

## Romanian national minority in the Yugoslav Banat 1918-1948

At the time the Habsburg Empire collapsed in the autumn of 1918, Romanians and Serbs had been neighbors in Banat for centuries. For most of the time they had been good neighbors: common religion and common underprivileged position within the Monarchy brought them together<sup>1</sup>. Indeed, until 1864 they shared the same ecclesiastical organization. The problem with it was that the Romanians made up the larger part of the faithful, whereas the Serbs made up most of the hierarchy. For that reason and due to the rise of Romanian national consciousness observable since late 18<sup>th</sup> century, the Romanians split and set up their own metropolis<sup>2</sup>. The division of church property also left a bitter taste up until the time between the two world wars<sup>3</sup>. The siding of part of the Romanians with the Hungarians (in the vein attempt at achieving ecclesiastical separation and national rights) during the revolution of 1848<sup>4</sup> had already been forgotten by then. But on the whole, thanks to common culture, religion and social position, the relations were good, spiced with frequent intermarrying. Serbian and Romanian political parties even collaborated sometimes in the struggle against Magyarization policy of the Hungarian government in late 19<sup>th</sup> century<sup>5</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> Nikola Gavrilović, *Srbi i Rumuni. Srpsko-rumunske veze kroz vekove*, Beograd, Novi Sad, Zavod za udžbenike, 1998.

<sup>2</sup> Keith Hitchins, *Orthodoxy and Nationality. Andreiu Şaguna and the Rumanians of Transylvania 1846-1873*, Harvard, Harvard University Press, 1977, p. 179-189; idem, *Andreiu Şaguna and Restoration of the Rumanian Orthodox Metropolis in Transylvania 1846-1868*, in *BS*, VI (1965), no. 1.

<sup>3</sup> Svet. Brodarević, *Naše hijerarhijske deobne parnice sa Rumunima*, Novi Sad, 1913; Svetolik Subotić, *Crkveni spor između belocrkvanskih Srba i Rumuna u XIX veku*, in “Zbornik Matice srpske za društvene nauke”, XIII (1963), no. 36.

<sup>4</sup> Keith Hitchins, *Orthodoxy...*, p. 175-178; I. D. Suci, *Rumänen und Serben in der Revolution des Jahres 1848 im Banat*, in *RESEE*, V (1968), no. 4.

<sup>5</sup> Gligor Popi, *Srpsko-rumunska saradnja i zajednička borba ugnjetenih narodnosti u periodu dualizma*, in “Balcanica”, VII, 1976; K. N. Milutinović, *Predratna Mala antanta*, Sarajevo, 1937; Vojislav J. Vučković, *Pariski komitet triju narodnosti (1896)*, in „Zbornik Matice srpske za društvene nauke”, XV (1965), no. 15; Miodrag Milin, *Rumunski nacionalni pokret u Banatu i antidualistička borba narodnosti (1884-1896)*, in “Godišnjak Društva istoričara Vojvodine”, VIII (1981).

These good neighborly relations were endangered in the fall of 1918 as the Habsburg Empire started to disintegrate. Various people set up their national councils with the aim of preserving order and seizing power for their respective ethnic groups<sup>6</sup>. Serbian politicians organized the Great Popular Assembly on November 25, 1918 that proclaimed unification of South Hungary with Serbia<sup>7</sup>. Six days later, the Romanian Great National Assembly declared unification of Romanian-inhabited lands of the defunct Monarchy with Romania<sup>8</sup>. This means, both sides aspired partly to the same territories. Romanian demands were larger since they stretched to the whole of the Banat, whereas the Serbs coveted only its western part, including Timișoara. It seemed the Serbs were in a better position to achieve their goals, since western Banat had been already occupied by Serbian troops. Thanks to the presence of the French forces, the armed conflict was avoided and the decision was referred to the Paris peace conference. After a prolonged diplomatic battle seasoned with numerous scholarly contributions (geographical, statistical, historical, economic, strategic), the great powers reached a decision, to divide the Banat so that approximately the same numbers of Romanians and South Slavs<sup>9</sup> remained on the wrong side of the border<sup>10</sup>. Total separation that would group all members of the two peoples within one nation-state was not possible due to scattered settlement patterns that created large areas of very mixed populations.

The population in question was partly active during the turbulent days of 1918 – but mostly in looting, where Serbs and Romanians (with occasional help from part of Hungarians) pillaged together the estates of the rich (who were more

<sup>6</sup> Saša Marković, *Od prisajedinjenja do prekrajanja. Vojvodina u Kraljevini SHS/Jugoslaviji 1918-1941*, Novi Sad, Arhiv Vojvodine, 2020, p. 73-78; Petar Pekić, *Povijest oslobođenja Vojvodine*, Subotica 1939, p. 111-112, 123-124, 129-130, 145, 150-151, 156, 169, 190, 230, 239-240, 242, 258, 275; *Spomenica oslobođenja Vojvodine 1918*, Novi Sad, 1929, p. 30, 95, 98, 107, 115, 124-125, 136, 140, 146, 153; Zoran Janjetović, *Deca careva, pastorčad kraljeva. Nacionalne manjine u Jugoslaviji 1918-1941*, Beograd, Institut za noviju istoriju Srbije, 2005, p. 122-125.

<sup>7</sup> *Spomenica oslobođenja...*, p. 163-164; Zoran Janjetović, *op. cit.*, 127; Saša Marković, *op. cit.*, p. 86-88.

<sup>8</sup> Miron Constantinescu, *L'acte de l'union du 1er décembre 1918*, in *Études d'histoire transylvaine*, ed. Miron Constantinescu, Bucarest, Académie de la République Socialiste Roumane, 1970, p. 148-164; *Storia del popolo romeno*, ed. Andrei Oțetea, Roma, Editori riuniti, 1981, p. 373-375. Except for 60 delegates, the Romanians from the Serb-controlled territory were prevented from attending (Andrea Schmidt-Rösler, *Rumänien nach dem Ersten Weltkrieg. Die Grenzziehung in der Dobrukscha und im Banat und die Friedensprobleme*, Frankfurt a. M., Berlin, Bern, New York, Paris, Wien, Peter Lang, 1994, p. 245; Gligor Popi, *Banatski Rumuni 1918. godine*, in *Prisajedinjenje Vojvodine Kraljevini Srbiji 1918*, Novi Sad, Muzej Vojvodine, 1993, p. 220-221).

<sup>9</sup> Mostly Serbs with couple of thousand Croats.

<sup>10</sup> Cf. Andrej Mitrović, *Razgraničenje Jugoslavije sa Mađarskom i Rumunijom 1919-1920. Prilog proučavanju Jugoslavije na konferenciji mira u Parizu*, Novi Sad, Institut za izučavanje istorije Vojvodine, 1975; Ivo J. Lederer, *Yugoslavia at the Paris Peace Conference. A Study in Frontiermaking*, New Haven, London, Yale University Press, 1963; Andrea Schmidt-Rösler, *op. cit.*; David Sherman Spector, *Romania at the Paris Peace Conference. A Study of the Diplomacy of Ioan I. C. Brătianu*, Iași, Center for Romanian Studies, 1995; Margaret MacMillan, *Paris 1919. Six Months that Changed the World*, New York, Random House, 2002, p. 125-135.

often Hungarian, Jewish and German)<sup>11</sup>. Political elites made momentous decisions more or less on their own – which does not go to say that broader masses of Romanian and Serbian population were not in favor of unification with their mother-countries. However, even after the border had been laid, the tensions did not recede immediately. It would take a couple of years before common interest in defending the post-war status quo brought the two states together, uniting them in defense alliance sealed with royal marriage<sup>12</sup>. This more relaxed international situation was not reflected automatically on the situation of the Romanian national minority in Yugoslavia. The reason was a restrictive minority policy the new state pursued that left little space for exceptions. Such policy toward minorities was dictated not only by nationalism and the prevailing low European standards of minority protection, but also by history, strategic considerations, and the fear of losing newly acquired territories, as well as other reasons. To be sure, not all of them applied to every national minority, but it was difficult to make concessions to one of them, lest others would demand the same<sup>13</sup>.

The Romanian national minority in the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes (as Yugoslavia was officially called until 1929) had some 70.000 members<sup>14</sup>. It consisted almost exclusively of peasants. At the very beginning it was weakened by emigration of a large number of teachers, who together with the clergy, made up its only intelligentsia<sup>15</sup>. Not only did the main industrial, cultural and social center of Timișoara remain outside of the new state, but the importance of some towns in the Western Banat (such as Vršac or Bela Crkva) that fell to Yugoslavia, was also diminished by the drawing of new borders<sup>16</sup>.

National minorities in Yugoslavia, as well as in Romania and other new and enlarged states, were protected by the Convention on Protection of Minorities that both countries reluctantly signed<sup>17</sup>. It stood under the aegis of the League of

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<sup>11</sup> Zoran Janjetović, *op. cit.*, p. 123-124; Bogumil Hrabak, *Logoši, zeleni kadar i zbivanja pri prevratu u Vojvodini 1918*, in "Istraživanja", VIII (1979), p. 126-134.

<sup>12</sup> More on Yugoslav-Romanian relation during the inter-war period cf. Gligor Popi, *Jugoslovensko-rumunski odnosi 1918-1941*, Novi Sad, Sloboda, 1984.

<sup>13</sup> Zoran Janjetović, *op. cit.*, p. 142-143.

<sup>14</sup> According to the 1921 census there were 231.068 Romanians in Yugoslavia. However, this number included the so-called Wallachians in eastern Serbia, as well as the Aromunes, mainly in Macedonia. Both groups were not officially recognized as national minorities. In the Banat there were 69.616 Romanians who were recognized (Zoran Janjetović, *op. cit.*, p. 65).

<sup>15</sup> Some intellectuals, especially teachers, left in search of better living conditions, but some were expelled for political reasons (Gligor Popi, *Rumuni u jugoslovenskom Banatu između dva rata (1918-1941)*, Novi Sad, Institut za izučavanje istorije Vojvodine, 1976, p. 49, 93). A smaller number of peasants also emigrated hoping to get larger plots of land in Romania (*ibidem*, p. 27-37).

<sup>16</sup> Helmut Frisch, *Werschetz (Versacz – Vršac). Kommunale Entwicklung und deutsches Leben der Banater Wein- und Schulstadt*, Wien, Verlag des Werschetzer Buchausschusses, 1982, p. 280-302; *Heimatbuch der Stadt Weißkirchen im Banat*, Salzburg, Verein Weißkirchener Ortsgemeinschaft, 1980, p. 127; Branislav Bukurov, *Naselja u južnom Banatu*, in "Zbornik Matice srpske za prirodne nauke", XIX (1970), no. 39, p. 42, 49; Zoran Janjetović, *op. cit.*, p. 155.

<sup>17</sup> Zoran Janjetović, *Pitanje zaštite nacionalnih manjina u Kraljevini SHS na konferenciji mira u Parizu 1919-1920*, in "Istorija 20. Veka", XVIII (2000), no. 2; Andrej Mitrović, *Jugoslavija na*

Nations but offered very limited protection. To make things worse, the Yugoslav authorities tended to interpret the Convention rather restrictively. Minorities in the northern parts of the country that could opt for their mother countries were deprived of right to vote until the end of 1922, even though they had to pay taxes and serve in the army just like all other full-fledged citizens. Thus, they could not take part at the elections for the Constituent Assembly that passed the Constitution of the new state – with shabby excuse that potential foreign nationals could not decide on the supreme legislative act<sup>18</sup>. Although the future would prove that national minorities could hardly influence political life,<sup>19</sup> it was a clear sign of discrimination. Exclusion of members of national minorities from the agrarian reform was another aspect. The reform was promulgated even before the peace treaty was signed and executed throughout the next ten-odd years at the detriment not only of large landowners of various ethnic background, but of the poor peasants of non-Yugoslav extraction. Whereas the first lost substantial portions of their estates (as did the churches, banks and some communes), the latter did not receive any land that was reserved for Slavic, mostly Serbian poor peasants and wartime volunteers<sup>20</sup>. The interest was to relieve social tensions, to reward the nationalists from former Habsburg lands who fought on Serbia's side in WWI and to increase the portion of Slavic population in the newly acquired territories in the Vojvodina and in Kosovo where minority populations actually made up the majority<sup>21</sup>.

This way two momentous decisions were made without participation of representatives of the Romanian national minority. The Romanian party was eventually founded in February 1923 and it remained active until King Alexander imposed his dictatorship in January 1929. It could achieve next to nothing due to the small number of its potential voters, disunity among its leaders and constant suspicion of irredentism under which it stood in the eyes of the authorities<sup>22</sup>. Furthermore, large part of minority voters tended to vote for large Yugoslav parties thinking the chances of receiving some benefits from them were bigger than from small minority parties. On the other hand, minority parties also acted in similar way, expecting it would be easier to obtain concessions for their respective minorities through direct negotiations with ruling parties than through a common

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*konferenciji mira u Parizu 1919-1920*, Beograd, Zavod za izdavanje udžbenika SR Srbije, 1968, 52, p. 200-206; Ivo J. Lederer, *op. cit.*, p. 225-226, 239-249, 254-257.

<sup>18</sup> Branislav Gligorijević, *Parlament i političke stranke u Jugoslaviji (1919-1929)*, Beograd, Institut za savremenu istoriju, 1979, p. 71; Zlatko Matijević, "Građani na odkaz" – njemačka nacionalna manjina i 9. članak Zakona o izborima narodnih poslanika za Ustavotvornu skupštinu Kraljevine SHS (1920), in "Godišnjak Njemačke narodnosne zajednice", X (2003).

<sup>19</sup> Zoran Janjetović, *Deca careva...*, p. 172-196.

<sup>20</sup> On the main traits of the Yugoslav agrarian reform cf. Nikola Gaćeša, *Opšta obeležja agrarne reforme i kolonizacije u Vojvodini između dva svetska rata*, in "Jugoslovenski istorijski časopis", XII (1973), no. 3-4.

<sup>21</sup> Nikola Gaćeša, *op. cit.*; Zoran Janjetović, *Deca careva...*, p. 328-345.

<sup>22</sup> Gligor Popi, *Formiranje, delovanje i razvoj Rumunske stranke (1923-1929)*, in "Istraživanja", III (1974); idem, *Rumuni*, p. 54-76. The party managed to return just one deputy to Parliament in 1923.

minority front. This enabled the large Yugoslav parties to receive most minority votes, gain occasional support from minority parties, without giving anything palpable in return<sup>23</sup>. After imposition of royal dictatorship and subsequent revival of political life after 1931, individual minority politicians featured only as ornaments in respective regime parties<sup>24</sup>.

Real improvements in the status of some minorities were achieved not through participation in political life of the country, but rather thanks to foreign political needs of Yugoslavia. The first to enjoy the fruits of these foreign policy considerations was the minuscule Italian minority in 1920s<sup>25</sup>; then the Germans secured educational privileges thanks to improved relations with Germany in 1930<sup>26</sup>. Despite good bilateral relations between Yugoslavia and Romania, the ethnic-Romanians were only the third minority to profit from Yugoslavia's foreign political needs. A convention on schools and churches was agreed upon in 1927, but signed only in 1933. However, the Yugoslav side being dissatisfied with it (since it was allegedly contrary to national interests) a new convention had to be signed in 1934. Unlike Romania, Yugoslavia failed to ratify it, although the part that concerned education was partly implemented<sup>27</sup>. This enabled a considerable number of teachers to come from Romania and teach in Romanian villages of the Yugoslav Banat<sup>28</sup>. Their number was high enough to make a difference in the education of the Romanian minority, but the seamy-side was that some of these teachers were members of the Iron Guard<sup>29</sup>. A part of the teachers from Romania were active in the cultural life of the Romanian minority, and some even stayed after WWII.

Minority culture was cultivated through a number of cultural societies that had been numerous already in Austria-Hungary. Their activities were resumed in 1924. On its founding, the Romanian Party wanted to start a Romanian cultural association with a bright scope of activities: setting up economic institutions,

<sup>23</sup> Zoran Janjetović, *Deca careva...*, p. 182-196.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 211-213.

<sup>25</sup> In order to appease the dangerous neighbor, Yugoslavia was obliged to make a number of concessions to the tiny Italian minority (Ilija Pržić, *Zaštita manjina*, Beograd, 1933, p. 143-149; Pierre Jaquin, *La question des minorités entre l'Italie et la Yougoslavie*, Paris, 1929).

<sup>26</sup> Zoran Janjetović, *Deca careva...*, p. 251-254; idem, *Nemci u Vojvodini*, Beograd, Institut za noviju istoriju Srbije, 2009, p. 200-205. The Volksdeutsche was allowed to found a private teachers' training college and a private burgher-school. A number of German classes was set up in state-run schools throughout northern parts of the country. After the collapse of France in WWII, additional German secondary schools were opened in 1940.

<sup>27</sup> Branislav Gligorjević, *Jugoslovensko-rumunska konvencija o uređenju manjinskih škola Rumuna u Banatu 1933. godine*, in "Zbornik Matice srpske za istoriju", III (1973), no. 7; Gligor Popi, *Rumuni...*, p. 94-113; Ilija Pržić, *op. cit.*, p. 151-154; Andrea Schmidt-Rösler, *op. cit.*, p. 427-437; Zoran Janjetović, *Deca careva...*, p. 254-257; Arpad Török, *Die rumänisch-jugoslawische Minderheitenkonvention und die Minderheitenschutzverträge*, in "Nation und Staat", VII (1933), no. 3, p. 151-155.

<sup>28</sup> According to Popi, their number was 47 by 1935 (Gligor Popi, *op. cit.*, p. 109). By 1938 their number reached 60 (*Die Kulturrechte des Rumänentums im jugoslawischen Banat*, in "Nation und Staat", XIII (1938), no. 1, p. 34).

<sup>29</sup> Gligor Popi, *Românii din Banatul sârbesc (1941-1996)*, vol. II, Pančevo, Libertatea, 1998, p. 26.

giving grants for students, founding and keeping schools and educational courses, publication and distribution of books, magazines and other printed matter, founding of various cultural and sports societies, drama sections etc. This program was far too ambitious for the modest means at disposal of the Romanian national minority – even though it did receive occasional aid in books and journals from cultural institutions and individuals from Romania and the Romanian government<sup>30</sup>.

The main form of cultural activity were choirs and brass bands that almost every village had. In 1931 they founded the Association of Romanian Choirs and Brass Bands, comprising 35 choirs and 14 bands. Other forms of cultural activity – apart from the press, religious circles and some 35 public libraries – were not very developed<sup>31</sup>. In order to unify the cultural activities, the cultural association Astra was founded in 1936<sup>32</sup>. It did contribute to enlivening Romanian cultural life, but its aims were too ambitious for the limited personal and financial possibilities of the Romanian national minority. At the same time, the authorities were less than forthcoming. Romanian cultural life remained a provincial one.

Occupation and dismemberment of Yugoslavia in 1941 did not change much the situation of the Romanian minority in Banat. Romanian government's attempt at obtaining the area failed due to conflict it would cause with the other ally of the Reich, Hungary. Indeed, Hitler had already promised the region to Hungary, and to prevent further deterioration of relations between his allies, he decided to leave the Western Banat as autonomous part of the occupied Serbia. It was put under control of the local Volksdeutsche who enjoyed many privileges, but also increasingly larger and more onerous duties<sup>33</sup>. Ethnic-Romanians were somewhat better off than under Yugoslav rule, but still not equal with the Germans. In terms of provisioning, the Romanians were almost twice less privileged than the Germans<sup>34</sup>. Some 500 Romanians volunteered to join the Romanian army in its crusade against the USSR, but although the leaders were willing to collaborate with the new powers, most of the rest were reluctant to take sides in the war<sup>35</sup>. They were unwilling to act as auxiliary policemen for the Germans, and only a few joined the communist-led resistance movement (that was very weak in the Banat, anyway)<sup>36</sup>.

<sup>30</sup> Idem, *Rumuni...*, p. 127-132.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 141; Zoran Janjetović, *Deca careva...*, p. 294.

<sup>32</sup> Gligor Popi, *Rumuni...*, p. 132-141.

<sup>33</sup> Klaus Olshausen, *Zwischenspiel auf dem Balkan. Die deutsche Politik gegenüber Jugoslawien und Griechenland von März bis Juli 1941*, Stuttgart, Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 1973, p. 209-211; Ekkehard Völkl, *Der Westbanat 1941-1944. Die deutsche, die ungarische und andere Volksgruppen*, München, Ungarisches Institut, 1991, p. 16-18, 29-32; Sandor Vegh, *Le système du pouvoir d'occupation allemand dans le Banat yougoslave 1941-1944*, in *Les systèmes d'occupation en Yougoslavie 1941-1945*, Belgrade, Institut za savremenu istoriju, 1963, p. 495-496.

<sup>34</sup> Gligor Popi, *op. cit.*, p. 43. The Volksdeutsche received 130 kilos of grain per head a year, and Romanians only 70 kilos.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 55.

<sup>36</sup> Cf. Đorđe Momčilović, *Banat u Narodnooslobodilačkom ratu*, Beograd, Institutu za izučavanje istorije Vojvodine, 1977.

The cultural association Astra managed to attract larger following than previously, but it was partly due to provisioning rather than to its cultural activities. However, following the German model of “Ethnic Groups”, it managed to become the sole representative of the Romanian population. Membership became compulsory and individuals could communicate with the authorities only through the Astra. Apart from provisioning, the organization dealt with culture, but also with political mobilization. It collected aid and volunteers for the Romanian army. It gained official status in mid-1942, pressurizing all Romanians to join<sup>37</sup>.

Under the German regime that was more lenient toward non-Serbs, the Vršac gymnasium got four upper grades and a Romanian department was opened at the teachers’ training college in the same town<sup>38</sup>. Cultural societies worked more freely since the Astra was officially acknowledged by the German authorities, becoming synonymous with the “Romanian Ethnic Group”<sup>39</sup>. After Romania changed sides in the war on August 23, 1944, the legionary Ilie Rotea, who came from Romania, proclaimed himself the leader of the “Ethnic Group”. Extreme right elements tried to help the Germans in defending the Banat<sup>40</sup>, but this shift to the right was short-lived since by early October the Red Army and Yugoslav partisans took over.

Unlike the Volksdeutsche who were severely punished for their massive collaboration and war crimes<sup>41</sup>, the Romanians were not perceived as so culpable as to deserve wholesale expulsion and mass shootings. Although all non-Slavs were eyed with suspicion and deprived of rights during the first days of the communist rule, this situation did not last long. Even the Banat Hungarians – who were earmarked for punishment during the first days of the new regime – were gradually set free from concentration camps as early as December 1944<sup>42</sup> and the communists started implementing the policy of national equality they had proclaimed. After a short period of forced labor (mandatory for many other inhabitants of the area)<sup>43</sup>, the ethnic-Romanians were also offered integration into the new society that was in the making. However, it came with a price: they had to

<sup>37</sup> Gligor Popi, *op. cit.*, p. 35, 46-47; Mirča Maran, *Kulturne prilike kod Rumuna u Banatu 1945-1952*, Vršac, Visoka škola za obrazovanje vaspitača „Mihajlo Pupin”, 2008, p. 35, 37-42.

<sup>38</sup> Gligor Popi, *op. cit.*, p. 62-63, 151-153, 163-164; Mirča Maran, *op. cit.*, p. 42-45.

<sup>39</sup> Gligor Popi, *op. cit.*, p. 14-16.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 28-30.

<sup>41</sup> Cf. Arbeitskreis Dokumentation, *Verbrechen an den Deutschen in Jugoslawien 1944-1948. Die Stationen eines Völkermordes*, München, Donaueschwäbische Kulturstiftung, 1998; Zoran Janjetović, *Between Hitler and Tito. The Disappearance of the Vojvodina Germans*, Belgrade, Zoran Janjetović, 2005 (2nd ed.); *Das Schicksal der Deutschen in Jugoslawien*, ed. Theodor Schieder, Augsburg, Welbild Verlag, 1995.

<sup>42</sup> Partial internment of Hungarians started in mid-October (Michael Portmann, *Die kommunistische Revolution in der Vojvodina 1944-1952. Politik, Gesellschaft, Wirtschaft, Kultur*, Wien, Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2008, p. 269).

<sup>43</sup> Gojko Malović, *Vojna uprava u Banatu 1944-1945* (M.A. paper manuscript), Beograd, 1979, p. 105-106, 121; *Jugoslovenski federalizam. Ideje i stvarnost. Tematska zbirka dokumenata*, eds. Branko Petranović, Momčilo Zečević, vol. II, 1943-1986, Beograd, Prosveta, 1987, p. 123.

join the partisan army and help liberate the rest of Yugoslavia. Many were not willing to do it and fled to Romania. Others deserted or went into hiding, whereas many served as military musicians, with some staying eventually in the army as professionals after the war<sup>44</sup>. On the other hand, only 119 Romanians were shot as collaborationists<sup>45</sup> – a small number compared to 7.612 Ethnic-Germans and 2.984 Hungarians in the Vojvodina alone<sup>46</sup>.

Having liberated and reconstituted the country, the leading communists set out to rebuild it on completely new social, political and economic basis. One of the worst problems of the inter-war Yugoslavia was the unsolved national question. In order to gain support from all during the war and in keeping with communist internationalism, the communists promised equal rights to all ethnic groups<sup>47</sup>. Even before the final liberation of the country, they started practicing communist-style inclusion. Romanian Cultural Union (RCU) was founded as early as May 1945. It had an ambitious plan of activities: publishing a weekly, founding sport clubs, public libraries, brass bands, choirs etc.<sup>48</sup>. As before WWII, the program proved too ambitious for such a small minority with so few intellectuals and such modest means. For that reason, the chief activity of the Union was the publication of three journals. In 1948 the RCU joined the Association of Cultural and Educational Societies of Vojvodina. After that the communists took over leadership and cultural work became more dynamic<sup>49</sup>.

This was the functioning pattern of cultural and educational societies: the communists strove to put their own people in charge, desirous of spreading their „gospel” through them, whereas bourgeois intellectuals, who originally led these societies, tried to keep them conservative and national. Romanian cultural societies were subject to the same treatment<sup>50</sup>. In order to better control cultural life in late

<sup>44</sup> *Jugoslovenski federalizam...*, vol. II, p. 148; Gligor Popi, *op. cit.*, p. 24; Mirča Maran, *op. cit.*, p. 49, 75; Michael Portmann, *Die kommunistische Revolution*, p. 284; Perunika D. Petrović, *Rumunska nacionalna manjina u Jugoslaviji od 1945. do 1963. godine* (B.A. paper, manuscript), Beograd, 1992, p. 9, 13; Paul Shoup, *Yugoslavia's National Minorities under Communism*, in “Slavic Review. American Quarterly of Soviet and East European Studies”, XXII (1963), no. 1, p. 76; O rumunskoj nacionalnoj manjini u Jugoslaviji, [1950?], Arhiv Jugoslavije (henceforth: AJ), 507, XVIII, k. 5/1-43.

<sup>45</sup> Srđan Cvetković, *Pregled uhapšenih i streljanih lica od Ozne na teritoriji Vojvodine do 20. juna 1945*, in „Istorija 20. veka”, XXIX (2011), no. 1, p. 200.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 200.

<sup>47</sup> At the second meeting of the partisan quasi-parliament, the AVNOJ, in late November 1943, it was decided that Yugoslavia would be a federation, that all south Slav peoples would be equal, and that national minorities would enjoy all civic and national rights (*Jugoslovenski federalizam. Ideje i stvarnost. Tematska zbirka dokumenata*, vol. I, 1914-1943, eds. Branko Petranović, Momčilo Zečević, Beograd, Prosveta, 1987, p. 801; Ljubiša Stojković, Miloš Martić, *Nacionalne manjine u Jugoslaviji*, Beograd, Rad, 1953).

<sup>48</sup> Gligor Popi, *op. cit.*, p. 123-124; Mirča Maran, *op. cit.*, p. 85-87.

<sup>49</sup> O rumunskoj nacionalnoj manjini u Jugoslaviji, [1949?], AJ, 507, XVIII – k. 5; Informacija o kulturno-prosvetnom radu nacionalnih manjina u Vojvodini, [October, 17, 1958], AJ, 507, XVIII – k. 9/1-36; Mirča Maran, *op. cit.*, p. 109.

<sup>50</sup> Delatnost i stanje partijske organizacije MK Vršac, Vršac, December, 20, 1947, Državni arhiv Srbije (henceforth: DAS), Đ2, Organizaciono-instruktorsko odeljenje, k. 107.



1948 the Association of Cultural and Educational Societies of Vojvodina was created. It engulfed all such societies in the province, with minority associations becoming its sections<sup>51</sup>. Nevertheless, the new Association was seen as too centralized, commanding rather than leading, too concerned with arts and too little with education, its activities overlapping with those of the Ministry of Education, whereas the Association's officials were seen as too one-sided, focused only on one kind of activity<sup>52</sup>.

Already in the summer of 1945 the officially proclaimed equality was anchored in laws prohibiting ethnic discrimination, national and racial hatred<sup>53</sup>. In August 1945 guidelines for setting up schools were laid down. Minorities were granted education in their mother-tongues in separate classes or schools. Official language was taught three classes a week<sup>54</sup>. Schools in Romanian were opened as well as classes at the teachers' training college in Vršac. Between 1945 and 1952, 2.184 Romanians were alphabetized at school and at various courses<sup>55</sup>. By 1950 only 136 Romanians in the Yugoslav Banat were illiterate<sup>56</sup>. Curricula for national minorities were adapted so as to spread knowledge of their national history, geography, literature and language. Although the search for the best way to educate the members of the minorities was continuous, the instruction in mother-tongue in elementary school was never questioned. As for the secondary education, it was much more difficult to organize it, due to lack of teachers, schoolbooks and limited number of students. To be sure, teachers, schoolbooks and school buildings also lacked for elementary education, but these were common weaknesses of education in all of Yugoslavia – even though national minorities felt it more keenly – not due to ill-will of the communist authorities, but to general poverty<sup>57</sup>. Under difficult circumstances the new authorities did what they could to provide minority schools with teachers and schoolbooks. During the first ten-odd years after WWII 152 Romanian teachers were trained at various courses and at the teachers' training

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<sup>51</sup> Mirča Maran, *op. cit.*, p. 90-95; Gligor Popi, *op. cit.*, p. 130; Osnovne karakteristike ostvarenih rezultata kulturno-prosvetnog života i rada nacionalnih manjina u NR Srbiji, [1958], AJ, 507, XVIII – k. 9/1-36. The Association had its commissions for various ethnic groups. The one for the Romanians had its seat in Vršac.

<sup>52</sup> Reorganizacija Saveza kulturno-prosvetnih društava, [1956], AJ, 142, 54/185.

<sup>53</sup> Ljubiša Stojković, Miloš Martić, *op. cit.*, p. 65-66.

<sup>54</sup> Razvoj i problemi manjinskih škola u Jugoslaviji 1945-1956. godine, [1956], AJ, 507, XVIII – k.6/1-24; Problem škola nacionalnih manjina i reforma škole, June 1956, AJ, 507, XVIII-k. 6/1-24; Koča Jončić, *Nacionalne manjine u Jugoslaviji*, Beograd, Savremena administracija, 1962, p. 51; Ljubiša Stojković, Miloš Martić, *op. cit.*, p. 112; Ljubodrag Dimić, *Agitprop kultura. Agitpropovska faza kulturne politike u Srbiji 1945-1952*, Beograd, Nolit, 1988, p. 121.

<sup>55</sup> *National Minorities in Yugoslavia*, Belgrade, Jugoslavija, 1959, p. 24.

<sup>56</sup> Gligor Popi, *op. cit.*, p. 131.

<sup>57</sup> More on minority education in socialist Yugoslavia cf. Zoran Janjetović, *Školstvo nacionalnih manjina u Jugoslaviji 1945-1991*, in *Bez škole šta bi mi?! Oglеди iz istorije obrazovanja u Srbiji i Jugoslaviji od 19. veka do danas*, Beograd, Institut za noviju istoriju Srbije, Institut za pedagogiju i andragogiju Filozofskog fakulteta Univerziteta u Beogradu, 2021.

college in Vršac<sup>58</sup>. By 1957 56 Romanian textbooks were published in 77.500 copies<sup>59</sup>. In order to inform, and ideologically influence the Romanian national minority, the weekly „Libertatea” was launched in May 1945<sup>60</sup>. Next year the „Bucuria pionierilor” was launched as a magazine for children<sup>61</sup>. Other journals followed in later years<sup>62</sup>.

Apart from education in mother tongue, that has always been one of the main important demands of most national minorities, the new authorities took into consideration the members of the national minorities during the agrarian reform which already started in autumn of 1945. By 1950 4.250 Romanian families were granted 8.965 ha<sup>63</sup>, which was in stark contrast with the agrarian policy of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia. It was part of broader policy of winning over poor peasants, but it also served to prove that policy of national equality was a reality.

In order to broaden the basis of their regime and to find the cadres on whom they could rely in winning over minority population, the communist leaders were more than willing to admit members of the national minorities into the Communist Party. Unfortunately for the leading communists, many were not willing to join, ethnic-Romanians in particular. They had no great interest in politics, and the experiences with the Astra during WWII made them especially wary of taking part in political life, lest a new possible upheaval could overtake them. There were obstacles also on the part of the Communist Party itself. Local communists regarded Romanians as backward, conservative, religious and disloyal – hardly as having the making of good communists<sup>64</sup>. These mutual reserves

<sup>58</sup> Školstvo nacionalnih manjina, [1956?], AJ, 507, XVIII – k. 6/1-24; Stanje i problemi školske mreže, October 25, 1957, AJ, 507, XVIII – k. 6/1-24.

<sup>59</sup> Stanje i problemi školske mreže, October 25, 1957, AJ, 507, XVIII – k. 6/1-24.

<sup>60</sup> Mirča Maran, *op. cit.*, p. 87, 204-205. By the early 1950s it reached the print run of 6.000 copies (O rumunskoj nacionalnoj manjini u Jugoslaviji, [1950?], AJ, 507, XVIII – k. 5/1-43).

<sup>61</sup> Mirča Maran, *op. cit.*, p. 219.

<sup>62</sup> Izveštaj o nacionalnim manjinama u FNRJ, October 14, 1958. godine, AJ, 507, III/82; Laslo Rehak, *Štampa u Vojvodini*, in *Vojvodina 1944-1954*, Novi Sad, Matica srpska, 1954, p. 350, 362, 366; Spisak listova i časopisa namenjeni[h] pripadnicima nacionalnih manjina, January-March 1957, AJ, 507, XVIII – k. 8/1-41; Gligor Popi, *op. cit.*, p. 339-343, 392-396, 419-430; Ljubiša Stojković, Miloš Martić, *op. cit.*, p. 202-204; *National Minorities...*, p. 28.

<sup>63</sup> Nikola Gačeša, *Agrarna reforma i kolonizacija u Jugoslaviji, 1945/1948*, Novi Sad, Matica srpska, 1984, p. 199; idem, *Agrarna reforma i kolonizacija u Vojvodini 1945-1948*, in idem, *Radovi iz agrarne istorije i demografije*, Novi Sad, Matica srpska, 1995, p. 460; Michael Portmann, *op. cit.*, p. 321.

<sup>64</sup> Branko Drača, Izveštaj o radu i problemima partiske organizacije sreza Kovinskog za godinu 1947, Kovin, December 27, 1947, DAS, Đ 2, Organizaciono-instruktorsko odeljenje, k. 110; Boro Najdanović, Analiza rada partijske organizacije od januara do decembra 1947 godine, Alibunar, December 24, 1947, DAS, Đ 2, Organizaciono-instruktorsko odeljenje, k. 106; Đoko Crvenković, SK Vršac, Centralnom komitetu KPS, godišnji izveštaj, [1947], DAS, Đ 2, Organizaciono-instruktorsko odeljenje, k. 108; Godišnji izveštaj SK KPS Pančevo za 1947 godinu Pančevo, December 29, 1947, DAS, Đ 2, Organizaciono-instruktorsko odeljenje, k. 113. Out of 55.144 members of the Communist Party of Serbia in early 1946 only 86 were Romanians (Branko Petranović, *Politička i ekonomska osnova narodne vlasti u Jugoslaviji za vreme obnove*, Beograd, Institut za savremenu istoriju, 1969, p. 41).

effectively hindered the intentions of the communist top-brass to gain recruits among the Romanians. Thus, after the initial resistance to the new regime, most Romanians did not join the winners, but rather retreated into passivity<sup>65</sup>.

More active were some intellectuals who had been active during the war, and in some cases even earlier. They perceived themselves as national leaders and they were willing to cooperate with the new regime in order to preserve their ethnic group. On the other hand, the new powers-that-be needed support in broadening the foundations of their power, so they were prone to turn the blind eye to collaborationist activities of some minority leaders during WWII<sup>66</sup>. This compromise proved fruitful for both sides: some of these intellectuals would play the main role in the cultural development of the Romanian national minority during the next few decades. The most prominent among such recycled intellectuals were teachers Mihai Avramescu and Aurel Trifu<sup>67</sup>.

Part and parcel of the communist solution of the national problem was federalization of Yugoslavia. A separate people's republic was reserved for each titular South Slavic nation. The number of members of national minorities in them was small, except for Serbia where 70% of all minorities in the country lived. In order to win them over, without antagonizing the Serbs at the same time, the communist leaders devised a solution along Soviet lines: autonomous provinces that derived their existence partly from their mixed populations<sup>68</sup>. Thanks to its historical and cultural traditions<sup>69</sup> and large proportion of minority population, the

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<sup>65</sup> Pera Crvenković, Godišnji izveštaj o radu Sreskog komiteta KPS Alibunar, [November 30, 1948.], DAS, Đ2, Organizaciono-instruktorsko odeljenje, k. 106; Michael Portmann, *op. cit.*, p. 142; Slobodan Bjelica, *Sporovi oko autonomije Vojvodine*, vol. I, 1961-1974, Beograd, Službeni glasnik, 2015, p. 29-30; O nekim problemima u rumunskoj nacionalnoj manjini u FNRJ, January 9, 1956, AJ, 507, XVIII, k. 5/1-43; Izveštaj druga Hašimbegovića Selima o partijskoj organizaciji okruga petrogradskog (severni Banat), [after July 22, 1945], DAS, Đ2, Odeljenje za informacije, k. 1; Izveštaj drugarice Milke Minić o stanju partijske organizacije na terenu južnobanatskog okruga i sreza Kovinskog, [June 24-29, 1945], DAS, Đ2, Odeljenje za informacije, k. 1; Godišnji izveštaj SK KPS Pančevo za 1947 godinu, Pančevo, December 29, 1947, DAS, Đ2, Organizaciono-instruktorsko odeljenje, k. 113; Jovo Grbović, Politički i ideološki rad u srezu pančevačkom. Politički rad u Kačarevu, [1949], DAS, Đ2, Agitprop komisija/Ideološka komisija, k. 4.

<sup>66</sup> O nekim problemima u rumunskoj nacionalnoj manjini u FNRJ, January 1956, AJ, 507, XVIII, k. 5/1-43.

<sup>67</sup> Mirča Maran, *op. cit.*, p. 69; O rumunskoj nacionalnoj manjini u Jugoslaviji, [1950], AJ, 507, XVIII - k. 5/1-43; O nekim problemima u rumunskoj nacionalnoj manjini u FNRJ, January 9, 1956, AJ, 507, XVIII - k. 5/1-43. One other such intellectual, albeit much less prominent at that time, was Gligor Popi, whose works we have quoted repeatedly in this paper.

<sup>68</sup> Koča Jončić, *op. cit.*, p. 32; Ljubiša Stojković, Miloš Martić, *op. cit.*, p. 73.

<sup>69</sup> The idea of an autonomous territory in southern Hungary occurred already in late 17th century, as large number of Serbs immigrated there from Serbia, fleeing Ottoman persecution. The idea would resurface in late 18th century and again during the revolution 1848. In order to appease the Serbs and hurt the Hungarians, emperor Francis Joseph even created a duchy in southern Hungary in 1849-1860, albeit without any ethnic coherence and autonomy. Former southern Hungarian territories that fell to the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes had no autonomy in the new state either, although they were perceived as a separate part of the country. Some politicians strove to reestablish the Vojvodina as an autonomous region, but they failed. The communists took up the idea and mirrored it

Vojvodina was declared autonomous province within the framework of Serbia, even before the Constitution was passed. Even though the Romanians were a minority third in size (6.5 times less numerous than the largest minority in the province, the Hungarians), the total number of non-Yugoslavs in the Vojvodina made it mandatory for the government to take greater care of their special needs than would be possible in a broader political or administrative unit. Each national minority carried much larger weight in the province than in the country as a whole and for most of them it became a ersatz nation-state within Yugoslavia.

Yugoslavia's break with Stalin in 1948 was an epoch-making occurrence in that state's history as well as in the history of world communism. The conflict revolved around the question of obedience to the international communist center. When Yugoslav leaders released what was at the core of the matter, they started looking for new allies and new ways of social and economic development<sup>70</sup>. Unlike some other ethnic groups, the Romanian national minority in the Banat was not touched much by the Tito-Stalin conflict directly. Only couple of Romanian members of the Communist Party declared themselves in favor of the Cominform resolution against Yugoslavia, but two prominent representatives of the minority, Traian Flora, Chairman of the Romanian Cultural Union and Coriolan Lupșici, member of parliament, were among them. They were sentenced as Romanian spies to seven and ten years in prison<sup>71</sup>. Although the Romanian Embassy in Belgrad was suspect of organizing intelligence work among members of the Romanian minority, only 14 ethnic-Romanians were discovered as involved in such activities, and only 5 of them were sentenced<sup>72</sup>. To be sure, the number of Romanians who aided agents infiltrated from Romania was much higher, but this was not motivated by Stalinist ideology, but by nationalist feelings or friendly or family connections<sup>73</sup>. What prevented a more wide-spread cooperation with the mother-country during Yugoslavia's conflict with the Eastern bloc, was Romanian aversion toward Russia<sup>74</sup>. This, coupled with large abstinence from politics in general, spared the national minority from retaliation and enabled its comparatively peaceful existence in the Yugoslav Banat.

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in their party organization. For the reasons adduced above it was decided after WWII to set up the Vojvodina as an autonomous province within Serbia. Thus, it was the national minorities who eventually profited from the originally Serbian national concept (Cf. Čedomir Popov, Jelena Popov, *Autonomija Vojvodine – srpsko pitanje*, Sremski Karlovci, Krovovi, 2000 (2nd ed)).

<sup>70</sup> On various aspects of the split cf. *Zbornik radova sa međunarodnog okruglog stola Tito-Staljin, Beograd 25. oktobar 2006*, Beograd, Arhiv Jugoslavije, 2007; *Jugoslovensko-sovjetski sukob 1948. godine. Zbornik radova sa naučnog skupa*, Beograd, Institut za savremenu istoriju, 1999.

<sup>71</sup> O rumunskoj nacionalnoj manjini [1950?], AJ, 507, XVIII – k. 5/1-43; Gligor Popi, *op. cit.*, p. 108.

<sup>72</sup> Referat Rumuni. O nekim problemima u rumunskoj nacionalnoj manjini u FNRJ, January 9, 1956, AJ, XVIII – k. 5/ 1-43.

<sup>73</sup> Rumunska nacionalna manjina, [1954], DAS, Đ2, Komisija za nacionalne manjine Centralnog komiteta SKS.

<sup>74</sup> Referat Rumuni. O nekim problemima u rumunskoj nacionalnoj manjini u FNRJ, January 9, 1956, AJ, XVIII – k. 5/ 1-43.

To be sure, quite peaceful existence was not possible during the conflict with East European countries. Tensions on the borders were constant and the threat of war was looming large for several years. Nevertheless, the border with Romania was more peaceful than others, and Romania less willing to send agents and terrorists into Yugoslavia than any other socialist country<sup>75</sup>. At the same time, there were only 49 emigrants into Romania, among some 5.000 Yugoslav citizens who had fled to East European countries until 1952/53<sup>76</sup>. This testifies to small degree of ideological affiliation or even nationalist feelings among the Yugoslav Romanians<sup>77</sup>. On the other hand, after the conflict with Stalin had started, most Romanian leaders and intellectuals in the western Banat obediently toed the official Yugoslav line, condemning political moves of their mother-country at various rallies and meetings<sup>78</sup>. In this they evinced a sense of political pragmatism from which the whole national minority benefited.

Other difficulties caused by the Yugoslav-Soviet rift were incumbent on all citizens of the country, irrespective of their ethnic affiliation. One unsavory feature of the socialist system was the pressure on peasants to join cooperatives. Although cooperatives were being founded ever since 1945, the split with Stalin intensified the process – in order to prove ideological orthodoxy to the Big Brother<sup>79</sup>. Thus 22 all-Romanian peasant cooperatives were set up in the Banat area by March 1, 1950. Apart from them there were other 78 where Romanians were members together with people from other nationalities<sup>80</sup>. 2.209 Romanian families joined cooperatives, but not always without pressure: in the village of Lokve 50 Romanian women were arrested on charges of “economic sabotage”<sup>81</sup>. Luckily for the peasantry, the policy of collectivization was given up already in March 1953 and most cooperatives dissolved soon afterwards<sup>82</sup>.

<sup>75</sup> Until the mid-1950s, 327 agents were sent from Bulgaria, 240 from Albania, 30 from Hungary and only 17 from Romania (Momčilo Mitrović, Slobodan Selinić, *Jugoslovenska informbiroovska emigracija u istočnoevropskim zemljama 1948-1964*, in “Tokovi istorije”, XV (2009), no. 1-2, p. 45).

<sup>76</sup> FNRJ, DSUP, UDB I odeljenje, Jugoslovenska emigracija u IB zemljama 1952-1953. godine, Beograd [after 1952], Hrvatski državni arhiv (henceforth: HDA), 1561, SDS RSUP SRH, šifra 1, 10/33.

<sup>77</sup> Presumably, part of the most ardent nationalists had left to join the Romanian army in WWII, and others had cooled down in the meantime.

<sup>78</sup> Gligor Popi, *op. cit.*, p. 106-107.

<sup>79</sup> Srđan P. Milošević, *Agrarna politika u Jugoslaviji (1945-1953)* (Ph.D. manuscript), Beograd, 2015, p. 451-452. Pandering to rich peasants and tolerance of capitalist elements in agriculture were among accusations the Cominform leveled against the Yugoslav Party leaders. Before they started looking for their own way, Yugoslav communist leaders tried to prove the falseness of Soviet accusations by showing their own Marxist orthodoxy. Among other things this meant stepping up the creation of peasant cooperatives (Momčilo Pavlović, *Radikalizovanje agrarne politike kao posledica sukoba sa Informbiroom*, in *Jugoslovensko-sovjetski sukob 1948. godine. Zbornik radova sa naučnog skupa*, Beograd, Institut za savremenu istoriju, 1999).

<sup>80</sup> Mirča Maran, *op. cit.*, p. 67; Gligor Popi, *op. cit.*, p. 104.

<sup>81</sup> Gligor Popi, *op. cit.*, p. 101-104.

<sup>82</sup> Momčilo Pavlović, *op. cit.*, p. 207; Gligor Popi, *op. cit.*, p. 104; Srđan Cvetković, *Između srpa i čekića. Represija u Srbiji 1944-1953*, Beograd, Institut za savremenu istoriju, 2006, p. 457. In fact,

The Romanians of Western Banat experienced three turbulent decades between 1918 and 1948. Within just one generation they lived to see the break-up of the Habsburg Monarchy, the creation of Yugoslavia, its demise in WWII, the communist liberation, the imposition of communist system and eventual split with the Soviet Union. Being a real minority, they were denied self-determination and become subjects of a country in which they, like all national minorities, were second-class citizens. German occupation of 1941 upgraded their status a bit, without endowing them with equal rights as the Germans. Eventually, this turned to be good for them, since they were not involved in collaboration and war crimes. This enabled them to make a fairly smooth transition into socialist Yugoslavia. The leading communists were willing to grant equality to all – within the framework of their system that was equally oppressive for all citizens. Due to Romanians' isolationism and conservatism, they could never be firmly integrated in the socialist system – even when it gradually became more liberal than in other East European countries. Like some other national minorities, they remained rather static and self-sufficient well into 1980s<sup>83</sup>.

### **Romanian national minority in the Yugoslav Banat 1918-1948**

#### *Abstract*

*The Romanians of Western Banat experienced three turbulent decades between 1918 and 1948. Within just one generation they lived to see the break-up of the Habsburg Monarchy, creation of Yugoslavia, its demise in WWII, communist liberation, imposition of communist system and eventual split with the Soviet Union. Being a real minority, they were denied self-determination and become subjects of a country in which they, like all national minorities, were second-class citizens. Then, the leading communists were willing to grant equality to all – within the framework of their system that was equally oppressive for all citizens. Due to Romanians' isolationism and conservatism, they could never be firmly integrated in the socialist system – even when it gradually became more liberal than in other East European countries.*

*Keywords: Romanians; national minority; Yugoslavia; Banat; communism.*

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disintegration of cooperatives started already in 1951, when the compulsory sale of agriculture products at low prices was abolished; many farmers joined cooperatives in order to avoid it, rather than out of economic or ideological conviction (Srđan P. Milošević, *op. cit.*, p. 477; Michael Portmann, *op. cit.*, p. 340-341, 351).

<sup>83</sup> Saša Kicošev, *Geografske i demografske karakteristike rumunske narodnosti u SAP Vojvodini* (Ph.D. manuscript), Novi Sad, 1989, 62, p. 131-136.