

# GLASUL ARDEALULUI (TRANSYLVANIA'S VOICE) – THE NEWSPAPER OF THE GREAT UNION IN BRAȘOV

AN EVALUATION OF A UNIONIST, PATRIOTIC AND DEMOCRATIC MEDIATIC ACTION

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**Abstract:** Event of huge importance for the formation of the national Romanian state, the Great Union on the 1<sup>st</sup> of December 1918 was and remains in the memory of the Romanian people as an apotheosis moment, fulfilling the desires of so many generations, fighting for the Great Romania. Starting from the idea of consciousness of nation and freedom of the three Romanian provinces, what will be constituted in the future united Romania, our study aims to evaluate the contribution of a newspaper from Brașov, *Glasul Ardealului* (Transylvania's Voice), to the future preparation and the mobilization of the Romanian population for the support of the Great National Assembly from Alba Iulia. On the occasion of the 100th anniversary of this great event, the *Association of Conscience and Freedom* organizes, in collaboration with the Parliament of Romania, between 14-15 November 2018, the international symposium entitled *The Idea of National Unity, Freedom of Conscience and the Principles of Democratic Society*. Expressing the unity in the minds and the souls of the Romanians from Brașov, the editors of the newspaper, Ilie Cristea and Dante Gherman, wrote immortal words on the theme of the great desire of the Transylvanian Romanian population: *we want to be united with the country*. As active members in the Romanian National Counsel from Țara Bârsei and in the County Executive Committee, the two journalists are part of the historical contribution of Brașov County to the Great Union, by the force of their democratic mobilizing discourse, influencing spiritually the people and stimulating their commitment to the national and patriotic activism. Their articles are powerful, programmatic and organizational, insisting on the support and the promotion of the democratic society fundamentals of the united Romania.

**Keywords:** Centenary, Alba Iulia, Union, Romanian politics, Brașov – Țara Bârsei

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### In the middle of the unionist battle

Placed at the cross of the three Romanian provinces – Wallachia, Moldavia and Transylvania – the city of Brașov, a free princely city from 1868, is bearing the greatness of the unionist deeds. Writing on the Small Union of Moldavia and Wallachia, followed by the political appearance of the modern state Romania, the professor and journalist Valeriu Braniște shows that, starting in 1859, “Brașov [...] was practically connected to Romania by thousands kinships ...”<sup>1</sup>. This spiritual appurtenance is owed to the incidence and the signification – in the collective mentality – of the aspirations for unity and freedom of the Romanians from the three historical provinces, perpetually, uninterrupted, from generation to generation<sup>2</sup>, and of the deepening of the anti-Romanian manifestations in the policy of the Austro-Hungarian authorities. In order to affirm and manifest themselves as nation, the Transylvanian Romanians did not hesitate to claim, first to Wink, en and later to Budapest, the freedoms they were entitled to. Their fight started with a solicitation, as George Barițiu (1868) wrote in *Gazeta de Transilvania*: “Until we will not be given counter-evidences, we will continue to affirm that there is for us no constitutional right to manifest in meetings and press our desires and needs for the Romanian nation”<sup>3</sup>. In this context, the ideal of union with the Romanians across the mountains became more common among the people of Brașov, mobilized energies and stimulated the political action of the opinion leaders and, in the same time, rouse the people. The consciousness of belonging to the same nation, language and Church became general and modeled the national activism of an entire community. The national ideal tested its power similar to the year of 1848, when Small Romania had seemed a distant shore, but Nicolae

1 Ion VLAD, *Brașovul și Marea Unire*, Lugoj, Editura Dacia Europa Nova, 1996, p. 2.

2 Acc. to Dumitru POPESCU, *70 de ani de la Marea Unire*, in *Astra*, no. 11, noiembrie, 1988, p. 1.

3 George BARIȚIU, in *Gazeta Transilvaniei*, anul XXX, no. 1, 1868.

Bălcescu had been writing: "Our Romania will exist, this is my most intimate belief and anyone not seeing it is a blind man"<sup>4</sup>.

It was not by chance that, around the time of the War World I, numerous intellectuals, merchants and professionals from the city used the meetings of the Club *Casinei* of Braşov – inaugurated in 1835 – to prepare and organise the national fight of the Romanians, motivated by the ideal of union with the Romanians across the mountains. Travelling in the Old Country, many of the people present at the meetings of *Casinei*, kept alive the spirit of the unionist aspirations in the intellectual environment, in the schools and public institutions from Wallachia (Gheorghe Bogdan-Duică, Ovid Densuşianu, Ştefan Bogdan and Gheorghe Munteanu-Murgoci), Oltenia (Mişu Pop, and Constantin Leca) and Moldavia (Ioan Ursu and Emil Puşcariu). The pro-union action from Braşov exceeded the borders of the Romanian world. Intending in the same time to disseminate the legitimate aspirations of the Romanians and to gain empathy on the western political and decisional environment, the intellectuals from the city developed an intense diplomatic activity to the Presidency of the USA; Gheorghe Moroianu and Ioan Ursu, the editor of *La Roumanie* acted in London and Paris; the union was supported in Italy by Vasile Lucaciu, in Sweden by Constantin Lacea, Nicolae Bogdan and Iosif Blaga; in Wien, the union was supported in the Romanian Military Senate by the officers Traian Popa, Emil Colbazi, Petre Popovici and Ioan Brotea. Because there was a significant number of Romanian soldiers in Russia, Pompiliu Nistor, Voicu Niţescu, Ion Lapedatu and Victor Branişte edited there *Gazeta Transilvaniei și Bucovinei* and involved in the preparation of a remarkable programmatic unionist document titled *Proclamația – The Manifesto – from Darnița Kievului* on the 13<sup>th</sup> /26<sup>th</sup> of April 1917. In this context, it is obvious that, during the first years of the World War I, Braşov was of primary importance for the affirmation, the dissemination and the support of the desiderate of the Great Union, as attested by the documents preserved in the historical archives of the Museum of the First Romanian School, the County Library "G. Barițiu" and of the branch from Braşov of the State Archives, and also reflected in the entire press of the times. The two newspapers from Braşov, *Glasul Ardealului* and *Gazeta Transilvaniei*,

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4 Dumitru ALMAŞ, *Pe al nostru steag e scris unire !*, in *Astra*, no. 6, 1968.

reflect the troubles and the fight of some lucid minds that saw, through the fire of the World War, the light of the union of the Romanian nation. The priests of the Church “St. Nicholas” from Șchei, Vasile Saftu, Ion Prișcu and Nicolae Stinghe, the teacher and the folklorist Andrei Bârseanu, the musician Tiberiu Breticianu, the composer George Dima and the professor Nicolae Oancea, and also the women from the Association “The Reunion of the Romanian Women” of Brașov – Maria Maximilian, Elena Săbăleanu, Elena Mureșeanu, will maintain alive the flame of the Romanian consciousness, calling continually to the support of the union with Romania.

Like the Romanians, all the nations in the Empire asked their right to self-determination and the authorities from Budapest, knowing the imminence of the fall of the bicephalous monarchy, did not hesitate to play as last card miming reconciliation with the Romanians and the promise to respect their national rights. It is the merit of the young professor from Brașov, Dante Gherman that he observed the danger derived from a possible agreement to such proposals and the necessity of bringing to full political fruition the historical context, according to the legitimate desires of the Romanians. Thus, Dante Gherman did not hesitate to ask to Vasile Goldiș and Ștefan Cicio-Popto make concrete steps for taking out Transylvania from the authorities from Budapest and Wien: “I, back then, as a young teacher filled with the spirit of the national ideal, decided for a decisive step. I went to Budapest in August-September 1918, where our deputies, Goldiș, Cicio Pop, and A. Vlad, were, and asked them verbally, in the name of the inhabitants from Brașov, to make a memoire, to leave the Parliament from Budapest and to make a declaration on the interruption of the relations between Transylvania and Hungary, as the Serbian, Italian, and Slovakian deputies from the Hungarian Parliament had already done it”<sup>5</sup>. Indeed, the Romanian deputies left the Hungarian Parliament and established on the 30<sup>th</sup> of October 1918 the Romanian National Central Council – R.N.C.C., with a first meeting on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of November 1918 in Arad. Its objective was to prepare the union with Romania politically, administrative and military. The newspaper *Românul* (*The Romanian*), official newspaper of the Council from Arad, echoed the objective, publishing the document

<sup>5</sup> Mircea GHERMAN, *Evenimente brașovene din preajma Unirii*, in *Astra*, no. 6, 1968, p. 2.

*Spre orientare* (For orientation), urging “the establishment of a Romanian National Council affiliated to R.N.C.C. in each Transylvanian county and Romanian National Councils in all the towns and communes”<sup>6</sup>. In front of all these initiatives and actions, the leaders of the Saxons and of the Hungarians from Braşov, tries, as proved by professor Ion Vlad, to derail the Romanian movement from its unionist and national aims, trying to save Țăra Bârsei’s dependence to Budapest, as a guarantee for the preservation of the influence and role of their local and zonal leader. Concretely, they tried to block the application of the provisions of the document *Spre orientare*, establishing the so-called County National Council, which should have included “two representatives of the Hungarians, Saxons, Romanians and social-democrats under the lead of the trustee of that time, L. Servatius”<sup>7</sup>. Thus, the representatives of the Romanians in this artificial organism, the Orthodox Dean Vasile Saftu and N. Garoiu, declared at the first meeting that “the Romanians do not recognize in Transylvania any authority except for the Romanian National Central Committee from Arad and they remain faithful to the [self-determination] declaration made by the Romanian National Party in the Hungarian Parliament on the 18<sup>th</sup> of October 1918”<sup>8</sup>. According to this position, the Romanian animated by Dean Vasile Saftu – who was recently returned from the detention from the camp in Sopron Hungary – will decide to convoke on the 19<sup>th</sup> of October/ 1<sup>st</sup> of November 1918 a big popular meeting at the Church “St. Nicholas”, where all Romanians from Braşov and all the representatives of the county communes were invited to participate. This is how the Romanian National Council from Țăra Bârsei was established, under the lead of an Executive Committee, formed by 12 personalities from Braşov and 23 representatives from the neighbouring localities<sup>9</sup>. The head of the Executive Committee was Dean Vasile Saftu, the secretary was P. Munteanu, and among the members were T. Breticianu, I. Cristea, P. Debu, and Ghe. Dima, Ovidiu Dante Gherman, I. Peteu, Constantin A. Popovici, Ştefan Popovici, I. Prişcu and N. Stinghie. Five members of the Committee were professors to

6 Ioan VLAD, *op. cit.*, p. 201.

7 Ion VLAD, *op.cit.* p. 201, și in *Gazeta Transilvaniei*, no. 120, 20 octombrie /2 noiembrie 1918.

8 Ioan VLAD, *op. cit.*, p. 201.

9 Prof. I. NICOARĂ, *Sfatul Național Român din Țăra Bârsei*, in *Astra*, no. 6, 1968.

the Romanian School in Brașov, reflecting the indestructible connection between school and the national ideal<sup>10</sup>. The activity of the Council required support from the press. First, this duty should have belonged to *Gazeta Transilvaniei*, owned by Arsenie Vlaicu and Nicolae Sulică, but they supported the conservative positions of Budapest<sup>11</sup>. Because they asked much money for the use of the newspaper, the Romanian National council decided to edit another newspaper<sup>12</sup>. Thus, starting on the 9<sup>th</sup> of November 1918, *Glusul Ardealului* appears. As editors, we mention Axente Baci, Aurel Ciortea, Silviu Țeposu, Ilie Cristea and Dante Gherman. We will try to depict some aspects related to the political and administrative program of the newspaper *Glusul Ardealului*, also titled *Glusul* in our study.

### ***Glusul Ardealului*– as unionist tribune**

Serving a political precise aim, the mediatic support of the union between Transylvania and Romania, *Glusul Ardealului* was published for 49 issues, with minimum 4 pages, printed daily 9<sup>th</sup> of November and 30<sup>th</sup> of December 1918. The content reflected the stage priorities of the political process leading to the Great Union. The first 14 issues insisted on mobilizing and stimulating the public enthusiasm, repeatedly highlighting the huge significance of the historical moment. Issues 15, 16 and 17 concentrated on the participation of the local representatives to the Great National Assembly from Alba Iulia, with 94 official delegates from Brașov. The following issues, after the 1<sup>st</sup> of December and until the 30<sup>th</sup> of December 1918, had as theme the concrete problems related to the practical/ effective achievement of the union between Transylvania and Romania. In this context, *Glusul Ardealului* was considered the unionist tribune of the community from Brașov, expressing openly and repeatedly the huge popular enthusiasm created around the capital historical moment. Thus, the first number, on the 9<sup>th</sup> of November 1918 called to mobilization: “Romanian brothers, let your voice be heard from one corner to the other in the world, honoring the entire Romanian nation. Choose a National Council to be the middle path between the Romanian

10 Idem, *Contribuția școlilor brașovene la desăvârșirea unității naționale*, in *Astra*, 1968.

11 Ioan VLAD, *op. cit.*, p. 202.

12 Arsenie VLAICU, *Memorii*, mss, Arhivele Statului Brașov, p. 8.

National Party and the people, for us to be able, when required, even if the request will be tomorrow, to gather all the Romanian spirit to proclaim our rights. The Hour of Resurrection is now, let us be united in spirit, and united in God”<sup>13</sup>. On the first page of this issue, *Glasul* assumed as main objective the enlightenment of the masses on the importance of the historical moment: “the enlightenment of our nation on its immediate interests, its guidance in these special times – a special spark that need to be thought and politically used”<sup>14</sup>. In other words, *Glasul* assumed as stringent necessity the duty to explain to the people and gather them in a crucial historical time. This action was naturally fit into a national political program, in a unionist national platform, aiming to concentrate all the resources of the nation to reach a historical desiderate of exceptional importance. From this perspective, *Glasul* adhered to and supported a platform “fixing in eternity the political principle of the national union, similar to a genial sculptor fixing his creed in marble”<sup>15</sup>. The article *Stat Național* (*National State*), from the 2<sup>nd</sup> issue of the newspaper highlights this positioning: “For the first time ever, the official representatives of the Romanian people confess our entire political creed. The National State [...]. We are on the top of Golgotha. The countries of the old world are falling with a terrible noise...”<sup>16</sup>. The editorial of the next issue demanded with urgency “the perfection of the unitary national state”<sup>17</sup>, while, in issue no. 16, the article *Voința noastră* (*Our Will*), by Dante Gherman, ended with a highlight on the categorical adhesion of all Romanians to the unionist slogan: “Our slogan is: The categorical union of all the Romanians in one state”<sup>18</sup>. Similarly, the article *Acum ori niciodată!* (*Now or never!*), by Ilie Cristea, in issue no. 4 underlined that the future National Assembly “will have the ultimate right to decide the destiny of the Romanians from this monarchy [Austro-Hungarian]”, a right coming from the unanimous and incontestable adhesion of the Romanians to the desiderate of the union: “our instinct urges us to shout in the entire

13 Ilie CRISTEA, *Frați români!*, in *Glasul Ardealului*, no. 1, 9 noiembrie 1918.

14 *Ibidem*.

15 Ilie CRISTEA, in *Glasul Ardealului*, no. 1 din 9 noiembrie 1918; Ion Nicoară, *Glasul Ardealului, ziarul brașovean al unirii naționale de la 1 decembrie 1918*, in *Studii și articole de istorie*, XI, 1968, p. 185 – 210.

16 \*\*\* *Stat Național*, in *Glasul Ardealului*, no. 2, 12 noiembrie 1918.

17 \*\*\* *Glasul Ardealului*, no. 3, 13 noiembrie 1918.

18 Dante GHERMAN, *Voința noastră*, in *Glasul Ardealului*, no. 16 din 29 noiembrie 1918.

world that the Romanian nation from everywhere wants to be united in a unique, unitary and independent national Romanian state”<sup>19</sup>. From this perspective, Stefan C. Pop wrote in his article *Către popoarele lumii!* (*To the nations of the world!*), in no.11/23 .11.1918, that the Romanians “declared their will to become part of a free and independent state, in order to validate all their forces in the service of the culture and of the human freedom”, the integration of Transylvania in the Kingdom of Romania, with “the help of the entire Romanian nation, with which we want to be united forever”<sup>20</sup>. A different but complementary position is to be found in *Să fie lumină* (*Let there be light*), by Ilie Cristea, in issue no.6, which highlighted the force of the united nation, and also the determinant role of the law in the new Romanian state: “We want to build a State of our own: its law will be the consciousness and justice will be its weapon”<sup>21</sup>. The same material showed that, for the construction of the new Romanian state, the law and the justice will be in indestructible connection with the limitless affirmation of the national consciousness and values: “The political situation cleared, we finally have the right to establish our fate and the achievement of our national unity [...]; I feel no revenge, but neither any pity [...], the goddess of justice is haggling. We do not ask revenge. We want to build a state of our own”<sup>22</sup>. The same number published for the first time in Transylvania the letter of Bishop Elie Miron Cristea of Caransebeș, soliciting to the priests to pray to the liturgy “for our national leaders and for the National Assembly”<sup>23</sup>.

Close to the date of 1<sup>st</sup> of December, we mention that the editorial of issue no. 15 of *Glasul Ardealului* shows that, representing the ideal of the Romanians, the majority population in Transylvania, the union with Romania requires fulfillment and respect from the minority ethnic groups. It was requires “a willingly union in complete harmony”<sup>24</sup>. In fact, this positioning appeared in the context in which the close date of the Great National Assembly from Alba Iulia brought the increase of anti-Romanians attitudes belonging to the Hungarian extremist circles. The

19 Ilie CRISTEA, *Acum ori niciodată*, in *Glasul Ardealului*, no. 4, 14 noiembrie, 1918.

20 Dr. Ștefan C. POP, *Către popoarele lumii!*, in *Glasul Ardealului*, no. 11, 23 noiembrie, 1918.

21 Ilie CRISTEA, *Să fie lumină*, in *Glasul Ardealului*, no. 6, noiembrie 1918.

22 *Ibidem*;

23 Elie Miron CRISTEA, in *Glasul Ardealului*, no. 6, noiembrie 1918.

24 \*\*\* *Glasul Ardealului*, no. 15, noiembrie 1918.



historian and political man Oszkár Jászi denied the representativeness of the National Romanian Central Committee and stated (in 1918!) that the majority of the Transylvanian population were the Hungarians<sup>25</sup>. As response to this false position, Ilie Cristea publishes a series of articles – *Je sais mon histoire, Să fie lumină, La liman, Zvârcoliri neputincioase, Încercări disperate* and so on – showing to the opponents of the union that they do not understand the spirit of those times and hang on the revoluted past times, because they forget that “the land belong to the inhabitants”<sup>26</sup>. In the article *Je sais mon histoire*, Ilie Cristea presents the conversation between the Hungarian prime-minister Mihály Károlyi with Louis Franchet d’Esperey, the head of the troops belonging to Entente in the Balkans, underlining the firm position of the French general in front of the Hungarian assertions related to their demographic majority in Transylvania: “I know the statistical behaviour. I know how you use it. I know...”<sup>27</sup> The Romanians paid attention also to the situation in Romania and the editor of *Glasul* insisted on the fact that the reunification of Romania should bring correctitude and the elimination of the moral problems affecting the political life in the old Kingdom, including the pillages of the public funds, because some had the habit of “stealing from the pocket of the country”<sup>28</sup>. The fulfillment of the national ideal should have pushed the political class from Romania to correctitude and loyalty to the state, by “stopping the nepotism, the political cabals, weeds that needed to be snatched until it was too late”<sup>29</sup>. The editorial “Nedumerire” (Bewilderment) appeared in the issue no. 48. The desire for the radical change takes the form of the rhetorical question: “Why do not have new men for the new times?” a paraphrase to Mihail Kogălniceanu. In parallel, the reunited Romania was intended as the country of more accentuated democratic freedoms – especially a radical agrarian reform – capable to eliminate social injustice<sup>30</sup>. The Big Romania was intended to be a profoundly democratic country, a democracy achieved “in action

25 Ilie CRISTEA, *Zvârcoliri neputincioase*, in *Glasul Ardealului*, no. 13, 26 noiembrie 1918.

26 Idem, *Glasul Ardealului*, no. 6, noiembrie 1918.

27 Idem, *Je sais mon histoire*, in *Glasul Ardealului*, no. 3, 13 noiembrie 1918.

28 *Glasul Ardealului*, no.48, decembrie 1918.

29 *Glasul Ardealului*, no. 34, decembrie 1918.

30 *Glasul Ardealului*, no. 38, decembrie 1918.

and not in words”<sup>31</sup>. The most urgent problems were considered to be the agrarian reform and the transfer of properties to the peasants, the general right to vote and the secret and direct vote.

Accidentally, the condemnation of the problems of the political class in the old country appeared in extreme forms. The article “Atitudinea noastră” (Our attitude), issue no. 38 of the newspaper, asked the Transylvanians to avoid any associations with the political parties in the old country commit betrayal”. Still, constructive calls to adopt a correct political behaviour were prevailing. The editors from *Glasul* asked the future political leaders of the united Romania “to have the capacity to work selflessly for the good of the nation”<sup>32</sup>. The editors condemn “the rush for financial gain”<sup>33</sup> and the avoidance of the work, because “we are all born for work depending on our dignity”<sup>34</sup>. Once united, Romania should begin a huge work of reconstruction, capable to ensure the consolidation of the Romanian state and its affirmation internationally; thus, it was necessary for “the festivities and parties honouring the Union to stop. It was also necessary for the recovery work to begin”<sup>35</sup>.

Due to the ethnical diversity in Brașovului and Țara Bârsei<sup>36</sup>, *Glasul* could not ignore the sensitive matter of the position of the Saxons and Hungarians related to the unionist process and to the Great Union<sup>37</sup>. The editors of the newspaper proceeded with a lot of political acuity and tact, insisting on the fact that the national state will respect the democratic rights of the ethnical minorities and the revenge acts would be disavowed. The article *Fraților sași! (Saxon Brethren!)* by Dante Gherman asked to the Saxons to oppose not to the Union and to reflect on “our great path to union and freedom, because the dawn is here and we are already in Alba Iulia. If you wake up at noon, we will still be here, on the land of our ancestors that you didn’t take away from us, but the fear of others brought

31 *Glasul Ardealului*, no. 49, decembrie 1918.

32 *Glasul Ardealului*, no. 31, decembrie, 1918 și no. 34, decembrie 1918.

33 *Glasul Ardealului*, no. 40, decembrie 1918.

34 *Glasul Ardealului*, no. 34, decembrie 1918.

35 Ioan NICOARĂ, *Glasul Ardealului*, in *Cumidava*, II, 1968, p. 217; Cf. in *Glasul Ardealului* no. 13, 26 noiembrie 1918.

36 Ioan-Gheorghe ROTARU, *Sabatarieni în contextul vieții transilvane (sec. XVI-XIX)*, Vol. I., Editura Risoprint, Cluj-Napoca, 2014, pp.84, 99-100, 114-115.

37 Arnold UNGUREANU, *Atitudinea presei săsești față de unirea românilor din Transilvania cu România*, in *Cumidava*, 1, 1979 – 1980, p. 307.

you among us”<sup>38</sup>. Also in the spirit of respect and understanding for all minorities, *Glasul* from 26<sup>th</sup> of November called all the Transylvanian ethnies to Alba Iulia: “Come! We don’t ask from you your money, your law or your language, because we want your language and blood to remain clean. Your children will not sing Hallelujah in a foreign language. We will not beat them or put them in chains as slaves, because we have no prisons and we do not know the barbarian fury”<sup>39</sup>. Observing the duplicity policy of the Saxons, who hesitated to take a position related to the unionist project, waiting for the result of the political confrontation between Romanians and Hungarians, *Glasul* adopted in the article by Ilie Cristea a tough position: “We do not need to hunt the empathy of the Saxons [...]; we do not blow hacks but we do not hate them [...]; we are tougher, but we won’t do what they did in 1916 [...]; we have no reason to hate them [...]; our soul is so filled with happiness and content that the feeling of hate has no space to reside there”<sup>40</sup>. In fact, the tolerance and the wisdom of the Romanians from Braşov related to the relations with the Saxons is highlighted by the fact that they maintained in function the mayor K.E. Schnell and the deputy mayor Fabricius, although they took refuge in 1916 in Budapest<sup>41</sup>. Proving political realism, the mayor K.E. Schnell confessed to a delegate of the American President Woodrow Willson that: “...the Saxons appreciate the union of all Romanians as a result of a natural and legitimate process”<sup>42</sup>. From this perspective – the acceptance of a political reality/ situation they did not agree with but could not influence it either – an important part of the Saxon population from Țara Bârsei refused to accompany the German troops that were retiring, opting, *de facto*, to continue to live with the majority Romanians, even if in a state where the Saxons would no longer have the same power and influence<sup>43</sup>. Contradictory to the diplomacy of the Saxons was the vehemence of the Hungarian opposition to the union with Romania,

38 Dante GHERMAN, *Fraților sașii!*, in *Glasul Ardealului*, no. 13, 26 noiembrie 1918.

39 Ioan NICOARĂ, *Glasul Ardealului*, p.217; Cf. *Glasul Ardealului*, no. 13, 26 noiembrie 1918.

40 Ilie CRISTEA, articolul *Miopia sufletească*, in *Glasul Ardealului*, no. 26, 26 noiembrie /12 decembrie 1918.

41 Ioan VLAD, *op. cit.*, p. 218.

42 Karl Erns SCHNELL, *Aus meinem Leben*, Braşov, Markus Verlag, 1934, p. 193.

43 *Ibidem*, p. 191 și Emil POENARU, *Unele principii ale Declarației de la Alba Iulia*, in *Cumidava*, no. II, 1968, p. 229.

and some formal leaders and opinion leaders of the Hungarian people manifested in this direction. Militating for a Hungarian state including Transylvania, they tried to oppose to the Romanian action through a series of actions identified by the editors of *Glasul* as: (a) “the enticement of the Romanians to the old state form”, (b) “political calumny” to the address of the unionist people and their actions (c) “violence”<sup>44</sup>. If the enticement actions were performed through false petitioning campaigns to the Romanian National Central Council, pretending that the Transylvanian Romanians were rejecting the unionist actions, and if the “calumny” actions meant writing and spreading irreverent manifestos<sup>45</sup>, violence was manifested through devastations and violent acts whose victims were the Romanians<sup>46</sup>. Related to all these aspects, Ilie Cristea highlighted the shameful and always condemnable feature of the actions and also their lack of political relevance and utility, because the path to union was already established and sure: “You can continue with the infamies you like, the people know you and your lies have no success. You use a weapon with sad consequences, the atrocities”. He reminded the case of the priest Ioan Opriș of Criștiș-Turda, the father of seven minor children, shot by the Hungarian policemen on the 6<sup>th</sup> of November 1918<sup>47</sup>. The reaction to such horrible acts could only be the opprobrium of the civilized world, the one “making so many empires built on lies to fall”. Still, although they were victims to the unjustified and absurd revenge, the Romanians have no thought, and desire of revenge, and their leaders always called to tolerance and mutual understanding. Ilie Cristea wrote that the Romanian leaders “make the best efforts to calm the storm awoken in the depth of the masses and which threatens to wipe you [the Hungarians with bad intentions] on its way”<sup>48</sup>. In fact, proving more equilibrium and wisdom, the editors from *Glasul* tried to separate the extremists from the peaceful Hungarian population, living together with the Romanians for centuries<sup>49</sup>. From this perspective, the

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44 *Glasul Ardealului*, no. 17, 30 noiembrie 1918.

45 *Ibidem*.

46 *Ibidem*.

47 *Ibidem*.

48 *Ibidem*.

49 *Glasul Ardealului*, no. 21, 23 noiembrie 1918.; See the Fund Professor Gheorghe DRAGOȘ, preserved to the County Library Brașov, Special Collections. Other similar situations were registered in Săcele and Teliu.

issue of *Glasul* from 21<sup>st</sup> of November showed that, at the sanctification festivity of the Romanian flag organized by the National Guard in Barcan, the Hungarians had an open position to the ideal and the actions of the Romanians: "Welcome! God brought you [...]; we, the Hungarians present here today, born and raised in the same way as you, are here to fulfill our duty. We pray to the good Lord for this sanctified flag, to bring us freedom, a good life, holy peace and understanding. We pray to you, from our heart, to think of us as brethren. Long live our freedom and union!"<sup>50</sup> Once signed, the act of the union was saluted with enthusiasm by the editorial team from *Glasul*. Thus, the issue from the 1<sup>st</sup> of December 1918 inserted the article "Înviere!" (Resurrection!), where Ilie Cristea wrote: "It's the time of the fulfillment. Today, we know your secret, sweet magic star! Today, we know the reason of the coming! Today, those gathered in Alba Iulia spread the news of a dream fulfilled!" In parallel, the article "Proclamarea unirii cu România" (The Proclamation of the union with Romania) underlined the indestructible connection between the national ideal – already achieved and the democratic ideal – on its way to achievement. *Glasul* invoked among the legitimate values adopted to the Great National Assembly of Alba Iulia "national freedom for all the nations in the territory"; "confessional equality"; "direct, equal and secret voting" and "the freedom of the press and the free propaganda of all the human thinking" and so on.

## Conclusions

The newspaper *Glasul Ardealului* remains for the Romanians from Braşov, and also for the Transylvanian Romanians, the newspaper of the Great Union between Transylvania and Romania. Its publication, although considered sometimes as improvisation or a conjectural initiative, was in fact an authentic and legitimate plenary expression of the unlimited enthusiasm related to a much waited fulfillment. Published between November and December 1918<sup>51</sup>, the newspaper was necessary and useful, as voice of the citizens of Braşov, expressing their unionist ideal of self-determination. But *Glasul Ardealului* was more than this; it has a significant functional role for the act on the 1<sup>st</sup> of December 1918: it mobilized the Romanians,

50 Ioan VLAD, *op. cit.*, p. 222; Cf. *Glasul Ardealului*, no. 33, 21 Decembrie 1918.

51 *Gazeta Transilvaniei*, no. 1, ianuarie 1919.

simulating their activism; guided them in organization for facing the huge responsibility of each local representative or opinion leader; it tempered the extremism and tried to pacify the anti-Romanian tendencies coming from some radical policies; ultimately, but perhaps most important, it ensured what we would call nowadays the interface of the National Central Council in Brașov. Therefore, preparing the travel of the delegates from Țara Bârsei to Alba Iulia and fighting against all those who were trying to divide the Romanians, *Glasul Ardealului* was “a true mirror for every man desiring to find out about the last battle in the fight for the fulfillment of the Romanian political unity”<sup>52</sup>. Performing its role completely and with honesty, *Glasul Ardealului* stopped its activity on the 30<sup>th</sup> of December 1918, according to the decision of the *Ruling Council from Sibiu*, but, it transformed as a Phoenix in the newspaper titled *Gazeta Transilvaniei*, on the 1<sup>st</sup> of January 1919.

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52 *Ibidem*.