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Ioan Mihu and Aurel Vlad, Supporters of the Romanian National Cause through the *Bunul Econom* Magazine (1899 - 1907)

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Abstract

The two patrons of the Romanian people from Transylvania, Ioan Mihu and Aurel Vlad, gathered around them all those who were able to work to build the Romanian people on their own, using this way of publishing an economic newspaper. The economic knowledge, necessary for that moment, when the ideas of association were seen as the only way out of the crisis, was translated into the simple language of the peasant reader, who received guidance on various branches of activity, thus managing to remain independent. The permanent preoccupation of the intellectuals in the area to train the people, so as to reach a proper standard of living, was visible since the appearance of the first Romanian daily published in Orăștie. Achieving a certain level of well-being brought independence from the Hungarian government and, at the same time, gave the possibility to support the struggle for the cultural, political and national emancipation of the Romanians in Transylvania. A true advisor of the entire associative activity, this publication with an economic profile was integrated within the efforts to spread the national economic literature, which aimed at the economic and national emancipation of Romanians, respectively.

Keywords

Nation, supporters, welfare, emancipation, patronage, nation, economy, intellectuals, publications, training, independence, school, meeting, twinning, association, modality.

I. Introduction

Intellectuals from the very middle of the people in the Orăștie area, located in the vicinity of the Dacian fortresses, who formed the hearth of formation of the Romanian people, were constantly looking for ways to promote the most appropriate means to support economic progress, as the only way to bring the welfare and emancipation of the Romanian nation.

Among them Dr. Ioan Mihiu and Dr. Aurel Vlad are prominent personalities of cultural, economic and political life and true benefactors of the Romanian people in Transylvania, involved in initiating and supporting some of the Romanian newspapers in Orăștie, whose support would benefit both themselves but also a large part of the Transylvanian Romanians.

II. Some biographical data

Ioan Mihiu, born on October 17, 1854 in Vinerea, locality from Hunedoara county, today in Alba county, in a family of leading peasants, was to attend primary and secondary school in Vinerea and Orăștie, high school in Sibiu and courses at the Faculty of Law in Gratz and Budapest, where he obtained his doctorate in 1883. After an internship, at the Court from Deva, he settled in Orăștie, where he opened a law office and where, supported by the Romanians in the area, he founded in 1885, the “Ardeleana” Bank. This financial institution was to be put to the service of the struggles for the support of national rights. In parallel, he was president of the “Romanian Intelligence Reading Society in and around Orăștie” and of the “Society for Romanian Theatre Fund” as well as headmaster of the Orăștie Division of Astra. He chaired the “Economic Reunion” in Orastie, established in April 1898, and the “Funeral Reunion”. He guided political life, seeking the most appropriate means for the development and assertion of the national consciousness, taking a stand in the face of attempts to Hungarianize from the part of the Budapest Government. He supported the idea of national solidarity as a member of the Romanian National Party. Retired from the management of the “Ardeleana” Bank, in 1911, he would carry out a rich cultural and social activity through the articles published in the newspapers from Orăștie. In 1910 he donated 25,000 crowns for the establishment of

the “Foundation for the Aid of Romanian Journalists in Hungary”. After participating in the Great National Assembly in Alba Iulia, on December 1, 1918, he retired from political life, living in Vinerea and Orastie. He bequeathed to the Romanian Orthodox Metropolitanate from Sibiu a large part of his fortune. He ended his life in his house in Orăștie, on June 1, 1927, being buried in Vinerea¹.

Aurel Vlad was born in Orăștie, on January 25, 1875, the son of the lawyer Alexandru Claudiu Vlad and of Aurelia, the daughter of George Baritiu. He attended primary and high school in Orăștie, and University at the Faculty of Law in Budapest, where he obtained his doctorate in law in 1898. He made his debut in law in Deva, and in 1901 he settled in Orăștie where he was named director of the “Ardeleana” Bank, with the support of Ioan Mihu. He married in 1905 Ana Iancu from Bobâlna. Involved in supporting the *Libertatea* newspaper from Orăștie, he would be noted as the initiator of the movement for the resumption of political activism. In 1903 he would enter the Parliament of Budapest as a representative of the Iliia Electoral Circle, following the victory in Dobra, and in 1905 as a representative of the Orăștie Electoral Circle. Following the resignation of the Hungarian Government and the elections of 1906, Aurel Vlad resigned from the position of director of the “Ardeleana” Bank in order to dedicate himself to political activity. In 1908 he was present with Iuliu Maniu at the People’s Assembly in Orăștie, following which a criminal case was filed against him for decorating his carriage with a tricolor. In the same year, his wife, Ana Vlad, would be elected deputy. Because she would have urged Romanian children to speak Romanian at school exams, she was sentenced to one month in prison and fined 300 crowns, and was finally pardoned, without taking any action in this regard.

In 1912, Dr. Aurel Vlad became a lay deputy in the National Church Congress of the Romanian Orthodox Metropolitan Church of Sibiu, succeeding Ioan Mihu. Protesting against the Hungarian government’s attempts to Hungarianize and restrict church autonomy, he would be permanently involved in preparing for the events of 1918. In the fall of this year he mortgaged his entire fortune to serve the needs of the Romanian nation. On October 12, 1918, at the meeting of the leadership of the

¹ Maria RAZBA, *Personalități hunedorene – dicționar*, ediția a II-a, edit. Emia, Deva, 2004, p. 340.

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Romanian National Party in Oradea, he was elected as a member of the subcommittee, in charge of preparing the great event of December 1st. On October 30, 1918, he participated to the creation of the “Romanian National Council”, which, after two days, established its residence in Arad. Following the negotiations in Arad from November 15-16, he came together with Iuliu Maniu to Orăștie, being invested for the election and appointment of the delegations of the National Assembly. Through the manifesto signed on November 25, 1918, he demanded the annexation to the Romanian kingdom and on November 26, he became one of the five delegates from the Romanian voters from the Orăștie circle. He became Minister of Finance and later of Industry and Commerce and would propose the unification of taxes levied by the state throughout the country.

Promoter of a civilized policy, he would receive in 1929 the order “Crown of Romania” in the rank of high cross, and towards the end of his life he retired to Orăștie. After the proclamation of the People’s Republic he was arrested together with the whole family and like the other ministers imprisoned in Sighet where he ended his life in July the 2nd 1953².

III. The “Economic Meeting”, the “Ardeleana” Bank and the “Bunul Econom” publication

Ioan Mișu’s desire to channel all his energies for the realization of a prosperous and independent economic base, would determine the creation of the “Economic Meeting” in Orăștie, of which he was president. Through it and with the support of the “Ardeleana” bank, he would look for the most suitable solution for promoting the information meant to keep alive in the souls of the Romanians the consciousness of their own nationality.

Thus, as early as December 1899, it set out to establish its own publication, through which to popularize the necessary knowledge³. Therefore, on December 25, 1899/6 January 1900, the first economic newspaper appeared in Orăștie entitled: ***Bunul Econom (1899 – 1907)***. Carrying the subtitle: The “Economic Reunion in Orăștie”, it saw the

² Maria RAZBA, *Personalități hunedorene – dicționar*, p.590; Dan DEMȘA, “Dr. Aurel Vlad – date biografice comprehensive”, in: *Corviniana*, 1/1995, pp.197-203.

³ *Revista Orăștiei*, nr. 52 of 25 dec. 1899/6 ian. 1900 and *Bunul Econom*, nr. 1 of 25 dec.1899/6 ian. 1900

light of day in the “Minerva” Printing House, under the leadership of an editorial committee formed by Ioan Mihaiu, Șt. Erdely, Daniel David and C. Baicu. The priest Ioan Moța was appointed responsible editor, who had returned to Orăștie, where he had also won the competition for the position of priest⁴.

Having an economic specificity, the new newspaper dealt with issues of agriculture, industry and trade, either at the level of an agricultural fellowship or reunion, or at the level of a single household, trying to convince the Romanians of the need to achieve a more prosperous material state. “If you want to reach an appreciation or even mastery in this world, then remember that you absolutely need a flourishing material well-being, which will enable you to meet the many needs of life”⁵. The purpose and objectives that the *Bunul Econom* proposed were outlined in the same programme article. The positive results, obtained by Economic Meetings everywhere, based on the discoveries of science, were to be made known to all households, because only well-trained, it was possible “to make the welfare flower bloom on the doorstep of his house cultural development”⁶. We have here a confirmation of the fact that the editors of the newspaper were aware of the need to make cultural progress, which implicitly brought the strengthening of the national consciousness of the Romanians.

In order to bring abundance to the “land and court” of the Romanians, the *Bunul Econom* aimed to pursue these discoveries of science “according to the meaning of all”. Therefore, it is a new “people’s” newspaper, which is working hard to present the information in a simple form, accessible to all.

At the same time, the publication promoted the idea of learning the “trades and business” (trade, n.n.), which the Romanians needed. All this was able to bring beautiful material results, which benefited only those who knew how to manage them properly. “That is why the *Bunul Econom* will force himself to plant and cultivate in our hearts the feeling that we, the Romanians, do not have, of sparing, of loving work, of avoiding useless waste!”⁷.

⁴ Valentin ORGA, *Moța – Pagini de viață. File de istorie*, Cluj Napoca, 1999, p.78.

⁵ “Doamne ajută”, in: *Bunul Econom*, no. 1 of 25 dec. 1899/6 ian. 1900.

⁶ “Doamne ajută”, in: *Bunul Econom*, no. 1 of 25 dec. 1899/6 ian. 1900.

⁷ “Doamne ajută”, in: *Bunul Econom*, no. 1 of 25 dec. 1899/6 Jan. 1900.

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In addition to the economic news, *Bunul Econom* presented news “about all the events of another nature, church, school, cultural and of any kind that will have a literary leaflet of delight”. The magazine thus took into account the concrete conditions of life of the Romanians from Transylvania, entering the category of publications, which defended their national interests. As an edifying conclusion of what is stated in the programme article of the *Bunul Econom*, it is significant to dwell on the following quote: “to be loaded with all sorts of news and stories, like bees with powder from all kinds of flowers and to please everyone”⁸.

The specification according to which “politics, but also personalities, will be completely excluded from this sheet”, confirms, in a way, the hypothesis launched by Valentin Orga in the cited paper⁹. The new newspaper, benefiting from the support of the most influential intellectuals of the land, had a series of permanent headings, including: Reunion, Plowing, Cattle Care, Wine Care, Crafts, Gardening, Companions - Comrades, Economic News, Commercial News, Hive, Church and school, Price of food, Gifts and throws, Hygiene and Foil.

All were rubrics for the dissemination of knowledge, giving practical advice and working in this way for the development of agriculture and even of the Romanian industry. However, the presence of the literary column is also noticeable, which is not absent from most Transylvanian newspapers. This period lasted until the end of 1901, when, as shown in the article Towards the readers,¹⁰ the economic magazine, in danger of being suppressed, proposed a revival of its programme.

From the beginning of 1902, the newspaper appeared with the following subtitle “Magazine for agriculture, industry and trade, organ of the Economic Reunion from Orăștie and of the Romanian Reunion of agriculture from Sibiu County”, having as owner and editor Aurel P. Barcianu. It was then proposed to set up new sections, such as the House Doctor and the People’s Advocate, to deal with issues of folk medicine and to give advice on how people should proceed in case of lawsuits.

The death of the owner, which occurred in July 1904, brought *Bunul Econom* to the “Minerva”¹¹ printing house. From the beginning of 1905,

⁸ “Doamne ajută”, in: *Bunul Econom*, no. 1 of 25 Dec. 1899/6 Jan. 1900.

⁹ Valentin ORGA, *Moța – Pagini de viață. File de istorie*, p. 78.

¹⁰ *Bunul Econom*, no. 52 of 22 Dec. 1901/4 Jan. 1902.

¹¹ *Bunul Econom*, no. 24 of July 17, 1904.

the archpriest Vasile Domșa became the owner of the newspaper and the printing house. Because of this no. 1 of January 15, 1905, presented the article Probationary Number, in which a brief review of the issues to be debated was made. A last change occurred at the end of 1906, when the *Bunul Econom* changed its form, having 16 pages and being similar to a small brochure¹².

IV. Economic lectures in villages or practical advice for householders

In the pages of the *Bunul Econom* appeared news about the popular lectures, held especially during the winter, through which he campaigned to determine the Romanian peasant to apply efficient methods in order to obtain increased productivity¹³. In order to help the peasants under the title *Economic Lectures in the Villages*, practical advice was presented, by which they were urged, in addition to cultivating what was necessary directly in the households, to plant trees in unused places, because in this way it was possible to get a nice income without too much effort¹⁴.

At the same time, the newspaper provided information on the crops to be set up and how the work from land preparation to harvest was to be carried out. Information was given both on the crops, which were used as fodder, and on the crops, useful for the direct feeding of the population. Following the titles of some of the articles: *Red Clover, Lucerne, Cultivation of Sugar Turnips, Ovėsul, Fodder Turnips, Peas*¹⁵ we can understand how varied the information¹⁶. provided to instruct the peasant on the benefits

¹² “Către abonații”, in: *Bunul Econom*, no. 47-48 / 16 dec. 1906.

¹³ For example, you can consult the articles published under the title “De la Reuniune”, in: *Bunul Econom*, no. 4 of 22 Jan./3 Feb. 1900; no. 6 of 5/17 Feb. 1900; no. 8 of 19 Feb./3 Mar.1900; no. 9 of 26 February /10 March 1900; no. 11 of 11/24 March 1900; no. 12 of 18/31 March 1900; no. 14 of 1/14 April 1900.

¹⁴ *Bunul Econom*, nr. 42 of 29 oct. 1905; “Cum să sporim veniturile agricultorilor”, in: *Bunul Econom*, nr.2 of 13 ian. 1903.

¹⁵ *Bunul Econom*, no. 5 of Jan. 27, Feb. 10, 1900; no. 8 of 19 Feb./3 March 1900; no. 10 of 4/17 March 1900; no. 11 of 11/24 March 1900; no. 14 of 1/14 Apr 1900; no. 17 of 22 Apr./5 May 1900.

¹⁶ “Cânepa și inul”, in: *Bunul Econom*, no. 16 of 15/28 Apr. 1900; “Cultivarea și folosul cănepei”, in: *Bunul Econom*, no. 48 of 6 Dec. 1903.

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obtained from their rational cultivation was. However, he also campaigned for the cultivation of plants, which were to be used in the “home industry” or in various factories for their processing. For example, on linen and hemp, the newspaper came back with a lot of information. All crops had to be set up by rotation, because this way an increase in productivity and income could be obtained¹⁷. In order to get an increase in productivity it was recommended to use carefully selected seeds.

The care of cattle was another topic debated consistently in the pages of the *Bunul Econom*. The advice referred to everything related to this sector, starting with the way in which the cattle had to be kept and up to the classification of the horns, according to the species or the use, that they were going to have in the household¹⁸. Information on Fish Filling or Goose Fattening was also featured in the pages of the newspaper¹⁹.

The development of fruit growing, beekeeping and viticulture has constantly preoccupied those who worked hard for the economic advancement of the Romanian nation. The orchard with all the necessary knowledge to be known was present, both theoretically and practically, for almost the entire period of the magazine, information on the varieties of different species of fruit trees, also finding their place in its pages²⁰. The situation was similar in terms of beekeeping and even viticulture, which can be seen by going through even the partial issues of the magazine²¹.

¹⁷ *Adaos to Bunul Econom*, no. 16 of 15/28 Apr. 1900.

¹⁸ “Cum să fie grajdurile?”, in: *Bunul Econom*, no. 2 of 8/20 Jan. 1900; “Împărțirea vitelor cornute”, in: *Bunul Econom*, no. 6 of 5/17 Feb. 1900; “Vitele de prăsilă, de carne, de muncă, de lapte”, in: *Bunul Econom*, no. 16 of 15/28 Apr. 1900; “Rasele animalelor”, in: *Bunul Econom*, no. 8 of 10 March 1907.

¹⁹ “Prăsirea peștilor”, in: *Bunul Econom*, no. 5 of 17 Feb. 1907; no. 6 of 24 feb. 1907; “Îngrășatul găștelor”, in: *Bunul Econom*, no.11 of 31 March 1907.

²⁰ See art. generically entitled “Pomărit”, in: *Bunul Econom*, no. 6 of 5/17 Feb. 1900; no. 15 of 8/21 Apr. 1900; no. 16 of 15/28 apr. 1900; no. 13 of 8 apr. 1906; no. 10 of March 24. 1907.

²¹ “Folosul albinelor”, “Tractarea vinului ca must”, in: *Bunul Econom*, no. 2 of 8/20 Jan 1900; “Timpul și chipul începerii stupăritului”, in: *Bunul Econom*, no. 4 of 22 Jan./3 Feb. 1900; “Cercetarea stupilor”, in: *Bunul Econom*, no. 13 of March 25/7 Apr. 1900; “Coșnițele”, in: *Bunul Econom*, no. 16 of 15/28 Apr. 1900; “Roirea timpurie”, in: *Bunul Econom*, no. 18 of April 29/12 May 1900; “Albinăria”, in: *Bunul Econom*, no. 1 of January 20, 1907; no. 3 of Feb. 3, 1907; no. 5 of 17 February 1907.

V. Association as means of ensuring one's own welfare

However, the revitalization of the economic life in the villages was achieved by setting up agricultural associations and procuring, through them, equipment to replace manual labor, obtaining, at the same time, increased results. This campaign, which campaigned for the grouping of Romanians in an associative form, was opened by the article *The Spirit of Forgiveness*²², which highlighted the results obtained by those who joined; there was a brief review of the evolution of the comrades from 1895 to 1899. Then other articles followed such as the *Lever of Advancement* and *Let's Make Beginnings* by which new exhortations were launched to establish agricultural comrades²³. The efforts to convince the Romanian peasants to embrace the idea of their establishment, were springing from the belief that through them "the fierce fight against poverty could be waged"²⁴. Moreover, an attempt to argue the formation of these associations, started from the ancient traditions of self-help existing in the Romanian villages, which manifested themselves in some situations, as can be seen today in some Transylvanian localities.²⁵ Proving to be a press body, which consistently insisted on "spreading the ideas of association in the villages"²⁶, the periodical had launched a sustained campaign, which aimed to popularize the beneficial results brought by these associations. It is obvious, given the fact that, after the publication of a significant number of articles, which presented multiple forms of association - possibly to be established in the village world, *Bunul Econom* returned with another article entitled *Also* to the question of economic development and the introduction of village fellowships²⁷. At the beginning of 1907, there appeared in the pages of the newspaper two projects for the establishment of such accompaniments, having the role of serving as a model for those who wanted to become members of such companionships²⁸.

²² *Bunul Econom*, no. 13 of March 25/7 Apr. 1900.

²³ *Bunul Econom*, no. 46 din 11/24 Nov. 1900 and no. 24 of 9/22 Jun. 1900.

²⁴ *Bunul Econom*, no. 16 of 14/27 Apr. 1901.

²⁵ *Bunul Econom*, no. 7 of 22 February 1903.

²⁶ V. DOBRESCU, I. KOVACS, "Presa românească despre cooperăția din Transilvania la începutul secolului al XX-lea", in: *Anuarul Institutului de Istorie și Arheologie Cluj*, no. 17, 1974, p. 306.

²⁷ *Bunul Econom*, no. 7 of 3 March. 1907.

²⁸ "Tovărășii agricole și pentru asigurarea vitelor", in: *Bunul Econom*, no. 11 of 31 March. 1907; no. 12 of 7 apr. 1907; no. 13 of 14 apr. 1907; no. 14 of 21 apr. 1907; no. 15 of 28 Apr. 1907; no. 16 of May 5, 1907; no. 18 of May 19, 1907.

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Among the countless forms of association, *Bunul Econom* militated for the establishment of its own banks and shops. Banks in the villages²⁹, was the title of the article announcing Dr. Ioan Mihiu's urge to set up small local banks to represent their interests. Subsequently, the magazine insisted on the introduction of village credit in the Reiffeisen system, which was based on "the solitary responsibility of those accompanied by all their wealth, for each other" and "which do not allow the borrowed money to be used only for useful things and producers"³⁰.

Benefiting from the support of these associations, the Romanians had the opportunity to establish their own stores, through which they could purchase both the products needed to feed the entire household and to support the new crops. Through these stores they also had the opportunity to purchase equipment, which they could use to work the land and to process the products obtained³¹.

Identifying another source of income, the newspaper's editors worked tirelessly to give useful advice to those who wanted to promote trade. In this sense, *Bunul Econom* opened a series of articles entitled Commerce³² and later the editors of the newspaper return with an article entitled Trades and business³³. Wanting to convince the Romanians that they "are the richest sources of national private wealth", they also made a historical presentation of them, starting from antiquity and up to that moment. In this way, the national feeling awoke in the soul of the people and a connection was made with another field for the development of which the newspaper constantly militated. What trades to learn³⁴, was the article that stated that young people should be directed to a certain qualification, depending on the real needs in the territory. Following this line, the article Sources of gain³⁵, presents the benefits brought by some of these trades. The way in which women had the possibility to make up, in their own household of products useful for their family, did not go unnoticed in the pages of *Bunul*

²⁹ *Bunul Econom*, no. 8 of 19 Feb./3 March. 1900.

³⁰ *Bunul Econom*, no. 5 of Feb. 8, 1903; no. 9 of 17 March 1907.

³¹ "Magazine de bucate", in: *Bunul Econom*, no. 11 of 11/24 March. 1900; "Agoniseala mașinilor economice pe calea întovărășirilor", in: *Bunul Econom*, no. 18 of 28 April / 11 May 1901.

³² *Comerciu*, was opened in no. 22 of 11 June. 1905 and continued thereafter.

³³ *Bunul Econom*, no. 10 of March 18 1906.

³⁴ *Bunul Econom*, no. 7 of 12/24 febr. 1900

³⁵ *Bunul Econom*, no. 40 of 11 Oct. 1903

*Econom*³⁶. At the same time, however, the newspaper urged young people to go to the industrial sector, where there is a great need for craftsmen, especially in the conditions of the existence of so many natural raw materials³⁷.

The forms of association did not refer, as we reported, only to the activity of the peasant. They also looked at the activity of craftsmen and merchants. Attempts by the former to gain state recognition have met with countless refusals. As a result, they were allowed to enter and work at the Economic Meeting, for which the *Bunul Econom* had insisted, publishing the repeated exhortations of Ioan Moța³⁸. The pages of the publication even proposed the establishment of a general association of Romanian craftsmen from Transylvania, which would guide their activity according to local and national needs³⁹.

The achievement of material well-being, of cultural promotion and implicitly of national emancipation was thus easier to achieve in the conditions of knowing some trades and practising a sustained work.

However, the results obtained had to be properly managed, which has been insisted on many times. The Spirit of Forgiveness, Forgiveness to the Full Bag, Today's Forgiveness - Tomorrow's Expense or Against the Ease of Cooking, are just a few of the articles that talked about the duty to save and manage, as the results of work deserve. It created the possibility, in times of need, to be able to enjoy what you saved when you had plenty. However, the obtained surpluses had to be deposited only in the Romanian banks, the only ones that helped the Romanian institutions⁴⁰. Moreover, the economic paper also drew attention to the dangers, which targeted those who, through improper management of goods, ended up borrowing money from usury⁴¹. In the case of appreciation and good governance, of the results of work, people were to live contentedly⁴².

³⁶ *Bunul Econom*, no. 47 of 29 Oct. 190

³⁷ "Industrie Mare", in: *Bunul Econom*, no. 29 of 30 July. 1905

³⁸ *Bunul Econom*, no. 11 of 10/23 March. 1901

³⁹ *Bunul Econom*, no. 31 of 27 Jul.10 Aug. 1900

⁴⁰ *Bunul Econom*, no. 48 of 25 Nov./8 Dec. 1900

⁴¹ *Bunul Econom*, no. 10 of 4/17 March. 1900; no. 45 of 4/17 Nov. 1900; no. 48 of 25 Nov./8 Dec.1900; no. 10 of 15 March 1903.

⁴² "Să ne pregătim de mai multă mulțămire", in: *Bunul Econom*, no. 36 of 2/15 Sept. 1900; "Arendă, chirie, camătă", in: *Bunul Econom*, no. 51 of 15/28 dec. 1901 .

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Banking institutions and good governance were not the only tools meant to protect the Romanians from deprivation and trouble. Because of this, *Bunul Econom* insisted on convincing the need to insure houses and crops against natural disasters and fires⁴³. This is all the more so as the first responsible editor of the newspaper was a convinced promoter of the insurance system. For a start, the Romanians were informed of the conditions under which it was possible to insure them. Subsequently, in the pages of the magazine, he campaigned intensely for the conclusion of such assurances⁴⁴.

The end of every man's life has been and it is an unknown. Because of this, wanting to help those who arrived in such situations, Father Ioan Moța tried to get the Romanians to join the so-called "Funeral Reunion". The new institution developed very quickly both in Orăștie and in the surrounding localities, and later the status of organization was requested by more distant communities of Transylvania⁴⁵. It was about another form of aid or insurance, to the establishment of which the *Bunul Econom* and its editor fully contributed.

VI. Economic, social and national emancipation in close connection with the proper training of the people

Aware that economic, social and national emancipation cannot be achieved without proper training of the people, the editors of the newspaper have repeatedly insisted on the importance of this. It was not easy, but those who worked hard to achieve *Bunul Econom* strove to work in all the ways available to them to prosper the nation. Because of this, the pages of the publication often featured exhortations for parents to send their children to school, especially to learn various trades. Therefore, since the first year of publication, the article "The State of education among the Romanians in Hungary" was published, which made an analysis of the evolution of the number of young people in different educational institutions in the

⁴³ "Asigurați-vă recoltele contra incendiului", in: *Bunul Econom*, no. 28 of 26 June. 1903.

⁴⁴ "Asigurarea lucrărilor de câmp", in: *Bunul Econom*, no. 18 of 29 Apr./12 May 1900.

⁴⁵ *Bunul Econom*, no. 31 of July 29/11 Aug. 1900; no. 40 of 30 Sept./13 Oct. 1900; no. 42 of 14/27 Sept. 1900; no. 24 of 9/22 Jun. 1900; no. 40 of 29 Sept / 12 Oct. 1901.

country. Noting the increase, the magazine does not forget to insist on the duty to constantly militate for the orientation of as many children as possible to schools⁴⁶.

The popular schools, the place where the elementary knowledge was acquired, were the first institutions to which the Romanians were directed to send their children. The results obtained at the end of the years were recorded in the pages of the newspaper, emphasizing that the Romanian civilization can only be built by Romanian means⁴⁷.

The situation of the students from the Secondary School from Brad, for whose free food innumerable calls were made, also preoccupied the editors of *Bunul Econom*. The realization of this would have determined several inhabitants of the area to direct their children to the only secondary school in the county. That is why the reception conditions were presented to the public in parallel with these calls.⁴⁸ The reception conditions in the “Civil School for Girls” of the “Association” from Sibiu were also brought to the public’s attention, and the inauguration of the boarding school was not overlooked, precisely because it was the only institution of this kind⁴⁹.

Above all, however, the people were instructed to urge children to learn certain trades, the benefits of their practice being well known. That is why *Bunul Econom* insisted on the special forms of training offered by the profile institutions⁵⁰. The decision of the Romanian Ministry of Cults and Instruction in Bucharest to open 40 trade schools in the conditions in which most of the craftsmen from Transylvania were of foreign origin, wanted an example worth following⁵¹. The Ceramic School from Targu Jiu, the Rehearsal Economic School, the School for Home Economics and Industry are articles that presented the schooling plan and the subjects

⁴⁶ *Bunul Econom*, no. 23 of 3/10 June 1900.

⁴⁷ “Examene în școalele populare”, in: *Bunul Econom*, no. 20 of May 25, 1903; “Școli pentru popor”, in: *Bunul Econom*, no. 22 of 11 June 1905; “La început de an școlar”, in: *Bunul Econom*, no. 35-36 of 9 Sept. 1901.

⁴⁸ “Gimnaziul nostru din Brad”, in: *Bunul Econom*, no. 33 of 12/25 Aug. 1900; “Pentru gimnaziul din Brad”, in: *Bunul Econom*, no. 47 din 18 Nov./1 dec. 1900; “De la Gimnaziul din Brad” in: *Bunul Econom*, no. 34 of 2 Sept. 1906.

⁴⁹ *Bunul Econom*, no. 33 of 12/25 Aug. 1900 and no. 30 of 23 Aug. 1903.

⁵⁰ “Către părinții români”, in: *Bunul Econom*, no. 28 of 7/20 July. 1901; “Școale economice”, in: *Bunul Econom*, no. 12 of 18/31 March. 1900; “Școale pentru industriași și meseriași”, in: *Bunul Econom*, no. 15 of 8/21 apr. 1900; “Școala și economia”, in: *Bunul Econom*, no. 39 of October 8, 1905.

⁵¹ “Se caută meseriași români”, in: *Bunul Econom*, no. 34 of 18/31 Aug. 1901.

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studied, the structure of the school year or the fees charged in such schools⁵². An alternative, for the people settled in their houses, on which the *Bunul Econom* insisted, would be the need to organize practical Schools for the people, which were to function especially during the winter, when the peasants were freer⁵³.

Regardless of their level or specialty, all these institutions proved to be “strategic”, protecting young people from the dangers of Hungarianize and educating them in a healthy way⁵⁴. In fact, this was also the goal pursued by the magazine through the constant publication of the cultural column Foița. In it, the editors of *Bunul Econom* published poems, belonging to well-known names in the country, but also to some local writers, including Mihai Eminescu, Vasile Alecsandri, George Coșbuc, Ștefan Octavian Iosif, Maria Ciobanu, Petre Dulfu. Among the works in prose are creations of Ilarie Chendi, George Coșbuc, Ion Luca Caragiale, Th. D. Speranța, Costache Negri, Dimitrie Bolintineanu, Alexandru Vlahuță, Carmen Sylva, or translations from the works of Tolstoy or Lamartine. For a better knowledge of them, the editors also presented the works published in the Library of *Bunul Econom*, informing the readers how they can get into their possession⁵⁵. Highlighting the role of libraries in the process of cultural emancipation, the newspaper guides them to the parish libraries, considered the safest means for the development of the culture of the common man, to which they had access⁵⁶.

However, the pages of the magazine also hosted history studies published after the works of A. D. Xenopol, providing information about the inhabitants of these lands from the period before the Roman rule⁵⁷. The martyrdom of the faithful voivode Constantin Brâncoveanu was presented to the people as an example worthy of being followed by each of the country’s inhabitants, for the defense of the ancestral faith and of the

⁵² *Bunul Econom*, no. 44 of 28 Oct. 10 Nov. 1900; no. 29 of 29 June. 1906; no. 25 of 7 July. 1907.

⁵³ *Bunul Econom*, no. 47-48 of 16 Dec. 1906.

⁵⁴ *Bunul Econom*, no. 12 of 18/31 March 1900; no. 19 of 6/19 May 1900; no. 47-48 of 16 Dec 1906.

⁵⁵ The section “Biblioteca Bunului Econom” was inaugurated in no. 4 of February 1, 1903, continuing throughout the publication of the magazine.

⁵⁶ *Bunul Econom*, no. 46 of 26 Nov. 1905.

⁵⁷ “Timpurile dinaintea stăpânirii romane”, in: *Bunul Econom*, no. 31 of July 29/11 August 1900.

national being⁵⁸. The image of the ruler Alexandru Ioan Cuza, who managed to unite under his leadership Moldavia and Wallachia, thus forming Romania, was brought before the readers together with the activity of the great politician Ion C. Brătianu⁵⁹. However, there was also information about the royal family of Romania. Queen Carmen Sylva, “that good soul, soothing of the soul and body pains of the suffering, the comforting mother of children”, was described on the occasion of her 59th birthday. King Carol the 1st’s personality was given ample space on the occasion of the May 10th holiday. However, the magazine’s editors also presented information about Prince Ferdinand, the heir of Romania, or about the little princes Carol and Elisabeth⁶⁰, insisting on the good education that the latter had benefited from. Fragments of King Carol’s life, as well as his involvement in the life of the country were provided in the following years⁶¹, certainly having their role. It proved that the publication knew how to keep alive the consciousness of belonging to all Romanians to the nation they belonged to, no matter where they lived.

Astra’s cultural celebrations, under the auspices of which the most extensive work of cultural and national revitalization took place, were also to be recorded in the pages of the *Bunul Econom*. Determined by the General Assemblies of the Association, these manifestations became true celebrations of the Romanian people, which enlightened all those who took part in them and in their turn were able to spread this light further⁶².

Supporters of the Association, who also contributed significantly to the construction of the new Metropolitan Cathedral in Sibiu, were members of the Mocsonyi family. That is why the *Bunul Econom* presented their actions, which permanently militated so that the Romanian nation could be directed on the path of cultural, social and national promotion. Among

⁵⁸ *Bunul Econom*, no. 37 of 20 Sept. 1903.

⁵⁹ “Alexandru Ioan Cuza”, in: *Bunul Econom*, no. 4 of Feb. 1, 1903; “Ioan C. Brătianu”, in: *Bunul Econom*, no. 5 of February 8, 1903.

⁶⁰ “Carmen Sylva”, in: *Bunul Econom*, no. 1 of 11 Jan. 1903; “Carol I - regele României”, in: *Bunul Econom*, no. 20 of May 25, 1903; “A.S.R. principele Ferdinand”, in: *Bunul Econom*, no. 8 of 1 March. 1903; “Micii principii ai României”, in: *Bunul Econom*, no. 30 of 2 Aug. 1903; “O creștere frumoasă”, in: *Bunul Econom*, no. 46 din 11/24 Nov. 1900.

⁶¹ “Din România”, in: *Bunul Econom*, no. 21 of May 31, 1906.

⁶² “Serbări culturale”, in: *Bunul Econom*, no. 38 of 15/28 Sept. 1901; “Discursul”, in: *Bunul Econom*, no. 37-38 of 14 Oct. 1906.

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those who stood out in this struggle, given in the land of the church, school and national economy, are mentioned the names of those who were Andrei, Petru, Antoniu and Eugen Mocsonyi⁶³.

A whole cycle of articles was dedicated to the great Metropolitan Andrei Șaguna, in which, starting from the feast of Saint Andrew, the achievements obtained on behalf of the Orthodox Church from Transylvania and the entire Romanian nation were evoked⁶⁴.

Aware of the role of printing in the life of the people, the editors of the newspaper also made a short history of the Romanian prints that had appeared until then. At the same time, they showed “what we should do and do to strengthen ourselves and help each other, surrounding the printing of our words in the printing presses of strangers until we have ours”⁶⁵. The emergence of the press was also seen as a benefit of these institutions, emphasizing the role it needed to play as means of spreading culture among the people⁶⁶. Thus, joining the family and the school, they were meant to feed the soul of the Romanians, “making them worthy people for the necessities of life, illuminating their paths, infiltrating in them the feeling of love and respect for their neighbours and for their homeland”⁶⁷. The quote comes to eloquently confirm how aware these tireless dismissals were of the mission they had to fulfill.

VII. Signaling the danger of denationalization

The danger of denationalization was much greater, and therefore the fight against it had to be fought in every possible way. This explains the fact that the editors of the newspaper launched appeals, in which they defended the dignity of the national port, constantly presenting the activities carried out in this sense by the existing cultural foundations⁶⁸. Although we are dealing

⁶³ “Familia Mocsonyi”, in: *Bunul Econom*, no. 45 of 15 Nov. 1903.

⁶⁴ “De Sfântul Andrei”, in: *Bunul Econom*, no. 49 of 17 dec. 1905; “Andrei Șaguna”, cycle of articles inaugurated with no. 2 of January 21, 1906.

⁶⁵ “Tipografiile românești”, in: *Bunul Econom*, no. 3, 4, 5, 7 published between February 3, 1907 and March 3 1907.

⁶⁶ “Ziarele noastre ca element de cultură”, in: *Bunul Econom*, no. 9 of 17 March 1907.

⁶⁷ “Folosul ziarelor”, in: *Bunul Econom*, no. 24 of 30 June. 1907.

⁶⁸ “Păstrați portul național”, in: *Bunul Econom*, no. 6 of February 17, 1906, “Inimi îndurate”, in: *Bunul Econom*, no. 38 of 16/29 Sept. 1900.

with an economic publication, in whose programme it was mentioned that politics will be completely excluded from its pages, however, some political news have been published. However, it is a natural thing, given the fact that the measures adopted in the Hungarian Diet, the news about the new governments or the dietary elections directly concerned the Romanian nation, whose development was closely related to them⁶⁹.

The difficult situation, sometimes desperate, in which the Romanians found themselves, determined many of them to emigrate to America. However, the editors of *Bunul Econom* tried to persuade the people not to be deceived by the miraculous income they hoped to obtain, showing them that only hard work awaited them there. Although it was better paid, it did not bring enrichment, but only the bitter longing for birthplaces and the beloved ones. Therefore, it was wiser to work in their own households, gathering and saving to move forward to prosperity⁷⁰. Maintaining his point of view, *Bunul Econom* warned of the danger of leaving the country by an increasing number of people from different localities⁷¹.

The law, the language and the estate were considered sacred things, which the Romanians had to treat with respect. Otherwise there was a danger of alienation from God, and it was possible to exploit some by others, which the newspaper's editors glimpsed from the ideas of hitherto unknown currents. It was communism and socialism, the danger of which these fierce defenders of the nation had identified since then as the one who easily brought anarchy.⁷²

Analyzing these aspects, we find how wide the spectrum of problems approached and how concrete were the guidelines given. All these brought to the reader rich knowledge, necessary for the increase of material well-being and sensitized him so that later he would be able and eager to support the achievement of the national desideratum of all Romanians. The appearance of *Bunul Econom* did not end, however, in 1907, but

⁶⁹ "Știri politice", in: *Bunul Econom*, no. 41 of 5/18 Oct. 1901; "Noul guvern", in: *Bunul Econom*, no. 44 of 15 Nov. 1903; "Alegeri dietale", in: *Bunul Econom*, no. 4 of February 5, 1905.

⁷⁰ "Porniri rele", in: *Bunul Econom*, no. 7 of 12/24 Feb. 1900.

⁷¹ "Știri despre pericolul părăsirii țării", in: *Bunul Econom*, no. 32 of 5/18 Aug. 1900; "Fear of emigration", in: *Bunul Econom*, no. 34 of 19 Aug./1 Sept. 1900 "Românii înspre America", in: *Bunul Econom*, no. 12 of 17/30 March 1901; "America, nenorocirea noastră", in: *Bunul Econom*, no. 38 of 16/29 Sept. 1900.

⁷² "Comunismul, socialismul și anarhismul", in: *Bunul Econom*, no. 18 of May 3, 1906.

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starting with December 1, 1907, the magazine did not appear in Orăștie. Passing into the ownership of the “Industria” Bank from Deva, it was to be published in that locality until March 31, 1908⁷³.

VIII. Conclusion

Looking at the overall activity, we can conclude that the publication, edited at the urging of these great benefactors of the Romanian people, who were Ioan Mihu and Aurel Vlad, who gathered around them all those who were able to work to build on their own the Romanian nation, fulfilled its proposed objectives. The economic knowledge, necessary for that moment, when the ideas of association were seen as the only way out of the crisis, was translated into the simple language of the peasant reader, who received guidance on various branches of activity, thus managing to remain independent. The permanent preoccupation of the intellectuals in the area to train the people, so as to reach a proper standard of living, was visible since the appearance of the first Romanian daily published in Orăștie. Achieving a certain level of well-being brought independence from the Hungarian government and, at the same time, gave the possibility to support the fight for the cultural, political and national emancipation of the Romanians in Transylvania.

⁷³ “Rămas bun, Orăștie”, in: *Bunul Econom*, nr. 46-47 din 18 dec. 1907.