reason, they tried to help the eastern-European Protestants in any way they could. Since the counter-reformation of the Jesuits grew strong during the reign of Voivod Péter (1588–1591), under the direction of Bartolomeo Brutti, Voivod Aron quickly had the mission leader murdered, thus ridding himself of his uncomfortable presence; subsequently he sent away the monks of the mission from his principality in 1592 in order to comply with the requests of the English. In the next year, the only way that Barton would support the Voivod in regaining his throne in the capital of the Turkish Empire and in strengthening his power was if the Voivod would return the churches of the Hussites and the Protestants, and allow free religious practice everywhere in his principality. The attitude of the English can be attributed to the fact that earlier the Pope had excommunicated Elizabeth, the Queen of England from the Roman Catholic Church.³⁴

The spread of Protestantism caused great confusion in the stronger Catholic communities as well. In many places the parsons renounced their vow of celibacy, married, and raised their own children with pride. This is described by Bernardino Quirini in a report written in 1599, who found 1,080 Catholics in Kotnár/Cotnari. At that time the priest of this congregation was a certain Dániel, of Transylvanian origin, who married a widow in a ceremony celebrated by another married priest. The bishop severely reprimanded the woman and forced her to move to another settlement in Moldavia, but because of the great lack of

priests, he allowed Dániel to stay as head of his congregation. During Quirini's visitation tour, he met the married Laurentius Demuth in the city of Bányá, and a 70 year old Saxon married parson with children in Németsváros/Tîrgu Neamţ, as well as the married priest Bene János in Tatros/Tg. Trotuş.³⁵ The head priest allowed the Saxon Lutheran schoolmaster of Transylvanian origins in Kotnár/Cotnar, Petrus Elmon, to remain as head of his community also because there was a lack of priests; he had a Hungarian and Latin school in the city, but had in his possession several "heretic" Hungarian books and prohibited Bibles, which the head priest burned on the spot.³⁶ Quirini made a note concerning János, the observant Franciscan Father of Transylvanian origins who practised in the city of Husz/Huşi: he is married and has several children.³⁷ In many places Quirini observed that the priests led the spiritual lives of the congregations without having been ordained, while in other places, only Transylvanian Protestant priests gave their blessings to the missionary work.

Cesare Alzatti sensed more of an Orthodox influence rather than a Protestant one in the renunciation of the vow of celibacy: in many places it was the congregation who requested that the priest get married and have a family before being ordained, similarly to the Greek Orthodox priests.³⁸ Quirini, the Catholic head priest, made efforts to introduce stricter regulations in Moldavia because of the lax church discipline brought on by the influence of Protestantism. Many people did not agree with the stricter disciplinary rules (i.e. keeping the vow of celibacy) introduced in the spirit of the Council of Trident; for this reason, some tried to organise the assassination of Quirini.³⁹

Many years after the counter-reformation offensive of the Catholic Church, the missionaries travelling in Moldavia at the beginning and middle of the 17th century found quite a few Protestants. For example, Andreas Bogoslavich found "Lutheran" believers in Husz/Huşi, Karácsonykő/Piatra Neamţ, Szucsáva/Suceva, and Tatros/Tg. Trotuş, in 1623. There was even a Lutheran priest preaching in 1630. Another Franciscan missionary submitted a report to the Holy Congregation in 1632 in which he says that "*...in Tatros, Bogdánfalva, and in other places, there are about 200 Catholic families who practice the faith in the Calvinist mode, for there is no priest from their own nation.*"⁴⁰ Simon Appoloni describes the conversion of a married couple in 1643 in Jászvásár/Iaşi, who lived according to the Lutheran faith. At the same time, on his visitation tour in 1647, Bandinus found only a single Calvinist priest in Bákó/Bacău, who had guided the spiritual lives of the people of the city and its vicinity for the previous fifteen years.⁴¹

At the beginning of the 17th century, the Vatican urged the union of European believers in order to push back the threat and expansion of the pagan Turks. Meanwhile, in order to strengthen its weakened position in the provinces south and east of the Carpathian Mountains, the Catholic Church set out to re-establish the episcopates of Moldavia and Wallachia and to drive back Protestantism as much as possible. Since the Tartars had destroyed the episcopate of Argyes/Ar-

ghes, Bishop Querini transferred the headquarters to Bákó/Bacău in 1597.⁴² In the last decades of the 16th century, Pope Gregory XIV appointed Bernard Querini Bishop of Moldavia and made the Observant Franciscan monastery in Bákó/Bacău the headquarters. This episcopate existed from 1607 until 1818. Because of the war conditions the bishop could only get to Moldavia after seven years; there he found 1,591 Hungarian Catholic families (10,704 people) in 15 cities and 16 villages. He also had good relations with the Franciscans of Csíksomlyó/Șumuleu. Querini would have liked to have them take over the guidance of the Moldavian Hungarians. At that time, the voivod of the province was Ieremia Movila, who took possession of the throne with Polish support. His wife, Csomortáni Erzsébet was Hungarian, who supported the Hungarians of Moldavia. For two hundred years after Querini, only bishops of Polish descent filled this seat in Bákó/Bacău, and because of this they could not form intimate spiritual relations with the Hungarian congregations; thus the spiritual lives of these people were neglected.⁴³

Because of the increasingly serious lack of priests, the Hungarians in Moldavia requested missionaries directly from Rome. The Vatican sent primarily Italian, Croatian, and Bosnian Franciscan monks, who did not speak the language of the communities, and learned Romanian after their arrival, since it was much more similar to Italian than Hungarian. A few missionaries, however, understood that the only way to truly reach out to the Moldavian congregations was through knowledge of Hungarian. Bartolomeo Basetti wrote the following about Beke Pál in 1642: *“The best thing for these poor Hungarians would be if he became a missionary, for he could do more than all the missionaries put together, since he knows the Hungarian language. All the Catholics in this province, it seems, are Hungarian.”*⁴⁴

Marcus Bandinus, the most well-known bishop of the mission, summed up his experiences while visiting the Catholic communities of Moldavia with Beke Pál in 1646: *“The Roman Church as the father of the religion should send priests over here who speak the language.”* Later Rafael Petrus Arduini, apostle vicar of Moldavia, exclaimed that it was nonsense how the missionaries try to force the Romanian-language catechism on a people who speak only Hungarian.⁴⁵

The underdevelopment and poverty of the Moldavian settlements shocked the arriving missionaries. Most monks in the poor villages lived under the same circumstances as their followers; they too could only live by scrimping, since they could not hope for any larger donations from their destitute congregations and received irregular and little support from Rome. It must not be forgotten, that it was not usually the best missionaries who volunteered to go to that end of Europe, and the visitation reports of head priests and letters of local congregations only point out the demoralisation and neglect of the mission Fathers. One such letter was written by the residents of Szabófalva/Săbăoani in October of 1671, directly to the Missionary Organisation of the Holy Congregation, in which they complain about the immorality and power-hunger of the missionaries sent to them.⁴⁶ *“Our lives are like those of the dumb beasts, who cannot praise God, but can only*

live in their stupidity. We send our humble plea to you, Great and Holy Fathers, and to the Holy Congregation, to tell you of how the missionary friars Your Honours sent to us try to rule us with strength of power, and do not act as the orders demand, but rather pursue drink and women, associate with them, live ugly, unclean lives, which is scandalous to all men, but especially to us Hungarians: we cannot take from them anything that may awaken the fruits of our spirit, they would have all power over us."⁴⁷ The people of Szabófalva/Săbăoani warn the leaders of the Congregation at the end of their letter that if they do not give them other missionaries in place of these *unstable and damned* priests then they will join the side of the *Oláhs* (Romanians) and listen to their bishop from now on.⁴⁸ The conflicts, the personal jealousy, the accusations between the different branches of Franciscan monks (Observants and Minorites) only made the relationship between the Catholic Church and the village communities under their guidance more complicated and poisoned.

Letters and reports from the 17th century also show that the congregations expressly demanded and continuously requested priests who spoke Hungarian, since their relationships with the foreign priests was becoming impossible. For example, in 1652 Marjanus Kurski, who was of Polish background and appointed Bishop of Moldavia, squandered the funds of the Franciscan monastery in Bákó/Bacău in less than two weeks, and then put anything that was left on a cart and sent it home to Poland. The dejected leaders of the Bákó/Bacău community wrote a Hungarian letter asking for a different bishop and requested the monastery to be given back to the Transylvanian Hungarian Franciscans. "*We the Catholics living in the city of Bako in Moldoua Country, along with the Hungarians of the area ... plead with you to hear our request. We here among the Olá nation have many different problems weighing down on us, but of the most difficult is that we must live without a pastor for so many years now. Our old cloisters, that previously belonged to the Province in Hungary called Salvatoris, is now under the dwellings of the bishops, and from them we have suffered many ills, as they have made many a scandal in our faith as well, and seeing that the bishops do not remedy our ailments, do not support us and strengthen us in our true faith, but rather give us these scandals, especially the Polish bishops, who among them Bishop Marjanus Kurski's acts are not like a shepherd but like a wolf's since his arrival in Bako in 1652, he gives us no good example, nothing which would come from a true Bishop of God, and everything that the fraters gathered and saved, he had with his servants squandered with wine; two weeks following, that which had not been expended, he loaded on carts, and took everything that the Bishops that had departed to the Lord had collected ... sent to us was an evil, drunken servant from Poland, shameful to those poor Fathers who suffer...we ask Your Highnesses with humbleness ... plant the poor Fathers back into their old cloisters, for we will not accept any more foreign bishops ... and we ask the Holy Congregation with spiritual fervour, that this cloister should be put under the Transylvanian custody, two days' travel from here.*"⁴⁹

In the summer of 1644, the Hungarians of Csöböröcsök/Ciuburciu, who lived next to Dnester, on the land of the Tartars, pleaded with Beke Pál, Jesuit mission-

ary: *“Have mercy on us, mercy, at least you, Christian brethren, and send us a priest, to be our saviour.”*⁵⁰

A half century later, in 1706, they repeated their request to Ferenc Rákóczi II (Prince of Transylvania) even more resolutely in front of the ambassadors visiting the Tartar Khan. The diaries of Bay Mihály and Pápai Gáspár preserve the request of the people of Csöböröcsök/Ciuburciu the following way: *“It was King László who had settled this village named Csebercsik, among other villages, near Akkerman or Neszter-fejérvár, in Bessarabia and Bucska. Many of those other villages have been destroyed, but this one remained, even though half is already an Oláh village. Some still speak the Hungarian language, this vassal village of the Tartar Khan. There are many farmers still, some thirty, with many children and servants, they are good men. They complained that for a few years they have no pater, though they are Catholic. They marry, have children and multiply amongst themselves with no priest, there are even babes who are four and five years old yet not baptised, their parents married without priests, and many of these children die without baptism. They lament to us their great sorrow of the diminishing numbers of their priests; they wish that a priest would come once every three or four years to them, who would baptise the children, perform marriages, and hear their confessions. They are so determined in their own religion, that even though there is an Oláh priest living in the village, they would rather bury their children un-baptised than have them baptised by the Oláh priest. We have been sworn to report these things that have come to pass to our Lord and Highness, and ask Your Highness to send us a pater, and they are ready to pay all expenses for him; but they request a pater who speaks Hungarian, for they know no other languages besides Oláh and Hungarian.”*⁵¹

On returning from the land of the Tartars on June 6, 1706, Bay Mihály and Pápai Gáspár informed Ferenc Rákóczi II at Érsekújvár of the request of the Roman Catholic Hungarians living in Csöböröcsök/Ciuburciu. The Prince took action immediately and in August Lippay István was already among them. In his report to Ferenc Rákóczi II, he explains that at first the Hungarian congregation living among the Romanians and the Tartars were very mistrustful.⁵² Zöld Péter visited Csöböröcsök/Ciuburciu in May of 1767, and the people who had lived without a priest for 17 years welcomed him with tears of joy. Over the course of two weeks he held mass in Hungarian, served communion, heard confessions, baptised, married, taught the young people the Catholic faith, and told the midwives the proper expressions of Christianity. At the end of his missionary visit, the people from Csöböröcsök/Ciuburciu Hungarians escorted Zöld Péter one mile, and begged him in tears to send them a priest who spoke Hungarian.⁵³

Petrus Parcevic, the apostolic vicar of Moldavia, saw clearly that it was the neighbouring Transylvanian Hungarian monks living two days' walk away who would be best fit to take the spiritual welfare of the Hungarian communities into their hands. For this reason, he suggested that the monastery of Bákó/Bacău be returned to its old owners—in other words, return it to the Franciscans of Csíksomlyó/Șumuleu. In a Latin text dating from 1670, he emphasises that many

of the Catholics living in Moldavia know how to speak only Hungarian, and ask for Hungarian priests. They refuse to go to the Romanian priests even for confession and will not listen to their sermons. Archbishop Parcevic concluded an agreement with the Transylvanian Observant Franciscan custodians pledging that he would return to them the Bákó/Bacău monastery, where the missionaries of the monastery of Csíksomlyó/Șumuleu would once again serve.⁵⁴ He appointed Tapolczai István, Father Superior of the Csíksomlyó/Șumuleu monastery, as head of the mission centre; it was his job to renovate the monastery building, which had been damaged during the battles, and to collect the scattered community and unify them. However, higher politics stopped the new plans and appointments. Since Moldavia was under the jurisdiction of the Polish Catholic Church, the Bishop of Bákó/Bacău, Rudzinski, protested against inviting the Franciscans of Csíksomlyó/Șumuleu, and the Papal Legate of Warsaw, Cardinal Nerli, did not support the idea either.⁵⁵

In addition to the Franciscans, the Jesuits also did missionary work. At the end of the 16th century, the Father Superior of the Jesuit Order of Poland initiated talks with the Voivod of Moldavia, Sánta Péter (Petre Șchiopul), who wanted to build good political relations with the Vatican. In the meantime, the decisions of the government convention held in Medgyes/Mediaș in 1589 forced the Jesuits out of Transylvania; many of them fled to nearby Moldavia, where they settled primarily in Jászvásár/Iași and did important missionary work in the village Catholic communities.⁵⁶ At the end of the 16th century and beginning of the next century, the Jesuits worked in this province sporadically. More members of their order arrived from Poland in 1660, and worked in Jászvásár/Iași and Kotnár/Cotnari. They established a Latin-language school, where primarily the children of the Moldavian community's elite were taught. For example, Beke Pál, who accompanied Archbishop Bandinus on his Moldavian visitation tour in 1646, founded a school in the frame of the Jesuit mission in Jászvásár/Iași, where he taught along with members of his order until 1651.⁵⁷

Unfortunately the relationship between the Franciscans and the Jesuits in Moldavia was not the most harmonious, since the Jesuits sought to win over the powerful elite. They boldly intervened in political and power affairs, and looked down upon the Franciscan monks who lived in poverty among the people in the villages. These oppositions generally weakened the effectiveness with which they cared for their parish.⁵⁸

Because of the constant lack of priests, the role of the so-called “deáks”—who had very little schooling—was elevated. Many had studied at the eastern-Transylvanian Franciscan monasteries. For example, the father of Petrás Ince János, who was a learned parson serving in Klézse/Cleja, had studied in Kanta in Kézdivásárhely/Târgu Secuiesc, and spoke, read, and wrote perfectly in Hungarian, Romanian, Latin, and Italian.⁵⁹ Because there were so few priests and monks, the Hungarian communities brought in Transylvanian teachers or deáks, and

midwives to baptise their children only with great financial strains. The deáks who could read and write not only played an important role in the practices of spiritual life, but also in the settling of worldly affairs with power institutions.⁶⁰ In those villages where there were no priests for years at a time, the deáks were the ones who baptised the babies, married couples, said the final farewell at funerals, led the singing of hymns and prayers in Hungarian, and taught the younger children how to pray, read and write. This unfortunate situation was described by Blasius Koicevic, Franciscan monk and assistant to the Moldavian Apostolic Vicar, in a report written in 1661: “In the Hungarian villages, if there is no priest, there is a schoolmaster or a sexton; these are the people who pre-sing the songs, read the scriptures, and teach the children.”⁶¹

For the most part, the cantor teachers came from Transylvania. Even in the 19th century it was a common practice for a Moldavian Roman Catholic village community to invite a cantor teacher from Székely land. One example is Bertalan Sándor, who was born in 1872 in Kézdiálmás/Mereni in Felső-Háromszék and attended school in Kézdivásárhely/Târgi Secuiesc at the Minorite school, then went to Moldavia where he was an “apprentice” to the old cantor Baka in Poskucén/Ploscuteni, and served for years in Onest/Onești as a Catholic *deák*, but who supported himself and his family with his carpentry work.⁶²

At the beginning of the 1860s, Héja József, from Háromszék, decided to go to work in Gorzafalva/Gorzești, a large community near Ojtoz/Oituz: “*Just as in my poor Hungarian land I tried as best as I could to bring the children to the learning of the Catholic faith, here I would have desired to do the same without payment for the children of these frightened people, but as I have noticed, there will not be anyone needing me this winter...*”⁶³ The young teacher was shocked by the extreme poverty of the families and at their indifference, and because of his increasing homesickness, he requested that the archdeacon of Háromszék send him back to his homeland. On November 20, 1862, Kozma Funtak, pater of Gorzafalva/Gorzești, wrote a letter to the archdeacon of Kézdi-Orba Szék, in which he explains that the young man suffering from homesickness would like to return: “*He longs for the Breast of his sweet homeland, he would see only Your Honour with his eyes, he speaks of it, and if not always, he would like to be nearer, he wishes for Zabola, I can see, that the boy loves Your Honour and the land of his birth, I fear for his health here, I fear, and so I take him with me everywhere, he only speaks of Your Honour and his Parents, I think it would be good if You would promise ... to give him Zabola...*”⁶⁴ In my opinion, it was not only homesickness which prompted Héja József to leave, since we know from his own letter that he couldn’t really develop a good relationship with the cantor of Gorzafalva/Gorzești, who was highly regarded by the congregation. “*As your honour has seen, what wildness the people of this region live in, and how they make their sacrifices with body and soul to this day, and these people do not recognise me as teacher and cantor, and I fear that if I would reside in the cantor’s residence, that one night the cantor would come upon me drunk with his others and there they would beat me to death, as they had come to the window*

of the reverend, why would they not come to me...”⁶⁵ Héja József’s letter to Háromszék is a fine example of how, in 1862, the cantor played an even more important part than the parson in the spiritual lives of the Hungarian congregation in Gorzafalva/Gorzești.

Because of the continuous lack of priests, with the absence of direct language contact between the congregations and the missionaries, in Moldavia it was the archaic, Medieval, and apocryphal elements of folk religion that became conserved.⁶⁶ At the same time, due to the influence of the neighbouring Orthodox communities, they also had mystical and superstitious practices (healing by charlatans, demon exorcisms, etc.).⁶⁷

Archbishop Bandinus noted that in Tatros/Tg. Trotuș, for example, miracles occurred in the churches named for Saints Kozma and Damján: “angel songs” could be heard from the building at night, a light similar to torch light encircled the church and then disappeared above the mountains. Influenced by the miracle of TatrosTg. Trotuș, a Saxon Lutheran converted to the Catholic faith.⁶⁸

Beke Pál, Jesuit monk, gave a detailed account of his experiences in Moldavia in 1644 to the Head of the Austrian Church Province, who later summed up the words of the Hungarian missionary in his annual report to Rome. The summary shows that the Moldavian Catholics were greatly influenced by the Greek Orthodox Church, and thus kept several superstitious practices: for example, during Easter, like the Romanians, they made merry above the graves of their loved ones so the souls wasting away in Purgatory would be cheerful. Kidnapping women and divorce was an accepted practice among the communities. Therefore, those who got bored of their mates simply chased them away.⁶⁹ The Moldavian Hungarians believed even then that Orthodox priests could exorcise the devil from suffering, ill, and possessed people more effectively. A Greek schoolmaster was cursed by his lover, and even though the Romanian *kalugers* (Orthodox monks) tried to beat the devil out of him with sticks, it did not work, and it was only the ardent prayers of the Jesuits that could free the man of the devil. Once a Catholic man who did not attend mass was gripped by wild hallucinations, and started to scream wildly in front of the holy church. A Romanian medicine-woman burned the man with a hot iron to exorcise him of the demons. They also said their confessions similar to the Romanians: only partially. They confessed only one or the other of their sins.⁷⁰

A great change came over the eastern politics of the Vatican in the 18th century. In this century, the goal was to convert the peoples of newly discovered lands, primarily the primitive, tribal groups of South America. The directors of the foreign politics of the Vatican realised that it was impossible to convert the Orthodox from the direction of Moldavia. For this reason, they terminated the missionary work in Moldavia and with this decision, left the Hungarians of Moldavia on their own. At the same time, the counsellors of the Pope saw from the reports they received that the priests who did not understand the Hungarian language were

unable to properly look after and direct the spiritual lives of the congregations. In 1774 the Pope ordered that all those who take part in missionary work must learn the language of the communities in six months, on which they will then be tested; and without doing this they cannot work. Unfortunately, the order from far-away Rome only stayed on paper, for no one bothered to put it into practice.⁷¹

Under the orders of the Sistovo Peace Treaty (1791) the Moldavian Catholic mission area was placed under the jurisdiction of Austria by the Vatican at the end of the century. Unfortunately, it was never in the interest of Vienna to truly represent the interests of the Hungarians, and for this reason they took every opportunity to make the lives of the Hungarian priests serving in Moldavia impossible. The Austrian administration appointed Franz Joseph Sulzer, who made a tour of Moldavia in 1779, and in his report registered 6,000 Hungarian families, some 25–30,000 people living in Moldavia.⁷²

After the massacres of Mádéfalva/Siculeni in 1764, Zöld Péter, Székely parson of radical spirit, worked among the Moldavian Hungarian communities for five years, until Batthyány Ignác, the library-founding, learned bishop of Transylvania, asked him to come home to his homeland of Csíkszék. The priest serving in Csíkdelne/Delnița wrote a detailed report in which he documented the contemporary situation of the Moldavian Hungarians. In his letter he recommended to the bishop that the Holy Congregation send Hungarian priests in place of the Italian missionaries, and if possible these priests should be of the stricter Franciscan order. *“These kinds of priests are very important in this area, for without them the Catholics here are only Catholics by name, since the Italian Fathers could not teach them the faith because they could not speak their language... after they finished with the holy mass. In addition, only God knows how they hear the confessions of the people from the written questions, which, as I have experienced, can hardly be a full confession, for they do not understand the sins of the self-accusing people, the type and circumstances, especially those that change the kinds; these pitiful Hungarians often tell me among bitter tears that because they do not know the language they had never once confessed in their lives.”*⁷³

Batthyány Ignác received reliable information from Zöld Péter’s detailed report, and understood that no one in Moldavia adheres to the Pope’s 1774 order. In 1887, he wrote to the Pope very bitterly: *“Your Holiness should not believe that it does not matter if all the missionaries don’t speak the Hungarian language, for there are not simply a few families, few and far between. There are very many families, who have settled entire areas and are as unfamiliar with the Oláh language as they are adamant in preserving their mother language... For this reason, when these missionaries hear confessions, they bring along a list of certain sins, and instead of hearing the spiritual wounds of those who wish to speak, the missionaries themselves list the sins, just as when the confessions of mutes are done; or other times they vary and turn the words so they can hardly be understood, and the Hungarians cringe from this type of confession so much that many among them go 20 years without a confession.”*⁷⁴

Over the course of the 18th and 19th centuries, more Hungarian Protestant refu-

gees arrived from Transylvania who scattered in Moldavia and lived in smaller groups; for this reason they quickly became a part of the Roman Catholic communities. In the Klézse/Cleja cemetery the old graves of the Protestant families were still far away from the Catholic ones even in the 20th century.⁷⁵ Smaller and larger groups of Hungarian Protestant craftsmen settled in cities of Moldavia (e.g. Jászvásár/Iași) from the beginning of the 19th century. Various sources show that Protestant families also lived in Prála/Pralea and Bucsum/Bucium near Onyest in the middle of the 19th century, who were later converted back to the Catholic faith by Kozman Funták, parson of Gorzafalva/Grozești, in 1860.⁷⁶

At the beginning of the 19th century, a significant number of Protestants lived in Vizánta/Vizantea Mănăstirească in Vrancea County, who settled by the base of the Carpathian Mountains from Transylvania in 1814. In the beginning, a Hungarian priest was at the head of the Protestant congregation in Vizánta/Vizantea Mănăstirească; the Catholic parson of the area filed charges against him with the Moldavian Austrian consul, which resulted in the Protestant priest's departure as a result of the strict orders of the consul. Two years later another Protestant priest arrived in the village from the Transylvanian Orbaiszék neighbouring Vrancea County. The presence of the priest, who preached in Hungarian, annoyed the Catholic bishop in Bákó/Bacău, and in 1817, the bishop also complained to the Austrian consul, asking Vienna to order the Calvinist Hungarian priest to leave Moldavia and return to Transylvania. Beder Benjamin, however, was still serving the Hungarian believers of Vizánta/Vizantea Mănăstirească in 1817; but he later left the village because of increasing harassment, and went on to lead a larger Protestant congregation in Szászkút/Sascut-Sat. In 1858, only Nyújtó János and his large family lived in Protestant faith, and soon the deserted church of the Protestants collapsed.⁷⁷

In Moldavia, Protestant Hungarian village communities survived until the 20th century only in Szászkút/Sascut-Sat. In the Middle Ages this village had a significant Saxon population, who kept up intensive relations with the headquarters of Transylvanian Protestantism in Brassó/Brașov and Barcaság; this German community welcomed new religious ideas along with the Hussites in the 16th century. The population of the Hungarian Protestant community in the second half of the 18th century and the first half of the 19th century grew with the Transylvanian families who fled from Háromszék, so their priests were from there as well. Though they lived under poor circumstances, the Protestants of Szászkút/Sascut-Sat also kept up a denominational Hungarian school.⁷⁸ Their priest still travelled to the village of Bilak/Domnești, south of Egyedhalma/Adjud, in the 1870s, where he cared for the spiritual lives of 39 Hungarian Protestant families, but even they converted to the Roman Catholic faith in 1898. The last Protestant Hungarian priest, Dobai György, came from a peasant family, studied theology in Debrecen and Sárospatak, and chose his wife from Esztelnek/Estelnic in Felső-Háromszék. This learned priest served the congregations of Szászkút/Sascut-Sat from 1875

until his death in 1925. During World War I, the Protestant church and parsonage of Szászkút/Sascut-Sat burned to the ground. During the census of 1930 in Romania, only 115 Roman Catholics were counted in Szászkút: among them, 109 described themselves as Hungarian in nationality, and 103 still spoke Hungarian as a mother tongue.⁷⁹

In 1807, Hammer, the Austrian consul in Jászvásár/Iași, in a report to his superiors in Vienna, listed the following Moldavian villages as having functioning Roman Catholic parsonages: Forrófalva/Fărăoani, Klézse/Cleja, Gorzafalva/Grozești, Bogdánfalva/Valea Seacă, Lujzikalagor/Luizi-Călugăre, Tamásfalva, Dumafalva, Halasfalva/Hălăucești, Szabófalva/Săbăoani, and Husz/Huși. According to his records, at this time 4,182 Roman Catholic families, namely 21,307 people, lived in these settlements.⁸⁰ Vienna ordered the government of Transylvania in 1823 to investigate whether the Csíksomlyó/Șumuleu Franciscans really needed the monastery in Bákó/Bacău. Unfortunately, the initiative of the court was pointless.⁸¹

The people who arrived after the massacres of Mádéfalva/Siculeni had a greater Hungarian language consciousness, and for this reason they requested Hungarian language liturgy and religious life from their ecclesiastic and worldly leaders. In their disappointment they not only made their request for Hungarian priests to Rome, but also to the Emperor of Austria himself. Upon their repeated pleas, they sent Dénes Imre, who belonged to the Pécs diocese; he established a school in Jászvásár, and taught religion in Hungarian. During his 12-year stay in Moldavia, he served his Hungarian congregations at first in Jászvásár/Iași, then later in Prezest and Kaluger. Through the repeated requests of the Moldavians, Bocskor István was also sent to Moldavia in 1803, where he cared with enthusiasm for the spiritual lives of the people who had been religiously abandoned. Unfortunately, the leaders of the mission area were ever more harshly opposed to the people who wished to have Hungarian liturgies and against cantors who directed church life in Hungarian. Brocani Dominicus, the prefect of the area, issued an order dated June 15, 1804, that in the villages of Lujzikalagor/Luizi-Călugăre, Bákó/Bacău, Barát, and Prezest, the prayers and catechism classes could be held in Romanian only. At the same time, he did not support the work of the aforementioned Bocskor either; he did not ratify the sending of the helpful priest to Szabófalva/Săbăoani even though the people of the village requested his coming. Soon enough he accused the priest in front of Hammer, the Austrian consul, who found the work of the Transylvanian Hungarian parson to be so harmful and dangerous that in 1807 he had him arrested and sent to the prison of Temesvár/Timișoara in Bánság.⁸²

Paroni, the Apostolic Vicar of Moldavia, finally became weary of this unlucky state of things and travelled to Kolozsvár/Cluj in 1825, where he concluded a contract with Rudolf Studer, the head of the Hungarian Minorite order, that in exchange for 100 tallérs, the Transylvanian diocese would send six Hungarian

monks to Moldavia per year. The growing numbers of Hungarian priests irritated the Italian missionaries working in Moldavia, and with schemes and plots, they tried to force the Transylvanians to leave. Since the above-mentioned money was sent irregularly by the poor Moldavian mission centre, the Transylvanian Franciscan vicar informed the locals that until they paid their debts, they would be unable to send any more Hungarian priests from Transylvania into Moldavia.⁸³

The intolerance and contempt the Italian priests felt toward their congregations is obvious after the defeat of the 1831 Szabófalva/Săbăoani uprising. The foreign missionaries were so fervent in humiliating the renegades, that Rafael Petrus Arduini, newly appointed Apostolic Vicar of Moldavia, had to make obvious temporary concessions, and relax the intolerant attitude towards language; for this reason, he was forced to prohibit the open persecution of the Hungarian language: “*It would be nonsense for someone to preach in French to people who only speak German or Slavic, and it is the same here... in this example, where the missionaries want to teach the faith in Romanian to people who understand only Hungarian.*”⁸⁴

Carol Magni, the Prefect of the Catholic Mission between 1832 and 1838, opened a Romanian-language public school and cantor-training school in Szabófalva/Săbăoani while he was in Moldavia. One of the earlier leaders of the mission wished to break the power of the Hungarian cantors, and so he drastically changed the church taxes. In Moldavia up to that point, the local Roman Catholic communities usually brought in cantors from Transylvania who spoke Hungarian and were of Hungarian nationality, paying them from their own church taxes. According to the new laws, the congregations had to pay separate taxes to the parsonage out of their own church funds, and from that money, the parson chose and paid the cantor or *deák*. The unhappy people of Szabófalva/Săbăoani went straight to *de Propaganda Fide*, so the leader of the Moldavian mission would not change the old religious order of their lives. In their letter they asked expressly that a Hungarian priest be sent, and threatened that if the leaders of the Catholic Church did not comply with their request, they would all convert to the Orthodox religion. The angered villagers finally chased the unwanted priest (Remigius Silvestri) out of their village and reported their annoyance at the prince’s court. At the court, first the villagers were told to convert to the Orthodox faith, and then later offered a compromise. Alexandru Ipsilanti, Voivod of Moldavia, organised a Council of Bojars to look into the case; finally it was resolved that the church tax would be collected by two landowners of Szabófalva/Săbăoani.⁸⁵

In the first part of the 19th century, because of the circumstances mentioned above, the number of Hungarian priests in Moldavia radically diminished. Pap Sándor wrote the following about this artificially and deliberately induced situation: “*As for the diminishing numbers of Hungarian priests... this would be very unfortunate for the Hungarian people, for it is not the efforts of the missionaries, but the love of their language that keeps the Hungarian people in the Catholic faith, where many cities and villages have grown distant to their faith only because they have forgotten the language of their*

parents, and this may happen to the residents of Husz, who do not know the language of their parents. What has happened before, will happen again.” Pap Sándor believed the greatest fault to lie in the fact that while they heard confessions, the priests could not properly interact with the believers, and therefore could not affect the spiritual or moral lives of the congregation. He closes his words with bitterness: “*Could one who knows these facts deny that there is a need for the Hungarian language in Moldavia? And still the report is given that the numbers of Hungarian paters should be diminished. These are the things that the Holy Congregation should remedy, if they would not be misinformed.*”⁸⁶

In the summer of 1841, Petrás Ince János—Hungarian priest born in Moldavia and serving in Pusztina/Pustiana—accompanied Rafael Petrus Arduini, apostolic vicar of Italian origins, to the Transylvanian Borszék/Borsec thermal bath resort. At the resort in Csíkszék, they became acquainted with Döbrentei Gábor, a learned Hungarian young man working in Buda. At first the relationship brought mutual respect and then scientific exchange. We know from the letters written to the young man by Petrás Ince that in 1839 there were altogether 57,300 Catholic Hungarians in Moldavia, but only eight Hungarian priests in 1841.⁸⁷

The petty, material relationship between the Moldavian Catholic Mission and the Transylvanian Franciscan diocese became especially bad in the 1840s, when Jerney János wrote articles in Budapest newspapers concerning the situation of the Moldavian Hungarians and their denied rights. Meanwhile, Kopácsi József, Archbishop of Hungary, agreed to regularly pay the fees of the Hungarian Minorite monks working in Moldavia and, in addition, asked for the increasing of their numbers from the Transylvanian Order. With the support of the Italian priests, the government of Moldavia decided that they would deport all Hungarian priests from the principality of Moldavia. Sardi Pál, Apostolic Vicar, could only partially prevent the Order from taking action. At his request, *de Propaganda Fide* rejected the intervention of Kopácsi, and on orders, the last two Hungarian friars had to leave Moldavia at once. Since the archbishop did not pay the fees needed for the mission Minorites to continue their work, Szabó Román, the leader of the Transylvanian Minorite Order, asked for the return of the Hungarian monks from Moldavia on May 4, 1848.⁸⁸

The Roman Catholic Schemata, compiled in Moldavia in 1851, listed 22 parsonages and 186 branches in altogether 208 settlements. According to the annual report, the congregations of the parsonages of the following 16 villages still spoke, sang, and prayed in Hungarian: Dsidafalva/Agiudeni, Bákó/Bacău, Bergova, Butea, Kalagor, Klézse/Cleja, Forrófalva/Fărăoani, Foksány, Gorzafalva/Grozești, Halasfalva/Hălăucești, Prezest, Szabófalva/Săbăoani, Pusztina/Pustiana, Tatros/Tg. Trotuș, Bogdánfalva/Valea Seacă, and Valé.⁸⁹ The Schemata also showed that in 1851 the patron saint of the Catholic churches of Gajcsána/Găiceana, Szólóhegy/Pârgărești, and Pusztina/Pustiana was Saint Stephen, while the patron saint in Vizantea/Vizantea Mănăstireasc was Saint Ladislaus, both former Hun-

garian kings.⁹⁰ The importance of the Hungarian language in the liturgy was portrayed by the fact that in the middle of the 19th century, the Apostolic Visitant of Moldavia still published a bilingual catechism (Romanian and Hungarian) in Jászvásár/Iași; this meant that the church had to comply with the need for the Hungarian language in religion even in 1841.⁹¹

In 1859, the principalities of Romania united, and became a kingdom with the Hohenzollern Dynasty on the throne in 1881. The young burgeoning Romanian state soon found it humiliating that missionaries directed by Rome were working on its land. In 1881, head priest Camilli was appointed Apostolic Visitant of Rome in Moldavia; he organised the mission into an episcopate with the help of the Romanian state in 1884, which was further strengthened by Pope Leo XIII in a letter dated June 27, 1884. First they established the Episcopate of Jászvásár/Iași, where a theology seminary opened in 1886.⁹² In 1897, a Romanian-language Minorite monastery was founded in Halasfalva/Hălăucești. The episcopate of Jászvásár/Iași served the nationalist endeavours of the Romanian state, because the new Romanian state only allowed the building and upkeep of the Roman Catholic institutions under these conditions. The *gratitude* of the Moldavian Roman Catholic Church did more for the ethnic homogeneity project that had been raised to a state political affair than it needed. It consciously prepared the language and national assimilation of the Moldavian Hungarians. The leaders sought to repress Hungarian religious life by any means; in the Jászvásár/Iași theology institute, they taught the men from the Csángó communities to be priests who would step up against their own mother tongue and people. While Camilli directed the diocese strictly, he explicitly ordered his priests that the only language to be used in the Roman Catholic churches of Moldavia was the language of the country, namely Romanian. In a letter dated 1889, he ordered that the prayers in the Pope's encyclical letters could be recited only in Romanian. For this reason, there was no way for a deeper relationship to develop between the priests practising the aggressive repression of the Hungarian language with feudal methods, and the continuously intimidated congregations.⁹³

However, the Moldavian Hungarians would not accept the orders of the Bishop of Jászvásár/Iași, and so they wrote myriad petitions in which they requested Hungarian-language masses, sermons, prayers, and hymns. For example, in 1915, Bishop Camilli refused the petition of the peasants of Lujzikalagor/Luizi-Călugăra—who would have liked to continue listening to sermons, praying, and singing in Hungarian—in an appalling manner. *“The petitioners should know that in Romania, the language of the people is Romanian, and cannot be anything different. It would be against the laws of their nation and shame in their own eyes if they would want to speak a foreign language in this house, a language like Hungarian... I ask the residents of Lujzikalagor, who, as they wrote themselves, live in this country mixed with other nations with civil and political rights, in this country where they were born and raised, ate the bread of the country, let them tell me, are they Hungarians or Romanians? If they are*

Hungarian let them go to Hungary, where they speak Hungarian, but if they are Romanian, as they truly are, then they should be ashamed of themselves that they don't know the language of their country..."⁹⁴

The moving letter of the people of Gorzafalva/Grozești, dated 1860, explains what an important role Hungarian priests played in the preservation, strengthening, and passing on of the Hungarian language and ethnic identity: "*We 600 land-owners who live near Ojtozhatárszél, gathering together in Moldavia, discussing amongst ourselves about our great injury, we who have lived for 500 years as Hungarians and Roman Catholics of true beliefs, have stayed strong, have borne all of our sufferings, we have multiplied, become strong in our true faith, and all this we can thank to our poor Hungarian priests and not the Italian priests... Oh how many weeping, as the poor in spirit say: Oh God! Give the poor Hungarians a Hungarian priest, and the Oláh an Oláh priest...*"⁹⁵

After the Trianon Peace Treaty that closed World War I, Romania's area grew with significant new territories and denominational communities. In 1920, Carl Hohenzollern, King of Romania, admitted that the Catholics have the same rights as the majority Orthodox do. In 1927, Romania and the Holy See concluded an agreement in which Roman Catholics were free to practice their religion.⁹⁶ At the same time, they re-animated the so-called Saint József Province, in which ten significant Csángó parsonages (Szabófalva/Săbăoani, Halasfalva/Hălăucești, Dsidafalva/Agiudeni, Prezest, Bákó/Bacău, Lujzikalagor/Luizi-Călugăra, Forrófalva/Fărăoani, Tatros/Tg. Trotuș, Galac/Galați, and Husz/Huși) would come under the jurisdiction of the Minorites of the Province.⁹⁷

In 1924, Pal Iosif Petru founded a theology and philosophy institute in Lujzikalagor/Luizi-Călugăra. The students would go to Italy to finish their studies in 1926. From 1932 until the communist education reform in 1948, a theology and cantor-training seminary named after Saint Bonaventura operated in the renovated and enlarged building of the parsonage.⁹⁸ When impatient nationalism began to increase in Romania in the 1930s, the priests prohibited the cantors in Moldavia from singing in Hungarian. Those *deáks* who studied in Transylvania and led a part of the religious life in Hungarian were threatened by gendarmes. Those who fought against the violent Romanian-isation of religion were called Bolshevik agitators and rebels.⁹⁹

A Moldavian Csángó man wrote to Domokos Pál Péter in 1931: "*There are priest seminars in Jászsi and Bucharest, but we know that if our sons go to study in the Regát, they will forget the speech of our sweet mother tongue, for this has already happened to every Csángó boy who became priests there. Our Bishop of Jászsi is a purely Csángó boy, but cannot understand Hungarian, and he hates and does not allow the Hungarian language to be spoken or sung in churches. [...] Our Bishops of Jászsi were always only Italian men and ordered only Italian priests for the poor Csángó people, who truly hated and prohibited the speaking of our dear Hungarian language, the Csángó boy, who studied to be a priest in Jászsi, was not allowed to speak, read, or write in Hungarian, and because of all the mock-*

ery, he himself began to hate the language of his people. The same happened to the Bishop of today, who hates his own Hungarian language.”¹⁰⁰

The impatience concerning the Hungarian language increased in Moldavia in the decades following World War I. The growing intolerance did not spare those who preached in Hungarian, nor those who preached in other languages. For example, Petrus Matthias Neumann, Franciscan monk of German origins, was dismissed from his parsonage in Bogdánfalva/Valea Seacă after 40 years of service only because he excellently learned the language of his congregation, who were then able to say their confessions to this benevolent priest in their own mother tongue. Since the Hungarian language was constantly spoken and sung in his church, his church superiors, who were infected by the ideals of Romanian nationalism, dismissed him from his post. Nonetheless, this priest, who had lived a decent and moral life, did not allow himself to be dejected: he built a small wooden chapel near Bogdánfalva/Valea Seacă, worked the soil, and continued to live the life of a saint. Since his faithful congregation continued to come to him for confessions in their mother tongue, he was forbidden to hear confessions by his superiors. He said bitterly to Domokos Pál Péter who came to visit him in 1929: “*The last request of the dying was for me to hear their confessions, and they did not allow it... Your heart breaks when you see day to day how a true and honest people are weighed down by repression and Romanian assimilation efforts. I, a German, say, who has never and will never make politics, but find conversation in the mother tongue, worship in the mother tongue, and singing in the mother tongue a basic and holy right. I saw this basic and holy right of the Moldavian Csángós offended and tread on perpetually during my 41 years of service.*”¹⁰¹

During the Second World War, especially between 1940 and 1944, hatred of foreigners and an anti-Hungarian attitude increased even in church life. This was obvious through the practice of dismissing from their jobs and throwing out of their residences those cantors who led prayers and hymns in Hungarian. Even their private work was prohibited and they were persecuted if they organised and led Hungarian prayer and singing at wakes or at the Parish Pilgrimage of Csíkсомlyó/Şumuleu. The parsons who took part in the Romanian assimilation propaganda after the years of the Vienna decision circulated Romanian language publications of fascist ideology that claimed that, based on mass blood type examinations, the Moldavian Catholics could only be Romanians even by blood type.¹⁰²

Directly after the communist take-over following World War II, the relationship between the Vatican and the new, declared-atheist Romanian power grew worse. In 1949, the Papal Legate was declared *persona non grata*, but the representative of the Vatican did not leave his post in Bucharest even after he was ordered to do so. In 1948, the functioning of the Greek Catholic Church that had merged with Rome was forcefully prohibited, and all buildings and property of the churches were taken away and given to the Orthodox Church; the priests, along

with the leaders of the Transylvanian Hungarian Roman Catholic Church, were put into prison for many years. At the same time, the Romanian communist leaders did not prohibit the work of the episcopate of the Moldavian Roman Catholic Church, and even helped it; it is strange how the chain of institutions of this church flourished and grew during the Stalinist and later the Ceaușescu years.¹⁰³ During the harshest years of the communist dictatorship projecting an atheist world-view, Roman Catholic theology classes were allowed in Jászvásár/Iași, and ultra-modern churches were built in villages and cities. In return, the Moldavian Catholic Church served the ethnic and national homogenising project of the government, aiding the language and cultural assimilation, and changing of the national identities of close to a quarter-million Csángós of Moldavia.

Directly after the Second World War, in 1945–46, the Hungarian Folk Union began to organise Moldavian Hungarian-language education as well as the introduction of Hungarian liturgy. In many villages they recruited the old “deáks,” the peasant cantors, to be the local leaders of the Union, because they alone made up an “intellectual” layer, who could read and write in Hungarian, among the Csángós. The Hungarians of Lészped/Lespezi went directly to the Ministry of Nationality and Religious Affairs in 1946 so they could have Hungarian language worship in their church once again. When they asked for a written permit, they referred to a local census they organised, which showed that there were 310 Hungarians who requested the incorporation of Hungarian-language liturgy. The Roman Catholic priest could only intimidate 92 people into voting against the Hungarian sermons. The brave Hungarian demonstrators of Lészped/Lespezi based their actions on the pretext that the prefect of Bákó/Bacău County, the nationality law, and the constitution allowed the free use of the mother tongue. After many years of prohibition, Hungarian hymns could be heard in the Lészped/Lespezi church for the first time on Christmas Eve of 1946. Ioan Gherghina (originally Györgybíró János, of Csángó origins) the parson of the Lészped church, who submitted the petition of his congregation to the Roman Catholic bishop in Jászvásár/Iași, received from his superior the written answer that he is allowed to use only Romanian and Latin in Church. Moreover, the bishop denounced and punished those 16 Csángós who were brave in fighting for the Hungarian liturgy. In 1947 the accredited diplomats of Hungary in Bucharest brought their complaints to Gróza Péter, the new Romanian communist Prime Minister. Even though Anton Durcovic, Moldavia’s Catholic bishop, allowed the use of the Hungarian language in religion and the church with his Decree No. 317 of 1947, the order was not followed in a single village. In the area of Bákó/Bacău, in Lészped/Lespezi, Klézse/Cleja, Nagypatak/Valea Mare, Ferdinánd, Trunk/Galbeni, Tratosvásár/Tg. Trotuș, and Pusztina/Pustiana, priests threatened those people who dared speak Hungarian in church with curses, banishment, public humiliation, and polarisation, and in some villages, those people who tried to protect the Hungarian liturgy were marked with a black cross and chased out of the church.

In these villages, the priests plotted not only against the Hungarian liturgy, but also the Hungarian-language schools. The paper entitled *Világosság*, published in Kolozsvár/Cluj, circulated an article on August 11, 1947, in which it denounced the attitude of the priests of Csángó lands, their feudal terror, and the curses with which, from the pulpit, they declared the Hungarian language to be the language of Satan. During his travels in Moldavia in 1947, Czikó Nándor, an activist of the Hungarian Folk Union, urged the Csángós to use their mother tongue in church in spite of their priests' prohibitions, and also handed out Hungarian hymn-books among the people. Meanwhile, the relationship between Simon Ferenc, parson of Lészped/Lespezi, and the authorities had grown so bad that the local council ordered the priest out of the village. In order to calm the situation, the authorities sent Father Gherghina, born in Nagypatak/Valea Mare, to Lészped/Lespezi, where he held masses in Romanian and Hungarian, and blessed and supported the local Hungarian school. Because of the bravery of the landowners, and out of fear of the activists of the Hungarian Folk Union, the priests in other villages also began to "let up." For example, Minucz János, parson of Ojtoz, began to preach to his congregation in Hungarian, while his cantors (Gál János and Valentin Mihály) began to sing the hymns in Hungarian at the request of the people. A written report dated 1951 claims that in Gyoszén/Gioseni and Dormánfalva/Dărmănești the priests were understanding to those who wished to have a Hungarian liturgy.¹⁰⁴

In this heavily weighted and complex time, the communist powers "preaching" atheist ideology made perverse use of the tension between the people demanding Hungarian liturgies and the Roman Catholic parsons. For example, a landowner of Rekecsin/Răcăciuni, from a poorer family, who had become a communist while a prisoner among the Russians, attacked the local Father who did not want to incorporate the Hungarian liturgy into the mass. Soon he called some soldiers who would take the "renegade" priest to jail. When the infamous Securitate arrived in Rekecsin/Răcăciuni, the women of the village stopped them from taking away their priest. After these events, the men stood 24-hour duty, and when they saw a larger number of the government's men encircling the village with guns, they would ring the church bell. The cantor, who led the "Morsel Revolution," was quickly shot, while those resisting were first arrested, then beaten and imprisoned. Some people fled to the forest; but after a few months they were caught, and their resistance broken by beatings. Finally they too were imprisoned and sent to the labour camp building the Danube Canal. There they were prisoners along with the landowners dragged away from Bogdánfalva/Valea Seacă, Forrófalva/Fărăoani, Klézse/Cleja, Lujzikalagor/Luizi-Călugăra, Pusztina/Pustiana, and Trunk/Galbeni.¹⁰⁵

Soon serious conflicts occurred between those Csángós who fought for the validation of the Hungarian language and the local Romanian administration, who terrorised and threatened them with the allegation that if the Russians left

Romania, they would level the dissatisfied Csángó-Hungarian villages with cannons.¹⁰⁶ One example of how serious they were in their intentions was that, after the “events” in Lészped/Lespezi, they accused Father Gherghina, who served his own people, of serving foreign reactionary powers; he was arrested for these fabricated accusations. He was imprisoned and sentenced to forced labour, which he served in the Romanian “Gulag” under inhuman conditions at Nagysziget-on-Braila/Insula Mare a Brăilei within the branches of the Danube. His benevolent humanity, his wide-ranging European knowledge and culture soon enchanted his fellow prisoners, who looked upon him with reverence during his prison years.¹⁰⁷

In 1965, Nicolae Ceaușescu became the leader of the Communist Party in Romania. Following the events in Prague in 1968, his ideology and nationality policies became more relaxed for a few years. As a result the dialogue between the Vatican and Romania was re-started, which Ceaușescu tried to use to elevate his prestige on an international level. In 1973, Pope Paul VI received Ceaușescu in Rome, thus becoming an accomplice in the legitimisation of the dictator practising two-sided politics. In 1978 talks continued between the Holy See and the Romanian government, which finally placed Ioan Robu as Head of the Episcopate of the Moldavian Roman Catholic Church. In 1989, in the most difficult years of Ceaușescu’s dictatorship, Teocist, the Orthodox Patriarch of Romania who served the dictator to the utmost, visited Rome, where he met with Pope John Paul II at the Vatican.¹⁰⁸

After 1972, Nicolae Ceaușescu introduced an even more inhuman dictatorship in Romania: he waged open battle with the Hungarian minority and non-Orthodox Churches. In Moldavia, he tried to achieve his goals with the help of the Roman Catholic Church. Most of the parsons serving in the Csángó villages were persuaded into working together with the infamous Romanian political police, the Securitate. The priests made a pact with the devil, for in return for the toleration of religious life, they had to serve the assimilation politics of the dictator. They intimidated their congregations (with banishment from the church, public humiliation, masses based on black magic), turned against the use of mother tongue in worship, and even forbade the use of Hungarian in the private sphere; it was often they who sent the secret police after the more daring Hungarian folklorists visiting the Csángó villages. They persecuted those Csángós who dared to go on Pentecost Saturday to the Pilgrimage in Csíksomlyó/Șumuleu, who sang, prayed and confessed there in Hungarian. They reacted the same way to those parents who sent their children to Hungarian schools in Transylvania.

After the change of regime in 1989, the power and social prestige of the Church began to grow stronger in the slowly democratising Romania. The church restoration was signalled in Romania—where the majority religion was Orthodox—by the fact that the priests took part in worldly events as well, and represented themselves actively at national and political events. With intelligent diplomatic strat-

egy, Romania tried to rectify its relations with the Vatican by making Bucharest the representative episcopal headquarters of the Roman Catholic Church. Even though there were nearly one million Roman Catholics in Transylvania, whereas outside of the Carpathians there are hardly 300,000, the Pope visited only Bucharest in 1999. The Vatican's point of view concerning the Csángós of Moldavia has not changed, even in the last decade. The Vatican's diplomats found an already existing Romanian Roman Catholic community much more important than the slow language-, cultural-, and ethnic assimilation of the Moldavian Hungarian communities. When, in 1991, the Pope visited Hungary for the first time after the change of regime, a large group of Csángós went to him and asked him for written permission to practice their religion in Hungarian.¹⁰⁹ Their request has gone unanswered to this day. When the Holy Father visited Hungary for the second time in September of 1996, the entire story repeated itself.

After the change of regime in Romania, the believers also felt the new perspectives opening through the social and political transformations. For this reason many Csángó villages let go of their fears and in 1990 they (e.g. Pusztina/Pustiana, Lészped/Lespezi, Klézse/Cleja) turned to the Bishop of Jászvásár/Iași and asked for permission to have a Hungarian liturgy. The parsons threatened the petitioners in every village and publicly humiliated them; they even forced some of them to revoke their signatures from the petition. Since, even today, mass in Hungarian is not permitted, those people who have stronger ethnic and language consciousness can only practice their religion in an intimate sphere.

Beginning in 1990, with the help of priests from Transylvania, people organised masses in the courtyards of private homes in many Moldavian Csángó villages (e.g. Pusztina/Pustiana, Lészped/Lespezi, Klézse/Cleja). However this form of religious practice soon provoked the objection of local Roman Catholic priests. It became clear very quickly that these priests were not at all concerned about the people living in poverty; but taking advantage of the deep religiousness of this ethnic group, they only oppressed them with feudal methods. They did not listen to the initiatives coming from "below," and opposed any efforts for change. We mentioned earlier that a great number of Roman Catholic priests serving in Moldavia were trapped into complying with the Romanian political police, famous for their cruelty and anti-minority attitudes. Even after the change of regime in 1989, members of the church could not entirely free themselves from the claws of the Securitate, since the church leaders who had worked together with the secret police in the past regime could, after 1990, be blackmailed at any time. Their impatience and intolerance were shown by the fact that they intimidated and humiliated those Moldavian Hungarians in their own villages (e.g. Lujzikalagor/Luizi-Călugăra) who attended the Pentecost Pilgrimage in Csíksomlyó/Șumuleu. Since the Csángós of Moldavia have for centuries been taking part in this Hungarian religious event in Székely land in great numbers, were they to be prohibited from, or should they choose not to attend, this event in the future, their ritual

and spiritual relationship with the Roman Catholics living in the Carpathian Basin would come to an end.

Pope John Paul II visited Romania May 7–9, 1999. The Orthodox Church, however, did not allow the Holy Father to visit Transylvania and Moldavia, where the Roman Catholics live, and only agreed to an Ecumenical visitation in Bucharest. On March 8, 1999, the Bishops' Council of the Roman Catholic Church¹¹⁰ asked the leaders of the Orthodox Church not to limit the visit of the Pope to a time and place, since most of his Romanian believers live in Transylvania and Moldavia. This basic need for the believers to meet with Pope John Paul II in the Moldavian Bákó/Bacău and the Transylvanian Kolozsvár was cunningly sabotaged by the “government religion”, the Orthodox Church.¹¹¹ Finally 500,000 Christians took part in the holy mass celebrated on May 9 on the square in front of the giant palace of Ceaușescu: a building that claimed the lives of many innocent people. A significant number of people came from the Moldavian Csángó villages, since the offended Transylvanian Catholic Church leaders did not support their congregations in their travel to Bucharest. National and international media regarded this visit as a symbolic event with regard to the reconciliation of the Roman Catholic Church and the Orthodox Church.

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NOTES

- 1 Ferent 1981. pp. 114–151.
- 2 Domokos 1979. p. 40.
- 3 Benda 1989. p. 41.
- 4 Domokos 1979. p. 45; Gábor 1996. pp. 246–248.
- 5 Domokos 1979. p. 48; Gábor 1996. pp. 26–30.
- 6 Papacostea 1998. p. 200.
- 7 1533: Franciscus de Somogyvár; 1535: Joannes de Petherd; 1537: Martinus de Enyedino; 1544: Mathias de Ebretz; 1546: Gasparus de Várallya; 1550: Laurentius de Kolozsvár; 1552: Petrus de Sancto Michaele; 1556: Laurentius de Vásárhely; 1570: Mathias de Satmár. See Domokos 1979. p. 48.
- 8 Papacostea 1962. pp. 253–258.; Giurescu 1966. p. 28.
- 9 Papacostea 1962. pp. 253–254.
- 10 Binder 1982. p. 123.
- 11 The remaining Hungarian residents moved to Husz at the beginning of the 19th century. See Halász 1999. p. 167.
- 12 Gálos 1928.; Sógor 1992. p. 14.
- 13 Binder 1982. p. 120.
- 14 Crăciun 1996. pp. 16–17.
- 15 Domokos 1987. pp. 60–61.
- 16 “*Ungari, qui erant in oppido Hustwaras, item in alio oppido dicto Romanwaras est in villis vecinis duo millia hominum in circasunt conversi ad fidem catholicam, qui prius sequebanturhaeresim Ioannis Hus...*” See: Benda 1989. p. 71. Quoted by Crăciun 1996. p. 185.
- 17 Benda 1989. pp. 31., 41., 71–72.
- 18 Halász 1999. pp. 168–169.
- 19 Protestantism did not have established headquarters in the Moldavian Romanian communities. Its theories were only adopted by part of the Romanian elite (ie. Luca Stroici and Ieremia Movilă) who had previously studied in German areas. No frescoes can be found on the outer walls of the Orthodox monastery founded in Dragomirna by Luca Stroici, which points to the Protestant, Puritan views of its patron. See: Crăciun 1996. pp. 194–195. We know from various scattered sources that those Romanians who lived with strong Saxon and Hungarian communities were indeed affected by Protestant teachings. For example, the priest of Jászvásár/Iași notes in 1577 that a Romanian youth who lived among the Saxons (probably as a result of a mixed marriage) converted to the Lutheran faith. See: Crăciun 1996. pp. 195–196.
- 20 According to Maria Crăciun, the acceptance and spread of Protestantism in Moldavia was greatly helped by the so-called *allogen* communities. See Crăciun 1996. p. 43.
- 21 Benda 1989. p. 46. See: the report of Blasius Koicevic. Benda 1989. pp. 531–532.
- 22 Ferro 1999.
- 23 See Alzati 1982, 1991; Ferro 1998; Domokos 1979. 71–72.; Pilat 2000. 91–103.
- 24 Crăciun 1996. pp. 45–49.
- 25 Crăciun 1996. pp. 58–61.
- 26 Crăciun 1996. pp. 65–98.
- 27 Papacostea 1998. pp. 221–222.
- 28 Crăciun 1996. p. 196.
- 29 Crăciun 1996. p. 110.
- 30 Bârsănescu 1957.
- 31 Crăciun 1996. p. 182. See also Benda 1989. p. 85.
- 32 The Moldavian situation between 1585 and 1587 was explained wonderfully by the Jesuit Giulio Mancinelli: “...essendo condotto in una chiesa latina, lo trovo profana dalli ministri

luterani, che spesso venivano in quel loco per servitio delli artigiani, che sono quasi tutti Tedeschi ovvero Ungari luterani.” Crăciun 1996. p. 185.

- 33 Benda 1989. pp. 77, 205.
- 34 Crăciun 1996. pp. 160–169.
- 35 Benda 1989. pp. 123–124.
- 36 Benda 1989. pp. 47, 118–119
- 37 Benda 1989. p. 118.
- 38 Alzati 1982. pp. 263–269. Quoted by Crăciun 1996. p. 188.
- 39 Crăciun 1996. p. 192.
- 40 Benda 1989. p. 170.
- 41 Halász 1999. p. 171.
- 42 Benda 1989. p. 42.
- 43 Domokos 1979. p. 71.
- 44 Calatori VII. 53.
- 45 Quoted by Lestyán 1994. p. 4.
- 46 Benda 1989. pp. 667–669.
- 47 Benda 1989. p. 668.
- 48 The people of Szabófalva/Săbăoani called on the apostolic vicar personally at his residence in Bákó/Bacău, and complained to him that if the cruelty of Giovanni Battista del Monte (missionary) is not ended, then they will convert to the Greek Catholic Church. The petition was signed by Varga Gergely, Demö Bálint, Kati Péter, Jano Lőrinc, Kadar Janó, Dobos Gergely, Thamo György, and Deske Gergely. See Benda 1989. /Bacău668–669.
- 49 The letter was signed by Gencze István (judge), Kószin Balázs, Bodor Gergely, Zorát György, Kadar György, and Vincelerd Márton (former city judge). See Benda 1989. /Bacău497–498.
- 50 Benda 1989. pp. 269–279.
- 51 Benda 1989. p. 765.
- 52 Benda 1989. pp. 766–767.
- 53 Domokos 1931. pp. 56–58.; 1987. pp. 95–98.
- 54 Benda 1989. pp. 603–606.
- 55 Benda 1989. p. 612.
- 56 Benda 1989. p. 45.
- 57 Benda 1989. p. 781.
- 58 Benda 1989. pp. 45–46, 315.
- 59 Domokos 1979. pp. 1344–1345.
- 60 Tóth 1988.; Tánczos 1995.
- 61 Benda 1989. p. 47.
- 62 Domokos 1987. p. 176.
- 63 Sávai 1997. II. p. 800.
- 64 Sávai 1997. II.p. 801.
- 65 Sávai 1997. II. p. 800.
- 66 Tánczos 1995, 1999, 2000, 2001.
- 67 Pilat 2000. pp. 99–103.
- 68 Benda 1989. pp. 483–483.
- 69 Pilat 2000. p. 94.
- 70 Benda 1989. pp. 314–315.
- 71 Domokos 1987. p. 100.
- 72 Domokos 1987. p. 101.; Sulzer 1781. p. 85.
- 73 Domokos 1979. pp. 91–93.; 1987. pp. 92–100.
- 74 Domokos 1987. pp. 100–101.

- 75 Domokos 1987. p. 543.
- 76 Domokos 1987. pp. 542–543.
- 77 Czelder 1861. 13, p. 159.
- 78 Czelder 1861. pp. 11–13.
- 79 Gazda 1992.; Halász 1999. pp. 174–177.; Sógor 1992.
- 80 Auner 1905. pp. 65.; Domokos 1979. pp. 93–94.
- 81 Domokos 1987. p. 108.
- 82 Domokos 1987. p. 108.
- 83 Domokos 1979. p. 1350.; 1987. p. 110.
- 84 Domokos 1987. p. 110. Quotes Auner 1908. p. 74.
- 85 Gábor 1996. pp. 234–235.
- 86 Domokos 1987. pp. 110–111.
- 87 Domokos 1987. pp. 111–113.; 1979. pp. 1317–1351.
- 88 Domokos 1987. pp. 115–116.
- 89 Domokos 1979. p. 94.; Domokos 1986. p. 19.
- 90 Domokos 1986. p. 20.
- 91 Domokos 1979. p. 94.
- 92 Almanahul 2000. p. 167.
- 93 Domokos 1979. p. 94.
- 94 Domokos 1979. pp. 94–95.
- 95 Veszely-Imets-Kovács 1870. p. 77.; Domokos 1987. pp. 180–181.
- 96 Almanahul 2000. p. 77.
- 97 Domokos 1979. p. 95.
- 98 Gábor 1996. pp. 168–169.
- 99 Vincze 1999. p. 214.
- 100 Domokos 1987. pp. 259–260.
- 101 Domokos 1987. pp. 186–187.
- 102 Iosif Petru Pal closed his book about the origin of the Moldavian Catholics with the chapter entitled “The Word of Blood.” In this chapter he refers to the racist Romanian physical anthropology blood analysis carried out by Rîmneanțu Petru. (See Rîmneanțu P.: Grupele de sânge la ceangăii din Moldova. In Buletin eugenic și biopolitic XIV. 1943. pp. 1–2. 51–65.) According to him, this study also backed up his “scientific” research: the Csángós are of Romanian origin even on a racial basis. Pal 1942. The fact that this work was published in great numbers in Bákó/Bacău in 1997 portrays today’s situation in Romania quite well. See Sylvester 1998.
- 103 Almanahul 2000. p. 77.
- 104 Vincze 1999. pp. 220–234.
- 105 Ferenczes 1997. pp. 79–85.
- 106 Vincze 1999. pp. 217–219.
- 107 Sylvester 1999. pp. 101–102.
- 108 Almanahul 2000. p. 77.
- 109 Bodnár 1991.
- 110 The Bishops’ Council of Romania is made up of 16 diocesan bishops; 9 of them are Roman catholic, while 7 are greek catholic. the roman catholic bishops’ conference was founded after the 1989 Romanian change of regime, on March 16, 1991, but the operation of the council was only ratified on November 25, 1993. See Almanahul 2000. p. 74.
- 111 Almanahul 2000. p. 74.

About the Demography of the Moldavian Csángós

by *Tánczos Vilmos*

1. THE TERM “CSÁNGÓ”

Moldavia, an eastern province of Romania, consists of the following counties: Bákó/Bacău, Botoşani, Jászvásár/Iasi, Neamţ, Vászló/Vaslui and Vrancea, where, according to the 1992 census, approximately a quarter of a million (243,133) Catholics lived. Both Hungarian and international scholars unanimously agree that the Moldavian Catholic population, called Csángós, apart from a small number from Romanian, German, Polish, Italian and Gypsy groups who became fully assimilated, is Hungarian by origin. This fact is accepted even by prominent Romanian scholars.¹ Furthermore, it seems probable that a certain portion of the Orthodox Romanian population of Moldavia also used to be ethnic Hungarian. There is, however, no specific scientific evidence to support this hypothesis.² Lacking suitable scientific material we can only speculate that the assimilation of Hungarian Catholics during the 16th–18th centuries was not only linguistic, but religious as well. In certain villages they lost both their language and religion due to pressure from feudal lords and princes, as well as a shortage of clerics. This can be seen from the geographical place names³, family names, and other historical references. The reverse assimilation of Romanian Orthodox population into Roman Catholic Hungarian Csángós must have been to a far lesser extent, which is supported by evidence showing that Romanian family names are found in Csángó villages.

Csángó is the official designation as well as the popular name for Hungarians living in Moldavia. (Ethnic Hungarians living in the Gyimes/Ghimeş Pass and in Hétfalu/Săcele near Brassó/Braşov are also called Csángós, and the term is sometimes used even for those Székelys who, having migrated eastwards to Bukovina in the late 18th century, were later resettled in the Carpathian Basin.) The etymology of the name of this ethnic group reveals an interesting detail in the history of the Csángós: according to a widespread, yet never fully verified hypothesis, the word Csángó derives from the verb *csang/csáng* (i.e. to wander, stroll, ramble, rove, etc.) and thus the name of this ethnic group clearly refers to the migratory, colonising character of the Csángós (Benkó 1990. p. 6., Gunda 1988. pp. 12–13., Szabó T. 1981. p. 520.). The Moldavian Hungarians themselves do not constitute a homogeneous group, either historically or linguistic-ethnographically. The majority of researchers disagree with the use of the term Csángó as a general designa-

tion for them, preferring to differentiate between the earlier Moldavian Hungarians who were settled there in the Middle Ages, and the fleeing Székelys who arrived in the 17th–19th centuries (most of whom arrived at the end of the 18th century). Some researchers speak about *Moldavian Hungarians* and *Moldavian Székelys* (Lükő 1936., Mikecs 1941.), while others use the terms *Csángó Hungarians* and *Székely Hungarians* to distinguish between the two groups (Benkő 1990.). The use of the name Csángó in its broadest sense is quite common, however, even among historians, linguists, and ethnographers. Due to the processes of assimilation and acculturation, differences between the traditional folk culture, language, historical consciousness, etc. of the two groups are disappearing to such an extent that the Szekler population, whose ancestors never considered themselves Csángós, now seem to accept this designation. Today, both groups use the term to describe someone who belongs to neither side, someone who is no longer either Romanian or Hungarian, while at the same time it has come to have the pejorative connotations of imperfection and degeneracy.

2. THE PROBLEM OF ORIGINS

References to Moldavian Hungarians appear in historical sources from the 13th century onward. So far, however, there is no scientifically convincing explanation for their origins. One rather romantic view, according to which the Csángós are the successors of the Cumans (Jerney 1851., Munkácsi 1902., Veress 1934.), has long been refuted, while a small minority believe that the Moldavian Hungarians descend from a group of Hungarians who did not take part in the Conquest (Rubinyi 1901., Domokos 1931., Gunda 1988.). Currently, it is generally accepted that Moldavian Hungarians arrived at their present settlements some time in the Middle Ages, and came from the West rather than the East (Auner 1908, Lükő 1936, Năstase 1934, Mikecs 1941., Mikecs 1943., Benda 1989., Benkő 1990.). Ideas differ, however, as to when, and with what objective, the first settlements were established, and from which parts of the Hungarian-populated lands the migration towards Moldavia began. Most researchers see a relationship between this group and the Hungarian population of the Szamos/Someş Valley and the Upper Tisza/Tisa Region (Lükő 1936., Năstase 1934., Mikecs 1941., Mikecs 1943., Benda 1989.). According to a theory based on linguistic geography, the majority of the Csángós broke away from the Hungarian population of Mezőség/Câmpia Transilvaniei in Inner Transylvania (Benkő 1990). It is possible that, in addition to the non-Székely Hungarian population, there were also some Székelys who settled in Moldavia as early as the Middle Ages. Presumably, they populated mainly the southern parts, i.e. the lower regions of the Szeret/Siret and Tatros/Trotuş Rivers (Lükő 1936., Mikecs 1941.). It is generally accepted that the original Csángós settled in Moldavia as part of a

systematic Hungarian imperial policy. Their task was to control and defend the eastern frontier of Hungary. This border ran along the River Szeret/Siret, an indication that in Medieval times, the eastward movement of the Hungarian ethnic collective did not stop at the Carpathians. The kings of Hungary wanted to exercise military control over the lands outside their borders; and their watch-towers, outposts and border forts were pushed forward as far as the Dniester and Danube Rivers (Kilia, Dnyeszterfehérvár/Cetatea Albă Akkerman, Braila, Várhely/Orhei, etc.). The systematic settlement, which was intended to safeguard the border region, could not have been carried out before the very end of the 13th century. The earliest possible timing for the establishment of the first Moldavian border-guard settlements is after the 1241–1242 Mongol Invasion, and later in the early 14th century. During the course of the 15th century, the number of Moldavian Hungarians increased due to the arrival of Hussite heretics who had left southern Hungary to escape from the Inquisition. There is no scientific backing for the Romanian view that Moldavian Csángós are Romanians who were Magyarised by the Catholic Church. Today, this ideologically-based theory aims at the “re-Romanianisation” of the Csángós (Mărtinaş 1985.). Historical documents (Domokos 1987., Benda 1989., Horváth 1994.), place names and proper names (Rosetti 1905., Veress 1934., Lükő 1936., Mikecs 1943., Benkő 1990.) and ethnographic evidence (Kós–Nagy–Szentimrei 1981.) attest to the fact that in certain areas of Moldavia—especially in the river valleys at the approach to the Carpathian passes—i.e. the most important locations from a military and strategic point of view—the Hungarian presence preceded the Romanian influx.

3. HISTORY, INTERNAL CLASSIFICATION, HISTORICAL DEMOGRAPHY

Prior to the Mohács catastrophe in 1526, Moldavian Hungarians, an ethnic group vital to imperial policy, had enjoyed the security provided by a powerful, centralised Hungarian Kingdom. Historical documentation proves that at the turn of the 16th century, the 20 to 25 thousand-strong Hungarian population was the largest non-Romanian people within the ethnically mixed Moldavia (Domokos 1938., Mikecs 1941., Benda 1989.). The Hungarian settlers occupied the wide and fertile river flats of the Szeret/Siret and, in particular, the territories around the deltas of its western tributaries (Moldva/Moldova, Beszterce/Bistriţa, Tatros/Trotuş). At this time, the territories populated by Hungarians were composed of enclosed settlements, inter-connected by unbroken lines of dwellings (e.g. between Szucsava/Suceava and Románvásár/Roman, around Bákó/Bacău, right of the Szeret/Siret River, in the Lower /Tatros/Trotuş region, etc.). Even towns were established in places of strategic economic, commercial

and military importance, with majority Hungarian and partly German population (Román[vásár]i/Roman, Bákó/Bacău, Egyed[halma]/Adjud, Tat[á]ros/Trotuş, Aknavásár/Târgu Ocna, [Moldva]bánya/Baia, Jász[vásár]/Iaşi, Husz/Huşi, Barlád/Bârlad, etc.). Urban life and trade developed in Moldavia in the 15th and 16th centuries due to the activities of the Hungarians and Germans. (A very telling piece of evidence is that the Romanian word “oraş”, i.e. town or city, is borrowed from the Hungarian “város”.) Urban development, however, was halted as early as the late 16th century because of the unfavourable politico-military situation, and was entirely destroyed as a result of the 17th-century Tartar and Cossack military campaigns. The artisan and merchant populations of the market towns, mostly ethnic Hungarians, were subsequently assimilated into the Romanian majority (Mikecs 1941. pp. 168–178., Benda 1989. pp. 35–37.). Ethnically and religiously homogeneous, and making their living mainly from cultivation, the population of the Csángó villages in the flat lands were free tenants, which meant that the communities paid corporate taxes directly to the Hungarian authorities in Transylvania, the Voivods, without the intervention of the Moldavian nobility (*bojars*). Presumably, free Romanian villages in Moldavia adopted certain Csángó farming techniques and legal customs (e.g. certain forms of self-government, “arrow-lot” in the periodical distribution of village lands, the role of clan groups in land-ownership, etc.) (Mikecs 1941. pp. 158–165.). In the Middle Ages, the inhabitants of the free villages in Moldavia were called “razeşi”, which derives from the Hungarian “részes” (share-farmer). The settlement system marked by plot-groups and blind alleys, which illustrate clan relations, has survived in certain villages (Kós–Nagy–Szentimrei 1981. pp. 17–22.). Certain Moldavian place names, as well as the existing documentation and the location of villages which were later Romanianised, clearly suggest that the territory inhabited by the Medieval Moldavian Hungarian settlers was considerably larger than that which their successors occupy today. Over the years, the Hungarian ethnic population disappeared from certain regions, as a result of both war, and of linguistic and religious assimilation. In other areas, villages were divided and the territories occupied by Hungarians shrank. There are only two language enclaves where the descendants of the Medieval non-Székely Moldavian Hungarians have survived: the “northern Csángós” north of Románvásár/Roman, and the “southern Csángós” in some villages south of Bákó/Bacău. The central geographical location of these villages and their favourable economic conditions suggest that they were among the first settlements to be established in this province. Both northern and southern Csángós are characterised by archaisms in their language (e.g. the sibilant pronunciation of the consonant “sz”—between “sh” and “s”—, the archaic pronunciation of the diphthong “lj”—today spelled “ly”, etc.), as well as by their folklore, which has retained many ancient elements. The largest and most central villages of the northern Csángós are Szabófalva/Săbăoani and Kelgyest/Pildeşti. In a few of the

Catholic villages around them (Jugán/Iugani, Újfalu/Traian, Bargován/Bârgăoani, etc.) there are still some elderly people who speak Hungarian, while in other villages, the Hungarians have been completely Romanianised. The heart of the northern enclave, Szabófalva/Săbăoani, was the mother community of Balusest/Balușești and Ploszkucény/Ploscuțeni in the lower Szeret/Siret region which were established later. The most important villages of the southern Csángós (living south of Bákó/Bacău) are Bogdánfalva/Valea Seacă, Trunk/Galbeni, Nagypatak/Valea Mare, and Gyoszény/Gioseni, the last of which shows strong Székely influence. Bogdánfalva/Valea Seacă is the mother community of Újfalu/Nicolae Bălcescu, founded after World War I. In Szeketura/Pădureni, only the older generation speaks Hungarian. The number of Hungarians in Moldavia was reduced significantly in the 16th and 17th centuries by wars, epidemics and, importantly, by linguistic and religious assimilation to the Romanians. Numbers began to rise again only in the 18th century as a result of the increasing rate of emigration among Székelys. In particular, many eastern Székelys moved to Moldavia after the Madéfalva/Siculeni Massacre in 1764. Most of the existing “Székelyised” Csángó villages date back to this time. Since there was little in the way of arable land in the economically backward Székely regions, over-population in these areas meant that the flow of Székelys into Moldavia continued into the 19th century. Emigration was given new impetus at the turn of the century, although now it was the larger towns in the Romanian Kingdom (Regat) which were the targets of the Székelys’ trans-Carpathian exodus. A minority of the emigrants were Calvinists who were soon assimilated into the Catholic majority. Even in those villages where Calvinists formed the majority (e.g. Szászkút/Sascut-Sat, Prálea/Pralea, Vizánta/Vizantea Mănăstirească), their original religion did not survive. It is clear that present-day Calvinists living in the region do not descend from the Moldavian Csángós; the 518 Hungarian Calvinists recorded in Moldavia in the 1992 census are more recent immigrants. Moldavian settlements with Székelyised Csángó inhabitants are markedly different from one another:

a. When emigration was at its height (i.e. at the end of the 18th century), large homogeneous groups set out towards the east and, once in Moldavia, generally stayed together. This is probably the period when regions which were sparsely populated, or uninhabited, witnessed the emergence of the biggest ethnically and religiously homogeneous villages belonging to the Moldavian Székelys (Pusztina/Pustiana, Frumósza/Frumoasa, Lészped/Lespezi, Szőlőhegy/Pârgărești and its vicinity, Magyarfalu/Arini, Lábnik/Vladnic, Kalugarén/Călugăreni, etc.). Given that the best agricultural land was already “taken”, the newcomers had to confine themselves to the narrow valleys of small rivers and streams. Even relatively large Székely villages in these areas thus have a kind of “mountain” atmosphere.

b. There are several villages in which it seems that a previously existing Hungarian population, sometimes dating back to the Middle Ages, was later joined by

Székelys who had a significant effect on the language and culture of the village. This is clearly what happened in the villages of Gyoszény/Gioseni, Lujzikalagor/Luizi-Călugara, Klézse/Cleja and Forrófalva/Fărăoani in the region of the River Szeret/Siret, and possibly also in Külsőrekecsin/Fundu-Răcăciuni and Százkút/Sascut-Sat (Szabó T. 1981. p. 518.). The Hungarian population of Gorzafalva/Grozești, Tatros/Târgu Trotuș and Onyest/Onești along the Tatros/Trotuș and its tributaries may also have been established earlier. However, because the strong Székely influence tended to submerge the original dialects, categorisation of such villages proved problematic for researchers using the methods of linguistic geography (Lükő 1936., Szabó T. 1981.). It is interesting to note that the northern Csángós never mixed with the Székelys, perhaps due to the higher population density in the northern Csángó territories and to the high number of villages.

c. New settlements were founded in and around existing Romanian villages by Székelys who arrived in small, isolated groups, as well as by those who arrived later (in the 19th century) or those who moved away from the Moldavian villages. It is possible that certain villages had a mixed Székely and Romanian population. The small, ethnically mixed villages (Gerlény/Gârleni, Liliyec/Lilieci, Szolonc-ka/Tărăța, Szerbek/Florești, Gyidráska/Vereșești, Jenekest/Enăchești, Turluján/Turluianu, Bogáta/Bogata, Dormánfalva/Dărmănești, Szárazpatak/Valea Câmpului, etc.) situated in the valleys of small rivers (Tatros/Trotuș, Tázló/Tazlău, Beszterce/Bistrița and other minor rivers), and several of the villages near the River Szeret/Siret (Ketris/Chetriș, Furnikár/Furnicari, Újfalú/Dózsa/Gheorghe Doja, etc.) belong to this third multi-ethnic category of Székelyised Csángó villages. Villages in the Carpathian highlands also witnessed a similar ethnic mixture (Csügés/Ciugheș, Bruszturósza/Brusturoasa, Gutinás/Gutinaș, Fűrészfalva/Ferestrău-Oituz, Vizánta/Vizantea Mănăstirească, etc.). Small Hungarian villages can be found at the heads of mountain streams or above the Romanian villages situated along the lower reaches of the streams (Kukujéc/Cucuieti, Ripa Jepi/Bogdănești, Lárguca/Lărguța, Esztrugár/Strugari, Váleri/Valea Rea, Butukár/Butucari, Berzunc/Berzunești, Szálka/Seaca, Szalánc/Cireșoia, Cserdák/Cerdac, Kápotá/Capătă, Prálea/Pralea, etc.). Generally speaking, Székelys who arrived in Moldavia in the 18th and 19th centuries occupied relatively large territories in the mainly mountainous, unpopulated regions which offered only a limited scope for cultivation and viticulture, as well as for animal husbandry or forestry. The population of Székely villages was generally smaller than that of the Medieval Moldavian Hungarian ones. In many cases, this population was made up of sporadic groups within a multi-ethnic and multi-religious environment, another factor which helped to further their linguistic assimilation to the Romanians. However, it must be emphasised that this part of the Moldavian Csángós, who are Székelys by origin, have assimilated less than the Hungarian population who were settled there during the Middle Ages; consequently, approximately 80% of Moldavian Catholics who had kept their mother tongue until today belong to the Székely

class of society. The growth of the Moldavian Catholic population can only be estimated from such 16th–17th century sources as Church censuses, travellers' notes, etc. However, from the first half of the 19th century, and especially from the middle of the 19th century, we have more reliable data and can form a more accurate picture of the main demographic processes: the main sources being *Church Parish Records, censuses* ordered by Princes of Transylvania, followed by *official censuses* (1859,1899) and the first *scientific publications*.

Table 1
Number of Catholics in Moldavia⁴

Time	Number of Catholics	Source
Early 16th century	ca. 25–30,000 (20–25,000 Hungarians)	Mikecs 1941. pp. 245–246. (estimation)
1591	15,000	Benda 1989. p. 31. (Church census: B. Bruti)
1646	5,577	Mikecs 1941. p. 245. and Benda 1989. p. 31. (Church census: B. Bruti)
1696	2,799	Benda 1989. p. 31. (Church census: unknown)
1744	5,500	Auner 1908. p. 48. (R. Jezierski Bishop of Bákó/Bacău)
1807	21,307	Auner 1908. p. 48. (Consul Hammer)
1851	45,752	Domokos 1987. pp. 116–119. (Church directory)
1859	52,881	Official census return. (Quoted by Szabados 1989.)
1875	58,809	Domokos 1987. pp. 116–119. (Church directory)
1899	88,803	Official census return. (Quoted by Szabados 1989.)
1902	64,601	Auner 1908. p. 79.
193	109,953	Official census return.
1992	240,038	Official census return.

As can be shown from these records, the first official Romanian census in 1859 gives 52,811 Catholics, which is in line with previous Church records (Szabados 1989. p. 92.). During the second census, that of 1899, their number is already 88,803 (Szabados 1989. p. 92), but this increase of 36,000 in forty years seems to be too high. A more realistic figure would be that based on a survey of Church Records carried out in 1902 in the Parish of Jászvásár/Iași, and quoted by Auner Károly in his book (*Historical Sketch of the Hungarian Colonies in Romania*, pp. 78–83.) published in 1908. Auner, however, lists only those villages which his book concerns or those villages where the number of Catholics exceeds 100. Consequently, the final figure quoted by him is much lower than the actual number of Moldavian Catholics at that time. (This data were also used and quoted by others, e.g. Mikecs.) We must accept the 1899 census figure of 88,803 as reliable, bearing in mind that this figure would also include itinerant Catholic workers from the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy who undertook work in forestry, railway construction, and salt-mining in Moldavia. Also included in this census were

Romanian Greek Catholics from Transylvania and approximately 2000 Italian forestry workers. (These believers converted to the Eastern Greek Faith gradually.) (Gyórfy 1942. p. 459.) These data are later confirmed by a census of 1912, which shows that the number of Catholics approaches 100,000 (97,771) (Scarlatescu 1921. p. 70.), but only 77,227 were Romanian citizens. The number of foreign nationals was 19,429 (8226 of them being Hungarians), and 1,103 Catholics registered as stateless. It is possible that some of these itinerant Catholic workers in Moldavia later returned to their home country; however the number of foreigners who assimilated to the Csángós and settled permanently in Moldavia could have been considerable. Most of the Transylvanian Greek Catholics assimilated to the Romanians in Moldavia, having converted to Greek Orthodoxy. There are, however, no figures to support the demographical trends.

In the 20th century, more sophisticated and modern census techniques would, in theory, have made it possible for more scientific and complex census material to have been collated (i.e. population increase; regional demographic changes; urbanisation; questions of assimilation with regard to language, religion and nationality, etc.). However, only the censuses of 1930, 1941 and 1992 can be considered to be reliable and comprehensive, and which included local Parish records. Censuses made during the 'Socialist' era (1956, 1966, 1977) published results only for larger administrative regions or, if local data were published (1966), religious data were not included. Consequently, the censuses were unsuitable for drawing conclusions about the Moldavian Csángós. In spite of the above inadequate sources and in the light of the 1992 census, conclusions could be made concerning the main demographic processes of Moldavian Catholics (e.g. population increase, exodus to other administrative regions, changing ratio between the Moldavian Catholics and the predominant Greek Orthodox). This research has yet to be carried out. (The Szabados study, frequently quoted, was published in 1989, before the 1992 census.) Because there is a lack of comparative data and reliable material for research, it is not possible at present to make a detailed study of smaller regions, but only to give an outline in general terms of the historical events in the whole of Moldavia.

The huge increase in the Catholic population over the last two centuries cannot be considered to result exclusively from the immigration of Catholic Székelys to Moldavia. The number of Catholics living in Moldavia more than doubled between 1930 and 1992, and this 118% increase significantly exceeds the similarly remarkable 67% growth in the population of Moldavia. However, it is important to bear in mind that during "socialist industrialisation", overpopulated Moldavia was the greatest supplier of human resources in Romania, and in this period there were many Moldavian Csángós, as well as Romanians, who moved to towns in Transylvania and to the southern industrial regions of the country. An estimated 50,000 people moved to Transylvania while some 15,000 people moved to Wallachia and Dobruja.⁵ We do not have figures for the huge number of Csángó

guest-workers labouring in foreign countries—particularly Israel, Hungary and Russia—at the time the census was made (January 1992). However, if we take into account the high numbers of Csángós living outside Moldavia at the time of the census, it is our contention that the increase in population since 1930 is closer to 180% than 118%, which would mean that the population of Csángó origin has almost trebled during the last sixty years.

4. THE USE OF THE HUNGARIAN LANGUAGE—LINGUISTIC ASSIMILATION

Literature about Moldavian Csángós contains a number of references showing that since the original settlement of Hungarians, during the Middle Ages, they have been exposed to Romanianisation and forced Romanianisation, especially in more recent history. As a result of assimilation processes most of the Moldavian Catholics of today are unfamiliar with their ancestors' mother tongue and consider themselves Romanian.

Data recording assimilation processes are rare and insufficient prior to the 20th century, so little can be said about the earlier periods. As has been shown, from the Middle Ages to the 18th century, even the changes in the absolute number of Catholics are derived mainly from indirect estimates, although there exist a few reports and data showing the assimilation process in progress (Parish Records and reports from envoys and travellers).

Romanian surveys dating back to the second half of the 19th century, can be considered reliable⁶ not only in the total number of Catholics but also with regard to the use of the mother tongue. Problems occur due to the inadequacy of the surveys rather than the reliability of the data.

Parish Episcopal Records of Jászvásár/Iași provide information only about the total number of Catholics (see table one). The 1859 census records data as to the use of the mother tongue and is of great value. This survey shows that 71.6% of Moldavian Catholics (37,825 out of 52,881) had Hungarian as their mother tongue, the remaining 28.4% (15,058) were already using Romanian as their mother tongue. Census figures were published for different counties⁷, so this survey can be used as a starting point for further detailed research. In view of the present situation, it is amazing that in 1859, 86.6% of Catholics (22,426 out of 25,896) in Bákó/Bacău county, and 94.6% (14,736 out of 15,588) in Románvásár/Roman county, declared themselves Hungarian. From the middle of the 19th century to the turn of the century, Hungarian was the dominant language used in the central and main traditional areas of the Moldavian Csángós; the northern Csángó villages north of Románvásár/Roman, the southern villages south of Bákó/Bacău, and in all the "Székelyised" villages. Assimilation began at the periphery of the area, among Catholics isolated from the central area. This affected

only a fifth of Moldavian Catholics. These Catholics lived outside the counties of Bákó/Bacău and Románvásár/Roman (11,397 out of 52,811), but only 5.6% (663) considered themselves Hungarian.

The next census, 1899, did not include questions on language usage and nationality. However, between 1898 and 1902 'Marele Dicționar Geografic al României' (*The Great Romanian Geographical Dictionary*)⁸ was compiled and published in five volumes. The editing and compilation of this dictionary was outstanding and was based on information from official sources. Place names were listed together with detailed information about ethnic identity and language usage. Although this was an important reference work, not enough attention was given to it by Hungarian Csángó-researchers.⁹ From the demographic data contained in this work it can be deduced that by the latter half of the 19th century there was a decline in the number of Catholics claiming to be Hungarian even in Bákó/Bacău and Románvásár/Roman counties.¹⁰

Large scale linguistic assimilation of Moldavian Csángós occurred in the second half of the 19th century, but this process only affected isolated Catholics within settlements, or where villages with a predominantly Hungarian population were situated between Orthodox Romanian villages, on the periphery of the northern Csángó region. Based on the material contained in the above mentioned sources it can be shown that migration occurred during the second half of the 19th century, mainly because of overpopulation.¹¹ Scattered Catholic communities which were at greater risk of assimilation migrated mostly from the northern region of Románvásár/Roman, but also from the traditional settlements of the Bákó/Bacău region. As a result of this exodus, the remaining Csángó population were rapidly assimilated. In the centre of the northern enclave (Szabófalva/Săbăoani and the surrounding area), but especially in the southern region of Bákó/Bacău and in the major Székelyised Csángó villages along the Rivers Tattoros/Trotuș and Tázló/Tazlău, no linguistic assimilation had begun at the turn of the century; in fact, the Hungarian population could hardly speak Romanian.

Figures for the assimilation processes of the 20th century cannot be quantified due to a lack of suitable and reliable data. The official Romanian surveys after the turn of the century can be considered reliable only with regard to the religious denominations of the Moldavian Hungarians¹² and are thus unsuitable for forming an overall perspective of how rapidly and comprehensively the assimilation processes developed. The surveys were inadequate for assessing the degree of Hungarian language knowledge and ethnic national identity. The 1930 and 1992 censuses were intentionally distorted; this is evident from their own inconsistencies in the data recorded.¹³ Suffice it to mention recent numerous publications¹⁴ concerning ethnography, linguistics, and history which prove beyond doubt that Hungarian ethnic groups exist even today, even where Romanian censuses do not demonstrate it.

According to official 20th century Romanian censuses Moldavian Catholics had

been entirely assimilated by 1992, having lost both their national ethnic identity and mother tongue.

Table 2
Changes in the numbers and percentages of Moldavian Hungarians according to the official Romanian Censuses.

Survey Year	Population Total	Number of Catholics	Proportion of Catholics within Total Population	Number of Hungarians	Proportion of Hungarians within Total Population	Proportion of Hungarians within Catholics	Source of Data
1859	1 325 406	52 881	4,00%	37 825	2,90%	71,6%	Szabados 1989. p. 91.
1899	1 848 122	88 803 ¹⁵	4,80%	24 276 ¹⁶	1,30%	27,3%	ibid. p. 94.
1912	2 139 154	97 771 ¹⁷	4,60%				Census return ¹⁸
1930	2 433 596	109 953	4,50%	23 894 ¹⁹	1,00%	21,7%	Census return ²⁰
1941	2 769 380	9 352 ²¹	0,30%				Census return ²²
1948	2 598 259	6 618 ²³	0,30%				Census return ²⁴
1956 ²⁵	2 991 281	8 829 ²⁶	0,30%				Census return
1966 ²⁷	3 391 400	4 748 ²⁸	0,14%				Census return
1977 ²⁹	3 763 221	3 276	0,09%				Census return
1992 ³⁰	4 079 046	240 038	5,90%	30 985 ³¹	0,08%	0,8%	Census return ³²

The above table and figures show that from 1859 to 1992 the number of Moldavian Catholics increased from 52,881 to 240,038, a five-fold increase. This gives a percentage increase from 4% to 6% of the total population of Moldavia, which is a relatively high increase in population considering that it does not take into account the 65,000 Csángós who migrated.

At the same time it is evident the Catholic Csángós, Hungarian by origin, had entirely lost their mother tongue and Hungarian identity, at least according to census data. In the middle of the 19th century, 71.6% (37,825 out of 52,881 Catholics) considered themselves Hungarian, while today only 0.8% (1,826 out of 240,038) does so. Furthermore, if we take into consideration the regional distribution of the 1,826 Moldavian Catholics, we see that, according to the census, there were 1,301 Hungarian Catholic city dwellers, while in villages, the number of Catholics considering themselves Hungarian was 525. According to official census figures *by the end of the 20th century*, the number of Hungarians living in Csángó villages had declined to approximately 500.

The above figures do not give any indication as to the linguistic-ethnic identity of the quarter of a million Moldavian Csángós. According to official records the assimilation process had been completed, since Csángós represented only 0.04% of the population, an insignificant figure.

It is not the purpose of this study to examine the basis on which the official sur-

veys compiled their figures and drew conclusions. Suffice it to note that official records showing a decline in the number of Csángó Hungarians was indeed the trend, but because of the somewhat artificial conditions at the time, not to the degree implied.³³

The official Romanian political stance, that there is no minority Hungarian ethnic group in Moldavia, is justified by them by the official census of 1992. The Romanian Government, therefore, does not accept officially the existence of a Hungarian question, and claims the Csángó are now fully integrated into Romanian society. Consequently, basic minority rights are not accorded to them and they are compelled to accept linguistic and conscious assimilation entirely.

5. KNOWLEDGE OF THE HUNGARIAN LANGUAGE TODAY

One basic question relating to the Moldavian Csángós is: How many of the Moldavian Csángós still know the native language of their ancestors?

In view of the fact that no reliable official data are available, in the following I shall make an attempt on the basis of my ethnographic fieldwork experience to assess the number of those Moldavian Csángós who understood the Hungarian language, as well as of those who spoke it, in the period following the Romanian census of 1930.

I have been doing research, primarily into religious folklore, among the Roman Catholic Csángós in Moldavia since 1980. In 1992–1996 I also assessed the identity-awareness of Csángós in some 110 Moldavian settlements. The data below reflect the language situation in the first half of the 1990s. In my fieldwork I aimed at visiting every village where Hungarian-speaking population could be inferred from the denominational figures of the census, the ethnographic literature, or from local Moldavian sources. Altogether I found 83 such settlements. It is quite possible that there may be one or two small settlements which have escaped the attention of researchers so far where older people still understand/speak Hungarian³⁴. Even if there are such villages, the total number of Hungarians in them could not possibly be higher than a few hundred, which would not affect the global picture. For the interpretation of the columns of figures in Table 3 the following methodological points should be noted:

1. In my experience the extent to which language has been lost varies from village to village and is revealed in the varying language competence of the different generations. In villages where linguistic assimilation to the Romanians is imminent, only the oldest people speak Hungarian. In other villages middle-aged people generally do speak Hungarian, and only the youngest do not. Language is most likely to survive where children are taught in Hungarian. Naturally, in most villages the generational borderline cannot be drawn with strict precision, as linguistic competence varies from family to family; yet the differences between vil-

lages are significant. (The Moldavian Csángós themselves are aware of these differences: the opinion of the people I spoke to confirmed my impression as to how well people in certain villages spoke the language.) In addition to the regional and generational differences, up until the most recent times gender also played a significant part: women who rarely left the village preserved the language more than the socially more mobile men. My estimates relating to the knowledge of Hungarian are based on an approximate assessment of the generational borderlines. In places where children were taught not only in Romanian but in Hungarian too, I concluded that the knowledge of the language was 100%. (I found no village where children would have been taught in Hungarian only.) In the villages where linguistic assimilation had only started in the preceding decades, I deducted the estimated number of children or young people who did not speak Hungarian at all from the estimated number of Catholics. In the villages where within the Catholic group only 10–20% (or even less) spoke Hungarian, only the oldest age group (or a part of it) spoke the language. To calculate the percentage distribution of Hungarian speakers I started from the age distribution data of the population as reflected in the census of 1992.

2. Travellers to and researchers of Moldavia have been continuously reporting on the degrees of language loss and on how linguistic competence has varied from village to village and from generation to generation. In the modern world of globalisation, however, the “traditional” processes of linguistic-ethnic assimilation are changing. The cultural unity of the traditional village is breaking down due to factors of acculturation such as commuting to and everyday contact with towns, schooling, organisation of religious life, wide-spread access to mass media, etc., which means the Moldavian Csángós are exposed to cultural influences which counter the traditional differences. Differences of degree in language loss according to settlement, generation or gender begin to lose their previous significance. The disappearance of relatively closed village spaces seems to speed up, “globalise” the processes of linguistic assimilation. The situation of Csángó families who have moved to town is a typical example of linguistic assimilation in the modern world. In these families the children do not learn the Hungarian language at all, irrespective of which village their parents come from. This is why the Table does not contain the data of those Csángós who have moved to the big Moldavian towns (Bákó/Bacău, Románvásár/Roman, Jászvásár/Iași, etc.), a great number of whom—depending on their birth-place—are still likely to speak Hungarian. The newly established housing estates and industrial districts of the Moldavian towns, on the other hand, are places where the Csángós are quickly or even immediately assimilated. Therefore, indicating this “Hungarian population” would only make our data “unreliable.” The Table does contain, however, those outskirts or suburbs of Moldavian towns which used to be traditional villages with Csángó populations (Onyest/Oneșt, Aknavásár/Târgu Ocna, Szlanik-fürdő/Slănic Moldvova). As a result of acculturation and globalisation the pro-

cesses of assimilation are speeding up: there are more and more phenomena of assimilation all over Moldavia which are not related to the linguistic or cultural traditions of a particular community or group. This is what makes it increasingly difficult to describe them in a traditional way and with traditional methods, in terms of the identity of villages, religious communities, generations or genders. The reason I still applied this method, which is based on the traditional structures of identity, both in the fieldwork and in my analysis, is that I find the above differences still relevant among the strongly tradition-bound communities of the Moldavian Csángós. In addition, I expected to get quantifiable results through comparing the differences in language knowledge between villages and generations.

3. Traditionally the linguistic competence of the individual was basically formed through his or her spontaneous immersion in the language of the local community. Today acquisition of a language is increasingly a *question of choice too*: the parents are consciously trying to meet the future needs of the wider social environment and speak Romanian to the children. Later the children themselves identify with their parents' attitude as school, church and mass media all convince them that it is worth acquiring the language of the state, which has a higher social prestige. It seems a common phenomenon that children who have been taught Romanian in the family will, as it were, casually, in the street, pick up the local Hungarian dialect, which means that Hungarian language competence continues to be formed by spontaneous community usage. As the significance of the Hungarian language in social communication decreases, the passing on of correct language usage will increasingly suffer. In such circumstances the actual knowledge of the Hungarian language is difficult to assess: those who speak it feel the local Hungarian dialect stigmatised, they feel ashamed of their "imperfect" Hungarian and are reluctant to speak it. The use of the state language, which has a higher prestige, means a more desirable identification to them and so they prefer speaking Romanian. In view of the above I tried to assess spontaneous language knowledge as an outside observer, and when I had doubts, I checked the data again and again. I visited the major Csángó villages several times and had plenty of opportunity to observe genuine conversations.

Table 3
I. Northern Csángós

Settlement ³⁴	Population in 1992 ³⁵	Catholics in 1992 ³⁶	Hungarian speakers among Catholics		Catholics in 1930 ³⁷
			Number ³⁸	Ratio ³⁹	
Szabófalva/Săbăoani	9,879	9,806	3,000	30%	4,374
Kelgyest/Pildești	3,779	3,760	3,100	82%	1,506
Újfalu/Traian	1,045	972	300	31%	339
Jugán/Iugani	2,061	2,034	50	3%	701
Balusest/Bălușești	2,262	1,268	600	47%	567
Bargován/Bărgăoani	1,357	1,055	30	3%	984
Ploszkucény/Ploscuțeni	2,557	2,199	1,100+30	50% ⁴⁰	1,220
Total		21,094	8,180		9,691

II. Southern Csángós (sibilant “sz”)

Settlement	Population in 1992	Catholics in 1992	Hungarian speakers among Catholics		Catholics in 1930
			Number	Ratio	
Szeketura/Pădureni	355	345	20	6%	244 ⁴¹
Bogdánfalva/Valea Seacă	3,125	2,837	2,400+30	85%	2,257 ⁴²
Újfalu/Nicolae Bălcescu	3,698	3,385	2,200	65%	961 ⁴³
Trunk/Galbeni	1,309	1,299	900	70%	565
Gyoszány/Gioseni	3,243	2,288	2,000+400 ⁴⁴	87%	833
Nagypatak/Valea Mare	? ⁴⁵	2,825 ⁴⁶	2,000	70%	1,773 ⁴⁷
Total		12,979	9,520		6,633

III. Székelyised Csángós
A. Along the River Szeret/Siret

Settlement	Population in 1992	Catholics in 1992	Hungarian speakers among Catholics		Catholics in 1930
			Number	Ratio	
Kalugarén/Călugăreni	833	791	250	31%	409
Lészped/Lespezi	2,108	1,917	1,917+191	100%	1,058
Rácsila/Gârlenii de Sus	1,581	1,398	1,398+183	100%	235 ⁴⁸
Lilijecs/Lilieci	1,627	608	200	33%	91
Gerlény/Gârleni	1,605	252	200	79%	82
Bergyila/Berdilă	697	57	40	70%	68 ⁴⁹
Terebes/Trebiș	778	666	10	1% ⁵⁰	330
Lujzikalagor/Luizi-Călugăra	5,227	5,198	4,700	90%	2,848 ⁵¹
Forrófalva/Faraoani	? ⁵²	3,472 ⁵³	2,600	75%	1,757
Klézse/Cleja	4,331	4,235	3,800	90%	2,249 ⁵⁴
Somoska/Șomușca	1,666	1,659	1,650	100%	898
Pokolpatak/Valea Mică	705	676	600	88%	283 ⁵⁵

Settlement	Population in 1992	Catholics in 1992	Hungarian speakers among Catholics		Catholics in 1930
			Number	Ratio	
Újfalu/Dózsa/Gheorghe Doja	1,057	674	550	81%	261 ⁵⁶
Csík/Ciucani	493	492	400	81%	179
Külsőrekesin/Fundu-Răcăciuni	1,913	1,903	1,903	100%	842
Kápota/Capăta	304	94	42	40%	129
Berendfalva/Berindești	1,137 ⁵⁷	371	200	53%	114
Rekesin/Răcăciuni	2,781	387	100	25%	244
Magyarfalu/Arini	1,337	1,325	1,325	100%	843 ⁵⁸
Lábnik/Vladnic	941	904	904	100%	615 ⁵⁹
Szászkút/Sascut-Sat	2,178	615	400	65%	399 ⁶⁰
Tamás/Tămași	1,190	94	10	10%	80
Ketris/Chetriș	750	505	100	20%	341
Furnikár/Furnicari	518	104	10	10%	69
Total		28,397	23,309		14,424

B. Along the River Tâzsló/Tazlau

Settlement	Population in 1992	Catholics in 1992	Hungarian speakers among Catholics		Catholics in 1930
			Number	Ratio	
Frumósza/Frumoasa	3,550	2,116	1,900 + 200 ⁶¹	90%	903
Pusztina/Pustiana	2,070	2,055	2,055	100%	1,153
Ripa Jepi/Bogdănești	71	45	30	66%	56 ⁶²
Szoloncka/Tărăța	979	380	80	20%	278 ⁶³
Kukujéc/Cucuieti	1,363	110	30	27%	109
Szerbek/Florești	613	540	300	55%	370 ⁶⁴
Esztrugár/Strugari	1,211	216	40	18%	296 ⁶⁵
Máriafalva/ Lărguca/ Lărguța	299	296	250	85%	144
Gajdár/Coman	931	927	850	91%	411 ⁶⁶
Esztofuj/Stufu	394	364	250	70%	289
Váliri/Livezi	905	215	100	56%	138 ⁶⁷
Balanyásza/Bălăneasa	912	138	20	14%	171
Jenekest/Enăchești	810	97	20	20%	79
Turluján/Turluianu	1,145	160	10	6%	61
Gyidráska/Verșești	1,029	215	20	10%	143
Berzunc/Berzunți	2,711	774	100	13%	371 ⁶⁸
Berzujok/Bârzulești	212	122	20	16%	36
Kövesalja/Petricica	480	126	20	16%	235
Ardeván/Ardeoani	1,578	48	5	10%	44
Total		8,944	6,100		5,287

C. Along the River Tatos/Trotus

Settlement	Population in 1992	Catholics in 1992	Hungarian speakers among Catholics		Catholics in 1930
			Number	Ratio	
Palánka/Palanca	849	122	20	16%	69
Csügés/Ciugheș	2,178 ⁶⁹	1,396	1,200+800 ⁷⁰	85%	771
Bruszturósza/Brusturoasa	3,608	746	100	14%	426 ⁷¹
Kománfalva/Comănești	25,020	1,577	200	12%	549 ⁷²
Mojnest/Moinești	25,560	1,365	50	3%	462 ⁷³
Dormánfalva/Dărmănești	13,883	1,623	550 ⁷⁴	34%	745
Doftána/Dofteana	2,920	190	0	0%	463 ⁷⁵
Szálka/Seaca	455	374	200	55%	
Válé Kimpuluj/Valea Câmpului	1,096 ⁷⁶	224	20	9%	
Bogáta/Bogata	816	326	30	9%	
Aknavásár/Târgu Ocna	13,939	1,220	0	0%	2,539 ⁷⁷
Degettes/Păcurele	860 ⁷⁸	235	170	72%	170
Szalánctorka/Gura Slănicului		110	20 ⁷⁹	18%	
Szlanikfürdő/Slănic Moldova	1,929	494	30	6%	998 ⁸⁰
Cserdák/Cerdac	1,571	559	250+50	42%	
Szalánc/Cireșoia	1,811	1,783	1,100	62%	
Tatos/Târgu Trotuș	1,946	1,241	600	50%	1,796 ⁸¹
Diószeg/Tuta	1,949	1,935	1,700	88%	
Szólóhegy/Părgărești	1,202	1,039	800	77%	1,133 ⁸²
Újfalú/Satu Nou	1,699	1,687	1,687	100%	
Szitás/Nicorești	902	901	901	100%	
Bahána/Bahna	594	528	410+40	77%	
Gorzafalva/Grozești	6,938	4,018	2,400+100	60%	1,873 ⁸³
Fűrészfalva/Ferestrău-Oituz	1,036	427	300	70%	259
Onyest/Onești	57,333	5,884	1,500 ⁸⁴	25%	1,236
Szárzpataka/Válszaka/Valea Seacă	798 ⁸⁵	394	100	25%	231
Gutinás/Gutinaș	592	123	20	16%	148
Prálea/Pralea	803	660	100	15%	248
Vizánta ⁸⁶ /Vizantea Mănăstirească	1,658	1,018	700	70%	488
Total		32,129	15,158		14,434
TOTAL I–II–III		103,543	62,267		50,469

An analysis of the above figures leads to the following conclusions:

1. There is sound evidence which proves the mainly Hungarian origin of Moldavian Catholics. Today, however, only 43% of them (103,543 out of 240,038) live in settlements where Hungarian is still spoken. In fact, the majority of the Catholic population has been entirely Romanianised linguistically. *Today, the*

number of Hungarian-speaking Catholics in Moldavia is an estimated 62,000, which is only a quarter of the whole Moldavian Catholic population. The tables indicate those districts and villages on the outskirts of Moldavian towns in which Csángós live in their own traditional village structure (e.g. at Onyest/Onești, Aknavásár/Târgu Ocna, Szlánikfürdő/Slănic Moldova). However, the tables do not give figures for Csángós who have moved into Moldavian towns and cities (Bákó/Bacău, Románvásár/Roman, Jászvásár/Iași etc.), many of whom—depending on where they were born—may well still speak Hungarian. On the other hand, it is precisely in the newly built housing estates and industrial zones of Moldavian towns that the rapid, almost immediate assimilation of Csángós has taken place, and therefore to allow for any “Hungarian population” in these towns would lead to a meaningless relativisation of the above figures. For similar reasons, we cannot include in our calculations the Hungarian-speaking Csángós who moved to Transylvanian towns and industrial zones (which we estimated above to total 50,000). Transylvanian Catholics who came from Moldavia have likewise become assimilated to the Romanians and the situation in the Székely Land is also very similar. Finally, it is also possible that there are some other Moldavian settlements overlooked by researchers where elderly people still speak or understand Hungarian.⁸⁷ But even if there are such villages the total number of their Hungarian inhabitants cannot possibly be more than a few hundred, which does not change the picture as a whole.

2. In 1930, there were 50,469 Catholics living in the above settlements where Hungarian is still spoken. This figure should be taken as a basis for estimating the number and ratio of Hungarian speakers. However, if we take into account the fact that the use of the mother tongue had already started to disappear in the villages, we can conclude that part of the Catholic population in the settlements shown in the tables definitely did not speak Hungarian in 1930. In the south, Szeketura/Pădureni was one such village, while in the north Jugán/Iugani, Balușest/Balușești, Bargován/Bârgăoani and Szabófalva/Săbăoani witnessed the same process. Some forty small Székelyised villages in the region of the Rivers Szeret/Siret, Tatros/Trotuș and Tázló/Tazlău had also been largely Romanianised. Studying the contemporary accounts, it is hard to imagine how, in certain settlements, the Hungarian language survived at all. Therefore, we have to decrease the figure 50,469 by at least 5–6,000 in order to get the number of Hungarian speakers in 1930. But presumably, sixty to seventy years ago some members of the older generation still spoke Hungarian in villages which have since been completely Romanianised (and which are not reproduced in the tables). In the north, Gyerejest/Gherăești and Dokia/Dochia were certainly in this situation, together with Szeráta/Sărăta, Horgyest/Horgești, Valény/Văleni and maybe some other small villages in the vicinity of Bákó/Bacău. The number of elderly Hungarian speakers, however, could not possibly have been more than 1–2,000 in 1930. Taking into account all these calculations, *the number of Hungarian-speaking*

*Csángós in Moldavia could have been around 45,000 in 1930, about 40% of the entire Catholic population of the province.*⁸⁸

3. The total number of Hungarian speakers increased by 37%, from 45,000 to 62,000, between 1930 and 1992. If the number of Hungarian speakers had increased at the same rate as the Moldavian Catholic population as a whole, that is, by 118%, there would have been another 53,000, a calculation which gives some idea of the rate of assimilation. In other words, in the absence of linguistic assimilation, the number of Hungarian-speaking Moldavian Csángós would have reached the mythical 100,000 by now. Because of assimilation, however, the number of Hungarian speakers fell by 40,000, and thus, in spite of a moderate increase, the proportion of Hungarian speakers among Catholics went from 41% in 1930 to 26% in 1992. *In the final analysis, the main features of the demographic behaviour of Moldavian Csángós are a high fertility index and rapid linguistic assimilation.*

4. There are differences among Csángó settlements in terms of the intensity of linguistic assimilation. The degree of assimilation substantially affected the ratio of Hungarian speakers: in some villages the assimilation was complete, or almost complete, while in others there was a significant increase in the number of people who (also) spoke Hungarian. With regard to Csángós living in sporadic groups, the number of Hungarian speakers either decreased or remained the same in villages with small, mixed populations and/or surrounded by a predominantly Romanian environment—more than 50 villages altogether. (The fact that there was no increase in the number of Hungarian speakers—e.g. in Újfalu/Traian, Balusest/Bălușești, Ploszkucény/Ploscuțeni, Szerbek/Florești and Onyest/Onești—at a time when the fertility index was high, also indicates the high degree of assimilation.) Only 25 to 30 settlements, the largest and most significant of the Csángó villages, witnessed any definite and substantial increase in the number of Hungarian speakers between 1930 and 1992. The increase occurred mainly in the ethnically homogeneous and more populous villages, where the danger of linguistic assimilation only became apparent during the last few decades. (These are generally villages in which, according to the tables, the proportion of Hungarian speakers is above 80%.) In 1930 in many villages the number of Hungarian speakers is twice as high as the number of Catholics—sometimes even higher. Of the northern Csángó villages, only Kelgyest/Pildești shows an increase in the number of Hungarian speakers, while in the other villages, the substantial drop in the number of Hungarian speakers brought this linguistic enclave to the verge of total disappearance. The situation of the southern Csángós is only slightly better: here, only the relatively rapidly assimilating Újfalu/Nicolae Bălcescu and Nagypatak/Valea Mare show any increase in the number of Hungarian speakers, as does Gyoszény/Gioseni, whose classification as a southern Csángó settlement, however, should be taken with reservations. The greatest increase has occurred in the ethnically homogeneous Székelyised Csángó villages, where certain favourable conditions (e.g. the proximity to and closer relations with the Székely Land, the

fact that the dialect is closer to literary Hungarian, that the settlements were established relatively recently, that there is a stronger awareness of Hungarian origins, that there is no surrounding Romanian population, and that there are still people who remember the Hungarian schools of the 1950s, etc.), have slowed the process of assimilation. Twenty villages belong to this category: Lészped/Lespezi, Lujzikalagor/Luizi-Călugăra, Forrófalva/Fărăoani, Cleja/Klészse, Somoska/Șomușca, Pokolpatak/Valea Mică, Csík/Ciucani, Külsőrekecsin/Fundu-Răcăciuni, Magyarfalu/Arini, Lábnik/Vladnic, Frumósza/Frumoasa, Pusstina/Pustiana, Lărguca/Lărguța, Gajdár/Coman, Csügés/Ciugheș, Diószeg/Tuta, Szőlőhegy/Părgărești, Szitás/Nicorești, Újfalu/Satu Nou, Bahána/Bahna. It would be misleading to state that the balance has tipped in favour of Hungarian speakers without emphasising at the same time that the increase is due to the high fertility index, and that it was produced within—and mostly in spite of—an omnipresent and strong tendency towards assimilation. Thus, the figures indicate an increase even in places where young people speak very little, if any, Hungarian (Újfalu/Nicolae Bălcescu, Trunk/Galbeni, Lilijecs/Lilieci, Gerlény/Gârleni, Tatros/Târgu Trotuș, Gorzafalva/Grozești, Fűrészfalva/Ferestrău-Oituz, Vizánta/Vizantea Mănăstirească etc.). Today, however, the figures no longer indicate those with Hungarian as their mother tongue or even those who use Hungarian in everyday life: much of the time they refer only to those who have some degree of knowledge of the language. In many villages the figures indicate linguistically well-assimilated young people whose first language is Romanian, but who, in certain situations, can use a dialect of Hungarian as a second language without it being likely that they will pass this language on to their children. Consequently, the increase of 17,000 in the number of Hungarian speakers between 1930 and 1992 is very “fragile” compared to the growth of the population as a whole, and does not suggest potential for further increase. Sixty to seventy years ago, at a time when the traditional village way of life was still in place, Hungarian speakers would use Hungarian dialects as their first language or mother tongue. Since then, modernisation and the greater degree of social mobility has diminished the importance of these dialects—for young people, the dialect has been downgraded to the position of a second language, at best, which they feel ashamed to use in public. Thus when comparing the 1930 and 1992 data on Hungarian speakers, it is important to remember that the background to the two sets of figures is very different.

6. LINGUISTIC KNOWLEDGE AND ETHNIC IDENTITY. SOME CONCLUSIONS

Of the 250,000-strong originally Hungarian Csángó population, a remarkable 62,000 still speak Hungarian. However, in 1992 only 1,800 of them considered themselves ethnic Hungarians. 1,301 of these people lived in towns, which

means that according to the census, only five hundred ethnic Hungarian Catholics were living in the Moldavian villages—the authentic Csángó settlements. This figure is arrived at by the manipulative, distortional methods used in the carrying out of the census—commissioners were ordered to cover up the presence of ethnic Hungarians and Hungarian speakers, the Church conducted a powerful propaganda campaign among the Csángós, those who declared themselves Hungarian were threatened with forced repatriation to Hungary, and the whole census was carried out in an atmosphere of nationalism fired by the mass media, etc.⁸⁹—and by the unique identity concept of the Csángós. Moldavian Csángós living beyond the Carpathian mountains played no part in the great historical movements of the first half of the 19th century which created the modern Hungarian nation and society (language reforms, political and cultural movements of the “Reform Age”, the 1848 War of Independence). The Moldavian Csángós were therefore the only group of Hungarian speakers who did not become part of the Hungarian nation. Consequently, the most important factors for unification are absent:

1. Beyond its practical role as a means of communication, the Moldavian Csángós do not attribute any symbolic or cohesive value to the Hungarian language. (Their relation to language use is free of ideology, thus they regard the phenomenon of language loss as an inevitable part of modernisation rather than as a tragedy.) Nor do they consider their Moldavian dialect to be identical to the one spoken in the Carpathian Basin—ignoring the fact that Hungarian dialects are all simply variations of the same language.

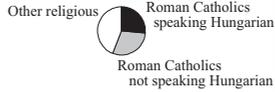
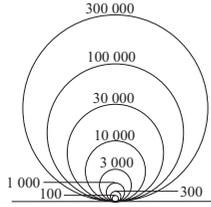
2. They are unaware of the national values contained within folklore and folk culture, and of the fact that traditional culture can be a powerful means of strengthening national unity.

3. They have virtually no contact with Hungarian “high culture” of which the values remain out of their reach due to the absence of a proper institutional network and the low levels of literacy in Hungarian.

4. Since their migration, the history and historical awareness of Csángós has been distinct from that of the Hungarians in the Carpathian Basin. The consciousness of common origins is fading away even among Székelyised Csángós. In Europe it was the intellectuals who played the most important role in acquainting people with the nation’s constituent features. In Moldavia, however, no ecclesiastical or secular intelligentsia emerged. The young Romanian state, which was established in 1859 and which won its independence in 1877 following the Russo-Turkish war, continues to hinder the formation of a Hungarian intelligentsia and an institutional network. It has always been careful to send to Moldavia priests, teachers and officials who were brought up in the spirit of Romanian nationalism, to act as channels of the official ideology (e.g. of the view that Csángós are Magyarised Romanians, *Roman* Catholics are, in fact, *Romanian* Catholics, Csángó “pidgin-talk” is something to be ashamed of, etc.). The formation of the Roma-

nian Catholic ecclesiastical intelligentsia resulted from the efforts of the seminary, and later the printing presses and cantor schools, of the Jászvásár/Iași bishopric established in 1884. This meant that the Catholic Church, which had been for centuries the most important factor in the separation of Moldavian ethnic Hungarians from the Romanians and in the survival of the Hungarian language, became, from the end of the 19th century, a vehicle of Romanianisation. After the establishment of a network of modern state-owned schools, the language of instruction in Moldavia became exclusively the state language. The speaking of Hungarian was forbidden in schools, and numerous accounts reveal that teachers punished students who used Hungarian, urging parents to speak Romanian, even at home. (Today, the need for such strict intervention in language use is disappearing, since there are now virtually no villages in which schoolchildren still speak Hungarian to each other.) In the first years of the Communist dictatorship, between 1948 and 1953, the Hungarian People's Association operated schools in about 40–50 villages, but they did not play any significant role in the formation of national identity. The schools were poorly equipped and students from the first to fourth years were taught together in the same class by teachers who, in many cases, had been sent to Moldavia as a punishment. The religious population was not supportive of these Communist schools, while local Romanian intellectuals continuously stirred up opposition to them, and thus, in most of the villages, such schools proved short-lived. The Romanian state does not officially recognise the existence of the Moldavian Hungarian ethnic group and, as it treats Csángós as Romanians, it does not grant them the most basic minority rights, thus forcing their complete linguistic and religious assimilation to Romanians. Local initiatives are occasionally taken to form or maintain Hungarian identity, but these are suppressed with the connivance, or the silent consent, of the authorities.

Population of habitations according to the census in 1992.

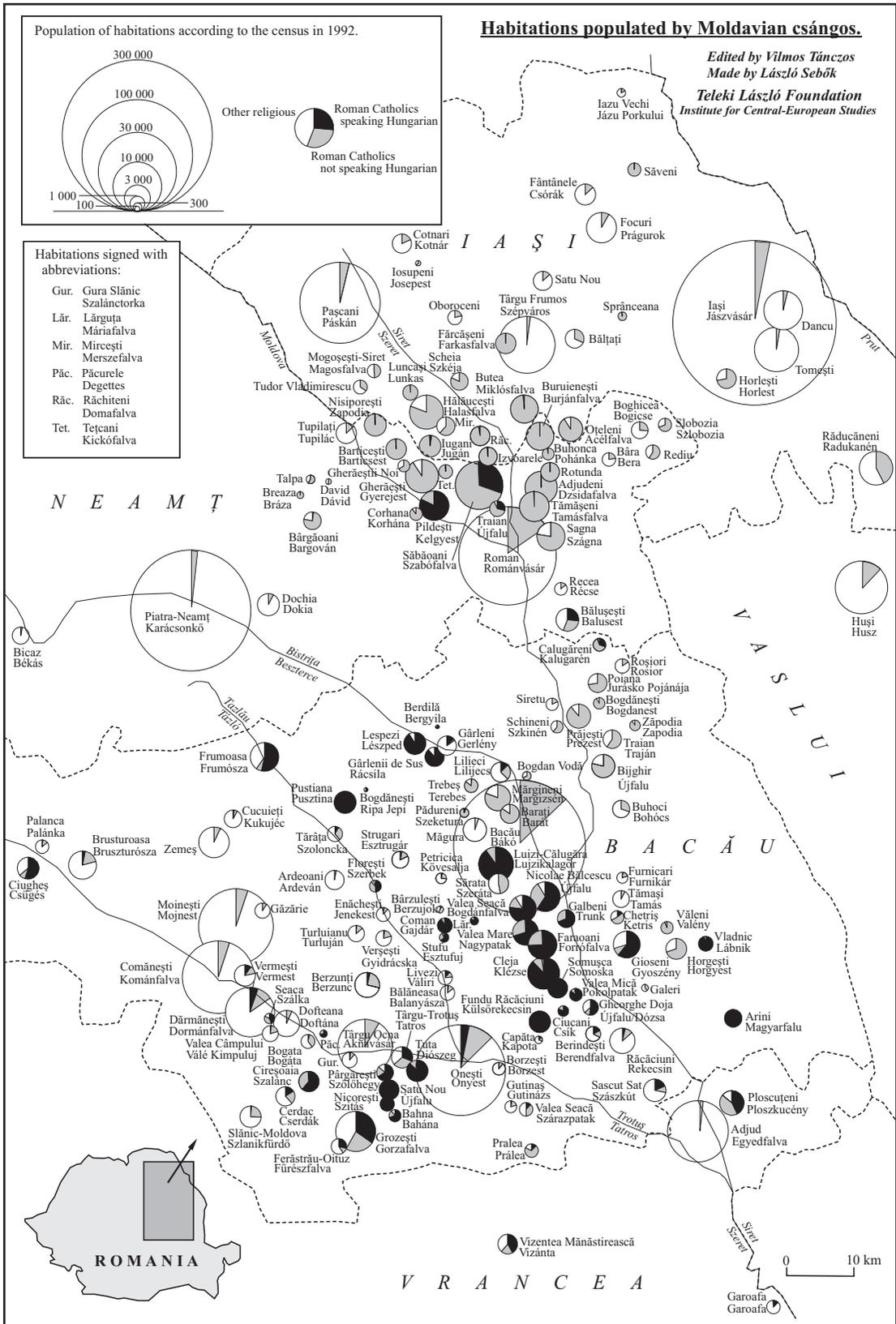


Habitations signed with abbreviations:

- Gur. Gura Slănic Szaláncortka
- Lăr. Lărguta Măriafalva
- Mir. Mircești Merszefalva
- Pác. Păcurele Degettes
- Rác. Răchiteni Domafalva
- Tet. Tetcani Kickófalva

Habitations populated by Moldavian csángos.

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NOTES

- 1 Reference should be made to: *Lahovari et alia* 1898–1902., *Rosetti* 1905., *Auner* 1908., *Nastase* 1934/35. The Hungarian origin of Csángós is only denied by pseudo-scientific publications expressing Romanian nationalistic ideology (i.e. *Martinas* 1985.).
- 2 Special studies concerning historical facts, linguistic data including geographical and family names, could serve as the basis on which such a scientific hypothesis could be compiled (eg. *Racovita* 1895., *Lahovari et alia* 1898–1902., *Căndea* 1917., *Lükő* 1936., *Makkay* 1936., *Lecca* 1937., *Năstase* 1934/35, *Mikecs* 1941 and 1943., *Jordan* 1963 and 1983., *Hajdu* 1980., *Benkő* 1990.).
- 3 e.g. Names such as: Ungureni, Secueni, Slobozia, Bejenari, etc.
- 4 The majority of Catholics in Moldavia are of Hungarian origin, therefore the total number is a good indication of the approximate number of Csángós over the centuries. Even today, the population of Polish, German, Ukrainian, and Gypsy nationality totals only a few thousand out of the quarter of a million Catholics living in Moldavia. We lack historical data on the number of Romanians who left their Greek Orthodox faith and the number of Hungarians who converted from Catholicism to Greek Orthodoxy.
- 5 The 1992 census recorded 79,337 ethnic Romanian Catholics in Transylvania. The majority live in the towns of the industrial regions of Southern Transylvania—in Temes/Timiș (14,436), Brassó/Brașov (9,835), Vajdahunyad/Hunedoara (9,119), Caraș-Severin (6,269), Arad/Arad (5,743) and Nagyszeben/Sibiu (2,000) counties—and of the Székely Land—in Hargita/Harghita (3,357), Kovászna/Covasna (2,829) and Maros/Mureș (2,091) counties. Since these territories have been the target of the Romanian influx from Moldavia into Transylvania in the last decades, we have good reason to suppose that the majority of the almost 80,000 Transylvanian Catholics who consider themselves Romanians are of Csángó origin, and that the remainder is made up of assimilated Transylvanian Hungarians, Germans and Slovaks. Ecclesiastical reports also attest to the presence of Csángós in Transylvania. Csángó migration towards the area south of the Carpathians was aimed at the petrol producing region of Ploiești, the seaport of Constanța and, in particular, the capital Bucharest.
- 6 Several Hungarian experts pointed out the merits of these surveys. See *Szabados* 1989., *Halász* 1992.
- 7 Population of Moldavia. 1859, Bucharest.

- 8 *Lahovari et alia* 1898–1902. Vol. I-V.
- 9 Hungarian researchers (*Domokos* 1938. and 1987., *Szabados* 1989.), became aware of the demographical data contained in the dictionary, but with regard to Moldavian place names, no study has yet been undertaken. In his treatise of 1938, Domokos Pál Péter listed from the dictionary 71 Moldavian settlements where Hungarians also lived, and gave the total population and the distribution of their national identity. In a later study published in 1987, he lists the entries in the dictionary referring to Csángó villages. (*Domokos* 'Moldavian Hungarians,' pp. 119–124.)
- 10 Szabados Mihály lists, from the dictionary, 31 villages in the counties of Bákó/Bacău and Románvásár/Roman which had ethnic Hungarians, and calculates that the number of Hungarians declined from 89.6% to 71.1% in the last four decades of the 19th century. So his conclusion is: “in 35 years, one third of Hungarians in this region became Romanian.” (*Szabados* 1989. pp. 94–95.) Szabados takes the data contained in the census of 1859 and extrapolates them into the data of the 31 villages listed in the dictionary, and thus arrives at the figure of 71.1%. The assimilation that occurred in the whole of the two counties was probably higher. The dictionary records the total number of Catholics in Románvásár/Roman County as 23,123, of whom 8,728 were Hungarian, which is 37.7%, compared to the 94.6% shown in the 1859 census. Similarly, in Bákó/Bacău County the total number of Catholics was 35,489 of whom 15,538 were Hungarian, which is 43.7%, compared to the 86.6% shown in the 1859 census. The assimilation process, however, was not this strong in reality: as the source does not mention several villages with entirely Hungarian populations, and the number of villages with a scattered Hungarian population not listed is also significant. These shortcomings of the dictionary are listed by Domokos Pál Péter who, in his study published in *Hitel*, lists 71 Moldavian settlements where Hungarians also lived. (*Domokos* 1938. pp. 304–308.). Lükő Gábor provided a list containing several hundred names of villages together with a map, which has many inaccuracies and omissions. For instance, he indicates villages as having Hungarians, whereas, in fact, there were none or their existence is questionable; and villages as having no Hungarians but which in fact have some, even today. Although these data were provided from official sources for the compilation of the dictionary, the circumstances and the criteria of the survey are unknown: we do not know what criteria were used to classify one portion of the population as Hungarian, and another Romanian, within the Catholic population of individual Csángó villages. When assessing the rate of assimilation we must also take into account that the 1899 census, which included all Catholics, also included non-Hungarian nationals from Transylvania who had been migrating since 1859.
- 11 See calculations of Szabados Mihály (*Szabados* 1989. pp. 91–93.).
- 12 There are those who question even the reliability of the data concerning the religious denomination figures of the 1992 census, pointing out that representatives of the Catholic Church provided the information whereby Catholics were registered as Orthodox. Even if there were such instances, it does not alter the overall picture because there is not a marked difference between the statistics published by the Church Authorities (see “*Almanahul Presa Buna*” of the Jászvásár/Iași Episcopate) and the census returns.
- 13 In his demographic study of 1989, Szabados draws attention to the 1930 census which indicates Hungarians by origin (“*origine etnică*”) or by mother tongue, but only in places where they live in isolation or are more or less assimilated; whereas in those places that were populated entirely by Moldavian Hungarians nothing was recorded.
- 14 The following ethnographic publications appeared concerning the Csángós after the Second World War: BOSNYÁK Sándor: *A moldvai magyarok hírvilága*, Budapest, 1980. (Folklór Archivum 12); DOMOKOS Pál Péter–RAJECZKY Benjamin: *Csángó népzene. I–III*. Budapest, 1956., 1961., 1991.; FARAGÓ József–JAGAMAS János: *Moldvai csángó népdalok és népballadák*. Bukarest, 1954.; HALÁSZ Péter ed.: “*Megfog vala apóm szokcor kezemlől...*” *Tanulmányok Domokos Pál Péter emlékére*. Budapest, 1993.; HEGEDŰS Lajos: *Moldvai csángó népmesék és beszélgetések*.

Népryelvi szövegek moldvai telepeseiktől. Budapest, 1952.; KALLÓS Zoltán: *Balladák könyve.* Bukarest, 1970.; KALLÓS Zoltán: *Új guzsajam mellet. Egy klézsei asszony énekei.* Bukarest, 1973.; KALLÓS Zoltán: *Ez az utazó levelem. Balladák új könyve.* Budapest, 1996.; KÓS Károly–SZENTIMREI Judit–NAGY Jenő: *Moldvai csángó népművészet.* Bukarest, 1981.; PÉTERBENCZE Anikó ed.: “Moldovának szíp tájaind születem...” *Magyarországi csángó fesztivál és konferencia.* Jászberény, 1993.; POZSONY Ferenc: *Szeret vize martján. Moldvai csángómagyar népköltészet.* Kolozsvár, 1995.; SERES András–SZABÓ Csaba: *Csángómagyar daloskönyv. Moldova 1972–1988.* Budapest; TÁNCZOS Vilmos: *Gyöngyökkel gyökerezétl. Gyimesi és moldvai archaikus imádságok.* Csíkszereda, 1995.; VERESS Sándor: *Moldvai Gyűjtés. Magyar népköltési gyűjtemény XVI.* Budapest, 1989.; VIGA Gyula ed.: *Tanulmányok és közlemények a moldvai magyarokról. A Néprajzi látóhatár thematic issue. III. vol. 1994. I–II.*

A full list of all the historical, linguistic and literary publications is not included here. Those interested should consult the invaluable bibliography of HALÁSZ Péter, entitled ‘A moldvai magyarság bibliográfiája’ Budapest 1996., which forms an excellent basis for future study and research.

- 15 Some of them—at least 15,000 are foreigners (see also data from 1912.).
- 16 *The Great Romanian Geographical Dictionary* qualifies this number of Catholics as Hungarian in 19 villages in Bákó/Bacău County and 12 villages in Románvásár/Roman County (*Szabados* 1989. p. 94.). Additionally, there were Hungarians living in Catholic villages near Aknavásár/Târgu Ocna who are not mentioned in the dictionary. These—often entirely Hungarian—settlements were correctly listed by Domokos Pál Péter in his field studies (*Domokos* 1938. pp. 304–308.). In the majority of these villages the Hungarian language is still used (see table 3 of present study.). The number of people with Hungarian mother tongue at the turn of the century must have been considerably higher than recorded in the dictionary.
- 17 This number is broken down as follows: 77,227 (3.6%) Romanian citizens; 19,429 (0.9%) foreign citizens, of which 8,226 (0.4%) were Hungarian citizens, and 1,103 (0.1%) stateless, and 12 (.0%) of unknown origin.
- 18 Source: SCARLATESCU, I.: *Demographic Statistics of Romania. Extracts from the Statistical Bulletin of Romania 1921.* Nos. 6–7, p.55., 70.
- 19 The number in the above table refers to those who used Hungarian as their mother tongue but of those, 20,964 were recorded as Hungarian nationals.
- 20 Source: *Manuila* 1938.
- 21 According to ethnic origin.
- 22 Recensământul general al României din 1941 6 aprilie. Date sumare provizorii. București, Institutul Central de Statistică. 1944. p. XI.
- 23 According to mother tongue.
- 24 GOLOPENȚIA, A.—GEORGESCU, D. C.: *Populația Republicii populare Române la 25 ianuarie 1948. Rezultate provizorii ale recensământului. Extras din Probleme Economice.* 1948. Nr. 2. p. 38.
- 25 According to the 1992 administrative classification, Szucsava/Suceava county and Gyimesbükk/Ghimeș excluded.
- 26 According to nationality. The number according to mother tongue is approximately 15,000. (According to the 1992 administrative classification, data are available about nationality only between 1956–1977. Data reflecting use of mother tongue at the provincial level have been recorded for the years 1956 and 1966.).
- 27 According to the 1992 administrative classification, Szucsava/Suceava county and Gyimesbükk/Ghimeș excluded.
- 28 According to nationality. The number according to mother tongue is approximately 7,000.

- 29 The number of Hungarians according to nationality, Szucsava/Suceava county and Gyimesbükk/Ghimeş excluded.
- 30 Szucsava/Suceava County and Gyimesbükk/Ghimeş excluded.
- 31 According to nationality. Number according to mother tongue is 3,118, of which 1,826 are Roman Catholics.
- 32 Recensământul populației și locuințelor din 7 ianuarie 1992. Structura etnică și confesională a populației. București, Comisia Națională pentru Statistică. 1995.
- 33 Several reports appeared in the press questioning the correctness of the 1992 census. Vetési László gives an account of the census of Lészped/Lespezi, as published in *Felebarát* issue(s) 1–2/1992 in Kolozsvár/Cluj, as well as in *Romániai Magyar Szó* issue(s) 11–12, April 1992. *Romániai Magyar Szó* 23rd April 1993 publishes the condemning statement of the Society of Moldavian Hungarians. Several newspapers published the protesting declaration of Percă Margaréta, census taker of Szabófalva/Săbăoani, in which, among other things, he points out the role of the Moldavian Catholic Church: “From the 1st of January 1992, the representatives of the Roman Catholic episcopate of Jászvásár/Iași, together with the village priest, strongly urged the population of the village to declare themselves categorically Romanian nationals at the census. The argument was that the expression “Roman Catholic” came from the word “Romanian”. Agitation among the population reached its peak on 6 January 1992, when the priest actually threatened the congregation, saying: if they did not declare themselves Romanian Nationals, the same situation would occur as in 1940, when the question of resettlement was considered for the entire Moldavian Hungarian community. Protesting against this rude intervention, which came from an institution having an overwhelming effect on the inhabitants of the village, and which obviously had the aim of falsifying the results of the census, I handed in my census papers to the village authority on January 1992” (*Romániai Magyar Szó*, page 3, 22 January, 1992).

The propaganda and threats carried out by the mass media, the Catholic priests and the local intelligentsia, contributed to a great extent to the fact that the Csángós, who have an uncertain national identity, declared themselves everywhere Romanian. At that time, the Catholic Church managed to spread the view according to which the *Roman Catholic* religion (in Romanian: “*Romano catolic*”) in fact meant *Romanian Catholic* (in Romanian: *Român Catholic*) among the Csángós. We also have data showing that the census takers had been told to fill in the census forms on the premises and only in pencil. Furthermore, not to write down anyone as being Hungarian.

Besides the existing assimilation processes and the artificially-created psychological situation, the manipulation of the information in the census returns effectively irradiated the entire existence of Moldavian Hungarians.

- 34 Table 3 contains those villages in which Hungarian is still spoken. In the identification of the variations of village names we made use of *Magyar helységnév-azonosító szótár* [Dictionary for the Identification of Hungarian Place-names], Lelkes György (ed.), Budapest 1992., however, we give the present-day Romanian names as well. The figures for those village districts which the censuses (and sometimes the related Hungarian literature) treat rather arbitrarily as separate villages, have been added to the data for the villages to which these districts really belong (e. g. districts of Bogdánfalva/Valea Seacă, Lujzikalagor/Luizi-Călugăra, Lábnik/Vladnic etc.). Where, on the contrary, the censuses have united separate villages, we have tried to give the corresponding figures separately (e. g. Forrófalva/Fărăoani and Nagypatak/Valea Mare, the villages attached to Aknávávár/Târgu Ocna and Szlánikfürdő/Slănic Moldova etc.).
- 35 Census return.
- 36 Census return.
- 37 Census return.
- 38 On-site estimation. In those villages where linguistic assimilation started only in the last de-

- cedes, I have not included the number of children and young people who do not speak Hungarian at all in the number of Catholics. In those villages where Hungarian language is taught besides Romanian, I took the knowledge of Hungarian language as 100%. In the case of certain villages I have used a + sign to indicate the Hungarian-speaking Greek Orthodox population.
- 39 Figure based on the estimated number of Hungarian-speakers. This figure also indicates the degree of assimilation in the village.
- 40 Excluding the Hungarian-speaking Greek Orthodox population. (The same hereafter in similar cases.)
- 41 Under the name Secătura.
- 42 The 1930 census gives separate figures for the following districts of Bogdánfalva/Valea Seacă: Albeni, Buchila, Gyergyódomokos/Dámuc, Valea de Sus, Szerbek/Floreşti, Frásinoia and Rujinca. In 1992 only Buchila was listed separately.
- 43 Under the name Ferdinand.
- 44 Hungarian-speaking Gypsies. They follow the Greek Orthodox and Pentecostal faith.
- 45 The 1992 census gives common figures for Forrófalva/Fărăoani and Nagypatak/Valea Mare: 5,400 Catholic and 51 Greek Orthodox people.
- 46 Church figure. (*Almanahul "Presă Bună"*. Jászvásár/Iaşi 1995. p. 135.)
- 47 With the population of the following districts: Costiţa, Valea Dragă, Alsófeketevölgy/Valea de Jos (Mare), and Felsőfeketevölgy/Valea de Sus.
- 48 Rácsila/Racila is actually (e. g. ecclesiastically) a part of the mother community Lészped/Lespezi.
- 49 Bergyila/Berdila is one of the districts of the village Vojkaháza/Gura Văii which belongs to Rákosterebes/Racova village centre. Its census returns were not given either in 1930 or in 1992, however, it is definitely true that the majority of the Catholics of Vojkaháza/Gura Văii live in Bergyila/Berdila.
- 50 Only those who married into the village from the neighbouring Catholic villages can speak Hungarian.
- 51 With the population of Corhana and Osebiţi districts which the censuses treated separately.
- 52 See note 17 on Nagypatak/Valea Mare.
- 53 Church figure. (*Almanahul "Presă Bună"*. Iaşi, 1995. p. 121.) The 1992 census gives common figures for Forrófalva/Fărăoani and Nagypatak/Valea Mare: 5,400 Catholic and 51 Greek Orthodox people.
- 54 With the population of Alexandrina district treated separately.
- 55 Under the name Pokolpatak/Valea Rea.
- 56 Under the name Gheorghe Buzdugan.
- 57 Almost all the figures for the mainly Catholic Berendfalva/Berindeşti were incorporated with those of the almost entire Orthodox Gâşteni. In consequence, these numbers are relevant to both villages together.
- 58 Under the name Magyarfalu/Unguri.
- 59 Podoros/Podu Roşu which is treated separately by the census (and sometimes in the Hungarian scientific literature) is a district of Lábnik/Vladnic.
- 60 The census identified the Catholic district as Fântânele.
- 61 Ca. 200 Greek Orthodox Gypsies and Romanians speak Hungarian as well.
- 62 Under the name Râpa-Epei.
- 63 Under the name Gura Solonţi.
- 64 Under the name Sârbi.
- 65 The Catholics live in Neszujest/Năsuieşti district of Esztrugár/Strugari, and in Csátószeg/Cetăţuia and Rekettyés/Răchitişu villages.
- 66 In 1930, Găidar (369 inhabitants) and Gajdár/Coman (42 inhabitants) are listed separately.

- 67 The village Váleri/Livezi is a district of the newly built Livezi. Under the name Valea Rea in the 1930 census.
- 68 In the villages Butukár/Butucari, Dragomir, Martin-Berzunți and Moreni together. Hungarian-speakers live mainly in Butukár/Butucari district.
- 69 Together with the small Cădărești district listed separately. Csügés/Ciugheș is actually composed of two small settlements—Románcsügés/Ciugheșul Român and Magyarcsügés/Ciugheșul Maghiar—but this division is not reflected in the censuses. Cădărești district is a district of Magyarcsügés/Ciugheșul Maghiar.
- 70 All the Greek Orthodox inhabitants of Magyarcsügés/Ciugheșul Maghiar and the majority of the Greek Orthodox population of Románcsügés/Ciugheșul Român can speak Hungarian.
- 71 The censuses give detailed figures for the districts. The figures given here refer to the whole village. The majority of the Hungarian speakers live in Cuchiniș and Buruienış districts.
- 72 Total figures are given here in case of both censuses. Those Catholics who still speak Hungarian live mainly in Vermești village in the outskirts.
- 73 Total Catholic population of Mojnest-Moinești, Lunca Moinești and Lukácsfalva/Lucăcești.
- 74 Catholics live mainly in the district Magyarodormán/Brătulești.
- 75 Total Catholic population of Doftána/Doftéana, Bogáta/Bogata, Válé Kimpului/Valea Cîmpului and Seaca which were not listed separately in 1930.
- 76 Today Válé Kimpului/Valea Cîmpului is a district of the village Ștefan Vodă. The figures of the 1992 census refer to the whole village.
- 77 The 1930 census found 2,539 Catholics in Aknavásár/Târgu Ocna and 998 Catholics in Szalánc/Slănic: the latter cannot be precisely identified today. Both settlements are composed of several villages and here it is impossible to give an adequate division of the figures by villages. It is true, however, that the 3,537 Catholics recorded by the 1992 census live in Aknavásár/Târgu Ocna, Szaláncorka/Gura Slănic, Degettes/Păcurele, Szlánikfürdő/Slănic Băi, Szalánc/Cireșoia and Cserdák/Cerdac.
- 78 The Catholic Degettes/Păcurele is a district of the Greek Orthodox village Poieni, a village on the outskirts of Aknavásár/Târgu Ocna. The census returns refer to Poieni but all 235 Catholics live in Degettes/Păcurele.
- 79 Today the village is situated on the outskirts of Aknavásár/Târgu Ocna. Due to a lack of data, it is impossible to estimate the total population. The number of Catholics is given by ecclesiastical sources (*Almanahul* 1995. p 134.).
- 80 In the 1930 census: Slănic Băi. See note 49.
- 81 The 1930 census incorporated the data from Diószeg/Tuta and Viișoara with the figures of Tatros/Târgu Trotuș. There are no Catholics in Viișoara. The total Catholic population of Tatros/Târgu Trotuș and Diószeg/Tuta is 1,796.
- 82 The 1930 census incorporated the data from the Csángó villages of Szitás/Nicorești, Újfalu/Satu Nou, Szőlőhegy/Părgărești and Bahána/Bahna with the figures of the Greek Orthodox village of Ripa Jepi/Bogdănești.
- 83 The village Călcâi listed in the censuses is a district of Gorzafalva/Grozești.
- 84 The town has a traditional Hungarian district. The estimated population refers to this district while the ratio corresponds to the whole town. We do not have data on the population living in the housing estates.
- 85 Today Szárazpataka/Valea Seacă is a district of the village Ștefan cel Mare. The figures refer to this village.
- 86 The village belongs to Vrancea county.
- 87 For example, we lack figures for the villages Fântânele[-Noi] (249 Catholic and 1,800 Greek Orthodox inhabitants in 1992) and Jázu Porkuluj/Iazu Porcului (present-day Iazu Vechi with 272 Greek Orthodox and 56 Catholic inhabitants) in Jászvásár/Iași county, which Domokos Pál

Péter considers as “pure Hungarian” (*Domokos* 1987. p. 255.). In the latter village, linguists from Kolozsvár/Cluj in the 1950s still found Hungarian speakers (*Szabó T.* 1981. p. 518.). The 1930 census found 185 Roman Catholics and 266 (!) inhabitants who had Hungarian as their mother tongue in the mountain village of Podul Șchiopului in the former Putna (today: Vrancea) county.

- 88 This number is 10,000 less than the estimation of Domokos Pál Péter in 1931 who at that time—still unaware of the 1930 census results—set the number of the Moldavian Hungarians at 55,000. Later, Mikecs László found this estimation “a little optimistic” (*Mikecs* 1941. p. 249.).
- 89 In *Romániai Magyar Szó* 11th–12th April 1992 Vetési László reports on the intimidation of the population of Lészped/Lespezi. The same newspaper publishes the protest of G. Margareta Percă, census official in Szabófalva/Săbăoani, which she sent to various political and human rights organisations. She wrote: “From January 1, 1992 onwards, the commissioner of the Roman Catholic Episcopal Office of Iasi and the village priest systematically urged the population every day to declare themselves ethnic Romanian at the census. They argued that the expression Roman Catholic derives from the name «Romanian». The propaganda among the inhabitants reached its peak on 6 January when the priest menaced the parishioners, saying that should they not declare themselves ethnic Romanians; the situation would be similar to that of 1940 when the transfer of the Moldavian Csángós to Hungary was on the agenda.”

The Character of the Csángó Folk Song and the History of Its Research

by Domokos Mária

The Hungarian Csángó villages in Romania's Moldavia region were not included in the great folk song collections of the early 20th century. Bartók Béla seriously deliberated going to Moldavia on a collecting trip, but World War I foiled his plan.¹ Kodály, who systematically explored the peripheral areas of the Hungarian language territory, visited the northern part of Moldavia, Bukovina, in 1914, collecting in five Székely villages resettled there in the late 18th century. The war prevented him from realising his plan to return to this area. Thus, the collection of Moldavian Csángó folk music began at a relatively late date.

Its first phase was from 1929 to '34. The collectors were Domokos Pál Péter, Veress Sándor, Lükő Gábor and Balla Péter. Domokos Pál Péter was the trail-blazer (early collecting trips: 1929, 1931). A fundamental contribution to Csángó literature is his book *A moldvai magyarság* [The Hungarians of Moldavia] (1931, 2001), which also contained 65 folksongs and proposed at that early date that a fifth folk-music dialect, Moldavia, be added to the four defined by Bartók (Transdanubia, Upper Hungary, Great Plain, Transylvania). Although this book was published privately, in a mere 500 copies, it caused an unexpectedly great stir. It was reviewed in daily papers, periodicals, professional journals, thus inducing wide interest in the history and culture of the Csángós. The phonograph cylinders of his second collecting trip were transcribed by Bartók.² Having just graduated from the Music Academy, composer and pianist Veress Sándor (collecting trip: summer 1930) followed in the wake of Bartók, Kodály, and Lajtha László by travelling to villages to collect music. His first trip was to faraway Moldavia. The careful transcriptions of his valuable material collected with the phonograph were published nearly 60 years later, in the volume *Moldvai gyűjtés* [Moldavian collection].³ As a scholar and professor of ethnomusicology at the Bern Music Academy as an emigrant in Switzerland, Veress worked on his Csángó collection, also using several tunes for his compositions for children's, male, and mixed choirs, and solo voices.⁴ Lükő Gábor collected in Moldavia in 1932 and 1933. He published his findings in his book *A moldvai csángók I. A csángók kapcsolatai az erdélyi magyarsággal* [Moldavian Csángós I. The Connections of the Csángós with Transylvanian Hungarians] (Budapest 1936). Balla Péter set out after Lükő, in part to replace the former's destroyed phonograph recordings. He collected among the

Moldavian Csángós and the Székelys in Bukovina in the summer of 1934.⁵ (It was again Bartók who transcribed Balla's cylinders.)

In May 1938, the performance of a few Csángó singers who were brought to the Eucharistic Congress in Budapest was recorded by the Hungarian Radio. In the studio Bartók Béla, Lajtha László, Veress Sándor and Domokos Pál Péter were also present.⁶ Bartók wrote about the event in a letter: "Yesterday and the day before, I had two beautiful days: two so-called 'Csángó' women were here from Moldavia (Eastern Romania); the Csángós are the easternmost Hungarians who never belonged to Hungary, they number about 20,000⁷, they are terribly suppressed (linguistically and politically) and have preserved a very peculiar archaic language. It is precisely because of the incredibly severe political pressure by the Romanians that it is impossible to bring them to Budapest; now it was only possible for the eucharistic world congress. Excellent recordings were made with them: two women (illiterate!) sang songs, told tales, they were spell-binding with their peculiar accent and antique costume. For the time being, however, the story must be kept in secret, and later it must be made public without names, lest the poor innocent creatures should be locked up in jail by the Romanian police just because they had sung songs and told tales in their mother tongue here. What a nice world, isn't it?"⁸

In the second phase of Csángó folk music collection, research bifurcated with Kolozsvár/Cluj and Budapest as the two centres. In Romania, collecting went on with unprecedented intensity for a few years. In 1949–1956 hosts of Kolozsvár/Cluj-based folk music collectors, linguists and ethnographers roamed the Csángó villages and their carefully assembled teams gathered an enormous collection of materials. These years yielded, among others, Faragó József and Jagamas János' *Moldvai csángó népdalok és népballadák* [Moldavian Csángó Folk Songs and Folk Ballads] (1954). As head of the Folklore Institute in Kolozsvár/Cluj and supervisor of the ethno-musicological work, Jagamas János elaborated his fundamental study *Beiträge zur Dialektfrage der ungarischen Volksmusik in Rumänien* on the basis of these experiences and collections.⁹ In it, he first discussed the need to subdivide the Transylvanian dialect on the basis of the more recent Hungarian collections in Transylvania which could not be known by Bartók, and then determined and detailed the characteristic features of a separate Moldavian Hungarian folk music dialect.

In the meantime, the researchers in the Budapest-based institutions carried on study among resettled people from Bukovina and Moldavia.¹⁰ To continue the Pátria record series, a series of excellent recordings were made of their performance. In the volumes of *Csángó népzene* [Csángó Folk Music] by Domokos Pál Péter and Rajeczky Benjamin, full and detailed transcriptions of the richly ornamented Csángó songs appeared.¹¹ In addition, volume I also contained an invaluable Csángó folklore material collected in the 1840s by the scholarly priest and

monk, Petrás Incze János.¹² The bulk of the texts recorded by Petrás was found almost unchanged by the collectors a hundred years later.

The ever darker and harsher decades in Romania between 1958 and 1990 put a curb on the institutional study of the Csángós. It soon became an official dogma that the Csángós were not of Hungarian but of Romanian origin. That doubles the significance of “independent scholar” Kallós Zoltán’s activity, who—enduring all hardship, harassment, imprisonment—kept touring the Hungarian villages of Mezőség, Gyimes and Moldavia, preserving a startling wealth of Hungarian folk music on paper and tape in the Eastern frontier area.

Kallós’s Csángó folkmusic collection is larger than anyone else’s.¹³ Nearly half the 259 ballads and balladic songs in *Balladák könyve* [A Book of Ballads] were collected from Moldavian Csángós (120 ballads and songs from 36 singers of 14 villages).¹⁴ In his scholarly preface, Szabó T. Attila noted that Kallós had largely stretched the geographical boundaries of the former collection area, and as for the music examples, “he had enriched the stock of published ballads with a larger single collection of melodious ballads than all his predecessors taken together.” Vargyas Lajos expressed a similar opinion about the publication, claiming that “since the collections of Bartók and Kodály, no discovery of similar significance has been made in the area of Hungarian folk songs.”¹⁵

In *Új guzsalyam mellett* [By My New Distaff], Kallós presented the secular songs of a single Moldavian Csángó woman, an excellent performer. (The book is subtitled: “Sung by me, widowed Miklós Gyurkáné, née Szályka Rózsa, aged seventy-six, at Klézse, Moldavia.”) Miklósné (1894–1970) hardly left her village, did not attend school, did not speak Romanian. She had learnt her songs from her mother and from the other lasses in the spinning room. Kallós first met her in 1954 and returned several times to assess and collect her extraordinary song repertory. In the book, 163 texts of the excellent singer (including 26 ballads) are given, with 1,010 strophes and 64 tunes.

Representative publications of the most recent phase of Csángó research include the *Csángómagyar daloskönyv. Moldva 1972–1988* [Csángó Hungarian Song Book. Moldavia 1972–1988] by Seres András and Szabó Csaba, with beautiful portraits of the singers by Szervátiusz Tibor (Budapest [1989]); and *Ismeretlen moldvai nótafák* [Unknown Moldavian Singers] from the collection of Szegő Júlia (edited by Tari Lujza. Budapest 1988). Valuable data and a careful analysis is given in Szenik Ilona: *Erdélyi és moldvai magyar siratók, siratóparódiák és halottas énekek* [Transylvanian and Moldavian Hungarian Laments, Lament Parodies and Funeral Songs] (Kolozsvár-Bucharest 1996).

After the great political changes, the Kolozsvár/Cluj workshop of ethnomusicology resumed work in 1990. The institutional frame is given by the ethnographic department of Babeş-Bolyai University and the Kriza János Ethnography Society, under the guidance of Pozsony Ferenc and Tánczos Vilmos. In the past decade, they and their students have contributed books, collections and

important essays to the ethnographic literature on the Csángós. In terms of ethno-musicology, the book of Pozsony Ferenc, *Szeret vize martján* [On the Seret River-bank] is outstanding.¹⁶ Since most material in the book of Seres and Szabó is by the same singer, a rare opportunity is provided to study the repertory, individual variation, and performance style of a single great performer.

Investigating the Csángó religious life and archaic prayers (including sung prayers!), Táncczos Vilmos has synthesised his findings in major studies and books based on comparative analyses.¹⁷ His paper on the cantors working in Moldavia has special importance for the interpretation of the repertory of Csángó religious songs.¹⁸

Forthcoming is the closing album of the *Népzenei Antológia* [Anthology of Hungarian Folk Music] series, which will give an overview of the Hungarian folk music of Moldavia and Bukovina on 4 CDs. (Eds. Domokos Mária and Németh István.)

An enormous collection is thus at disposal for research, although the most archaic Csángó group is not represented in it. These are the Northern Csángós of the villages around the town of Románvásár/Roman. They carried great weight in historical sources, 16th–17th century missionary reports. The Finnish researcher Yrjö Wichmann, who stayed at Szabófalva/Săbăoani for five months in 1907, established a rich collection for his Northern Csángó dictionary,¹⁹ while his wife Júlia Herrmann contributed articles about their customs to *Ethnographia*. The collectors of the 1930s and later have only found scattered traces of their folk music. The few secular and church songs, and prayers, that could be recorded are indeed but traces. They no longer reflect the splendour and wealth of the peasant culture which was registered by linguistic remains, written records, photos, and which sank into oblivion almost before our eyes with the gradual loss of the mother tongue of the population of Jugán/Iugani, Kelgyest, Ploszkucén/Pildești and larger Szabófalva/Săbăoani of several thousand inhabitants.²⁰

Ethno-musicology has committed an irreparable mistake by not collecting among Northern Csángós in time. The astonishing wealth of Csángó material at our disposal is practically all collected from Southern Csángós (living in villages around the city of Bákó/Bacău) and from Székely Csángós, who constitute the overwhelming majority of Csángós today.

What are the distinguishing characteristics of Csángó folk music? What differentiates it from the music of other Hungarian regions and what makes it similar? What justifies its treatment as a separate musical dialect?

It is generally maintained that, compared to the rest of the Hungarian language territory, the folk music tradition of Moldavian Csángós is extremely varied and viable, and conspicuously archaic in character, similar to their language, way of life, and customs. This variety implies a wealth of genres, the coexistence of several musical styles, the plenitude of variants. Viability means that the Csángós live with these traditions, that the songs have their function and meaning in the

life of the individual and the community. Archaism mainly implies **the manner of use**, that is, the performance of the folksongs, but it also applies to the language of the song texts.²¹

These peculiarities can be retraced to a variety of causes. The Csángó villages are on the periphery of the Hungarian-speaking area, isolated, amidst people of a different language, religion and customs. Their living conditions are conspicuously poor and backward. For want of schooling and religious services in their mother tongue, their self-expression was reduced to their language, religious belief and traditions.

It must be added, however, that their isolation from the other Hungarians was never complete. They were almost always in contact with the Székely country. The exodus of the Székelys went on towards the East, mostly Moldavia, for centuries (there was a political frontier between Transylvania and Moldavia until 1920), assuming mass proportions in the late 16th and late 18th centuries. Their relationship with Csíksomlyó also has a past of several centuries.²² Until the 1930s-'40s, the peasant cantors (*deák* lit. Latin, fig. student, scholar) who were mostly Székelys from Háromszék county played a decisive role in their religious practice.²³

It is therefore understandable why the musical legacy brought along from the east and the European tradition are equally part of the Csángós' living practice, why they have preserved archaic elements that have died out or live on in traces elsewhere, and why they have kept genres of Medieval origin and much of the 16th–17th century song stock of art-music origin. Comparative and diatonic researches have already arrived at startling conclusions.²⁴

In his study, Jagamas János pinpointed the peculiarities of the Moldavian dialect in the following features: it is an integral part of Hungarian folk music, preserves the most ancient tradition, contains a large number of tunes unknown elsewhere, has a conspicuous luxury of ornamentation; the new style is represented by an insignificant number of tunes; there is a strong Romanian influence.

As early as in 1930, Veress Sándor realized that the Csángós preserved more than one "old style". In addition to their pentatonic songs, they also had diatonic ones with an unusual cadence of the 2nd degree. Ethno-musicology has made fundamental discoveries in the differentiation between the old tune types and old styles.²⁵ Accordingly, Csángó folk music represents all the styles in the old stratum of Hungarian folk music with more or fewer variants. It includes songs of the broadly arched descending pentatonic (fifth-shifting) style, the small-range pentatonic style, the diatonic lament style and the psalmodic style. Pentatonic songs of a narrow compass as a separate style are a recent discovery, most such songs having been found in Moldavia and in Gyimes, an area contiguous with it. The analogies of these tunes found among linguistically related peoples suggest that they are rooted in very old times.²⁶ (*Ex.1*)

Even certain partial phenomena of the music may refer to an archaic tradition.

In tonality, such is tetratony, in performance the hesitant intonation of certain degrees of a key (third, fourth). As for strophic structure, the frequency of strophes of few (mainly six) syllables is an archaic feature; so is the free handling of strophes within certain limits, that is, the singer may change over to another syllable pattern or strophe during singing. This switch may occur between 6- and 8-, 6- and 12-, 8- and 16-, 7- and 8-syllabic lines and strophes.

A tune unknown elsewhere in the Hungarian territory may simply be a borrowing. However, it may also be the outcome of autonomous tune creation or the preservation of some archaic element. It all depends on how the given tune fits in with the rest. In the so-far published five volumes of the Hungarian folk song types²⁷, which mainly contain the pentatonic fifth-shifting types descending from high in the old layer of Hungarian folk music, there are several types that are only known in Moldavia but are closely related to the other types in the relevant volumes. One is “The Walnut Tree is in Blossom”, a match-making song known all over Moldavia.²⁸ (*Ex.2*)

The peripheral situation of Moldavian Hungarians may produce startling connections between tunes. It happens that a typical south Transdanubian fifth-shifting tune [“O My Dear Pint Bottle”] has Moldavian variants whereas it has none on the Great Plain or in Transylvania!²⁹ (*Ex.3*) Or, a rare tune may surface at two distant points of the periphery. Some of the variants are wedding songs in the Zobor region (Hungarian villages around Nyitra, Slovakia), the other group of variants are Moldavian Csángó ballads or lyrical songs.³⁰ (*Ex.4*) Most probably these tune types were more widespread earlier, but faded or vanished from the heartlands and only survived on the peripheries.

The most vulnerable aspect of the folkmusic tradition is performance: intonation, tone colour, ornamentation, tempo, concentration. That is where the weakening of the collective tradition, the slackening of its control, is first detectable. The peculiar intonation, reserved performance, unerring choice of tempo, and rich ornamentation alone are indicators of the advanced level and high quality of Csángó folk music culture. During the collection process, even collective singing of ornamented tunes could be recorded. Nowhere else can one come across them. In her book on the ornamentation of Hungarian folk music, Paksa Katalin summarised the typical features of the embellishment in the Csángó dialect as follows: “...every song is sung decorated, and the degree of ornamentation is the highest here... Unlike in the rest of the musical dialects, the degree of musical ornamentation in parlando rubato tunes hardly differs from that of giusto tunes... The arrangement of ornaments in this most remote corner of the Hungarian language area also completely tallies with the general Hungarian practice...”³¹

As has been mentioned, there is a surprisingly high rate of small-compass tunes of few syllables to a line, compared to the other Hungarian regions. Apart from the similarly narrow-range pentatonic old style of eastern origin, these include several tunes that compare well with Medieval European traditions. This

applies to genres (ballads of Medieval origin, ritual wedding songs, greetings), to musical forms (various strophes with refrain), to peculiar rhythms. For example, many Moldavian tune types include the kind of asymmetrical rhythm called *giusto syllabique* using Brăiloiu's term. It means the irregular alternation of two- and three-quaver units. The Moldavian recordings help to study the performance and living practice of this rhythmic pattern.

Though interesting research results have already been found in this field, still only the main directions of investigation have been sign-posted.³² This theme may hold much in store for future comparative studies in a historical perspective.

Most obviously, the new-style folk song, which arrived in Transylvania with a delay, is only sporadic, and also truncated in Moldavia, whereas elsewhere it constitutes the overwhelming majority. The melodic realm of a compass beyond the octave and long syllable patterns did not fit in with the archaic Moldavian tradition.

The influence of the Romanian environment is most pregnant in the Csángós' dances and instrumental music. As the folk dance researcher Martin György put it, "while their language and vocal folk music have preserved the Hungarian character, their instrumental and dance culture was thoroughly influenced by the Moldavian Romanians. Most of their dances ... have the shape of an open or closed circle... Their dances displaying terminological, musical and some formal relations with the Transylvanian dances include, e.g. the ardeleanka, lăpș magyáros [flat Hungarian], magyáros [Hungarian], hai dea doi."³³

In summary: Moldavian Csángó folk music belongs integrally to Hungarian folk music as its independent musical dialect. Its phenomena can only be interpreted against the background of Hungarian folk music. The divergences from the rest of the Hungarian dialects derive from the Csángós' peripheral position, isolation, backward state in the process of civilisation. The major difference lies in the ratio of the historical strata of the musical tradition. In Moldavia, the old styles and the music stock of Medieval origin are far richer, the life and performance of folk music are more archaic than elsewhere. As a corollary, the occurrence of the new style is meagre, while the influence of the surrounding Romanians is powerful, primarily in their instrumental music and folk dances. The wealth of the Csángó collection holds out the promise of further findings for comparative and analytic investigations.

MUSIC EXAMPLES

1). MF 2712d

① $\text{♩} = 142$



1. A - hol én el - mē-nyĕk, Még a fáĕk ĕs sir - nak, ĕ
Gyēnge á - ga - ik - ról Le - ve - lek le - hull - nak.

2. Hull - ja - tok, le - ve - lek, Rejt - se - tek el in - gem,
Met az én é - des - se - m Sir - val ke - res in - gem.

1. Wherever I pass by / Even the trees shed tears.
Leaves keep falling / From their tender
branches.

2. Hulljatok levelek, / Rejtsetek el ingem,
Met az én édessem / Sirval keres ingem.

2. Fall leaves, keep falling / To cover me over.
For my sweetest darling / Is looking for me,
crying.

Lésped/Lespezi (Bákó county); sung by Simon Ferenc Józsefné, née Fazakas Ilona (b. 1897); collected by Domokos Pál Péter July 1932, transcribed by Bartók Béla.

2). AP 6282c. *Publ.* CMPH VII. No 321.

② $\text{♩} = 132$



1. Meg - vi - ráĕg - zott a di - ó - fa, Meg - vi - ráĕg - zott a di - ó - fa,
Na - gyot haj - lott há - rom á - ga, Na - gyot haj - lott há - rom á - ga.

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. Megvirágzott a diófa, :/
Nagyott hajlott három ága, :/ | 1. The walnut-tree is in blossom,
Three of its boughs spread out wide. |
| 2. Még nagyobb az árnyékja. :/
zÁrnyék alatt e' vetett ágy. :/ | 2. Still wider did its shade,
In the shade there's a bed. |
| 3. Ki s ki fekszik abba zágyba? :/
Fekszik, fekszik Annád asszony. :/ | 3. Who and who is lying in the bed?
Pretty wife Ann is lying, lying in it. |
| 4. Anti bíró jó katona, :/
Ötön-haton teszik lóra,
Úgy sem tudja, hol a lova. | 4. Judge Tony is a fine soldier,
It takes five or six to put him on horse-back,
Yet he doesn't know where his horse is. |

Bogdánfalva/Valea Seacă (Bákó county); sung by Ciganyas Anna (b. 1951); collected by Kallós Zoltán 1965.

3).

③ ♩ = 72

a) 

b) 

a) 

b) 

a) *Publ.* CMPH VI. No 239.

Bezerédi birkás vagyok én,
Kukorica mellett őrzők én.
Teregetem nyájam, juhomat,
Ölelgetem a galambomat.

I am a shepherd of Bezeréd,
I graze my flock by the cornfield.
I let my flock graze, I let the sheep graze,
While I cuddle my sweetheart.

Bocska (Zala county); sung by Pintér Mihály (aged 79); collected by Seemayer Vilmos 1932.

b) AP 17.844a

1. Akkor szép az erdő, mikor zöld, :/
Mikor a vadgalamb belé költ. :/

1. The woods are lovely when they are green,
When the wild doves are hatching there.

Diószén/Gioseni (Bákó county); sung by Compó Mártonné, née Bárdos Tinka (b. 1926); collected by Kallós Zoltán *et al.* 1993.

4). *Publ.* Szalay 1988.

④ **Rubato** ♩ = 88 ♩ = 116 ♩ = 120

a) Háj-nál a hásád, csil-lá-ga rágog, Mégis a lyá - nyoka-nál vá-gyok. aj-

Parlando ♩ = 84

b) Gyere velem, Mónár An-na, Nem mehetek, Sajgó Már-ton.

a) ♩ = 88 ♩ = 96

a) Jáj, Is - tē-nēm, de szé-gyél-lēm, Hogy a hájnal itt írt én - gēm!

b) Mer nekēm van ki - csi fi - jam, Jámbor u - ram ez er-dűő-be.

a. Gr 37Ab

Hajnal hasad, csillag ragyog
Mégis a lányoknál vagyok.
Jaj, Istenem, de szégyellem,
Hogy a hajnal itt ért engem!

The day's breaking, stars are shining,
I am still with lasses.
Oh Lord, how ashamed I am
That dawn has found me here.

Menyhe (Nyitra county-Slovakia); sung by Fülöp Máténé, née Gál Ilona (aged 63); collected by Manga János, transcribed by Rajeczky Benjamin.

Publ. CMPH IIIA. No 11.

b. MF 2456A

Gyere velem, Mónár Anna!
Nem mehetek, Sajgó Márton,
Mer nekem van kicsi fiam,
Jámbor uram az erdőbe.

Come with me, Mónár Anna!
I cannot go, Sajgó Márton,
For I have a little baby boy,
A kindly husband away in the woods.

[see MNT VII 353j/a]

Somoska (Bákó county); sung by Bodó Gergelyné, née Farkas Rózsa (aged 70); collected by Veress Sándor 1930.

Publ. Veress Sándor: Moldvai gyűjtés. No 40.

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NOTES

- 1 Domokos, P. P.
- 2 Domokos, P. P.
- 3 Veress 1989.
- 4 Veress 1931, Veress 1982, Berlász–Demény–Terényi 1982, Berlász 1988, Berlász 1993, Berlász 2001.
- 5 For an evaluative review of Lükő's early collecting work, see Olsvai 1999.
- 6 For these recordings and Bartók's transcriptions see *Magyar népzenei hangfelvételek* [Records of Hungarian Folk Music] 1981, with a facsimile of Bartók's transcriptions in the accompanying booklet.
- 7 It is a mistake. They are far more numerous. See studies by Benda Kálmán, Tánczos Vilmos. In the preface to his book *A magyar népdal* [The Hungarian Folk Song] (1924), Bartók only knew of the Csángó villages around Bákó/Bacău and thought there was just as small an enclave as were the five Székely villages in Bukovina or the three Hungarian villages in Slavonia.
- 8 Bartók 1960: 186.
- 9 In: *Studia memoriae Belae Bartók sacra*. Ed. Rajeczky Benjamin. Budapest 1956.
- 10 The Székelys of Bukovina (14,000 people) all left their native villages in 1941 under an organised action of resettlement and acquired homes and land in areas in Voivodina which was reannexed to Hungary. Four years later, they had to flee again, leaving all their belongings behind. After long wandering, they were assigned places in 37 southern Transdanubian villages, in the houses of Swabians who had been expelled or were to be relocated. When they left in 1941, some 1,000 Moldavian Csángós also joined them. They also underwent all the tribulations of resettlement until most of them settled in the villages of Szárász, Egyházaskozár and Mekényes in Baranya county.
- 11 I. 1956, II. 1961, ²I-II. 1981, III. 1991. Budapest. The audio supplement (two cassettes) to Sebő 1994 presents the material of a recording made in 1954.
- 12 Petrás Incze János (1813–1886) was Csángó himself. His father and grandfather were cantors in Moldavia. He became a priest and a friar minor after studies in Kézdivásárhely and Eger. By chance, in 1841 he met Döbrentei Gábor, the secretary of the Academy of Sciences. Happy to meet a highly cultured young Csángó priest, Döbrentei had him answer a detailed questionnaire about Csángó ethnography—language—history. (The answers were published by Döbrentei in *Tudománytár* in 1842.) They began to correspond, to which posterity owes the text of fifty valuable folk songs and ballads put down by Petrás with important comments about the Csángó customs and language. (Twenty of the texts were published by Döbrentei in 1842. That is how Csángó folklore texts could be included in Erdélyi János's *Népdalok és mondák* [Folk Songs and Myths] of 1846–48.) Besides being intriguing readings, Petrás's letters also abound in

- important information about the Csángós. (All Petrás's writings can be found in the second part of Domokos P. P. 1979.)
- 13 See Kallós 1970, 1973, 1996, their audio supplements, as well as the cassette and CD series of the *Kallós Archive*.
 - 14 Two-thirds of the material Kallós presented in 1996 are from Moldavian Csángós.
 - 15 Vargyas Lajos (rec.) *Ethnographia* 1971/3 (LXXXII).
 - 16 Pozsony 1994.
 - 17 Tánczos 1995, Tánczos 1999.
 - 18 Tánczos 1995.
 - 19 Wichmann 1936.
 - 20 Harangozó 2001.
 - 21 "... folk tradition is capable of preserving remote antiquities: its development is characterised not so much by changing ancient elements but rather by adding new ones to them, co-ordinating the old and the new in a surprising combination." Vargyas 1983.
 - 22 Csíksomlyó has been a famous place for the worship of the Virgin and a destination of pilgrimage. Its Franciscan monastery was the superior of the former Franciscan convent of Bákó/Bacău . After it perished (1574) the "friars of Somlyó regularly visited the Csángós. It is a tradition for Csángós to take part in the pilgrimage to Csíksomlyó on Whit Saturday every year."
 - 23 From 1622, when Moldavia became a missionary area, mostly Italian and Polish priests, who did not know Hungarian, were in charge of the Roman Catholic Csángó congregations. (Since the foundation of the episcopacy of Jászvásár/Iași (1884) and the theological seminary there (1886), Csángó young men have been trained to become priests but they are Romanized during their studies. They become Janissary priests.) The priests had large areas to tend to, and while they were away, the Hungarian cantors led the common prayers, singing, litany, etc. These collective prayers and devotions at church could still be described by Domokos Pál Péter in his book and by the linguist and university professor Csúry Bálint. In his previously mentioned study, Tánczos 1995 (n.17) quoted Csúry's moving account: "*The church is the place of gathering for the Csángós on Sunday. I will never forget the first occasion I took part in a Sunday afternoon preaching and holy service... Women and men sat in separate groups. In front were the elderly, at the back the young ones. Right around the pulpit and altar were the children. The deák or cantor, dressed just like all the male villagers, stood in the middle and preached and prayed in the Csángó dialect. Religious teaching and prayer in Csángó dialect! This simple Hungarian language that was partly archaic and partly startlingly new for its separate development in isolation in a tiny church of a remote, forgotten little fragment of the Hungarian people, was one of the most astonishing experiences of my life... The cantor led the whole afternoon service. He performed each sentence of the litany in a sing-song, with the typical s's of the Csángó dialect: Ó Jézusz! Ó Jézusz! Ó Jézusz! Légy irgalmasz! Légy kegyelmesz! [O Jesus, Have indulgence, have mercy!] The people repeated, shouted every sentence after the cantor. The church came to life, boomed, roared, resounded with the shaky sound of the crooked old Csángó men and women in front, the sonorous voice of the young people and the ringing voice of the women and children around the altar. At church, the Csángós cried out to God indeed!" (Today, not a single Hungarian cantor is at work in Csángó villages.)*
 - 24 In keeping with the basic principles and methodology of Hungarian ethno-musicology, moulded from the 1910s via several comparative analyses of neighbouring and linguistically related folk music corpuses, it is not individual tunes that are compared but tune types and styles. The collected material is at the disposal of researchers in a systematised form, and the collection of Hungarian folk music, a series of books established by Bartók Béla and Kodály Zoltán (Corpus Musicae Popularis Hungaricae [=CMPH]), also arranged by musical criteria, already includes ten published volumes (1951–1997).
 - 25 Paksa 1999.
 - 26 Vargyas 1981; Paksa 1984.

- 27 CMPH VI–X [Collection of Hungarian Folk Music] *Népdaltípusok 1–5. Types of Folk Songs*. Budapest 1973–1997.
- 28 CMPH VII. Type XXIX. 22 variants from 10 villages.
- 29 CMPH VI. Type III.
- 30 Szalay 1988, Richter 1999, Dobszay–Szendrei 1992.
- 31 Paksa 1993: 149–154.
- 32 Vargyas 1981: 315–320, *Magyarország zenetörténete* [A Music History of Hungary]. I. Középkori népzene [Our medieval folk music] (chapter X), Dobszay–Szendrei 1992. Chapter III: Narrow Compass—Old Style.
- 33 Martin 1970, and about their dance music Pávai 1993.

Csángó Dialect—Csángó Origins

by *Benő Attila and Murádin László*

1. The term *Csángó* will henceforth be applied exclusively to the ethnic group of Hungarians living in Moldavia. It is important to clarify this because the term *Csángó* is also used in a broader sense: this name is also applied to other smaller dialectal and ethnic groups living outside of Moldavia in Transylvania. For example, the Hungarians living in seven villages near Brassó/Braşov (Bácsfalu/Baciu, Csernátfalu/Cernatu, Hosszúfalu/Satulung, Türkös/Turcheş, Tatrang/Tărlungeni, Zajzon/Zizin, Pürkerec/Purcăreni)¹ are called the “hétfalusi csángók” (the “Seven-village Csángós”), in addition to the Hungarian ethnic group of Székely origin living in Gyimesbük/Ghimeş-Făget, Gyimesközéplak/Lunca de Jos, and Gyimesfelsőlok/Lunca de Sus in the snowy Csík Mountains (“gyimesi csángók”/ “the Csángós of Gyimes”).

The Hungarians living in Moldavia today consist of two Hungarian ethnic groups. One of them is the Székely ethnic group generally living in the valleys of Tatros/Trotuş and Tázló/Tazlău. They are called the “székely csángók” (the “Székely Csángós”). The other ethnic group lives in the area of the lower reaches of the Moldva/Moldavia and the Beszterce/Bistriţa Rivers; the Hungarians of non-Székely origin who have a distinctive way of speaking are settled along the middle reaches of the Szeret/Siret River and generally live in villages found near Bákó/Bacău and Románvásár/Roman. (It might be added that during the past centuries Hungarians from Székely land have settled among the Hungarians living in the region south of Bákó/Bacău, near the junction of the Beszterce/Bistriţa and the Szeret/Siret Rivers.) The Csángós settled near Románvásár/Roman are called “Northern Csángós” while those living around Bákó/Bacău are called “Southern Csángós” (Szabó 1972. Benkő 1990.).

2. One of the earliest writings dealing with the use of language of the Moldavian Csángós was written by Zöld Péter in the 1760s, who wrote, among other things, the following: “They understand Oláh [Romanian] and Hungarian equally well, and speak them both correctly, with the exception that they pronounce Hungarian clearly but with a kind of lisp” (Szabó 1981. pp. 484.). This comment on the pronunciation of Hungarian words by the Csángós highlights a unique characteristic of their dialect: they pronounce “sh” as “s.”

Scientific research with regard to Csángó dialect dates back to the 1830s when

preparation began for the publication of the first Hungarian ethnic dialect dictionary organized by the Hungarian Scientific Society. Gegő Elek, Döbrentei Gábor, Imets Fülöp Jákó, and Kováts Ferenc wrote the first essays of scientific value. Imets Fülöp Jákó describes the language of the Csángós as “completely clear Hungarian with Székely characteristics” and does not regard this variation in language as a separate dialect: “apart from the use of ‘cz-ing’ and ‘hissing’ pronunciation—which is just as irrelevant as the lisping quality—it is so complete and Proto-Hungarian that it cannot be called a separate dialect.” Kováts Ferenc makes more detailed observations: he separates the language of the “Székely settlers” living in the vicinity of Tatros/Tg. Trotuş and Tázló/Tazlău from the language of the “Csángó Hungarians” and considers the Csángó dialect a separate variation.

The methodological study of Hungarian dialects in the modern sense began in the 1870s. The first result of this scientifically based, new viewpoint, was the study of Szarvas Gábor published in 1874. This study examines the use of language of the Southern Csángós from phonetic, morphologic, and syntactic viewpoints with a scientific method. A large section of Szarvas’s study is devoted to the common ground between the Székely and Moldavian Csángó dialects. He concludes that, surprisingly enough, “this group living so far away, geographically cut off from other Hungarians, has developed relatively few language variations of their own” (Szarvas 1874. p. 49.). Based on his observations of the linguistic phenomena, Szarvas was convinced that the origins of the Csángós and the Székelys were the same. Ideas consistent with Szarvas Gábor’s research can be found in a study written by Munkácsi Bernát (1880–1881). Munkácsi not only examined the Csángó dialect from the dialectal point of view, but also took into consideration the conclusions of linguistic records and related languages. This study may be seen as the first monograph on Csángó dialect.

Between 1900 and 1901, Rubinyi Mózes undertook a dialect collection tour in Moldavia. The results of his studies were a relatively rich collection of words from the Csángó dialect. In addition to his collection of words, a large part of his study was devoted to the descriptive examination of verbal and nominal conjugations of the Csángó dialect.

Based on an analysis of Moldavian geographical names, in 1908 Auner Károly came to the conclusion that Hungarians settled in the valley of the Tatros/Trotuş in large masses in the 14th century, since the constant toponymy (geographical names) of the mountains and streams were obviously of Hungarian origin (Auner 1908. pp. 9–10.).

The studies conducted on the Csángós to that point most likely contributed to the awakening of foreign researchers’ interests in the isolated and archaic characteristics of the Csángó dialect. Yrjö Wichmann, the Finnish linguist famous for his Cheremiss and Zyrian studies, collected dialectic data among the Northern Csángós in 1906–07. He collected vocabulary regularly, studied morphological

characteristics and used more precise phonetic notation than previous researchers. The result of this work was the Csángó dictionary published in 1936, which—according to Szabó T. Attila—is “one of the most prestigious products of Csángó dialect research of all time” (Szabó 1981. p. 497.).

After Wichmann’s study of the Northern Csángós, Csűry Bálint collected dialect data among the Southern Csángós. His work was many-faceted, taking a closer look at phonetic, morphological and lexical phenomena; his results added even more to what was already known about Csángó dialects.

Between the two world wars, Hungarian researchers felt the similarity between the Székely and Moldavian Csángó dialects to be so strong, that they classified the Csángó dialect not as a separate dialect, but along with the Székely dialect. Horger Antal’s work, published in 1934, entitled *Hungarian Dialects*, also manifested this point of view: “The dialect of the Moldavian Csángós does indeed have a few unique language characteristics wholly unknown to the Székely dialect; but since most of this dialect is still very much similar to the Székely dialect, there is no reason to separate it from the Székely dialect and treat it as a different dialect” (Horger 1934. p. 26.).² Horger Antal also explains that since the language of the Csángó Hungarians contains so many words of Romanian origin, it is almost impossible for Hungarians to understand it. Horger also alludes to the Csángós’ assimilation into Romanian society and to their diminishing numbers, which he attributes to the discriminative politics of the contemporary Romanian government (*ibid.* p. 27.).

In 1938, Lükő Gábor pointed out that several Romanian settlement and river names in Moldavia are of Hungarian origin, which undoubtedly points to the presence of Hungarians in Moldavia many centuries in the past. In his study, Lükő mentions the following village names: Gyula/Giulești, Kövesd/Cuejdiu, Lökösfalva/Leucusești, Lukácsfalva/Lucacești, Molnárfalva/Monarar, Ravaszfalva/Rauseni, Verersfalva/Verești (Lükő 1938. pp. 33–36.).

Mikecs László’s book about Moldavian Hungarians entitled *The Csángós* was published in 1941. The book analyzes Csángó origins objectively with the goal of establishing order among the chaos of viewpoints. Cancelling out the romantic views of origins from Hun-Hungarians and Kun-Hungarians, Mikecs discovers that the first Hungarians came to Moldavia as vassals in the medieval Hungarian kingdom. One of the greatest assets of the book is that it not only summarizes the research conducted up to that point, but also familiarizes the reader with the writings of Romanian chronicles and histories pertaining to Hungarians in Moldavia. The book also comments upon the published professional literature on the subject, which is very valuable in aiding orientation in Csángó research. Hence, it is not surprising that this book is regarded as one of the best syntheses on the subject of the Csángós.

Under the direction of Szabó T. Attila, in 1948, new research—more complex than had ever been conducted previously—was begun on dialects in several

Moldavian settlements. The younger researchers included Márton Gyula and Gálffy Mózes. From the very beginning, the goal of the project was to compile a dialect atlas of the Csángó language region. Based on the whole picture of the Moldavian Hungarian dialect—including 91 settlements and the most detailed labelling possible—the company of researchers was able to clarify the dialectal divisions among the Moldavian Csángós. As the map demonstrates, the dialect of the Moldavian Hungarian Csángós is divided into three dialectal and ethnographic groups: the Northern, the Southern, and the Székely Csángós. The analysis of the data shows that, “at least two-thirds of the Moldavian Hungarian Csángós who speak the Székely Csángó dialect are undoubtedly Eastern Székely settlers” (Szabó 1981. p. 521.). The result of this work was the *Atlas of Moldavian Csángó Dialect* (Gálffy-Márton-Szabó 1991.), which not only orients readers in questions of vocabulary, but also gives an account of phonetic, morphologic and syntactic phenomena.

Szabó T. Attila directed another research group the goal of which was to map the dialects of Romanian Hungarians. In compiling the *Atlas of Romanian Hungarian Dialects*, four Moldavian settlements were also taken into account: Szabófalva/Săbăoani, Bogdánfalva/Valea Seacă, Pusztina/Pustiana and Diószeg/Tuta. In these four settlements, Murádin László made inquiries with each of the 3,380 questions in the questionnaire booklet of the atlas. The dialect research material collected thus embellished the previous knowledge of the Csángó dialect.

The monographic processing of a particular phenomenon of the Csángó dialect may be attributed to Márton Gyula (1969/1972). Márton Gyula studied the Csángó dialect from the point of view of the effect of the Romanian language, but his lexicological, semantic, phonetic and morphological analysis also encompassed the whole of the Csángó dialect system. While discussing questions concerning the lexicon, he alludes to the fact that those words that were borrowed from the Romanian language are ones in which the correlative Hungarian word dates back to the years of the language reform or, if not, is a foreign word. Since the Csángó dialect in its isolation did not interact with the contemporary Hungarian language, these gaps were filled with words of Romanian origin. The comparison of this isolation and the archaic qualities of the Csángó dialect with other Hungarian dialects is compellingly made in one of Murádin László's studies (1958). Murádin László studied the familiarity of approximately 100 language-reform words among the Csángós in Külső-Rekecsin/Fundu Răcăciuni. It turned out that among the Moldavian Csángós questioned, those interviewed were not familiar with a single one of the 100 words, and for the most part the ideas represented by these language reform words were replaced by words borrowed from the Romanian language or, for the lesser part, were words of the Csángós' own fabrication. In the chapter dealing with semantics, Márton Gyula's book familiarizes the readers with the rules that recalled the modification of meaning of the words of Romanian origin. In the dialect of the Moldavian Csángós, the variation

in meaning of the words of Romanian origin may be in part accounted for by the effect of the Hungarian system of meaning, since, once inserted, the borrowed word always adjusts itself to the system of meaning in the language or language variation borrowing it. By studying phonetic and morphological questions, it is possible to formulate ideas about the intensity of the effect of the Romanian language as well. The research of Márton Gyula pointed out without any question that the Romanian language had an effect on the system of the Csángó Hungarian dialect as a whole.

Benkő Loránd's study, published in 1990, examines the question of the origin of the Csángós from a linguistic point of view. According to the language historian Benkő Loránd, the etymology of the name of the Csángó ethnic group stems from the verb "csang or csáng" meaning to 'journey, tramp, wander, or roam,' and is a part of the extensive verb—verb participle family in the Old Hungarian language and dialects. The word "csángó" is the participial derivation of the verb, and is the adjectival infinitive-creating form with the "-ó." Benkő Loránd's convincing etymological reasoning is an important addition to the ideas concerning the origin of the Csángós because it shows that this ethnic group moved away from its original place of settlement. This is not contradicted but is rather supported by the fact that in Transylvania there are many ethnic groups called Csángós that moved away from their original home and settled elsewhere (Bukovin Csángó, Gyimes Csángó). The origins of the use of the word Csángó as a personal name can be traced back to the beginning of the 15th century. According to Benkő Loránd, the personal name "Csángó" may allude in part to the meaning "wander, roam," and mirrors the use of the name of this ethnic group. This shows that the Hungarian ethnic groups that moved to Moldavia may have been called Csángós from at least the 15th century (Benkő 1990. p. 7.). Hungarian personal names can be found in certificates dating back to the end of the 14th century. It is quite certain that these names belonged to Hungarians, since there are names among them that occur with the Hungarian name order: family name + Christian name, which is the unique characteristic of the Hungarian language in the Carpathian Basin; furthermore, in several certificates the person the name identifies is mentioned as Hungarian in nationality. It may be added that these names occur mainly in certificates in the northern and central regions of Moldavia. Benkő Loránd also states convincingly that in their old linguistic, and present-day dialectal, data several geographical names, and especially settlement names, contain elements of Hungarian etymology and the Hungarian language. These names not only originate from areas where Csángós have settled, but also from other, more distant, regions, as for example, the Karácsonykő/Piatra Neamț region, as well. Henceforth, only those settlement names will be taken into account that refer to Csángó settled regions even today. In the region of the **Northern Csángós** the following settlement names are of Hungarian origin: Román(vásár)/Roman, Miklósfalva/Miclăușeni, Acélfalva/Oțleni, Magosfalva/Magoșești, Ta-

másfalva/Tămășeni, Lökösfalva/Licușeni, Kickófalva/Tețcani, Kozmafalva/Cosmești, Szabófalva/Săbăoani, Halas/Hălăucești, Bírófalva/Ghirăești, Farkasfalva/Fărcășeni, Burjánfalva/Buruienesti.

In the region of the **Southern Csángós** the following settlement names are of Hungarian origin: Bákó/Bacău, Tamás/Tămași, Diósfalva/Geoseni, Rekettyés/Răchitiș, Magyarfalu/Unguri. In addition to these settlement names the phonetic form of several place and stream names can be traced back to Hungarian etymology (*ibid.* pp. 11–12.). *The typological analysis of settlement names leads Benkő Loránd to conclude that the settlement of Northern and Southern Csángós in Moldavia occurred at the end of the 13th or the beginning of the 14th century.*

Since there are no documents stating where the Csángós came to Moldavia from, it is possible only to answer this question by analyzing language and dialect. In connection with the question of the Csángós' origin, Benkő rules out the possibility of their originating from foreign (Turkish, Romanian) language and ethnic roots; if such viewpoints are lacking exact historical or linguistic evidence then they are without scholarly foundation. We can establish similarities and differences between the two dialects based on the presence of unique dialect characteristics and language phenomena valid in the system. Benkő Loránd presents his conclusions in comparative dialect studies, explaining that the Csángó dialect is closely related to the Hungarian dialect version, which is usually called the “**mezőségi nyelvjárás**” (“**Mezőség dialect**”), and which is localized in the central region of Transylvania. It is obvious through phonetic, morphological and morphophonemic phenomena that the central-Mezőség dialect remained unchangingly the Northern and Southern Csángós' basic language layer. Based on this, Benkő Loránd was better able to pinpoint the geographical region from which the Northern and Southern Csángó settlements broke off. This region is the central Maros/Mureș River and the lower reaches of the Aranyos/Arieș River area (Benkő *ibid.* p. 38.).

Contemporary dialectology agrees with Benkő Loránd's views; within the Moldavian dialectal region the Northern and Southern dialects can be separated from the Moldavian Székely (Székely-ish Csángó) dialect. The Northern and the Southern Csángó dialects show a stronger Romanian influence. The phoneme system of the Northern Csángó dialect has been altered: two originally Romanian phonemes have been incorporated: the velar **D** (◁Rom. *î*) and **P**, (◁Rom. *ă*). The closed *ë* phoneme preserved in the Székely-ish and the Southern Csángó (e.g. *szëmem/my eyes, mëgijeszti/frighten*). In the Northern and Southern Csángó the interchanging of the **o:a** can be observed (e.g. *szúnyag* for *szúnyog/mosquito* and *álam* for *áalom/dream*). The archaic quality of the Northern and Southern Csángó is manifested by the preservation of a consonant that is no longer present in contemporary Hungarian, namely the **ly** phoneme (e.g. *ulyan, ilyen/like this*). Another proof of the archaic quality is the presence of the bilabial phoneme **v**, since the bilabial pronunciation of the letter *v* is proven to be a characteristic of Old Hun-

garian. Another characteristic feature that may be observed in the language use of Northern and Southern Csángós is the use of **s** in place of **sh**. The archaic nature of the Moldavian dialect is manifested by morphological phenomena as well. One example of this is the **u** vowel pronunciation variation of certain **v** stem verbs (*riu* for *rí* and *hiu* for *hí*), and in **s/d/v** stemmed verbs the use of a more complete stem change: *aluszik* as opposed to *alszik*/sleeping, as well as removing the **-ik (-ing)** from verbs such as *foly* for *folyik*/flowing, *mász* for *mászik*/climbing, and *es* for *esik*/raining or falling. The distinction within the region of Moldavian dialects also appears on a lexical level. It may be observed that certain ideas are called differently in Northern and Southern Csángó dialects than in the Moldavian Székely dialect (Kiss 2001. pp. 311–312.).

3. Centuries of Romanian historical writings have regarded the Csángós as of Hungarian descent.³

Nicolae Constantin, who was chronicler of Nicolae Mavrocordat, Moldavian Prince, mentioned in 1712 that Hungarians and Saxons settled in the new Moldavian principality.

One of the most important Moldavian historical works of reference was written by Dimitrie Cantemir in Latin and entitled *Descriptio Moldaviae*, which also speaks of Hungarians. According to this work, Moldavian Hungarians follow the Roman Catholic faith and keep to their own ancient language, though they are familiar with Moldavian Romanian as well.

In addition to the facts demonstrated by certificates, the renowned Romanian historian Radu Rosetti took into account conclusions drawn from the analysis of place names. He established that in Bákó/Bacău county several frontier mountain and settlement names refer to Hungarian origins: Áldamás/Aldamaş, Apahavas/Apahaos, Kerek-Bükk/Cherebic, Nagy-Sándor/Şandru-Mare, Halas/Haloş, etc. (Mikecs 1941/1989. p. 49.) Based on toponomic analysis, Rosetti concludes that the Hungarians must have arrived in Moldavia before the 15th century (Rosetti 1904–1905. Mikecs *ibid.* p. 51.).

Nicolae Iorga, one of the most important 20th century Romanian historians, who was also a professor at the Sorbonne, wrote in his work *România cum era înainte de 1918 (Romania As It Was Before 1918)*, that the Catholics who assimilated into Romanian society still preserved their knowledge of the Hungarian language. In his book he refers several times to the Hungarian identity of the Csángós. After studying letters in archives and old literature, and with the knowledge acquired during his travels in Moldavia, his answer to the question: Are the Moldavian Catholics really Hungarians? is a definite yes. He adds that the first Csángós arrived in Moldavia in the 13th century and have kept their language and traditions to this day.

Gh. I. Năstase, Professor of History at the Jászvásár/Iaşi University, treats the origins of the Csángós in his book entitled *Ungurii din Moldova de la 1646 după Co-*

dex Bandinus (*Moldavian Hungarians in the 1646 Bandinus Codex*). He notes that the residents of the Moldavian Hungarian villages kept their Hungarian mother tongue, while those Hungarians who moved to the cities lost their language and faith.

Constantin C. Giurescu in his book *Istoria Românilor* (*History of the Romanians*) highlights the historical role of Hungarians in Moldavia. The book republished in 2000 in Romanian in the *Opere Fundamentale a Culturii Române* (*The Basic Works of Romanian Culture*) series.

It would be possible to quote several other studies of Romanian history which validate the theory that Moldavian Csángós have been regarded as an ethnic group of Hungarian origins for centuries. It was only in the last few decades, during the reign of the Ceaușescu dictatorial regime that the Hungarian origins of the Csángós began to be questioned for political reasons.

4. For a long time it was obvious even to Romanian linguists that the Csángó dialect was a unique regional variation of the Hungarian language. Though Romanian linguists did not study the Csángó dialect specifically, this attitude was reflected in the comments made about the Csángó Hungarian dialect.

One of the most important Romanian linguists between the two world wars was Sever Pop, who, while introducing the Wichmann Csángó dictionary, said that the Csángó Hungarians were similar to the Romanians in their folk costume and way of speaking.⁴

In a study published in 1956, Romulus Todoran writes that the Csángó dialect is a regional variation of the Hungarian language which went through a unique development as a result of its isolation. Todoran believes that as a result of the strong effect of the Romanian language and the mixing of languages, this dialect will gradually disappear (1956. p. 98.).

In *Introducere în lingvistică* (*Introduction to Linguistics*), first published in 1958 and reissued in several editions, Al Graur, one of the most significant Romanian linguists of the 1960s and 70s, mentions that, in addition to analysing Romanian dialects in Romania, other dialects were also studied, for example, the Csángó dialect. Graur explains that a research group at Bolyai (Hungarian Language) University in Kolozsvár/Cluj collected data about the Csángó dialect. Graur also relates that experts at Babeș University in Kolozsvár/Cluj are studying the assimilated Moldavian Csángós' Romanian language variation (1958. pp. 248–249.). These comments lead to the conclusion that there is not a single theory that would suggest that the Csángós are anything other than of Hungarian origin.

In one of his studies Professor Emil Petrovici explains that an ancient phonetic tradition of the Hungarian language can be found among the “Moldavian Hungarians”: the bilabial pronunciation of the consonant *v* (Petrovici 1952. p. 8.). Petrovici writes about the Moldavian Hungarians in the most natural way possi-

ble, which shows that the acceptance of the Csángós as Hungarians is without question.

Vladimir Drimba, a Romanian linguist, analyzes the lexical effect of the Romanian language on the Csángó dialect in his study published in 1960. He points out that in Wichmann's Csángó language dictionary many more borrowed Romanian words occur than Wichmann and the editor O.J. Tuulio indicate. Drimba finds the study of the effects of the Romanian language on the Csángó dialect to be very important and values the results of research conducted so far on this subject.

5. The question of the Romanian origins of the Moldavian Hungarians—the Csángós—was also a topic of discussion, especially in the Jászvásár/Iași episcopate among the renegade priests who were Csángós raised under the Romanian nationalistic spirit, or among others in an age when nationalism was especially strong. One example of this is the book of the parson of Szabófalva/Săbăoani: Iosif Petru M. Pal (1941). Also to be included here are books that explain the origins of the Csángós as Romanian, based on racial and blood type analysis: Râmneanțu (1943).

More time must be spent, however, on the book (1985) by Dumitru Mărtinaș, who is of Csángó descent, but is in no way a professional historian or linguist. This work is important because, by shifting to a political level, it justified denying the Csángós certain socio-political rights based on the theory of their Romanian origins. The book maintains the following: after separating the Moldavian Csángós into different groups and labelling only those Catholics living along the Szeret/Siret River “Csángós,” the author concedes that in the 14th century the Hungarian government settled Hungarians on the eastern slopes of the Carpathian Mountains as protection along the eastern border. However, part of this group of people—according to the rather original views of the author—died out as a result of the 17th century Tartar and Turkish invasions, while the other part returned to Transylvania. As a result, their dwellings remained uninhabited for about half a century. The Csángós who settled from Transylvania also then occupied these dwellings in the 17th century. However, these people were not Hungarians, but Romanians who had more or less assimilated into Székely society. In consequence, they were familiar with, and even today speak, a mixed version of the Hungarian language. However, the majority, as Romanians, spoke only the ancient Romanian language; since there was no need for Hungarian in Moldavia they soon forgot it. Thus, the Csángós who settled in Moldavia should not be regarded as the descendants of old Hungarian-Székely settlers. Mărtinaș's opinion is that in certain villages, especially in Bákó/Bacău county, the Romanian residents do still speak the Csángó dialect, but this is only because of the stronger Székely influence (esp. in Lészped/Lespezi, Bogdánfalva/Valea Seacă, Nagypatak/Valea Mare, Forrófalva/Fărăoani, Klézse/Cleja, Trunk/Galbeni, Gajdár/Coman, Lujzikalagor/Luizi-Călugăra, Pusztina/Pustiana, Ploszkucény/Ploscuțeni, Kel-

gyest/Pildești, Szabófalva/Săbăoani). Nevertheless, these people who speak the Hungarian dialect should not be regarded as of the “Hungarian race,” as many people do, when they speak of the Moldavian Csángós; they are rather settlers of Romanian descent who were more deeply affected by the Székely influence.

What are the author’s assertions based on?

The author believes as proven that a significant Romanian population lived among the Székelys and were influenced by the Székely dialect, and so they became bilingual; but when the opportunity arose to move to Moldavia during the 17th century, a large number of this group—some 80 percent—quickly forgot the spoken Székely-Hungarian dialect.⁵

The proof of the Romanian origins of the Csángós—claims the author—is the Csángó folk costume, but especially the Romanian mother tongue of most of the Moldavian Catholics, which differs from the original Moldavian dialect, and has unique traits that can only be explained on the basis of the Transylvanian Romanian dialects. Mărtinaș, after lamenting that Romanian linguists paid no attention to the Romanian Csángó dialect since they regarded it as the assimilation of Hungarian Csángó dialect into the Romanian language, in a long chapter analyses the Romanian dialects of the Moldavian Catholics. A characteristic example shows that, contrary to the author’s opinion, the language differences between the Moldavian Catholics and the Moldavian Orthodox can be explained as the consequences of the basic Hungarian language layer.

As the author writes, a word of Latin origin, *levir*, can be found in both the Csángó Romanian and the Csángó Hungarian dialects. In Romanian it is *ler*, *leru*, *lerule*, *lerișorule*, and in Hungarian it is *lérem*, *léreszkém*. The word—explains the author—could only have come from Romanian, since Hungarian could in no way have adopted it from Latin. It does not occur to the author why this ancient Romanian word of Latin origin occurs only among the Csángó Catholics, and why it cannot be found in other Romanian dialects or in historical sources. Obviously it is because this word was incorporated into Romanian through the Hungarian language, and this is proven. The Hungarian language did not inherit it; it was taken over from the Latin. The word *lér* in Hungarian is an incorporated word from Latin. The variation *rér* can be found first in a *Glossary of Beszterce* around 1395, and further data can be found throughout linguistic history, as Pais Dezső shows in his article about the word.⁶ It is not only that data of linguistic history supports the word *lér*, but also very crucial is the fact that the word *lér* with the l-r r-r accommodation that became the *rér* form of the word can not only be found in Csángó dialects but also in Slavonic Hungarian dialects as well.

It would be easy to accuse the author of not using all of his talent in writing such a “scientific work.” The problem is that the origins of the Csángós are handled as a political question. In our opinion this is a scientific question and not a political one. However, Romanian dialect study has not yet searched for the origins of Csángós speaking a Romanian dialect, which is proven quite well by the

fact that the new Romanian dialect atlas (*Noul Atlas Lingvistic pe regiuni. Moldova*) does not label a single site of research, not even in places where the Catholic settlers speak only Romanian today. But if we were to suppose, *ad absurdum*, that these Csángó settlers were not of Hungarian, but of Romanian, origin, this would still not give the government the right to use this un-scientific work to revoke the basic civil rights of the Csángós still speaking Hungarian: their right to learn Hungarian and pray in Hungarian.

6. The language situation of the Csángó dialect is the result of many centuries of isolation and strong Romanian language influence. At present, most of the members of the younger and middle generations of the Northern and Southern Csángós have gone through a language switch. This course of the language switch was from the Hungarian-Romanian bilingual stage, where the mother tongue was the dominant, to the balance of the bilingual stage, which led to the dominance of Romanian in the bilingual stage. Finally, with the functionally restricted and reduced use value of Hungarian, the languages were switched.⁷ According to Tánzos Vilmos (1997) and Sándor Klára (1999), only 25% (approx. 60,000) of the Csángós speak the Csángó Hungarian dialect and 75% have become monolingual (Romanian). Those who are monolingual in Romanian and are of Csángó descent usually say they are Romanian in nationality. As a result of the Csángó dialect, the Romanian they speak can be regarded as a unique Romanian dialect. In Romanian political and pseudo-scientific discourse, usually the Csángós who speak Romanian and classify themselves as Romanian in nationality, are the only ones who accept the term Csángó as their ethnic name. This is what can be witnessed in Mărtinaş's book, which presents the Csángós as **Romanian** Csángós. The different uses of the name Csángó in Hungarian and Romanian cause many misunderstandings.

The language switch of the Csángó Hungarians is greatly influenced by severe restrictions with regard to language rights, which can be explained by the government's minority assimilation policy, and the attitude of the Roman Catholic Church. The Roman Catholic Church has not provided Hungarian language services for the Moldavian Csángós since 1622 even though, quite possibly, throughout the centuries, congregations have requested that such services be conducted. The local Romanian intelligentsia, especially the representatives of religious and educational institutions, brand and stigmatize the Csángó dialect, calling it a "korcsiturán" ("mutt language") and "madárnyelv" ("bird language") compared to the official Romanian language (Tánzos 1995. p. 60.). This adds to the feeling that the Csángós should not value and preserve their variation in language. Under these circumstances the language switch of the Moldavian Hungarians spreads easily and quickly.

The archaic Csángó Hungarian language and the rich Csángó folk culture are a worthy spiritual treasure, worth preserving, as Tytti Isohookana-Asunmaa, the Finnish European Council representative, pointed out in his 1998 report.

(Isohookana-Asunmaa 2001.). The existence of this dialect and culture are in danger. Their survival depends on minority and ecclesiastic political decisions.

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NOTES

- 1 Both the traditional Hungarian and official Romanian names of settlements and rivers will be indicated.
- 2 The listing of Székely and Csángó dialects under the same category can also be observed in Kálmán Béla's dialect handbook (Kálmán 1966. pp. 88–91.). Since this volume has appeared in many unchanged editions since its first publication, it can be said that the introduction of the Székely and Csángó dialects in the same category is still valid even today.
- 3 Not long ago Gazda László wrote a synthetic study on how the Csángó question appears in Romanian history (2001). We used this study in our introduction of Romanian historical writings.
- 4 *Buletin Linguistique* VIII., 1940. pp. 175–179.
- 5 Benkő Loránd also indicates that there are serious arguments opposing Mărtinaş's theories: "It would be impossible with regard to linguistic history and linguistic geography to label the Moldavian Csángós as Romanians assimilated into **Hungarian** society since the entire history of the Csángós shows exactly the opposite linguistic development, and points to their assimilation into **Romanian** society. As for the supposed theory that Romanians living in Székely land were assimilated and these people later settled in Moldavia, several circumstances point rigorously to the opposite: the linguistically faulty supposition of the Csángós in Székely land, the obviously mistaken chronological facts, the badly rendered etymology of the name 'Csángó' ('speaking incorrectly') and last but not least a somersault in logic: why would the Hungarian 'oppressors' force the ethnic group of Roman Catholic faith, speaking the Hungarian language, to flee to the other side of the Carpathian Mountains?"
- 6 *Magyar Nyelv/Hungarian Language* 39. p. 319.
- 7 When we speak of the functional restrictions of the Hungarian language we mean that the Csángó dialect and the Hungarian language in general there do not have any institutional background. This dialect is not used in the public sphere and only exists in intimate, family surroundings; therefore, in many situations, instead of the mother tongue (variation), the official language serves the purpose of communication.

LIST OF SETTLEMENT NAMES

Acélfalva–Oțleni	Gorzafalva–	Palánka–Palanca
Aknavásár–Tîrgu Ocna	Gutinázs–Gutinaş	Paskán–Paşcani
Ardeván – Ardeoani	Gyidráska–Vereşesti	Ploszkucény–Ploscuteni
Bahána–Bahna	Gyoszeny–Gioseni	Pokolpatak–Valea Rea
Bákó–Bacău	Gyula–Giuleşti	Prálea–Pralea
Balanyásza–Bălăneasa	Halas–Hălăuceşti	Pusztina–Pustiana
Balusest–Băluşesti	Herló–Hărlău	Rácsila–Gârleni de Sus
Bargován–Bărgăoani	Husz–Huşi	Rekecsin–Răcăciuni
Barlád–Bârlad	Istvánfalva–Teţcani	Ripa Jepi–Bogdăneşti
Berendfalva–Berindeşti	Jászvásár–Iaşi	Románvásár–Roman
Bergyila–Berdila	Jenekest–Enăchesti	Somoska–Şomuşca
Berzujok–Bărzuleşti	Jugán–Iugani	Sepsiszentgyörgy–Sfântu
Berzunc–Berzuleşti	Kalugarén –Călugăreni	Gheorge
Beszterce–Bistriţa	Kákova–Căcova	Szabófalva–Săbăoani
Bírófalva–Ghirăesti	Kápota–Capătă	Szalánc–Slânic
Bogáta–Bogata	Karácsonykő–Piatra Neamţ	Szalonc–Solonţ
Bogdánfalva–Valea Seacă	Kelgyest–Pildeşti	Szálka–Seaca
Borzafalva–Borzeşti	Ketris–Chetriş	Szászkút–Sascut–Sat
Brassó–Braşov	Kickófalva–Teţcani	Székelykeresztúr–Cristuru
Bruszturósa–Brusturoasa	Kicsiszolonc–Tărăţă	Secuiesc
Cserdák–Cerdac	Klézse–Cleja	Szeketura–Pădureni
Csík–Ciucani	Kolozsvár–Cluj	Szerbek–Floreşti
Csíksomlyó–Sumuleu Ciuc	Kománfalva–Comăneşti	Szeretvásár–Siret
Csíkszereda–Miercurea-Ciuc	Kotnár–Kutnár–Cotnari	Szitás–Nicoreşti
Csőbörcsök–Ciuburciu	Kovászna–Covasna	Szlániktorka–Gura Slănicului
Csügés–Ciugheşti	Kozmafalva–Cozmeşti	Szlánikfüürdő–Slânic Mold-
Degettes–Păcuri	Kövesalja–Petricica	vova
Diószeg–Tuta	Kukujéc–Cucuieţi	Szólóhegy–Pârgăreşti
Dnyeszterfehérvár–Akker-	Külsőrekecsin–Fundu	Szteckófalva–Teţcani
man–Cetatea Albă	Răcăciuni	Szucsáva–Suceava
Doftána–Dofteana	Lábnik–Vladnic	Tamás–Tămaşi
Domafalva–Răchiteni	Lészped–Lespezi	Tamásfalva–Tămăşeni
Dormánfalva–Dărmăneşti	Lilijecs–Lilieci	Tatros–Tg. Trotuş
Dzsidafalva–Agiudeni	Lökösfalva–Licuşeni	Terebes–Trebişu
Egyedhalma–Adjud	Lujzikalagor–Luizi–Călugăra	Trunk–Galbeni
Estánfalva–Sztánfalva–Stăneşti	Lukácsfalva–Lucăceşti	Turluján–Turluianu
Esztrugár–Strugari	Magyarfalu–Unguri	Újfalu–Dózsa–Gheorge Doja
Esztufuj–Stufu	Mánfalva–Măneşti	Újfalu–Nicolae Bălcescu
Forrófalva–Făraoani	Máriafalva–Larguca–Larguţa	Újfalu–Satu Nou
Frumósa–Frumoasa	Miklósfalva–Miclăuşeni	Újfalu–Traian
Furnikár–Furnicari	Mojnest–Moineşti	Válé Kimpului–Valea Câmpu-
Fűrészfalva–Fereastrău Oituz	Moldvabánya–Baia	lui
Gajcsána–Găiceana	Nagyptak–Valea Mare	Váliri–Livezi
Gajdár–Coman	Nagyrekecsin–Răcăciuni	Válészáká–Valea Seacă
Galac–Galaţi	Nemc–Târgu Neamţ	Vászló–Vaslui
Gerlény–Gârleni	Ónfalva–Oneşti	Vizánta–Vizantea Mănăstire-
Gyimesbükk–Ghimesş	Onyest–Oneşt	ască

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