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Summary

**ASPECTS FROM „ASTRA’S” ACTIVITY IN THE DIVIDING OF  
REGHIN AND TÎRGU – MUREȘ  
(1872 – 1940)**

SCIENTIFIC LEADER

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## INTRODUCTION

From the beginning, the association was the expression of the only purpose to emancipate the Romanian nation through culture. The level of realization of national and cultural unity was considered to be reflected by the dividing activity. Through the Association's regulations, it was established that the supreme leading authority was the general gathering, and the executive was the Central Committee. Its success in Reghin was due to the concord between the priests, traders, lawyers and the local schoolteachers. Eight people from Reghin signed next to other 162 persons on the petition that was sent to count Lichtenstein in 1860, demanding approval to founding the Association, fact that was due to happen in 1861. Later, in 1863/64 and 1864/65 it was noted that Grindeanu the judge, N. Marinoviciu, the trader, Mihail Orbonașiu the lawyer, Mihai Crișan, Alexia Onițiu the assessor and George Sceopulu (the Cripple) have all each paid 10 fr. In 1866/67. Vasile Pop Ladislau could have had an influence; he was the second president of Astra.

Included into the inauspicious political context of Transylvania, the Tg. Mureș town had another problem: the massive Hungarian presence which in many moments along the history has suffocated any attempt of a normal social, political, economical and cultural Romanian life. The politic of magyarization has continued at the end of XIX th century and the beginning of XXth century through the Ministry of Cults and Public Instruction and the Intern Affairs Ministry which demanded the censorship of the Romanian books and textbooks. At the beginning of the year 1909, the counties administrative authorities received a secret order to baffle the adults courses that were aiming to teach reading-writing, under the pretext that they were spreading knowledge against the state. The failure of Budapest's politic to create a devotion feeling through the educational system was obvious. It was the motive of the reproaches brought by Appony (the minister of Cults and Education) to Vasile Marga the Metropolitan bishop, in 1917. a large number of Astra's members have been active participants to Romania's war efforts that started in 1916. Amongst the dead, wounded or missing usually were the leaders of the subordinate structures of Astra – from the area of Mureș Inferior, such as I. Pantea the lawyer and Al. Târnaveanu the priest. Before, during and after the war the number of the dividing remained constant, but the number of members has changed: from 18.963 in 1914, to 2769 in 1915 and 1679 in 1916.

At Tg. Mureș it was found out pretty quick about the existence of the Society from Sibiu, and the proof of its beginning appeared in the year 1868 when the Greek-catholic precentor Vasile Hosu has paid his contribution of 5 fr. in 1866/1867. At Vasiliu Ladislau Pop's proposal to extinct the number of collectors, in Tg. Mureș were registered Vasile Gaetanu – assessor of the royal Board – for the year 1867/68 who had his tax paid in his own name. And Iosif Fülep the trader who sent both his taxes and those collected by the assessor

Antoniu Stoica, the traders Dănilă Moldovan and George Moldovan, Ioan Bardoși, Radu Fogarași and other citizens from Zau de Câmpie.

Restarting the life of the Romanians from Transylvania under all its aspects, after 1919, was stuck by some contrary aspects and points of view which belonged to the Hunarian ethnic group that was incapable to accept the new reality. In this new reality in which they, who have been masters almost 1000 years, now, they were equal or even inferior as social rank.

## **CHAPTER 1. THE TRANSYLVANIAN ROMANIANS IN THE SECOND HALF OF THE XIX TH CENTURY POLITICO – EDUCATIONAL AND CULTURAL CONTEXT AND UP TO THE FIRST DECADES OF THE XX TH CENTURY**

In the copy of one of a imperial rescript published in 1866 – entitled „The Romanian Zion” – was written about the imperial attempt to stop the persecution over the Romanians from religious reasons. The authenticity of this act was questioned. The fact is that the emperor Leopold in Transylvania’s Magna Charta – his diploma from 1791 – confirmed Aprobatele and Compilatele, referring to the articles from the law that were against the old Romanians’ confession, but the Kallonis cardinal didn’t subscribe to this act „the fanatic forerunner of all the confessions”. The Csera chronicle writer and others were claiming that these laws were completed by other ones which were secret and these ones were in contradiction with the first ones. These laws were mainly against the Calvinism.

The war between Austria and Prussia and the defeat of the Austrians at Sadowa in 1866 has excluded the Habsburgs from the competition with the Hohenzollerns for the realization of the German unification. It has also determined Austria to search for solutions to consolidate its own empire, which lead to a long agreement with Deák Ferenc, Eötvös baron and Andrassy count to sustain the dualism demanded by them. To stop the tensions and the conflicts with the Hungarians who demanded the recognition of their politico and national identity, the empire reorganization was made on account of a dualist monarchy.

In the years 1861 and 1865, Transylvania has suffered an economical deterioration process due to a succession of flood and hail along with drought. In these constant unfavorable conditions, Vicențiu Babeș realised the importance of national conciousness and voluntary adhesion, considerind the tongue representative „the basic type and characters of a nation”. If the nations politically subdued by the Austia had the right to keep their mother tongue and their cultural life, the nations towered by the Hungarians – the Slovacs, the Rhutens, the Serbs and especially the Romanians – were under an intolerant regim. In 1869, in the Mureș area, along with the hostile conditions were also the situations told by Partenie Trombițaș to A. Șaguna „because of the urban trials against the

Romanians owners by the adversaries, led to the lack of any elementary means of living and scattering of the Romanians”. And he was asking for help. For Austria, the Hungary’s threat to divide and seek independence, along with the conditions of their agreement between them, allowed not only the right to govern but also the right of magyarization of the nations subdued. The increasing number of population between the years 1840 and 1869 from 4.812.759 to 6.156.421, the Hungarian nation’s situation has gotten better, but still, wasn’t satisfying. After the Hungarians, the Romanians were the second place according to their number: 2.470.069 – this number including those from „St. Stefan Crown” territory that included Hungary and Transylvania. In the new Austro-Hungarian frame established at 5/17<sup>th</sup> February 1867, Transylvania’s autonomy was abolished, the count Andrásy Gyula was named prime minister and the Transylvanian Aula from Vienna was eliminated. The coronation of Francisc Iosif I of Austria as king of Hungary on the 8<sup>th</sup> of June 1867 has coincided with the ceasing of Austrian absolutism and the beginning of the Austro-Hungarian dualism. Through the imperial prescript from June 27<sup>th</sup> 1867 all the Romanians and Sas political rights were abolished by the eradication of the Dieta. The law 44 that was voted in the Parliament from Budapest, was consecrating the unification, and through the decision of the Hungary government May 1869, the Transylvanian guberniu/government was abolished. The Hungarian law number 30 from 1876 and with its adding in 1877 was demolishing any trace of autonomy, ensuring the domination of the Hungarian element. Through the law 21/1886, the territory divisions, of the highest rank, were given the attribute of „jurisdictiuni”, which were two categories: counties and towns.

The Hungarian county organization played a role of ceasing a nation, a role that was emphasized in the memorandum of Romanians’ from Transylvania and Hungary, a political document elaborated by P.N.R. and taken to the Imperial court in May 28<sup>th</sup>/June 3<sup>rd</sup> 1892 by a delegation of Romanians from Transylvania, led by Ion Rațiu. During the dualism period, the cities with the right of municipality were considered a special category, their experience found its explanation in the content of the law 42 from 1870 – the counties and some of the old free royal cities, but with a Hungarian majority, had the same right, that is why Timișoara, Oradea, Satu-Mare, Cluj and Tg-Mureș were grounded with this „honor”. Brașov, Sibiu, Mediaș, Sighișoara and Sebeș were also free royal cities, but their population did not include a Hungarian majority, so they have been excluded. Reghin was an exception because of his political and economical importance, and it was accepted the right to be framed as a city, but only until 1876 when it was demoted.

The necessity of a political organization of the Romanians from Transylvania led to creating of National Romanian Party from Banat in 1869 led by Alexasndru Mocioni, followed by the National Romanian Party from Transylvania led by Ilie Măcelariu which only after a month was forbidden by the Hungarian authorities.

The preoccupation of the representative high rank Romanians have pointed out „the high dietary” the necessity of creating some schools in 1849 – 1851. They based their demands on the principals of equality, righteousness and equity, but they were in vain. In the writings of the reformed church published in 1873, has brought attention to the fact that in XVIII th century, only during Iosif the IInd it has started building Romanian schools at Blaj. But after his death, most of the schools have been closed down or demolished. They wailed Șincai and forced all those who wanted to study to go to Romano-catholic or Calvinist of the Greek-catholic schools. And this led to the Hungarization with no turning back of their majority (Bethlem, Rendefi-Cândea, Barcsai-Borcea, Kemeny-Coman, Zeik-Zaicu, Natalai, Teleki, Papilla a general during Iosif, Meheșiu, Costa who were chancellors, Rusu under the name oros, guberial chancellor, Clusianu under the name Koloszi sons of an archpriest etc).

In the XIXth century the Hungarian state was creating the legal environment to change the names into Hungarian ones: „The law of national equality” in 1868 in which it was written an article that said „In Hungary there is just one nation, unique, undivided, the Hungarian nation”. Furthermore, in March 26<sup>th</sup> 1881 the „Central Society to Hungarisation of the names” was created and its chairman was Telkes Samuel, the author of the brochure „How to Magyarizate the surnames”.

The third efficient mean of magyarization of the names and making the Hungarian language compulsory on Hungary territory, was EMKE. From several points of view, it was noticed that the stage and the level of the public educational system from Hungary and Transylvania was very low. Moreover, through the law from 1868 the institution of school inspector and school senate were lost and the poor progress made under Austria, disappeared. Trefort himself – the cults and public instruction ministre – after a tour, coming back to Budapest published two acts from which it was noticed the dissatisfaction regarding the teachers, principals and the schools senates, the lack of discipline, lack of classrooms and school magazines, lack of hygiene. The Sass people had a satisfying situation from all points of view. Therefore, Treford has issued the March 8<sup>th</sup> 1874 act, through which he „recommended” the committee to be more rigorously. And, after his journey to Germany, he has brought to Cluj, Germans that knew Hungarian also, so he could establish here the University. In the year 1879, the parliament has voted „The law which introduced the compulsory of Hungarian language in all the primary schools” – Treford’s law. In 1893, the second Treford law prefigured that in the Middle Schools that were not Hungarians, the number of classes in which the language of teaching is Hungarian to increase, to increase also the number of checking and the numbers of the final exams held up in front of a committee instituted by the government.

The year 1891 brought „The law of the institutions (the kinder gardens) for the children”, those who were between 3 and 6 year old had to be sent to these institutions to be trained through „pious exercises” inter confessional to study the Hungarian language, and this led to decreasing the number of schools that were



not Hungarian, up to 1892, and increasing the number of Hungarian school up to 56%. During the reign of Iosif the IInd, Romanians were not allowed to build churches with towers or bells, but between 1860 and 1892, according to the statistics, the two Metropolitans and the five Romanian Bishoprpic have built approximately 500 churches made of rock.

In 1894, Astra from Sibiu insisted over the problems related to education. According to nationality, the Romanian pupils appear to be the last ones to attend to school classes, compared to the other nations from the multiethnic state: the first ones were the Germans 94%, Hungarians 86%, Slovaks 84%, Serbians 76%, Croatians 74%, Carpatho-Russian 70% and Romanians 57%. In the statistic „Yearbook” the Romanians were on the second place on the list of illiterates.

At the beginning of the XXth century the Hungarization politic continues. In the year 1909, the administrative organs have received a secret order from the Intern Ministry in which it was demanded the thwart the adults reading and writing courses. Implementing the Apponyi's laws and increasing the numbers of Hungarian classes has led to a gradually and worrisome diminutions of school frequency. Kristoffy's projects of laws from 1906 and especially I. Andrassy's project were tying the right to vote to the knowledge of reading. This led to enhancement of the courses and organization of these courses by the Romanians, reason for which in 1908 Astra was demanding the principals of the dividing to continue this approach. All these made that, in 1917, the Apponyi minister to be revolted that implementation of the Hungarian patriotism in the peak period in the confessional schools to be a failure. Between 1913 – 1914, the villages from the upper and lower magistracy of the Tg.-Mureş dividing, were under the Bőjtes, the notary cercal, observation and he was walking with the gendarmes to stop any form of Romanian manifestation. Between 1914 and 1916, the period was not at all favorable to this kind of activities, because many teachers were on the battlefield, and the children were substituting the lack of men in the families, and they were also doing the house chores. The clash of the Austro-Hungarian Empire has led to a number of attacks over the mansions and warehouses in the entire Mureş-Turda County. In November 6th 1918 the subprefect raported that over  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the territory has suffered these events. The Greate Headquatr has answered to the Hungarian military aggressions from the April to August with an attack that led to the occupying of Budapest in August 3rd 1919.

In the year 1927 – 1928 the central Mureş County dividing, included 38 villages, many of them Hungarized, which made the situation here to be exceptional. In March 1929, Astra was publishing in Transilvania magazine an article entitled „New problems in Astra's preoccupations. For the middle class and the city working class”, in the essence of which it demanded „the Romanization f the cities beyond the Carpathians”. Actually, in the ten years after 1918 it has managed to reRomanized only 2-3 cities. The Mureş dividing in 1928/1929 had the Niraj valley wchich has been completely denationalized. It has

become a state politic, from the Cults and Arts Ministry it has received subsidies of 10 and 20 thousand lei to continue the process of Romanization in 9 of these villages, an act that has been a failure. Abrogating the constitution in 1923, in the new one from 1938, it was mentioned that „All the citizens are equal in front of the law”, and in the second title were enlisted their duties and rights.

## **CHAPTER 2. SHORT CULTURAL HISTORY OF REGHIN AND TG.-MUREȘ TOWNS**

### **2.1. The town of Reghin**

The placement situated at the confluence of the rivers Gurghiu and Mureș, had the name revealed in the year 1228. G. D. Teutsch in „The History of Sass from Transylvania for the Sass people” called it „The kind town”.

The high socio- economical and political rank compared to the other towns from the east of Transylvania, is reflected in the fact that in 1330 was the residence of a Dean’s Church, and in 1332 of a kapitlu. With all these, in the second half of the XIVth century, it was still under the influence of the city Cluj, the traders from Cluj had here an intense activity, and their products filled the market. In 1361, in an act referring to the traders from Bistrița who were competing with the traders from Cluj, the town Reghin was named „Reugun”. In another document from 1427, the Reghin town appears for the first time as a market – oppidum Regen – to whom from 1447 the Transylvania’s voivod Ladislau Bánffy grounded the right to have cereals and kettles markets. The progress of the handicrafts, money prosperity allowed the opening of new confessional schools in the century XVth. The University from Krakow – found in 1364 – at the end of XVth century, was becoming the most important centre of the Humanism in East Europe. Here, enlisted twelve young men, but none of them were Romanians. In the XVIth century, the laic tendency was felt in Reghin, and a breach in the church culture appeared. From this town, between the years 1520 – 1700, only six young men were to leave abroad for studies, but not to Krakow, to Vienna, Wittenberg, Leipzig and Frankfurt n Oder or at the Academy from Strasburg – neither now, nor in the XVIIIth century, we could not find a Romanian young man.

Although there are no precise dates regarding the money possibility and the preoccupations in the cultural domain of the twenty Romanian traders families, born in Macedonia enlisted at Reghin in 1733 by the Clain census, but it is known that the families Marinovici, Bardoși, Vraciu, Muntean, Radu and Mihailovici have contributed with tenth or even hundreds florins to set up the first Romanian school in Reghin, then buying the field and building here a wooden church. They adhered at the Transylvanian Association’s objectives, contributing financially and supporting it.

At the beginning of the year 1919, the Romanian authorities have taken all the state schools from Reghin: the first one was the boys' civil school, which was transformed into a Romanian high school. The professional educational system was incorporated into the Romanian labor educational system, from forty industrial and commerce schools from Transylvania, one was at Reghin.

Astra's dividing Reghin reorganized in 1923 became catalyst of a cultural movement that hadn't been seen before, its main purpose being the education and culture, arousing in the nation consciousness the national ideal. In 1919 there were established „The Romanian Craftsmen's Society”, the Craftsmen's Chorus, the Craftsmen's Library, the Romanian Apprentice's Hostel, the Craftsmen's canteen. Alexandru Dima said that after 1918 forty-eight libraries were established in Reghin, and their total volume of books was counting 30.256. In June 15<sup>th</sup> 1933 „Astra” library opened its doors for all the book readers.

## **2.2. The town of Tg.-Mureş**

The first documentary cerify of the town dates from 1332 and appears on a list of taxes of the Pope, in which it is mentioned the priest Roman from Târgul-Nou of the Szekelies, Novum Forum Sicolorum. The name Novum Forum Sicolorum lasted up to 1370, when it was changed with Szekelyvásárhely, Tg.-Secuiesc. The name would be changed through the April 1616 Gabriel Bethlen's diploma. He repaid the bravery of the inhabitants by giving the name to their town Marosvásárhely (Tg.-Mureş). The first statistic made in 1733 by Inocențiu Micu Klein showed that there were „three hundred united souls” and here it must be added the 10% percentage of orthodoxies. Large numbers of orthodoxies were embracing the „unification” only after the year 1750. A more precise statistic from 1772 showed that here were 56 united families and 39 not united, and if we count the numbers of members, we can estimate 475 people. The enlisting of military and civil authorities in 1785 showed the existing of 4957 numbers of souls of which 10% were Romanians. In 1927 here were: 18.158 Hungarians, 11.229 Romanians, 5084 Jewish, 879 Germans ans 3152 „others”.

If in the absolutism era, between the years 1850 – 1876 there have been many primary schools with well prepared teachers in the schools from Ardeal, after 1876 the gates of Romanian schools have closed down step by step, but pretty fast. Romanian children had to study at the Hungarian state schools, and from here the process of Hungarization has flown pretty smooth. According to the picture of the Romanian schools situation between the years 1876 – 1919, made by school inspector Ieronim Puia, we can see that during 41 years the number of these schools has decreased with 34%, and after the Apponyi's laws from 1907, the schools that have remained were far to be able to preserve the national culture and spirit like the old ones.

At the beginning of the XVIIIth century there were two schools „one united and one not united”, and at the beginning of the next century the „not united” one disappeared. The united school was forced to abolish in 1912.

At 2<sup>nd</sup> December 1918 the Romanian army entered Tg.-Mureş, and from Sibiu, the Dirigent Council named as prefect of Mureş County the lawyer dr. Ioan Vescan. As a sequel of the new conditions and thank to the school inspector's skills Ieronim Puia, the primary school from the county has been reestablished. If in 1918 the county had 86 schools with the same number of teachers, in 1930 there were 215 schools with 417 teachers.

## **CHAPETR 3. THE ESTABLISHMENT, THE ORGANIZATION AND REORGANIZATION OF THE REGHIN AND TG.-MUREŞ DIVIDING BETWEEN THE YEARS 1872 -1940**

### **3.1. Reghin dividing**

Among the 170 people who signed the petition to Lichtenstein count to set up Astra at the date May 10<sup>th</sup> 1860, there were the Reghin dwellers: T. Şerban Lupu, Ioan P. Maior, P. Anca, N. Mrinovicu, M. Orbonaş, M. Crişan and Nicolae Görog. The exhibition organized in 1862 at Braşov was already honored by the presence of the exhibits of twenty members from Reghin. From the year 1873, N. Marinovicu's children, were offering in their father's name bonds of about 2350 florins, as capital for founding of a school remittance of 60 florins and they have given these money through the foundation that was carrying the name of the senior. Fourteen years later, on April 2<sup>nd</sup> /14<sup>th</sup> 1874 the dividing XVIIth Reghin of the Association was constituted. It included villages from the circle Turda de Sus and Tulgheş, its manager was chosen to be Ioan P. Maior, „great landowner” and „ordinary member lifelong”. For collecting the taxes from the members from Reghin and the surroundings, Anania Trombiţaş and Mihai Orbonaş were commissioned. The gathering of the Reghin dividing scheduled to be held at Borsec in 1874 faced the opposition of the Hungarian authorities the vicecomit Csik Solyom and Ferencz Puskas, but when V. P. Ladislau intervened, they received the agreement (it was the second meeting of the dividing). In 1890 from Sibiu came demands of a new meeting of the Reghin dividng XVIIIth. This was to happen in 1891. Under the pressure of the authorities, in 1897 they had to give up at the name „Transylvanian” from the title „Transylvanian Association for Romanian Literature and the Culture of Romanian People”, but they missed the fact that the magazine was named „Transylvania”. In the same year, the Mureş – Turda County was to include Tg.- Mureş Dividing and Reghin Dividing. The Reghin Dividing had: the territory: the town of Reghin; the administrative circle Reghinul de Jos and Reghinul de Sus, the village Cojocna administrative circle Teaca; the centre: Szekely Reghin.

On the ocation of the Reghin Dividing meeting held on September 25<sup>th</sup> 1913 in the „Murăşana” place, Vasile Duma, a member, came with the idea of separating the Reghin Dividing in two: „The Upper Reghin Dividing” and „The

Lower Reghin Dividing”. Both were to have the centre at Reghin. This proposal was made due to the fact that the Dividing had too many villages: 65. The logic of this separation was to be set by O. C. Tăslăuanu – he was born at Bilbor, in the Mureş Superior area – he participated at the meeting from October 9<sup>th</sup> 1913 from the Greek-Catholic school from Reghin. Here it was decided the division: Reghin Dividing had 31 villages. The second Dividing was Gurghiu which had the other ones. In 1914 Teaca Dividing had 38 villages and Gurghiu Dividing had 28; Teaca Dividing reestablished itself under the management of Vasile Podoabă the archbishop in January 10<sup>th</sup> 1921. In April 1921, from the central management level of Astra were taken reconfigured measurements of the Dividings, having in consideration the counties and the existence nettings, and seven other had to be reorganized, and in this category was included Reghin also. Ioan Harşia gave up at management, the archbishop Vasile Duma took care of the interim, he was asked by the rulers from Sibiu „to condescend to summon the circular meeting with the purpose of reorganization of the Dividings”, but this has not been made not even after an year. In this situation, the central committee elicited the young Eugen Nicoară to reorganize the Dividing, this happening in the year 1922 and in the same time with the answer for Nicoară related to a scientific paper which was to be sent to evaluation by the Medical Section of the Association. Gurghiu Dividing was reorganized on 22<sup>nd</sup> January 1922 by the forestry school’s principal Aurel Mureşan. Reghin Dividing was once more reorganized on 19<sup>th</sup> February 1923, fact reported by Nicoară. In 1924, from the C. C. report of Astra’s it was made known that the Dividing Gurghiu and reghin had fuzioned. Like Tg.-Mureş, Reghin belonged now to the same administrative-territory structure, that was Mureş-Turda County and it included 62 villages and 52 circles and it stretched over more nettings. This according t the new statute meant establishing more Dividings in the future.

With the occasion of the general meeting of Astra’s held at Reghin in 1925 it has been decided the reorganization of the Dividing and assignation to them according to their nettings. As a consequence of this restructure, Reghin had now 21 villages, but it continue to help the others that used to belong to it.

The nettings were the following:

1. The Netting of Reghin de Sus with its centre at Reghin, the chairman was dr. E. Nicoară;
2. The Netting of Reghin de Jos, with the organization of this Dividing was commissioned the priest I. Sărmăşanu from Voivodeni;
3. The Netting Topliţa – its organization vas commissioned to the doctor Nicolae Vasu;
4. The Netting Gurghiu – here, Leon Ternoveanu, the priest from Hodac was commissioned to reorganize the Dividing;
5. The Netting Eremitu, where a Dividing was t be organized by the priest Iuliu Grama from Chiger.

This organization was to last up to the Hortyst conquer from 1940. After the year 1940, dr. Harşia, dr. Enea S. Popa, Ioan Popescu etc., on the August 23<sup>rd</sup>

1942 have tried to rebuilt the Dividings under a new name „The Intellectuals' Circle from Reghin and Surroundings”, but their activity was stopped. A new attempt was in 1947, on the occasion of the organization „Ploughmen's front” meeting, but the communist regime that was new installed ended it.

### **3.2. Tg.-Mureş dividing**

In the first years after the establishment of Astra, the collector from Tg.-Mureş Demetriu Fogoraşi, sent different sums of money to the Association's fond and these money represented the taxes of the members from Tg.-Mureş for the years 1863, 1864. In the year 1866, the number of the members has increased, they were; the trader Demetriu Fogoraşi – foundation member; ordinal members: the knight Ioan Alexandru – the vice chairman of the Royal Board; owner Ioan Bardoşi, Greek-Catholic church community from Tg.-Mureş, the traders Radu Fogaraşi, Constantin Bardoşi, Daniel Moldovan, George Moldovan, the Greek-Catholic archbishop Iosif Nyulasi, the tax agent Gregoriu Pop, assessors at the Royal Board Matei Pop Grindeanu, George Roman, Antoniu Stoica, the chancellor George Tăbăcariu and the assessor Nicolae Vlad. Along with these ones, have sent money the owner also: petru Alexandrescu and Eremia Ladoşanu – the last one was from Sângeorgiu de Mureş. By the means of Iosif Fülep have also sent offers and collects: „the massar” Ioan Aldea; the traders Daniel Aldea and Benjamin Filip; from the villages: Ivăneşti, Lăureni, Sângeorgiu de Mureş. Amongst the names of Romanians from Tg.-Mureş that were paying the taxes appear those of the assessors at the Royal Board from Tg.-Mureş: Stoica Antoniu for the years 1865/6 6/7 7/8, Patriciu Constantin 1874/5 5/6 and the vicar Tancu Simeon from Sângeorgiu de Mureş for the years 1862/3 5/6 and 6/7. In the year 1868, the Astra's committee names as collector for Tg.-Mureş the assessors at the Royal Board, Nicolae Gaetanu along with the trader Iosif Fülep. In the same year, Nicolae Gaetanu has retired and left the town, the only collector remaining Iosif Fülep. With the occasion of the Association's XIth general gathering held at Şomcuta Mare in August 11th 1869 it was shown that there were 16 Dividings and it was necessary to establish six more, among which was Tg.-Mureş also. This desiderium was to happen on the 6th July 1876 and the catalyst was the second meeting of Reghin Dividing – which took place at Deda on August 10th 1874, the year when this Dividing was created. In the ordinary meeting of the Association's Committee held in September 19th 1876 under the chairman Iacob Bologna, it has been presented the minute about the establishment and the institution of the Dividing number XIX „Murăsiu-Osiorhei”. The new established board of the Dividing XIX - Tg.-Mureş – was formed by Demetriu Fogoraşi as Chairman and the ordinal members Matei Pop Grindeanu, Vasile Hosu, Simion Căluţiu, Eremia Ladosianu, Rudolf Fogoraşi and Partenie Trombiţaş.

Due to the Transylvania's political and social situation in general and the situation of the Romanians from this town in particular, they were considered citizens of inferior rank and they were treated like wise, their means to evolve

culturally were moving and were evolving with great difficulties because of the set backs of the local authorities and numerous Hungarian dwellers here and in the surroundings.

After the death of Demetriu Fogorași in 1879, came a decline period for the Tg.-Mureș Dividing. There were difficulties even in rebuilding the subcommittee because the jurists that were in charged with the Royal Board were afraid to take the leading command. In the same period, through the „provocation number 85683” of the Intern Ministry, it was demanded that 12 dividing to stop their activity if they did not sent their statute according to which they were displaying their activity until 30<sup>th</sup> November – between these Dividing was Tg.-Mureș also. The demand was irrational because the statutes had been sent long time before by the centre, and the Dividings were founding their existence and their programmes on them.

A new assignation of the Dividings was anounced in 1889 for the dividings made of 26 counties, amongst which was Mureș-Turda County also.

After this, for thirteen years there were no news related to Tg.-Mureș. In the year 1912, a new circular meeting was held at Sângeorgiu de Mureș, where it has been discussed a division of it, a problem that was discussed again in 8th December where it eas stated that a Dividing woud be Tg.-Mureș which would include 29 villages and the other Dividing would be Râciu with 14 villages – intercession established by the chairman of the Tg.-Mureș Dividing, Nicolae Vulcu.

Because of the obstruction that came from the authority of the Mureș’s Lower Preturia, this division was possible only in July 13th 1913 – according to the new calendar. Dr. Ioan Pantea became the chairman of the Tg.-Mureș Dividing which had 46 villages and five agenturas; in 1914 Pantea was called up.

The chairman of Râciu Dividing was Alexandru Târnoveanu, and had 14 villages and six agenturas. Because of the war and because of the lack of a sollution, Tg.-Mureș Dividing was reorganized by the Romanian prefet Ioan Vescan at 1st December 1919. Râciu Dividing could be reorganized faster – on 13th September 1919, in the meeting held at Bandul de Câmpie. The new chairman of the Tg.-Mureș Dividing was ellected to be Simion Gocan because Ioan Pantea had died on the battlefield; Râciu Dividing had as chairman the archbishop Alexandru Târnoveanu. As a consequence of Simion Gocan leaving to be a regional chairman at Oradea Mare, in April 18th 1922 a new chairman was ellected in his place. The chairman ellected was the high school principal Ioan Cheri.

The new territory reorganization generated during the year 1924 – 1925, made necessary to held a meeting for the Tg.-Mureș Dividing. This gathering took place in May 24th 1925 and prof. dr. Ioan Bozdog was ellected as chairman; during this period a new Dividing was created - Bandul de Câmpie – which had 20 villages and four ageturas. Band was to reorganize and to revive under its new chairman, the archbishop Em. Tătar. After the new administrative and territorial division, Tg.-Mureș became central County Division.

During the years 1926 – 1927 eighteen dividings were reorganized and 30 new ones created. Tg.-Mureş was not only a Dividing, but it was also a reconfigured one through creating four new dividings: Band and Râciu taken from the Mureş county dividing, and Gurghiu and Toplița, the one from Reghin netting.

## **CHAPTER 4. THE UNFOLDING OF ASTRA'S ACTIVITY IN REGHIN AND TÂRGU-MUREŞ DIVIDING BETWEEN THE YEARS 1872 – 1926**

### **4.1. The unfolding of Astra's activity in Reghin Dividing and its circles between the years 1872 – 1926**

During the Reghin Dividing meeting from 2nd/14th April 1874 – Reghin was a town that belonged to Turda de Sus County – Ioan P. Maior was elected chairman, he those who were proposed by him – and who were also accepted – to form the committee were: Mihai Orbonașu, Mihai Crișan, Iosif Brâncoveanu, Iosif Fincu, Marcu Cetățeanu, George Șchiopu, Nicolae Marinovici, Ioan Mureșan, Ioan Urziceanu, Ioan Avram and Ioan Spiru. The chairman also proposed a board ruled by Mihai Crișan and having as members Târnăveanu, Mureșan, Farcaș, Cașai, Mera Simion and Vasile Pop, and the aim of this board was to convince the children to embrace industrial professions. A new elected board had the goal to think a project that was to lead to the financial progress of the population from the Dividing area. Its members were: Brâncoveanu, Mureșan, Călin Șandor, Branea, Urzică, Spiru, Urziceanu, Popescu Ioan, Popescu jr. And Leon Lupu and as chairman was elected Iosif Fincu. A third board proposed by Ioan P. Maior had the object to lay down a statistic with the Romanians that worked in industry and commerce on the Dividing territory. The chairman of this board was elected Marcu Cetățeanu and the members were Ioan Marinoviciu, Petre Görög, Mera, Nicolae Görög, Vasile Pop, Cașai, Spiru and Mureșianu. The last board had the mission to lay down a statistic of the children that were born, the level of their studies and their nationality.

From imprecise reasons, Reghin Dividing had, for twelve years syncope, therefore, only after 1866 it appears with a general meeting held at Hodac. A special event was to happen in July 1896 when the successor for the chairman was to be elected the archbishop Petru Uilăcan.

On the occasion of the general meeting held by the Association at Sibiu in September 1901, between the 31 delegacies was also the delegacy from Reghin which was composed by 13 members. The former Reghin chairman was included in the composition of the board which suggested the election of a new chairman, vice chairman and the central committee. Amongst those who were proposed, as chairman was elected dr. Alexandru Mocsony, and as vice chairman Iosif Sterca Șuluțiu. At its own general gathering of the Reghin Dividing from that year two



events have been remarkable: the reelection as chairman of Petru Uilăcan and enlisting as new ordinary member of lawyer dr. Eugen Harșia.

Reghin Dividing has entered into a shadow up to 1906, when it is mentioned with its delegacy as participant to the general meeting of the Association that took place at Brașov. For the year 1911, the activity of this Dividing was appreciated as „satisfying”. At the beginning of the year 1926, Reghin Dividing had 62 villages and 52 cultural circles, but, as a consequence to those that had been decided at the central level in 1925 to reorganize, Reghin was left without several villages. In the year 1926 Reghin had only 31 villages, but the new elected chairman – elected in 1923 – dr. Eugen Nicoară continued to offer support to the villages that had been separated from Reghin. His generosity stretched over Tg.-Mureș Dividing too.

#### **4.1.1. The chairmen and members of Reghin Dividing and their subscriptions**

For the year 1875/76 a number of 5 persons living in Reghin sent taxes, in total of 65 florins. As the time passed, the number of these cases multiplied, but have been suddenly interrupted by the death of Ioan Maior in 1877. he was the first chairman of reghin Dividing. The Dividing, during the second chairman from reghin – Mihai Crișan, between 1877-1885 – had 58 villages, a number of 15 old ordinary members, 21 new ordinary members and 19 helping members.

Patriciu Barbu – the third chairman of the Reghin Dividing XVII, between the years 1885-1896 – had a board formed of important members from the social and public life: the priest Vasile Rațiu, the orthodox archbishop Galateon Șagău, the priest Leon Lupu, the notary Iosif Finu, Mihai Platon, Absolon Todea, the doctor dr. Alexandru Ceușianu, the great landowner Ioan Sandor, the priest Elie Câmpeanu, George Maior and Ion Urziceanu. Patriciu Barbu became a member of Astra in 1874, founding member in 1882 an chairman up to the year 1896. The sum of money represented subscriptions from the period 1885 – 1886 and their number increased up to 147 florins.

Starting with the year 1877, amongst the members that were exclusively men, have penetrate females too, like: Elena Barbu and Sabina Todea as ordinary members, then Constanța Platon and Eugenia Callini as helping members. Generally, the number of the members was increasingly growing year after year. In this year the sum of money that has been brought to the central cash-desk of the Association counted 101 florins and 30 cr., and this sum was almost double compared to the one from Tg.-Mureș. It must be said that Patriciu Barbu, as chairman, has come after Petru Uilăcan who did not sent reports between the years 1898 and 1899.

In the year 1900 the Reghin Dividing had 22 members. In January 1902 – July 1903 were enlisted 16 members. The chairman Petru Uilăcan died in the year 1905. The period between 1904 – 1923 is a period of evolution compared to the former ones. In the general meeting that took place at Mediaș in the year 1876

it had been decided to establish The National Museum and in the year 1904 the credit and saving institute „Mureșana” from Reghin offered 100K. and in 1905 Sever Barbu offered 1000K – half of the sum that had been promised after the death of his wife – after this donation Barbu became founder member of the museum. To that date, that has been the largest sum of money given by a person or institution.

The fifth chairman of the Reghin Dividing in the lead time 1905 – 1910, became the archbishop Galacteon Șagău. He made himself conspicuous through some gestures like: the contribution for the Astra’s history and ethnography museum fund; in 1874 he offered 25 florins for establishing a popular library in Deda and for establishing a ”tractual funebral chorus” and it was composed of priests and teachers that were famous George Dima’s students; he was one of the founders and main stockholders of „The Mureșana” bank from Reghin, founded in 1886 and also for the bank „Lumina” („The Light”) in Sibiu, founded in 1909. In October 1910 he was named cosistor assessor at Sibiu, he gave up the archbishop service. He died in August 21<sup>st</sup> 1914 at Sângeorgiu de Mureș. In 1909 it was collected the sum of 424K. from taxes, and 380k. of which have been sent to the Central Committee and 44K. were deposited to „The Mureșana” bank for the need of the Dividing. In the same time, the cassier Sever Barbu showed that after a party from 10th August, they gathered 403,16K., money that were equally shared – every 205,50K. – for Romanian churches from Reghin.

The sixth chairman of Reghin Dividing XXVI was Ioan Harșia, who as to rule the destiny of this dividing through the years 1910 – 1914. Reghin Dividing had a total number of 54 members. In the year 1914 Reghin Dividing had a total number of 92 members. Being the year when the first world war started on the international field, the leading place of the Dividing was given to the archbishop Vasile Duma. From 1923 he has been elected as bishop of Argeș Diocese with the residency at Curtea de Argeș, and he was given the name Nichita. Here he died in April 16th 1936.

As in the whole Association, at Reghin also remained a constant number of circles, but the number of the members has decreased terribly. They have been conscripted starting with the summer of 1914 for the war in which Romania entered in 1916.

Between the years 1916 – 1919, the activity of many Dividings has stopped. Through the address from April 10th 1920, dr. Ioan Harșia withdrew from the service of dividing’s chairman. He justified his gesture by being appointed counsellor at the Court of Appeal from Tg.-Mureș. He gave all the documents to the protoprebitarian Vasile Duma who was the vice chairman of the central committee and he lived in Reghin.

Gurghiu Dividing had three active members. In January 1922, Gurghiu Dividing was reorganized by the forestry high school principal Aurel Mureșan, and as chairman was elected the priest Simion Zehan from Cașva and it numbered 30 members.

Astra's Reghin Dividing met a revival period in October 9th 1923, opportunity in which dr. Eugen Nioară, was elected president, and he was the one that resuscitated it. Under the leading of Nioară, Reghin Dividing knew its pmpest period of its existence. Up to the half of the year 1923, reghin Dividing had 345 members, and next to those came the ones from Săcalul de Munte, that were 25 ordinary members and 22 helping members. In the year 1939 the statistic situation of the Mureș County Dividing and the other subordinated to it was the following: 1) Tg.-Mureș, 68; 2) Band, 5; 3) Gurghiu, 10; 4) Rîciu, 10; 5) Reghin, 45; 6) Teaca, 19; 7) Toplița, 24.

The rumors and the fears related to the war made that the number of the „Astra's” members from this part of the country to decrease starting with the year 1939. this was also due to the cobelligerent parts and to the Hungarian adversity.

Starting with the year 1924, the appointment of chairman of rulers of the dividings was officially replaced with the executive, but practically they were still using the old appointment. In the same year, Reghin Dividing started its collaboration with all the existing societies on its territory.

#### **4.1.2. The lecturers of Reghin Dividing and the on view thesis**

The instruments through which the Dividings were displaying their educative work were mainly the conferences, the libraries and the courses that they were lecturing with the population from the countrysides. The summit of the conferences from Reghin were recorded in 1934 when they held 877 conferences, and in the year 1935 a number of 850.

The first conference held in Reghin Dividing took place in 1875, when dr. Grigore Silasi presented „The Eulogy for the Baron Ladislau V. Popu”; in the same year the vicar B. Baiculescu was speakinh „About some means that could ameliorate the financial state of the Romanian people”. About the year 1890 it was mentined in the pages of „Transylvania” magazine: „It hasn't been read”. After the reorganization of the Dividing in October 1913 and up to the month September 1914, in Reghin was held a lecture and a conference; in Teaca Dividing, in the same period there were held 34 lectures.

In the year 1914, the lectures of the Gurghiu Dividing had 15 lectures in 8 villages, the numbers of the attendances was between 30 and 120. After the reorganization from 1923 at Gurghiu was established a cultural programming committee that wanted that lectures like that to be held on every holiday occasion; until July six lecturers went into 7 villages and in every town they held 4-5 lectures with a variety of themes but all had the same approach, the problems related to the financial situation, social and spiritual life of the population from the rural; in each of these town were or were established popular libraries. In Gurghiu Dividing , the cultural activity met a development starting with the year 1922 when four members have lectured in Ibănești, Hodac, Cașva and Gurghiu.

In the year 1924 the chairman of the Reghin Dividing was reporting to the central Astra that they had 40 villages, 20 agენტures, 18 populist libraries, 11

mixed libraries church and school libraries, 2 church libraries and 1 school library, and they held 52 lectures to which 3190 persons attended.

Being a medical, Eugen Nicoară brought to the thesis that were discussed, subjects related to diseases, their prevention, causes and their effects, among them the most mentioned being „the world diseases”, consumption etc., diseases that ruled in those times, followed by the drinking addiction which in the social life – but also for the health – represented a problem that could not be neglected.

#### **4.1.3. Projects, edifices, culture, education, monuments**

In the year 1872, the Dividings have been elicited to gather funds to establish a law academy until fall, therefore the mayor George Maior sent 17 fr. from 14 people. After the death of the first chairman of Reghin Dividing, Ioan Pop Maior, in 1877, the Association received the sum of 2000 florins that was left through his will, but this money were to be gathered after the selling of his houses. In 1885, Patriciu Barbu was announcing that I. P. Maior at rest had donated several books for Gurghiu, where he had dreamed to establish a reading society. The school teacher George Maior assumed the job of selecting and organizing of the library. Between the years 1887 and 1888 it was intended to train one by one the school teachers in the „house industry”, and those who proved to be very good at „growing trees” and/or had very good results in the industry of teaching adults received awards from Patriciu Barbu and Galacteon Șagău. For growing trees, awards have been given between the years 1892 and 1893.

In the year 1892, only Alexandru Todea offered 7 florins for the civil school of girls that belonged to the Association. In the year 1901, for the „National House” museum that was to be established, the lawyer Patriciu Barbu donated a plated mail that had been discovered in the village Mureș-Cuieșd, he paid the first rate of the tax as founding member and he also donated the impressive sum of 2000 crowns – the biggest sum ever donated by a contributor as founding member; he paid this sum in the memory of his wife.

In September 15th 1902, on the occasion of the general meeting of the Reghin Dividing, Petru Uilăcan was elected circular chairman for the next 3 years period. From his position as founding member and due to the donated sum of 1000K for building the Association’s Museum in Sibiu, Sever Barbu was invited at the inauguration. The bank „Mureșana” from Reghin participated with 14 photographs along with 75 other „institutes” at the exposition of the „Romanian Banks’ Delegacies”. On this occasion, on the list of the 18 founding members, eulogized were Patriciu Barbu and Sever Barbu who came from Reghin, both of them donated 2000 florins and 2000K respectively. The only ones who donated a larger sum of money were the brothers Alexandru and Zeno Mocsony who, together they deposited 24.000K.

In 1910, the mayor and also a school teacher, George Şagău built a in Idicel Pădure a school made of rock, and this school had the purpose to satisfy the pretentions of the Apponyi's law from 1907.

Gurghiu Dividing had, in the year 1914, 8 libraries in 8 villages.

In the year 1921, at Astra appeared the idea of building national houses, the project would include 29 centres, amongst which was supposed to be included Reghin too. They would incorporate under the same roof: libraries, regional museums, conference halls, reading hall and several rooms for the libraries' collections and different cultural, economical, musical, sportive, etc. societies. In the year 1923 from the centre, have been distributed popular libraries, and Reghin received 31. In the same year, month February, after the reorganization of the Reghin Dividing, in 8 villages in which lectures had been held, libraries were established there. In the years 1923/1924 were very prospers for the Dividing, this had 22 cultural circles, popular libraries in every villages. To those, they added the 31 ones, received from the centre. There were 13 subscribers at the popular libraries. Another 33 members subscribed in the year 1925. The schoolboys and schoolgirls from the high school in Reghin, Females' Reunion, Youth Societies and Romanian Craftsmen, Romanian Craftsmen Society's Chorus, Romanian Youth Society's Amateurs and five private persons held up cultural activities. In the account of the Dividing were 355.711 lei and it was stipulated the establishing of five nationala houses on its territory. Another four villages had church choruses.

An event of special importance was the fusion of Gurghiu Dividing with Reghin Dividing. The leadership of the Dividing suggested for starting the school teachers Alexandru Roman from Apalina village, Ion Batea – formmaster in Gurghiu village – George Uilăcan in Hodac village and Ioan Pop from Sânmihai village, because they had remarkable results with those who attended the illiterate courses. In the period 8 – 29<sup>th</sup> November , on the occasion on lecturers visiting the villages in which circles have been constituted, new subscribers to the „Astra's” populist library enlisted, the payment of such a subscription was 50 lei. For each of the villages Deda, Pitriş and Voivodeni, a library was donated. The Dividing committee subscribed 39 „Populist Libraries”. In the Dividing three banks and 32 cooperatives were active. In the same year a commemorative board was put on the Baron Ladislau V. Pop's tomb.

## **4.2. The unfolding of Astra's activity in Târgu-Mureş Dividing and its circles between the years 1872 – 1926**

In the year 1876, right before the establishing of Târgu-Mureş Dividing, the Târgu-Mureş dwellers presence was noted in Astra society through their financial contributions which more often were not too big. The Romanians from Târgu-Mureş and those that were living along the Niraj Valley, had moments in which they manifested themselves but in the boundaries, sometimes legal, sometimes due to the Hungarian population's hostility that surrounded them; any

Romanian manifestation was treated like inferior acts, although these manifestations have been perceived on an unconscious level as a permanent threat for the Hungarians. It is certain that in the year 1871, there were 12 contributors with sums between 1 and 10 fr. who were not necessarily Romanians, but it is sure they were not Hungarians. In the same period, from the towns: Grebenișu, Căpușu de Câmpie, Siculea and Luduș 7 more contributors acceded, but their gesture was occasionally and was due to the insistence of Matei Pop Grindeanu the assessor. If for the year 1872 there are no more records, for the next one, 1873, 7 new names are mentioned from the towns: Sărmașu (1) and Miheș (6). These persons offered sums between 50 cr. and 1 florin for the academy's fund, through the archbishop Andrei Ablon from Poplaca.

New and important dates about Târgu-Mureș are noted in 1895, it was mentioned among the Dividings that were "eulogized for their activity". It is sized up in the year 1896/1897. On the occasion of the Dividing's general meeting held in September 1897, 57 members and 18 helping members paid 75 florins and 15 cr. From here we can notice the dimension and human and financial potential that this Dividing was disposing. In the same meeting, Vasile Hosu was elected chairman for three years. In the year 1898, as a consequence of his dying, the archbishop Vasile Maneguțiu was elected chairman for the Dividing. After the assignation of 26 dividings – in the year 1899 – to Mureș-Turda County, the Dividings Târgu-Mureș and Reghin were also allocated to this county. The new situation did not stop the new elected chairman to solicitate books for the popular libraries and he received 8 titles of 3 pieces each.

General meetings were held in the year 1900 at Sântana, and in 1901 at Sâncraia. In 1902 the name of the new chairman was announced – dr. Enea Draia – and the members of the new committee which was formed of the former members. Through the note from 1909, it was promised the applying of the Association's Central Committee decision to give 100 cr. to the dividings with financial and existence problems, but Târgu-Mureș was not on this list, and this led to several lectures of the priests, school teachers and "other lecturers"; however, in the year 1910, under the archbishop chairman Ștefan Rusu, the problems started to find solutions, but mostly after the election of Nicolae Vulcu as chairman of the dividing. As for the cultural activities, not even in the year 1923 Târgu-Mureș Dividing was not among the best. In the year 1924, at the level of central leading of the Association, "satisfying" was only Band village. Inside Mureș County something still was developing: three popular banks have been established at Solovăstru, Teaca and Craftsmen's Bank at Târgu-Mureș and in 1925 a medical post was established under the leadership of "Astra".

#### 4.2.1. The chairmen and members of Târgu-Mureş Dividing and their subscriptions

In 1867 Vasiliu Ladislau Pop – the chairman of the Association – suggested to increase the number of the responsibilities that collected in "some parts", so from Târgu-Mureş Nicolae Gaetanu with Demetriu Fogoraşi were assigned assessors for the Royal Board (1800 – 1879); their names were mentioned amongst the first defenders of Astra. The trader Fogoraşi, with all his family, proved to be a generous person who assisted financially to establishing a Romanian national theatre, to the Romanian Institute for Girls in Oradea Mare and a Romanian school for girls at Cluj. In 1875 he was giving money for raising Romanian girls who were private of any means of living and for building an immobile at Târgu-Mureş which was to shelter a Romanian school. To help 30 families of Romanian peasants from Tofalău, who had their lands taken away by the Urban Court of Law from Târgu-Mureş, the good man constituted a "helping committee", a committee that was dissolved in 1876. On the personal field, he had many tragedies – the members of his family died one by one in the course of only several years.

In 1867/68, from 7 ordinal members, Iosif Fülöp was sending from Târgu-Mureş for the centre 35 fr., and from Zau de Câmpie, Vasile Moga sent 5 fr. with the same destination. He promised to pay constantly this sum of money for 10 years. In the year 1867/1868 in Târgu-Mureş were 13 members, and from surroundings, the people who have not been nominated sent a total of 17 fr. 70 cr. In the year 1868, on the list of the Association's collectors – that included 136 enlisted collectors – 3 were from Târgu-Mureş: Demetriu Fogoraşi, Cataromba (?) and Iosif Fülöp. The last one was also the one that in 1872 presented at the centre the reasons why at Târgu-Mureş a circular dividing was not established. This determined the chairman Iacob Bologa to contact and ask the lawyer Matei Pop Grindeanu to find the right persons and to establish at Târgu-Mureş that kind of dividing.

Between the years 1872 – 1874, Târgu-Mureş is not mentioned any more, and we can conclude that this was not a favorable period. On the occasion of the general meeting of reghin Dividing in 1875, from Târgu-Mureş members and from the surrounding towns the taxes have been paid: 7 ordinal members and 5 helping members. From the directive that came from reghin in 1862/1863, from this part of the county, a number of 6 private people and also the Greek-Catholic church community and political community – both from Sărmaş – sent the taxes. The total sum was 163 florins. In the year 1876 from the towns and villages: Ruşii Munţi, Morăreni, Gladinu, Şieuş, Sântioana, Nuşfalău, Ragla, Budacu Român, Monor have paid the taxes as new members for the years 1870 – 1875 also. Sever P. Barcianu also paid 100 florins as a founding member from Târgu-Mureş. With great satisfaction, in the meeting of the Transylvanian Association's Committee from 19th September 1876 held by the chairman Ioacón Bologa, it was presented the minute that was announcing the establishing of the

circular dividing "Murăsiu-Osiorhei". From this report it resulted that the chairman of the dividing was elected Demetriu Fogorași. In 1894, Vasile Hosu is mentioned as reelected chairman. What is noticeable about this year is that is the first time when a founding member appears a woman: Nina Cerghedi, born as Ciato, and she paid as founding member a tax of 200 florins and 154 florins as tax for that year.

In February 10th 1895 Târgu-Mureș Dividing XXIV, as a consequence of the reorganization, Matei Pop Grindeanu was elected as the new chairman, but he withdrew after some offences related to his lack of activity. In 1895 appeared a new female name – Nina Moldovan from Cirileu village.

August 28th 1899 at Nazna, on the occasion of the general meeting of the Târgu-Mureș Dividing, the archbishop Neculau Maneguțiu was elected as chairman. In this year as members of the dividing were enlisted 17 people and the sums that had been paid were 139,50 crowns and the sums paid were 117, 72 crowns.

In 1912 the circular meeting held at Bandul de Câmpie, dr. Enea Graia became the new chairman elected, and the number of the members was 15. The of increasing the number of the members with 2 in 1904, was shadowed by the year 1906 when the number decreased to 13. A consequence of dropping the number of the members can be the announcement in 1910 of Nicolae Vulcu withdrawing from the leadership, but after the members insistence, he remain.

A reevaluation of the dividing in 1911 at a general meeting, the Central Committee mentioned in a minute that in Târgu-Mureș are 50 members. From 1914 Vasile Nicolae is mentioned as former chairman because at the Târgu-Mureș dividing committee meeting in February 1st 1914 dr. Ioan Pantea appears to be elected for this service.

At the end of 1915 Râciu de Câmpie had as chairman the archbishop Tămăveanu Alexandru. In 1917 the activities of the dividing have been stopped. Ștefan Pantea announced the county leadership that his brother was a Russian's prisoner. After 1919 the dividings have revived and had as members persons of different professions, but they had in common the cultural institution, Astra. From the centre, Ioan Vescan was asked to reorganize. Ioan Vescan was the first Romanian prefect of Mureș. The reorganization was made at 1st December 1919, occasion in which 53 members enlisted and dr. Petru Hetcou, the principal of "Alexandru Papiu Ilaria" high school, was elected as chairman.

In 1922 there were 111 members. In the year 1923, from the report was sent to the Central Committee from Sibiu, it was let known that Târgu-Mureș Dividing had 61 villages and the chairman service was vacant for 2 years, and vice chairman was prof. dr. Ioan Bozdog who confirmed the lack of activity and therefore the lack of reports. This change led in this year of only 19 founding members, 28 members for life, only 4 members who paid their tax and 87 members who did not pay the tax. Bandul de Câmpie Dividing had only 7 members for life and 21 active members, all of them did not pay the taxes. In the



year 1925 Târgu-Mureş Dividing enlisted 26 founding members, 36 members for life and 39 active members.

#### **4.2.2. The lecturers of Târgu-Mureş Dividing and the on view thesis**

The beginning was marked by Teodor Bogdan in 1899, when he held the first lecture entitled "The hoarfrost and its utilities". Activities that sustained the conferences are rerun in the year 1900 when at Sântana de Mureş the theology graduate eorgiu Manoilă held a conference on the subject "The problem of the traditional school, present and future". The vicar Vasile Saltelechi lectured about „Economical treaty". In the following years, in the Târgu-Mureş County: Vasile Matora, Isidor Pop, Iuliu Morariu, Ioan Pantea, Bucur Băra etc., held numerous conferenced with divers subjects but related to the practical life problems of the population, history and the rhole of Astra in its existence. In 1912, after Bucur Băra suggestion, at Niraşteu was established an agentura and Victor Trifan was elected chairman. After chairman Simion Gocan's leaving, the number of such activities came down considerably.

A worthy mentioned activity took place in 1925 when in the Central Committee of the Association's report were enlisted 21 members and persons who were not members of the dividing but they travelled in 16 towns and villages. They discussed subjects related to school under different aspects, the second subject discussed was the history and equality referring to those rural organizations, health, "Astra" and culture.

#### **4.2.3. Projects, edifices, culture, education, monuments**

Establishing popular schools was a characteristic of the European states in those times. The intention of establishing of a „legal rights Romanian academy" came from Târgu-Mureş through urbal courl assessor Ioan Bădilă. In 1871 they sent to Sibiu 45 fr. through the assessor at the Royal Board Matei Pop Grindeanu, 39 fr. on the occasin of a meeting of the Association at Fărăgău, other 3 persons from Mureş offered each 1 fr.

In 1875, it has started to be given subsidies to the young persons who wanted to study. These subsidies came from the fundation "Marinoviciu" 60 florins for the first year gymnasium grade from Târgu-Mureş, the chosen one was Emil Viciu. In addition to the fond from the fundation "George Bariţiu" who paid a nanny and one for a servant for a girls school. Vasile Hosu from Târgu-Mureş collected from this area the sum of 11 fl. and 80 cr. from 59 persons. It was added the money from the years 1893 and 1894, which were 590 fl. and 76 cr. Protopresbiterian Nicolae Maneguţiu suggested a gathering of forces of the Romanian churches to support the schools, and the result that they were hoping was a stronger promotion of the culture. Therefore, the Association supported the idea of a union of Romanian churches, fact that was not achieved even to these days.

The drought from the years 1895 – 1897 that had as consequence the starving and the poverty of the population in general, made the activities of the dividing from the area to be few. In the meeting of the Association's Central Committee from April 1900 it was told to the present ones that apart from electing the new leadership for the Târgu-Mureş Dividing, it was decided to establish three agenturas and three popular libraries for which the chairman solicited the donation of available books. The Central Committee donated 4 titles of 3 pieces each and one of other 3 titles. In August 1900, at Sântana, 11 popular brochures have been given to the present population that was present at the meeting. At the beginning of the year 1900, the dividing's committee decided that the notar Ştefan Rusu to be incharged to organize the achive; in the same year, they established three agenturas and libraries at Săbed, Nazna and Râciu, everz library was used by the people from the surrounding villages. In the same year, they received the approval to buy books according to their financial possibilities, books that later were to be used by the population. At Braşov appeared the first time the idea of a library on the move (ambulatory library), and this dea belonged to Gregoriu Maior who came from Târgu-Mureş. For the History museum, in the year 1915 and the first half of 1916, amongst the 13 persons who donated objects to complete the collections, appeared the names Partenie Matei from Corunca and Nicolae Matora. In September 25<sup>th</sup> 1910, the leadership of the Târgu-Mureş Dividing on the occasion of the meeting held at Nazna, decided that in the future, more literature books to be ordered, on the purpose of establishing of a library in Târgu-Mureş for the young people who were studying at high school and the civil school in this town.

As a sequel of the Târgu-Mureş Dividing reorganization in 1913, from this one, it has separated a new Dividing – Râciu. Târgu-Mureş Dividing remained with 46 villages, 11 agenturas and 4 libraries (Nazna, Săbed, Sânişor and Târgu-Mureş); Râciu Dividing had: 14 villages, 8 agenturas and 2 libraries: at Râciu and Băla. Seven years later, in 1920 Sabin Oprea showed that in Târgu-Mureş, the buildings that were hosting schools were "absolutly proper", but he expressed his dissatisfaction related to some edifices, like The state commerce school, the only one under Cluj jurisdiction, was sharing its immobile with a pretorial office and a street post of police officers. The same personality showed that in Târgu-Mureş and Reghin there were not any "scientific collections". The teachers' and students' libraries contained mainly Hungarian books, and the majority of them were against our national interests.

In 1921, one of the issues that was troubeling the central leadership from Sibiu, was building the national houses in 29 the most important centres, that were to host libraries and reginal museums. The purpose of these was to imprint an intens Romanian speific – amongst them was included Târgu-Mureş too. In the year 1922, from the centre, the sum of 160.000 lei was divided to 9 "centres", and other 260.000 lei were given to keep the national houses from 4 "centres" and establishing 4 more in 4 more cities. Târgu-Mureş received a part of both sums of money – it has not been specfied – from the both offers. The new chaiman of

Târgu-Mureş Dividing, Simion Gocan, in his report for the year 1920 – 1921, wrote that here were 4 libraries and each of the 30 villages that were assigned to this Dividing, had one library. Râciu Dividing had 2 libraries. From the 700 libraries that were distributed by the Association in 1921/1922, a number of 130 were given to Mureş-Turda County thanks to the school inspector Ieronim Puia who was also the vice chairman of the Târgu-Mureş Dividing. The Central Committee's demand that the cultural activities from the Dividings to be held together with those of the school teachers' and priests' associations, in Târgu-Mureş it was respected and at these activities participated the officer group from the military high school from Târgu-Mureş. It has continued the courses to literacy the people from Căcuci and Urisiul de Sus; another desire was related to „repatriation and colonization” of the Romanian element in the Transylvanian counties that have been affected, and among these counties was Mureş-Turda County also, especially Târgu-Mureş and the Niraj Valley.

In 1924, the release of the University from Cluj Expansion, brought colossal cultural benefits, Târgu-Mureş was amongst the lucky Dividings, due to the conferences that have been held here. At the end of the year 1921 the number of libraries and books has increased and they managed to gather 2000 books from the School House, the Central of the Cooperatives, the Ambulatory Dispensary from Târgu-Mureş, ”Ardealul” Library, Iosif Bucur, Lucian brothers, Şerban and Sabin Ciobanu, the Arhidezezan Printing House from Sibiu. In the same report it was written that from Society's initiative and secretary Cioran's exertion popular banks have been established in Solovăstru, Teaca the ”Craftsmen's Bank” from Târgu-Mureş, all three were under Târgu-Mureş Dividing jurisdiction. In Remetea, Romanian courses started to be held by the school teacher Teodoru, these courses were addressed to the Romanian craftsmen that had been denationalized and here, they started building a national house. For the success of all these, a remarkable contribution had the Romanian mayor from Târgu-Mureş, dr. Emil Dandea.

The general meeting of the Târgu-Mureş Dividing, from 1925, held on the occasion organized by the ”Romanian Young men's Society” at Şincai, where on the behalf of their own expenses, lifted in the middle of the village a marble board dedicated to Gh. Şincai; three popular lectures were held and the book fund from the local library has been filed in.

## **CHAPTER 5. CENTRAL MUREŞ COUNTY DIVIDING, BETWEEN THE YEARS 1926 – 1940**

During the years 1926 and 1927, 18 Dividings have been reorganized and 30 new ones have been established. Târgu-Mureş was a Dividing that had been reorganized and reconfigured at the same time, through the release of the 4 new dividings: Band and Râciu detached from Mureş Dividing, Gurghiu and Topliţa detached from Reghin. The centre insisted that the central county

dividings were only intermediary authorities between the centre and the netting dividings.

The Mureş County looked like this: central county Mureş dividing, organized in 1926 (the Lower Mureş netting); Reghin netting dividing organized in the same year (the Upper Mureş netting); the dividings that have been reorganized in 1926 and 1927: Band with 14 villages, Gurghiu with 12 villages and Râciu with 16 villages. The new established Dividing 1926/1927 was Topliţa which had a number of 6 villages.

For the county's dividings have been granted subsidies: Mureş County contributes with 50.000 lei, fro behalf of Târgu-Mureş city hall 50.000 lei and from rehin 25.000 lei. Not reorganized and inactive is Teaca Dividing which had 18 villages. In his report for the year 1928/29, the chairman of the Reghin Dividing, dr. Eugen Nicoară, writes that „Although our activity is not so plentiful in some aspects – financial – compared to some big Dividings, which are also big cultural centers (Braşov, Cluj, Sibiu), however, the results of our work, from cultural point of view, it is not less important”. His efforts so that ”the dark and the lack of knowledge” of the people living in the surrounding villages made that the schools to be ”not spacious enough to receive the increasing number of those who want to participate to the cultural gathering and we are forced to have lectures under the clear ski”. Reghin had cultural gathering in all its 31 villages. For the same period of time dr. Nicolae Vasu from Topliţa also managed to establish 7 cultural gathering and was in touch with the local people from the surrounding villages, but he had serious health problems – in 1930 the vice chairman resigned. Of course the cultural activities have been affected after this event. At 1<sup>st</sup> September 1929, Mureş Dividing had terrain for the national house in 89 villages.

In 1933, the Central Committee of the Association, on the occasion of the general meeting from Deva, the first Dividing that they showed their attention for was ”central Mureş county” and from the netting Dividings, Reghin was the first one quoted at a national level, it was mentioned with 153 popular lectures, the biggest number (that number si not mentioned) of conferences, 48 popular libraries (they had 50 villages) which included a total number of books: 30.256, 10.842 number of readers who read 7405 volumes. In any other Dividing the total number of books from the libraries was not bigger than 3682, and the number of readers was 1319. The doctors from Reghin who were also lecturing in the places they travelled, have consulted and cured people for different illnesses. Between the years 1920 – 1939 the number of the patients was 35.970. the expences of the dividing were ”tens of thousands lei” and they were all paid by the chairman from his own money. The doctor Cornel Avram, who in an agreement with the villages' committees that for a modicum sum of money to consult all the citizens and for those who were sick, the medical visit to be for free. Pharmacies have been established in the villages: Râpa de Sus and Dumbrava, and from its own initiative and with no financial claim, the notary from the three villages was carrying a work of spreading the culture. Every second evening of the week, he organized writing-reading course, history course, national geography course and

math course and in the third evening the attendants were taught laic and religious songs.

The propaganda was backed up through modern means also, means like projections when the subjects were related to dispute the social diseases or showing the movie "Jesus's life" on the occasion of 32 conferences. There were 48 libraries that had a total number of books 30.256 "a number that again is not equalized by any other netting Dividing or even the central county Dividing".

Reghin Dividing with the help of Chamber of Commerce from Târgu-Mureș organized two traditional schools – one in Lunca and another one in Râpa – were the main courses were related to fruit and trees growing; it has sent students to the traditional school from Târgu-Mureș, where they have been sustained financial by it; it had built monuments at Ibănești, Pietriș and Nadășa and it has fixed 12 cross borders; it had published 4 brochures with practical guidance and another one with the title "Personalities from Mureș" in which Vasile Netea is written as joint author; in Râpa, where the notary P. Boțian was totally involved in the cultural act, he established three primary schools in two years, and in three villages – Râpa, Vătava and Dumbrava – 109 lectures and 13 artistical celebrations. In 1934, with the help of education minister Constantin Angelescu was opened a Normal School at Târgu-Mureș, and at this event took part even the high official.

In 1935 the school teacher Nicolae Crețu received the assignment of general school inspector for the primary educational system and secondary-mayor for the whole county. At Târgu-Mureș, the engineer Cioranu Șerban established a Romanian cultural gathering of whose chairman he was, and without any financial purposes. He only cared for the proximity between Romanians and minorities, to equalize the social classes. He had swimming classes, tennis, skating and hokey and in 1936 he was planning to have another one: tourism.

On Mureș County ground, it has been constituted a Committee of Antirevisionist League, in which 1531 members enlisted from the first year. This was a time when they fought insistent for "numerus clausus" that was: the allege of Romanians as majority in all the enterprises and institutions in the whole country. This led to the release of the Law for the protection of the national work. This led to the reaction of the doctors that were minority elements and they were also in a bigger number. The doctors Grigore Ursace andd Manu summoned the doctors from Reghin Nicoară and Nicolescu, and in the end the effect of all these was that the jobs have been taken according to the ethnic percentage.

On the occasion of the general meeting of the Dividing that was held at Filea, dr. Nicoară read the report with the activities of this Dividing on the year 1935. From this report we can see that a traditional school for men and one for women were established at Reghin (the schools had 6 successions) and he also built 12 crosses; along with these were the other activities: the cultural and national celebrations, a wide spreading of popular books and a number of humanitarian deeds.

In 13<sup>th</sup> October 1938, the king sanctioned through the High Royal Act number 3528 the Social Service Law, which had the purpose to organize the national educational system on scientific grounds and the main purpose of it was the realization of a cultural state. To carry out and to bring into force of this act, Mureş, Someş and Timiş areas had been chosen. The school principal Preda and the school inspector Stoichiţă held lectures in numerous places amongst which was Târgu-Mureş also. They came here in February 19th. Up to 1st April, the chairman of the Mureş territory, had received projects of activity from 8 dividings. Through the decision of Astra's Central Committee, in the meeting that took place in April 29th 1939, it has been received the instructions of how to bring into force the social service through Astra. This had t be brought into force in the three areas and the instructions had to be put forth through the circular number 2. From the moment of establishing of the Social Service in 1938, Mureş County Division appears under the name "The Central Mureş Dividing", which was led by dr. Ioan Bozdog, and which was part of the „Szekely Region". Set back signs have been shown starting with the year 1939. Occupying the North-West of Transylvania made that on these territories the activities to stop thoroughly. Moreover, in 1942 almost half of the old Dividings stopped their activity „under the harsh oppression of injustice and heavy hand".

### **5.1. The chairmen and members of Mureş County Dividing and their subscriptions**

In the year 1926, Reghin Dividing had 62 members, in the year 1927 had 46 members. In the same period of time, Târgu-Mureş Dividing had 67, Band: 4, Râciu: 3, Gurghiu: 30, Teaca: 15, Topliţa: one member.

In the year 1930, the statistics for the Mureş county Dividing was worrying, the report was the following: Târgu-Mureş Dividing, 67; Band Dividing: 4; Gurghiu Dividing: 9; Râciu: 10, Reghin: 45, Teaca: 19, Topliţa: 20.

Beyond the activities that took place in his Dividing, after all Eugen's Nicoară writing works sent to the Literary Secreatriat from Sibiu to be published in he popular Library „Astra", dr. Danielo selected the paper „The Syphilis".

Making a time jump in the year 1939, the Dividings from Mureş had the following number of members: Târgu-Mureş Dividing XI: 68; Band Dividing: 5, Râciu Dividing: 10, Gurghiu Dividing: 10, Reghin Dividing: 45; Teaca Dividing: 19, Topliţa: 24.

Worth mentioning is the fact that in 1940, the Association had as chairman dr. Iuliu Moldovan and three vice chairmen, and the Central Committee was formed of 45 members amongst who was dr. Eugen Nicoară and prof. univ. Dr. Vasile Meruţiu, doctor in Târgu-Mureş.

## 5.2. The lecturers of Mureș County Dividing and the on view thesis

In 1926 in the Reghin Dividing territory 13 lecturers had conferences. At Târgu-Mureș, in 1927/28 are named Ioan Bozdog, Ioan Vescan, Ioan Pantea and Traian Popa as lecturers; then in Gurghiu and in its surroundings Alexandru Donescu, Constatin Brăilan, Traian Todora, T. Vicol, Ioan Batea, Hort. Șuteu, Alexandru Siara, Emilia Frandeeș, Traian Todoran; the priests: Leoan Ternoveanu, Alexandru Donescu, Ilie Mirion, teodor Bucin; the doctor Eugen Nicoară; the notary Ioan Vlad; school vice inspector Romul Cătărig.

Râciu Dividing which included 16 villages had only 7 conferences due to the lack of lecturers – according to the chirman's Nicoale Vulcu saying.

In the same period, in Reghin Dividing were held 139 conferences in 43 villages, although in that time it included only 21 villages. But Nicoară proved to be very generous with the new established dividings that were created through the separation from the old Reghin Dividing; he has also hosted 4 referents of the University Extension: Coroian Petru, Sextil Pușcariu, Augustin Maior and Petre Grimm.

Târgu-Mureș Dividing between the years 1928/1929 had a lecture schedule in 14 villages, the lecturers have been: I. Bozdog, Gr. Ciortea, dr. Domițian Baci, Al. Sighișorean, V. Hondrilă, Ioan Roman, P. Comes, dr. P. Nistor and Traian Popa. They had various subjects and projections.

Between the years 1928/1929, Band Dividing organized lectures in 9 villages. The lecturers have been: the chairman Emil Tătar, the school principal Vasile Tamaș, A. tartacan, the priest Maxim Pop, Ana Hirian and the school teacher Zaharie Oltean.

In Gurghiu have been 36 lecturers, in Râciu 5 lectures, and in Toplița, 28. In Reghin Dividing, in 23 villages 67 lectures have been held by 20 lecturers. Dr. E. Nicoară, he personally held 18 of the 57 lectures. The Central Committee in its meeting from July 14<sup>th</sup> 1928 showed its impress towards Nicoară's activities.

The main activities of Mureș Central County Dividing for the year 1929/1930 were the 33 popular lectures on different subjects held by 12 lecturers in 13 villages. In Band Dividing in 1929/1930 have been 7 lectures in 7 villages. These lectures have been held by the 4 lecturers: Emil Tătar, Dumitru Gherghel, dr. Legman and A. Tartacan.

About Gurghiu Dividing, Leon Ternoveanu wrote that in the year 1929/1930 in this dividing have been held lectures in „almost all the villages”.

In 1929/1930, the netting Dividing Reghin, have been held conferences in almost all the villages, the number of these lectures was 71, 53 of them have been „medical-hygienic” lectures, the other ones were related to social, cultural and historical subject.

In the year 1930/1931, everyone was surprised by the growing number of popular lectures that have been held in Reghin. The number was now 107, and

this performance was due to 31 lecturers. The record of numbers of lecturers belonged to the chairman of the dividing dr. Eugen Nicora. He held 42 lectures. The people from Reghin were happy to meet and to be in the presence of certain outstanding lecturers that came from behalf of the Univeritary Extensin. These were: dr. Liviu Rusu, prof. dr. M. Botez, prof. dr. Aug. Maior, prof. dr. Ștefănescu Goangă and dr. Traian Popa. Between the years 1931 and the first half of the next year, 1932, in the netting dividing Reghin, have been held 94 lectures by 41 lecturers, amongst them have been 4 doctors and among all the lecturers, dr. Eugen Nicora was on the first rank with 40 lectures.

In 1932 and in 1933 but only up to the month of August, the statistics show the following: in Gurghiu Diviging have been held 17 lectures by 12 lecturers in 6 villages. In Mureș County Dividing, have been 8 lecturers in 23 villages; in Reghin Dividing have been 147 lectures held in 51 villages and towns. In 1933/1934, Râciu Dividing came back to life after a period of three years. Here 19 lectures in villages have been held. But with the occasion of the general meeting in 15<sup>th</sup> August 1934, a number of 14 lecturers.

### **5.3. Projects, edifices, culture, education, monuments**

From the statistic presented for the year 1926 of the Reghin Dividing, it has been shown that a number of 21 towns and villages – including Reghin and Reghin-village – had libraries and the number of books from all of them was 6420. Reghin had 3025, the other towns and villages together had 3395.

At the beginning of the year 1927, the chairman of the Cercual House from Târgu-Mureș, Vasile Al. George printed he press organ of the Mureș Dividing, it was named "Astra", and it was to appear every week. Due to financial reasons, the newsletter stopped its publishing in 7th July 1929. During the year 1927, in 12 villages in Mureș County territory from then, libraries have been established and the stocks of the old libraries have been completed. The war orphans and the poor children from Ogari and Mureșeni villages received books and school objects of a total sum of money: 1000 lei. Mureș Dividing, in all its cultural activities had the support of the Romanian Young People's Association and Secondary Teachers' Association in the organization of the lectures that have been held by the Cluj Univeritary Extension. The school inspector has edited a series of courses for the illiterate ones which have been encouraged and supported by the Associations that were mentioned before. A real help came from the Cultural League on the opportunity of the congress held in Târgu-Mureș city, occansion in which a festive edition of the local magazine Astra has been issued, and the League had contributed with the sum of 3000 lei for the oragnizational expenses. In the same period, 8 villages received field to buil national houses. Gurghiu Dividing had 12 villages and 12 libraries; here have been held courses with the illiterate in all the villages that belonged to this Dividing. It had a good colaboration with the priests' and teacers'gathering, too. In the Râciu Dividing



were 16 villages and in four of them were functioning cultural meeting and had libraries, and in 14 villages were school libraries and church libraries.

About Reghin Dividing, the chairman E. Nicoară showed that it had a number of 23 libraries with 9345 volumes of books all together. Now every village received field to build national houses and the teachers proved to be very helpfull in having illiteracy courses. The number of cultural meetings that took place in December 1926 in coloboration to the Craftsmen's Society and the high school from the city were able to take place thanks to the chairman Nicoară himself. He took care of the transport of the people and he offered his car in this purpose. The Women's Reunion, the Children Kindregarden have also contributed to the success of the activities that took place in this dividing.

In the year 1927/1928, the chairman of the Mureş County Dividing, dr. Ioan Bozdog showed that to the meetings that took place so far, recently joined the one from Chinari. In the other villages it was not possible due to the lack of proper persons for the leadership and they only established popular libraries whose inventory was completed with books and brochures which value was up to 6800 lei; another failure was that of national houses, because of the poor people in the villages from the dividing. Under this financial aspect, the dividing had the sum of 153.008 lei, and other 150.000 lei were to be received during that year. That meant a total sum of 306.008 lei. From this total sum of money, 150.000 lei were meant for building local national houses, and 50.000 lei were to serve for endowment of the "reading house" from the schools. For the orphans from Sântana and Chinari villages it offered books and school objects of a tota sum 1000 lei to each village and for Miercurea Nirajului village, the sum of miney was 5000 lei. At the half of the year 1928, Band dividing had 7942 lei and was requesting financial help for building a national house. Gurghiu Dividing, in the year 1927/1928 had 14 villages and 5 cultural meeting and in each of the was a popular library. The dividing, on the occasion of organizing a meeting, distributed brochures to the students and to helping members who participated to the establishing of these meetings. They also emphasized the coloboration they had with the priest and teachers meeting. They had in their account 2500 lei without receiving any help.

Râciu Dividing organized an exposition during which it has awarded 9 of its participants and they received 2552 lei to share. In the same year 1928, three more villages established popular libraries. It has also disposed of a financial fond of 5980 lei.

Reghin Dividing and all its villages that had been assigned to it continue to have a cultural meeting, and although the number of its villages was 21, the number of libraries was 23, and the number of volumes of books was 9460 compared to the previously year when it had 9345 volumes of books. For the illiterates 60 abecedariums have been distributed and in 18 villages had been courses that have finised satisfying. The fields for the national houses have been given to all the villages, but the poverness end any attempts to build. Reghin helped the village Breaza in the accomplish of this purpose. Withouth receivind

any financial help, the dividing had 30.662 lei, about 5000 have been donated for a bust of L. V. Pop which was due to be put in Berind, its home town – from Cluj county. Then two stocks have been bought at the "Astra Cinema". The values of these stocks was 2000 lei, and 3000 lei were destined to University Extension for the lecturers held at Reghin. The travelling expenses were paid integrally by the chairman Nicoară by giving his own means of transportation.

In Toplița, the vice chairman A. Petre Boțian, shortly after the establishing of the dividing and until 1927, had managed to create three cultural meetings, endowment of popular libraries in 5 villages, holding an illiterate course due to the school teacher Emil Bungărzan, to which 26 schoolboys and schoolgirls had enlisted. They had received free abecedariums and 7 subscriptions to "Astra" magazine had been made. The central library of the dividing had 500 volumes of books, it was not functional because it did not have an extent.

In the general report of the Central Committee of the Association for the year 1928/1929, about Reghin Dividing it was written only eulogize words thanks to the numerous activities that they were doing. Next to those were the eulogize to dr. Eugen Nicoară and to his personal efforts.

Mureș County Dividing was appreciated at central level for its evolution after the year 1919, because, amongst its 38 villages assigned, in 5 of them managed to create 5 cultural meetings and each of them had a library. An important event had been obtaining the right of property over the Apprentices' hostel in 1929. On the entire Mureș County Dividing area, in June 7<sup>th</sup> 1929 took place a big campaign against drinking alcohol, the day was named „Temperanta”.

Teaca and Gurghiu Dividings appeared with little activities.

In 1929, Reghin in its dividing had 23 popular libraries with 9476 tomes. The school teachers took care of these libraries from their will and with no financial reward. They thought that this help that they were given was „a duty of honour” of theirs. In the same year, the chairman of Toplița Dividing, dr. N. Vasu had established 7 cultural meetings and a library in each of them. In the spring of the same year – 1929 – the committee of this dividing decided publishing of a newspaper, which was to be named "The Călimans' Voice", and was to appear two times a month. In Tg.-Mureș have been held 45 lectures, meaning the biggest number from the entire Astra area. Ioan Bozdog, though, was disappointed by the lack of interest showed by the people from his area of responsibility.

In the year 1929/1930, between the netting dividings, according to the Astra Central Committee's appreciation, the first rank was won by Reghin, which had established cultural meetings in all its villages that were assigned to it and in each of them had a library also; it had 10 exhibitions of popular costumes and exhibits made by the children. For that the leadership of Astra gave to Reghin 107 awards. Reghin Dividing had in subordination 31 villages, in each of them was cultural meeting and it also had 33 libraries. The chairman himself dr. Eugen Nicoară, printed brochures with subjects related to the most frequent diseases.

In the same period – 1929/1930 – about Mureș County Dividing, it can be said that it had 38 villages. The chairman of the dividing was dr. Ioan Bozdog.

Although he had good and generous intentions, he could not materialize them, due to the poorness of the people. They could not help him. He could receive only schoolm books and teaching materials for the orphans, disabled, widows etc.

In the same period of time, the dividings Gurghiu and Band had 5 cultural meeting. Those who have bee praised here were the school teachers that were preparing the celebrations with songs, games, recitals, etc., but also the celebration of the days 1<sup>st</sup> December and 10<sup>th</sup> May. In this year, next to Nicoară and for his help came dr. Alexandru Ceușianu. A large number of intellectuals and average people participated at the occasion organized to uncover the statue of Avram Iancu in Tg.- Mureș. Regretable was the lack of participation of school teachers, their collaboration had been stopped "by superior orders".

The year 1931/1932 brought very good appreciations to Reghin Dividing. At the Central Committee at Sibiu they showed that in this dividing „Not only they had a large number of popular lectures, 109, held in 1931/32, in Reghin Dividing which made it the best amongst the netting dividings”, but also the fact that its leadership knew how to coordinate all the cultural activities and societies from this area. The chairman dr. Eugen Nicoară, printed on his expenses, this year also two brochures ( the Syphilis and the Cancer) in 2000 pieces, which were given for free to the people from the countryside.

Wanting to build a statue to the spiritual mentor of the Romanians from Reghin Petru Maior, the chairman dr. Eugen Nicoară, in July 1931 demanded in written financial help from the Association. He needed 180.000 lei because he had gathered 120.000 lei. The international crisis started in 1928 which forced the introduction of the first „sacrifice curb”, starting with the year 1931, was the excuse to saying no to the chairman dr. Eugen Nicoară. Nevertheless, in 1932 the number of activities did not decrease, the institutions remained solidary in realization of their purposes. From behalf of the leadership of the dividing, 600 awards in money and household objects were given, 3100 books and propagandist brochures were given and the fond of books was completed to 31 libraries – all these happened in the year 1932, when the second "sacrifice curb" has been applied.

In the year 1934 Central Mureș County Dividing established in the place of the normal school for boys, a traditional school that lasted a month. It participated 40 villagers that came from 19 different villages from the county – especially the area that has been Hunarized, Niraj Valley. To help the access to education, a number of 8 villages it has shared books and school objects to the children that were school aged. In Voiniceni, a traditional school has been established. The 47 children participant to an exhibition were rewarded with a shirt. Awards received also the groups of dancers who participated with an artistic programme.

Reghin Dividing, next to the usual cultural acts had also to show the Cultural House from Idicel Pădure, monuments dedicated to the heroes from the villages Ibănești, Pietriș and Nădașa, fighting against a number of disease; in Râpa de Sus was a pharmacy and with the help of Commerce Chamber from Tg.-

Mureş, in the villages Râpa and Lunca have been held courses of growing fruit trees. Durind these courses Nicoară letured several medical subjects and from his own pocket offered 2000 lei. Thanks to him, appeared 4 brochures also, the brochures were about important personalities from this area.

Along with Romanain Women Reunion, the dividing participated with 27 pairs of clothing, 28 pairs of boots for boys and 29 for girls, food and money; to Primar School number 1 it was given a complete set of gymnastics apparatus. The cultural meeting Râpa had activity in the villages Vătava and Dumbrava also. Here in the year 1933 held a total number of 199 lectures and 18 celebrations. An important contribution for the dividing had also Antirevizionist League.

In 1934, at Reghin under the support of Astra it was established the first traditional school on the Mureş Valley, where from the first day it had enlisted 34 attendants. Another novelty was the inauguration of a new section in the County Reghin Hopital, the section for contagious disease which had 14 rooms with a capacity of 30 beds.

In Mureş County Dividing Xii, the situation of the libraries in the year 1933/1934 was the following: Tg.- Mureş, 6; Band, 5; Gurghiu, 5; Râciu, 5; Toplița, 1; Teaca, -; Reghin, 48. Related to their lectures the situation was the following: Tg.- Mureş, 61; Band, -; Gurghiu, 24; Râciu, 19; Toplița, -; Teaca, -; Reghin, 377.

On the occasion of the general meeting of the Association from the year 1934, held at Tg.- Mureş, the organization "The Carpathians Hawks" participated. This organization was ruled by prof. Roman and inspired by this one, the school teacher Fleşariu was t established one in the village Voiniceni. Here at its hirst manifestation, next to the population participated the personalities: the prefect F. Porubski, the mayor of Tg.- Mureş, dr. Emil Dandea, dr. D. Banciu, the priest Maloş etc. and a group of university students led by Ioan Şerbănuți.

In 1934 at Tg.- Mureş, under the coordination of the dividing's chairman dr. I. Bozdog have been established 2 traditional schools – one for women, with 32 days of courses and one for boys with 30 days of schools – and 2 more schools for the Romanian craftsmen. In 1935 another traditional school for girls was established in the netting dividing Miercurea Nirajului.

In june 1935 Reghin Dividing in its activities was honoured by the presence of the prefect Porubski and the mayor of Tg.- Mureş Emil Dandea. Each one of them uncovered a monument dedicated to the heroes from the villages Aluniş and Habic; at Vasile Netea initiative and with dr. Dandea's support a cultural community home was established in Deda. Deda, offered to this institution books and periodics, a silver chandelier and a scholarship of 2000 lei for a student from the village. The political discord between dr. Ioan Bozdog and dr. Emil A. Deandea, led to dissadvantages, though – Dandea participated only to the opening of the programme of the Tg.- Mureş Dividing when Astra held its general meeting here in 1934 and, he refused to offer a sbuvencion.

At Sovata a monument dedicated to queen Maria was build, and after aproximately three weeks one dedicated to king Ferdinand was uncovered at

Gurghiu.

The cultural community home from Filea, was named "I. G. Duca" and the one from Maiorești, is from 1935. This is the year they celebrated 50 years of existence for the "Mureșiana" Bank. The school for the hawks condemned, established at Reghin had 12 days of courses and had 50 attendants. A brochure with the duties was written. Reghin Dividing had 63 organizations, 114 cultural meetings and they were working at building the national houses at Ibănești, Gorenii and Maiorești; crosses have been also placed; the model-garden was born, 1000 trees have been planted; another preoccupation was taking care for the churches and ceneteries.

In 1937, at 1<sup>st</sup> March a weekly magazine appeared. It was called "Astra – Reghin". Its founder father was dr. Eugen Nicoară. The dividing was also publishing the newsletters "The Book of the Hawks" and „The villager's hygiene". They had appeared in 5000 copies each. In 1926 in the dividing that he was leading, Nicoară established a school that has functioned up to the year 1940.

The netting dividing Miercurea Nirajului led by Ioan Oltean, organized a traditional school for girls and spread costumes and different help. At establishing the cultural meetings from here, Reghin dividing had an involvement.

At Tg.- Mureș, the traditional school for girls organized by the county dividing under the leadership of dr. I. Bozdog, held its courses thanks to its principal Maria I. Georgescu from the "Unirea" high school for girls. The financial support came from Astra's Central Committee. The traditional school for boys were opened in the villages Mureșeni and Ungheni under the leadership of dr. D. Baci.

At Reghin, the traditional school for men had been attended by 60 men from different villages and its courses took place between 10 – 22 January, then a traditional school for women was opened, and the courses took place for 2 months and 40 villagers women attended. Then, as the men, came from different villages. The hawks from Reghin held specific programmes abroad – at Praga on the Masarik stadium. A number of 450 hawks boys and girls from 5 counties – amongst which Mureș was included – they responded to the invitation made by "the Czechoslovak friends to participate to the grand Skoliada under the leadership of the general secretary of the organization Tiberiu Spârchez".

Starting with the year 1938 Mureș County Dividing is mentioned under the name "Central Mureș Dividing" led by the chairman dr. Ioan Bozdog and it was enlisted in "The Szekely area". In 1939 this dividing was eulogized by central Astra for the courses held for the Romanian craftsmen from Tg.- Mureș, where a number of 70 craftsmen took part at these courses: carpenters, painters and builders, courses that were held during six weeks.

In a number of 18 villages of the dividing, crosses have been put, and in 4 other, in Reghin also, the works of building national houses continued; two more villages edited their own news report.

Central Mureș Dividing, in collaboration with Agriculture Chamber, besides these schools, had organized courses for agriculture that lasted 3-4 days

in 6 villages. In Reghin was functioning the school for women that had a boarding school. It had 33 schoolgirls in the period of 7 – 28 February; Iclânzul was also the host of a local traditional school for men. It was held in collaboration with the netting Band dividing led by Toma Anuția. Sângeorgiu de Pădure, new born netting dividing was also the host of a local traditional school.

From the 64 villages union of the Mureș Dividing which were assigned to it, in the year 1939, only the Hawks from Reghin led by dr. Eugen Nicoară, had 40 unities. The hawks of the Band dividing had a mixed chorus and an orchestra and they wore costumes made by them. The hawks from Socol had a programme in Germany at Hambrug, at the congress of the organization Kraft durch Freude on the occasion of the local celebration.

In 1939 at Reghin was built the Cultural Palace; in this edifice were to have the centre all the Romanian cultural societies that were led by Astra: Romanians' craftsmen Society Casine, Romanian Women Reunion Society and Intellectuals' Casine. Their places have been blessed in December 2nd; here was to be opened a library, a museum, an entertainment hall, etc. At 1st November a first aid course for women was established. Their need was in an hypothetical war. The courses were held by the doctors Eugen Nicoară, Vasile Nicolae and Dumitru Lupu. The attendants „Misses and Misses”, were 140 in total and they took place in the same time with those traditionally for women which effective was of 28. Both courses lasted from 15<sup>th</sup> November – 10<sup>th</sup> December 1939.

In January 14<sup>th</sup> 1940, at Reghin a superior school for men was established. To this school 62 people enlisted. The final exam had problems from the social, economical, historical, national, juridic field, etc. In the end, they received certificates, and the statistics showed an expense of 18.000 lei.

Infirmery school lasted 8 weeks – from 13<sup>th</sup> November 1939 up to 12<sup>th</sup> January 1940 and it have participated 54 schoolgirls from the city. The training programme was conceived by the doctor Eugen Nicoară, who, at the end rewarded them with diplomas. The infirmery schools were justifying their acts by the fact that in West Europe in 1939 there were already wars. The ceasing of the Social Service was already regretted, its law was considered old through its objectives.

The newsletter published by Reghin, due to its acknowledged value, was published in the magazines Transylvania, Revue de Transylvanie, The Romanian Thought, The Politic and Eugenic Newsletter.

At the cultural celebrations from 26th April 1940, held in Voivodeni and Măiorești, the professor Iuliu Hațieganu, himself participated. He shared flags to those who were present on this occasion.

On the entire Mureș County the statistic related to the libraries was the following: Tg.- Mureș, 26; Band, 15; Gurghiu, 10; Miercurea Nirajului, 6; Râciu, 11; Toplița, 7; Teaca, 7; Reghin, 64. What made Reghin one of the best dividing were the 380 lectures and popular meetings that were held here.

## **CHAPTER 6. THE GENERAL MEETINGS OF CENTRAL ASTRA HELD AT REGHIN AND TÂRGU-MUREȘ**

### **6.1. The general meeting of central Astra held at Reghin**

#### **6.1.1. The year 1875**

The chairman of the Dividing XVII new established had the initiative to organize a general meeting of Astra at Reghin. This suggestion was made to the Central Committee in July 3<sup>rd</sup>/15<sup>th</sup>. Axente sever reiterated this suggestion in July 6<sup>th</sup>/18<sup>th</sup> 1875 at Alba Iulia, justifying it with paying homage to the second chairman of Astra – the baron Vasile Ladislau Pop – whose tomb was in that town. In the ordinary meeting of the Astra Committee from August 3<sup>rd</sup> the schedule of the XIVth general meeting at Reghin was settled for August 29<sup>th</sup> – 30<sup>th</sup> 1875. The first part of the schedule was detailed in 14 points, and the second part in 8 points. The representatives of central Astra had arrived a day before the meeting – 28<sup>th</sup> August 1875 – and they have been welcomed in Petelea village by Ioan Pop Maior and those who were accompanying him had 15 carriages and 40 riders. The guests from the central leadership of Astra were: Iacob Bologa, the vice chairman of this institution, Ioan V. Rusu, Ioan Hannia, Visarion Roman and Capitan Stejan. The local intellectuals were those who hosted them. The people was coordinated by the Greek-Catholic priest Mihai Crișan and he prepared a grand welcoming. In the evening, walking in column, the local people were carrying torches and lamps and in front all of them was the orchestra which among other national songs, sang „Deșteaptă-te Române” which closed the solemnity.

From the committees that had been formed during the working sessions have been part several persons from Reghin: Marcu Cetățianu, Ioan Marinoviciu, Mihai Cristea, George Șcheopul, Mihai Orbonaș and Dem. Făgărășanu from Târgu-Mureș. The biggest moment of this meeting was the election of Iacob Bologa as the chairman of Astra

#### **6.1.2. The year 1890**

From the decisions taken in the general meeting of Reghin Dividing in May 25<sup>th</sup> 1890, we can see that central Astra was holding the second meeting in this town and in this year. With the purpose of organizing this event, the chairman of Reghin Dividing – Patriciu Barbu has summoned all the important members of society from the local Romanian town who were also members of the dividing. In 25<sup>th</sup> May, Patriciu Barbu has divided into sections the committee with the purpose of this meeting. The sections had to take care of the following main issues: the welcoming committee, the accommodation, organizing of a ball, organizing of a concert and as a back up plan a theatre play. The general meeting started in

August 15<sup>th</sup>/27<sup>th</sup> with a eulogy speech at the tomb of the former chairman, the baron Vasile Ladislau Pop.

Reghin Dividing XVII was to be organized the following year – 1891 – when it was to become „Dividing XXVI”, as a consequence of increasing the number of Astra’s divittings to 33.

### **6.1.3. The year 1925**

In August, the days 29<sup>th</sup> – 30<sup>th</sup> 1925, central Astra held for the third time its general meeting in the generous Dividing XXVI Reghin. On this occasion, 30 divittings sent their representatives. The literature and science sections of Astra were represented by a delegacy of 42 personalities, then the army, Cluj University, the League for the cultural unity of all Romanians, the Cultural Foundation „The Prince Carol”, Romanians’ literature and culture Society from Bucovina, the priests and the cultural societies from Basarabia, present and former members of the parliament and representatives of the Mureş-Turda County administration. From behalf of the Association have participated: Ilie Beu, Vasile Bologna, Alexandru Borza, I. Bunea, Ilie Dăianu, Ioan I. Lepădatu, Gh. Poponea, Gh. Preda, Alex. Rusu, the vice chairman Octavian Rusu, Vasile Suci, Nicolae Togan, and, of course, the chairman Vasile Goldiș. With his speech he opened the meeting. Among other things he saluted and greeted politely the guests from Basarabia and Bucovina and, of course, all those who were present. Remarkable was the presence of the primcurator, the priest Norbert Wagner as representative of the Sass people from Reghin.

The meetings took place in the grand hall of the city hotel. Amongst many other problems, the most important ones were related to the spreading of popular libraries, the need that the libraries from a village to fusion, ensuring of a free CFR ticket for the propagandist-lecturer of Astra, it has been taken notice to the reorganization of the literature and science section, they thanked Alexandru Lapedatu for the help and support he had given to the Astra’s museums and they thanked Bogdan-Duica for laying down the sections’ regulation, etc.

The most important problem was the reelection for the position of chairman of Astra, of Vasile Goldiș for another 5 years: 1925 – 1930.

The exigent chairman of reghin Dividing – dr. E. Nicoară – described the way in which the general meeting was organized and the way in which everything happened during this meeting as a picture ”the most beautiful and the most dignifying”. A number of over 20 members enlisted in the Association and it is remarkable that they came from the whole country territory, like Bucharest, Ditrău, Caransebeş, Miercurea Ciuc, etc. Ioan Lapedatu offered Astra, for free on behalf the Romanian financial institutions „Solidarity” 1000 copies of „Economic magazine” the number written on that occasion, for the popular libraries.



## 6.2. The general meeting of central Astra held at Târgu-Mureş in 1934

Through „Transylvania” magazine numer 4/1934, the president of the Association, Iuliu Moldovan and the secretary Nicolae Băilă were announcing in whole county that the general meeting for the year 1934 was to be held in the days of 8th and 9th September at Târgu-Mureş. In the same time and in the same way he made public the schedule also. When the long waited moment by the people from Târgu-Mureş and those from the surrounding villages came, the program started with Iuliu's Moldovn speech, which showed that the simple culturalization of a large number of people was not enough if they did not become spreaders of culture themselves. He expressed his regret related to the lack of coesion between the intellectuals and country people, the fights, the separation and not taking in consideration the responsibility and ethnic dignities, even at „the border of Szekely people, the tomp of so many Romanian Consciousnesses”. This being a dominant feature, which led to national erosion and strengthen of cosmopolitanism. With this speech, the chairman I. Moldovan declared open the general meeting.

The mayor of the host-city, dr. Emil Aurel Dandea, also held a speech in which he stressed the necessity of culturalization of masses, act that was referring in his vision also, to the national proposition opera. Strict related to the city, the mayor led everyone present to know that, between the years 1923 – 1926 3 statues have been made, 2 schools have been opened, apprentices' hostel and 2 central located cathedrals. In the mayor's Dandea speech the idea that has been emphasized was that of seeming exterior progress, due to the lucky historical circumstances too. The lack of conducting spirit that was including the countryside and all that it is related to it, the lack of harmony of the shape with the background of the problem which can not be carry out only through individual efforts. He suggested holding two tipes of course: special courses for the dividings from the Szekely areas and general courses held for all Romanian areas. To support this he showed that the Mureş County monograph, Barabásy E. In 1910 had said that in some Romanian villages the losts are 100%. Dandea showed that what were the people missing was in many cases the skills and therefore fe suggested establishing of schools and courses for different professions.

The generous framework and in coordination to the exeptional situation, in which this meeting took place was due to the proffessor's Ioan Bozdog and doctor's Eugen Nicoară (from reghin) efforts. Speeches have been held by other institutions and cultural societies led by the Church and Royal Foundations. After those came the works of the congress related to administrative problems, suggestions, financial management and the most important the ratification act of fuzion of ”Romanian Fund for theatre Society” and Astra. For that reason, the former chairman of the ”Society”, Alexandru Vaida-Voievod was proclaimed honorific member of Astra. Sxtil Puşcariu spoke from behalf of Scientific-

Literature Section. During the meetings, two essays have been presented to the charimen – one from dr. V. Ilea called "The traditional school", and the other one, by dr. I. Bozdog, entitled "The villages' economical – cultural organization". Several Romanian personalities have been nominated whose activities were profound into the social life: Dimitrie Gusti as a researcher of the rural life, the general Manolescu who had the idea of establishing the national houses, etc.

It was also shown that until that date – 1934 – at Târgu-Mureş were held free courses for the craftsmen and industrialists that have been disnationalized. Amongst them, at least the children have been regained for the "Romanian soul". The teachers who were "teaching" in the Szekely areas did not receive any reward from behalf of the state to encourage them to stay there a longer period of time, which made them leave for the plain areas. This problem needed a solution. The development of home industry was desirable.

Between 1933 -1934, in Transylvania were 11 centres in which traditional schools functioned. The highest number of students was in Braşov: 51 and the lowest number was in Sălaj with only 14 students, and Târgu-Mureş – the same number like Cluj – had 40 students.

For the holiday atmosphere to be according to the events, a number of 50 villages from Mureş county presented what was specific in their clothes, their traditions and their dances.

## **CHAPTER 7. THE POLITICAL ACTIVITY OF SOME ASTRA'S MEMBERS IN TÂRGU-MUREŞ AND REGHIN DIVIDINGS. CONFLICTS AND PATIZANS**

I. Z. Toth, in the yearbook from Cluj of the Science Institute of Ardeal, in the year 1940/1941 he was dealing with "Astra's activity to spread Romanian features and culture into the Szekely area". The author considered that the period started with the year 1905 and up to the Unification was assiduous of political preoccupation in which Astra did not involve itself in the fight that was aiming to win political rights on Romanian expenses. On the contrary, it kept a neutral attitude. The years that followed, Toth saw them as lacking in purpose and ideal in Ardeal and in the Old Kingdom as well. He appreciated Vasile Goldiş who had traveled himself in 22 counties from Ardeal where he vitalized and urged to reorganization of the cultural meetings and enlisting of new members and above all „he created the possibility of giving birth and introducing of a new current". Actually, the reorganizations were due to start in the year 1925, when, according to Iuliu's Moldovan principles presented, „Astra" was reorganizing its medical Section and the subsection of Eugenics and Biopolitics – this one was established now. In the former one and in the Nation's hygiene brochure, 1925, Biopolitics in 1926, were spreading among the Romanian society the new principles which had to govern the social and family life – with this started the second period of Astra's activity.

Strictly Reghin related, in the year 1885, the third chairman of the Dividing XVII was chosen, and he was Patriciu Barbu. He was the one who establish the Romanian bank "Mureșana" and he signed next to Ion Rațiu and Vasile Lucaciu the memorandum sent to Vienna, reason of the trial from 1894 when 20 of the leaders of the memorandum delegacy left to Vienna. Amongst those who were called in front of the instance was Patriciu Barbu also who was condemned to two months of prison – then he was 51 years old. Before the Romanian National Party to be established, in his office at Reghin, h hosted the members of the Romanian electors from the electing meetings from this town and from Gornești; he was a defender of the Romanian church authonomy, he contested government's law projects. Due to the pressure exerted by his past, in March 27<sup>th</sup> 1896 he resigned from the service of chairman of the dividing, not to stop its function furthermore.

The priest and the school teacher Duma Ioan was also involved in the memorandum's movement and in the trial of those involved in the printing and spreading of the Memorandum. He was also part of the 300 delegacies that went to Vienna in the year 1892. for the crime of spreading the memorandum text, along with Patriciu Barbu, Nicolae Roman, Ioan Muntean and Dionisie Roman, he was punished with 5 years in prison; after 13 years from the sad event, in April 14<sup>th</sup> 1907 he took part at the general meeting of protestof the electing meeting from Reghin and Gornești.

In 1916, a number of 36 Romanians from Târgu-Mureș were locked down in the basement of the city hall that was then, today is Mureș Prefectura Palace, for the freedom they were to gain several years later – in 1918.

Romanian National Council from Reghin, established in 5th November 1918 aproved the text written by Ariton M. Popa, to which all its members subscribed. In this environment it was shown the significance and importance of the Executive Committee's of Romanian National Party Declaration from Oradea from 12th October 1918. it was read in the Hungarian parliament in 18th October 1918 by the deputy Alexandru Vaida-Voievod. In November 6th 1918, Teodor Branea, in the general meeting of the population from Hodac made a brief referring to the war, the accent was upon the 14 points of principles that belonged to W. Wilson; in Cașva, the people met in the popular gathering of the constitution of the local C.N.R. The action of organization of the Romanians from the Mureș-Turda County started with the constitution in 5th November 1918 at Reghin of the county's C.N.R. The decision of constitution of C.N.R. was taken in the presence of the leaders of the population: Augustin Chețan, the lawyer, the chairman; Vasile Duma orthodox archbishop, vice chairman; Ariton M. Popa, Greek-Catholic archbishop, general secretary; dr. Ioan Harșia, lawyer, secretary; Ioan Varga, hank manager accountant, notary; Iosif Popescu, bank manager; Iosif Șipoș, tanner craftsman; Petre Ciubotar, priest; Barbu Sever, Bank secretary; George Maior, retired school teacher; Victor More, chemist; dr. Teodor Popescu, lawyer. In the same time the Sass National Council and Hungarian National Council was formed. Other Romanian national councils in 42 villages that

belonged to Reghin de Sus netting and Reghin de Jos netting, were formed during the month November.

At the Great Meeting in 1918, personalities from Mureş County had been delegated to participate. Next to them went Romanian citizens who traveled on their own. Here are some names: Ioan Fleşer, David Ioan, Alexandru Gligor, Ioan Harşia, Vasile Duma, Ioan Iacob, Octavian Manu, Victor Mera, Vasile B. Muntenescu, Augustin Nilea, Arifton M. Popa, Teodor Popescu, Nicole Porav, Ioan Roman, Ioan David Roman, Ştefan Rusu – the chairman of central CNR from Tg.-Mureş, who along with his son – doctor in this city – Titus Rusu, signed the Act of Grand Unification, next to the other 1228 delegacies: Ioan Suci, Alexandru Simon, Dorif Şuteu – after the unification he was part of the Dirigent Council, Financial Resort as chief of the County Committee's to stamp the new banknotes, Eugen truţia – called as prim-pretor at the Intern Resot in the Reghin de Jos Pretura and under the rule of prime-minister Take Ionescu he got in the leadership of the countz Târnava Mare, Nicolae Vulcu, etc. The Mureş Council had a number of 24 members, most of them were also members of Astra.

The Justice resort gave the decree number 121 on the number 1 Act ground. It was related to the taking of the instances through the extension of the sovereignty over the counties that had belonged up to then to the Hungarian State. It was referred to: Inferior Alba, Braşov, Cojocna, Hunedoara, Odorhei, Solnoc-Dobâca, Târnava Mica, Turda-Arieş, Bistriţa-Năsăud, Ciuc, Făgăraş, Mureş-Turda, Târnava Mare, Treiscaune.

The Dirigent Council was abolished in April 1920, its attribution were taken by the central departments from Bucharest.

Conforming those observed by I. Z. Toth and by Vasile Goldiş too, the politic came to separate those who recently had been united in the national ideal. As an exemple in the unhappy happening between Eugen Nicoară who received a complaint from the Central Committee of Astra, from the Reghin netting dividing's cashier after a dispute between them. Although he had numerous complaints, Eugen Nicoară reacted later, showing the central forum that the complaints were related to something else: Eugen Nicoară, as chairman desired to take into safe keeping the money that several Greek-Catholic and orthodox members were fighting for. They were putting the blame one on another about a bad financial statistic. Next to this was the fact that the suitor was part of a different party, like the former cashier, the lawyer Enea Popa who resigned. Eugen Nicoară showed that the 150.000lei that belonged to the dividing and which have been deposit in the bank account where Gheorghe Maior was cashier, dissappeared with no trace. Maior was also cashier at the Romanian Craftsmen School, were principal was Alexandru Ceuşianu, who being a colleges helped and supported Maior. This hatred and animosity said Eugen Nicoară, towards which he felt a strong "feeling of appreciation and admiration". The end of the conflict was in February 25th 1933 as a consequence of Gheorghe Maior's resignation from the service of cashier of the dividing.

## **CHAPTER 8. THE FOUNDATIONS "NICOLAE MARINOVICIU", "PRIEST GRIGORE NICOARĂ" AND "NICOLAE MOTORA"**

### **8.1. The Foundation "Nicolae Marinoviciu"**

In the Association's Committee meeting held in 30th December 1873, an important news was that of the death of Nicolae Marinoviciu the trader from Reghin, who made a nobile gesture for the posterity – he left Astra as administration de sum of 2350 florins as foundation. From these money, 50 florins were given annually to young men from Transylvania who were studying. They were supposed to receive this money starting with the first gymnasium grade. Between the years 1874 – 1921, 11 students received subsidies.

It must be mentioned, that in the year 1874, the son Ioan Marinoviciu became a new ordinary member, and in 1875 his brother Dimitrie also. About their third brother of theirs Eugen Marinoviciu there are no dates according to which he had been a member of Asta too. The whole family is buried in the church cemetery from Reghin next to the tombs of Vasile Ladislau Pop and Truția family. Later was buried there Eugen Nicoară, too.

### **8.2. The Foundation "Priest Grigore Nicoară"**

Eugen Nicoară, received the service of a doctor in 1923 and then manager of the city hospital from Reghin, in the year 1926 bought the field of this hospital. On this ground between 1930 – 1933, he built a new hospital which had the capacity of 80 beds. The cost of this hospital was 6.000.000 lei. Two years later, in 1935 Eugen Nicoară rented this building to Romanian Orthodox Episcopy of Cluj and Feleacul from Cluj. In that time Nicolae Ivan was bishop. From the money he received as rent, dr. Eugen Nicoară established "Piest Grigore Nicoară" Foundation. From this foundation, between the years 1936 – 1940, a number of 38 students received scholarships.

### **8.3. The Foundation „Nicolae Motora"**

Member for life of the Association, the orthodox priest in Sângeorgiu de Mureș – Tg.- Mureș dividing – he sent a letter of intention to the Association. February 5th 1917 a libel of deposit was made at the Tg.- Mureș branch at "Albina" Institute of credit, the sum of 25.000 crowns with the purpose of establishing a foundation which was to become active after the end of the war and from its money were to be given subventions to young men – orthodox and Greek-Catholic – Romanians from middle schools, and later to those from the Universities.

The general balance of accounts from Decembre 31st 1918 was showing at the "pasive" found the sum of 25.750 crowns. The Foundation was under the Association's committee administration until 1923, when at the founder's demand he was given back the sum of money. He expressed his wish to complete its found with 100.000 lei, the sum he wanted to give in administration to the Romanian orthodox eparhial consisor of Cluj. In the year 1939/1940 with the exception of two foundations, all the other foundations had only stocks and deposits that were to grow, at different banking institutions.

## **CHAPTER 9. THE CEASING OF ALL ACTIVITIES OF MURES DIVIDINGS OF ASTRA IN 1940**

During 1940, Romania had lost Basarabia and North Bucovina and, finally, Transylvania and Dobrogea. The events of this year, proved, once more, that the economy matters only when rendered to national elements, while the foreigners bring just speculations and exploitation, and, during difficult political times, espionage agents and treason elements of nation were recruited from these foreigners. In 1945, the common traditional general assembly became an administrative one, to the deception of all leading members of president Iuliu Moldovan. In Mures county, all activities, no matter their nature, were ceased with the Horthyst occupation in the autumn of 1940. With the decision nr. 399 from 14<sup>th</sup> April 1955 of the Counsel of Ministers, a series of cultural societies, amongst which the Association as well, were dissolved. This decision was followed by the order nr. 47040/25<sup>th</sup> May 1950 of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, sent to the Temporary County Committee - point 6 of this order stipulated the dissolution of the Association and the obligation to hand over its entire patrimony to the Temporary Committee. The finishing strike came from the Court House from Sibiu, which through civil sentence nr. 1589 bis. From 31<sup>st</sup> May 1950 stipulated the eradication of 31 foundations of the Association from the register of juridical persons, and its patrimony went to the property of the „People's Counsel of urban commune of Sibiu”, after their dissolution according to the decision of the Ministers Counsel nr. 399/14<sup>th</sup> April 1950. C. Droc received a last assignment – to hand over the patrimony.

## **CHAPTER 10. MEDALLIONS**

### **10.1. Ladislau Vasiliu Pop**

From the line of twelve presidents of the venerable Transylvanian Association for Romanian literature and the culture of the Romanian people (ASTRA), during its existence – between 1861 and 1950 – the second president was Ladislau Vasiliu baron of Pop. Although he was from Berind commune, Cluj county, where he was born on 6<sup>th</sup> January 1819, being very close to Simion

Barnutiu, he was forced to move to Tg.-Mures, where he worked at the Royal Table, in 1845, due to a scandal at Blaj. He established himself in Reghin from 1848, where he became the employee of baron Bornemisza, with the support of Ioan P. Maior. In October, of the same year, he married Elena Olteanu, the daughter of the well-known merchant from Reghin, Ioan Olteanu, and, on his very wedding night he had to take refuge to Bistrita, being in danger due to his participation to the Great Assembly in Blaj, where he was elected member in the delegation which was going to present to the emperor the claiming of the nations. Coming back to Reghin, he was arrested and imprisoned in Tg.-Mures for a short period of time. Having a solid academic preparation – he started his studies in Cluj, going to primary school, high school and law courses between 1825-1838, he continued theology in Blaj and the „St. Barbara” Seminar in Vienna – he had several functions: district commissary in the Kingdom, counselor at the „criminal tribunal” in Bistrita, then in Sibiu, from where, in 1854, he became counselor at the Transylvanian Superior Court of Justice in the same city and, after three years, he became counselor of section in the Ministry of Justice. In 1860, he became counselor at the Transylvanian Chancellor’s aula in Vienna. He reached his highest point in his career in 1861 – vicecomite of Transylvanian govern and president of the justice Senate, the chief of justice in Transylvania – function which no other Romanian could achieve in the Habsburg Empire.

He died on 17<sup>th</sup> February 1875. His funeral was in Budapest. His body was interred in the cemetery of the Greco-Catholic church in Reghin.

## **10.2. Eugen Nicoara**

Eugen Nicoara was born on 6<sup>th</sup> January 1893 in Pietris village, being the second of seven children in the family of priest Grigore Nicoara. He went to primary school at Gurghiu studying in Hungarian; then he continued his studies at Odorhei where he went to high school, which he graduated in Tg.-Mures at the reformat high school. Having a scholarship from the Orthodox Bishop in Sibiu he went to Medicine University in Cluj, where, getting noticed for his abilities, was sent to Budapest to complete his studies, sustaining three doctorate thesis in 1918. He came back in 1919, being employed by the eminent professor Iuliu Hatieganu at the Surgery Clinique, being in charge with the emergency service. After 4 years of training at this Clinique, we was appointed surgeon at Reghin. He was part of the first generation of Romanian surgeons from Transylvania trained in Cluj. In 1923 he was elected president of Astra’s Reghin Dividing, job which he occupied until Horthy’s occupation. The period in which he led the destiny of this dividing is clearly detached from all its previous ones, due to the number and quality of the cultural activities, schools, libraries and monuments, which all owe their existence to Eugen Nicoara. However, despite all his exceptional achievements, the new ruling empowered after 1944, disposed him of all his belongings and sent him from prison to prison until around 1950. Of a real help was to him his wife Maria – her real name being Irmus – doctor, as well.

According to his own assertions, he had done 50000 operations until 1967 and, in only 7 years (1960-1967) he sustained 12 scientific conferences. In 1968 he tried, unsuccessfully, to take back his hospital. He died in 1985 at the age of 92 years old. He was buried in Reghin in the cemetery of „Holy Trinity” church, alongside all those, who throughout the years, were the pride of Reghin’s Astra.

### **10.3. Ioan Bozdog**

The need for Romanians with proper academically preparation in the „Hungarian area” of Tg.-Mures imposed the bringing of dr. Ioan Bozdog in the part of Transylvania in 1919. He was born in Urca village in Cluj county on 4<sup>th</sup> May 1891, from parents Maria and Filimon. He went to primary school at Turda, high school at Blaj, where he passed his final exam in 1910, and then the Theological Faculty, which he graduated in 1914, still at Blaj. He continued his studies in Cluj at the Faculty of Letters and Philosophy, Romanian-Latin section, sustaining his thesis in 1922 and, also, a doctorate in theology. After peregrinations between Blaj and Darja – Solnoc county, he came to Tg.-Mures in 1919 as a substitute teacher at „Al. Papiu Ilarian” High School, the Romanian-Latin section. In 1928 he became full teacher on this position. O double change in his personal life took place in 1927 when he was chosen both president of his secondary teachers and president of Astra’s Dividing in Tg.-Mures. Being brother-in-law with the prefect Ion Vescan, Bozdog got involved in the construction of the two cathedrals situated at both sides of the center of Tg.-Mures, an orthodox one and a Greco-catholic one. In the period in which he led this dividing - until 1940-he built the statue of Avram Iancu, the Hostel of prentices, was the editor responsible for the Astra publication founded by Al. George, edited the weekly economical gazette „Ogorul” (1923-1927), led the weekly gazette „Muresul”. As a politician, he registered for the Romanian National Party, and after the unification of PNR with PNT he stayed faithful to the Peasants National Party, being part of the leadership of Mures organization, position which led him to deputy seat in the Romanian Parliament between 1928-1931 and 1932-1933, while his brother-in-law Vescan was a senator.

In 1946, at the death of the president of PNT Mures, dr. Ioan Bozdog was chosen in his place.

After the Vienna Dictate, Bozdog took refuge in Brasov where he published articles in the „Transylvanian Gazette”.

On the day of deliverance of Tg.-Mures – 28<sup>th</sup> September 1944 – Bozdog retuned and, alongside the freeing army, he raised the Romanian flag, thus honoring the memory of the 591 Romanian heroes who fell in the battles with the enemy between 19-28<sup>th</sup> September. Once he came back, he noticed with great surprise that when he left there were 30000 inhabitants and now there were 50000. The Romanians had been forced to retreat, while, at the same time, a massive infiltration took place of Hungarian population, phenomenon which did not occur in the area of the Superior Mures. His political membership brought



him a 9 month conviction at Caracal by the Interior Ministry led by Teohari Georgescu; in 1951 he was arrested again and took to the „Canal”, getting a 2 year conviction. After his release, he managed to get a job only in his final years, as a librarian and researcher at The Romanian Academy Library, Cluj branch, where he worked at the Romanian Encyclopedic Dictionary.

He died on 14<sup>th</sup> April 1967 and he was buried at the Central Cemetery in Cluj.

## **10.4 Iosif Hodos**

He was born on 29<sup>th</sup> October 1829 in Bandul de Campie, Mures county, the youngest of 5 children in priest Vasile Hodos' family. Simoin Barnutiu was his teacher in Blaj, allying with him at his forced leaving after the trial with bishop Lemenyi. He went to study law at Vienna, then at Padova, Italy and finally at Pavia.

After passing the bar exam, he moved from Abrud to Baia de Cris, where he was elected vice-committee of Zarand, establishing the secondary school of Brad, hospitals and public institutions, as well as improving the existing ones.

„The Hodos' Club” would be eliminated by the Hungarians in 1876. At that time, Zarand was no longer part of Transylvania, being occupied by Hungary in 1861. In 1870, Hodos was one of the initiators and founders of „The Society for Romanian theatre fund” – being, also, founding member of the Association – one of the most important cultural association of Transylvanian Romanians up to the Union – being its first president. After the eradication of Zarand shire in 1876, Hodos moved to Sibiu, where he was appointed assessor in the senate of the archbishop Consistorian and II secretary of Astra, with Gh. Baritiu, who was prime-secretary. he died at Sibiu in 10<sup>th</sup> December 1880. His burial was organized by Astra and the ceremony had a national character. At his 51 years old, he left behind 8 children – 6 boys and 2 girls.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

The astrist phenomenon included the entire area of the superior and inferior course of Mures river. Even since the attempt of founding Astra in Sibiu in 1860, a number of 6 Romanians from Reghin signed the act soliciting governor Lichtenstein's approval. Still dating from that period, these representatives, who gained in number with time, sent financial contributions as recognized and registered members. The Romanians from Tirgu-Mures, from the very beginning, became members, as well, their recognition being given by the financial contributions which they sent to Sibiu. Settled as dividing of Reghin in 1874, followed by Tg-Mures in 1876, they both had the same general path as Astra, although with great inequalities between their evolutions. Reghin was always one

of the leading dividing before and after 1918, due to its ethno-demographic conditions and, also, to its sometimes privileged statute.

Following the stipulations of the 1923 Constitution and of the new law regarding the administrative and territorial reorganization, the two dividing were also reorganized and reconsidered, hierarchically: Tg-Mures became county dividing, while Reghin was subordinated to the first one. After the establishment of the Social Service, in 1938, Tg-Mures was chosen, together with Somes and Timis, to put to practice the stipulations of the new law, being officially named „Central Dividing”. There was no envy from the administration of Reghin; on the contrary, its leader- dr. Eugen Nicoara –offered his priceless assistance so that the activities taking place in Tg-Mures to be of high standards. However, both dividings were forced to end their existence in 1940 due to Hungary occupying the Nord-Western part of Transylvania. Ten years later, the other dividings shared the same faith as a result of the prohibition of „Associations” by the soviet occupant.

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