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**SUCEAVA REGION, UPPER LAND, GREATER BUKOVINA
OR JUST BUKOVINA? CAROL II'S ADMINISTRATIVE REFORM
IN NORTH-EASTERN ROMANIA (1938-1940)**

This paper examines the territorial aspect of the Romanian Administrative Law of 1938, concentrating on the reception of the Law in Bukovina, Hotin/Khotyn and Dorohoi counties: Did Suceava Region, which the Law created, erase former Austrian Bukovina (1775-1918) from memory and revive the pre-1775 Moldavian Upper Land? Did it become a Greater Bukovina to the inhabitants of Bukovina, Hotin and Dorohoi counties? Or was it just a synonym for "Bukovina"?

As from 5th January 1934, the Kingdom of Romania had experienced a longer period of political stability, with four liberal cabinets, all led by Gheorghe Tătărăscu. In the general elections of 20th and 22nd December 1937, the first-placed National Liberal Party (PNL) however failed to obtain 40% of the vote, which would have given it again the majority in Parliament, according to the Electoral Law of 1926 (art. 90-b). As King Carol II could not reach an agreement with the politicians of the second-placed National Peasants' Party (PNȚ) and as he wanted to weaken the third-placed anti-Semitic and anti-systemic Iron Guard, he saw no other option but to entrust poet Octavian Goga from the fourth-placed anti-Semitic but pro-constitutional National Christian Party (PNC) with the formation of the government, although it had obtained only 9,15%.¹ Carol II wrote in his diary:

I am perfectly conscious that a government with these elements, who are quite anti-Semitic, can not last for a long time and that after this, I shall be free to take some stronger measures, which will untie me and the country from the tyranny of the petty interests of the parties, which is so often unpatriotic.²

In accordance with this note, the king let Goga pursue an aggressive anti-Semitic policy and simultaneously prepared a coup, for which he could count on right-wing leaders, such as Nicolae Iorga and Constantin Argetoianu, as well as on Romania's guarantor powers France and Great Britain.³ The king took action one day after Goga

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¹ Carol II, *Între datorie și pasiune. Însemnări zilnice*, vol. I, București, 1995, p. 233-234.

² *Ibidem*, p. 234: "Sunt perfect conștient că o guvernare cu aceste elemente, destul de hotărât antisemite, nu va putea fi una de lungă durată și că după aceea voi fi liber să pot lua alte măsuri mai forte, măsuri cari să mă descătușează, atât Țara cât și pe mine, de tirania, adesea atât de nepatriotică, a meschinilor interese de partid."

³ Hans-Christian Maner, *Parlamentarismul în România 1930-1940*, București, 2004, p. 195-197.

reached an electoral agreement with Iron Guard leader Corneliu Zelea Codreanu, which threatened the king's power.⁴ On 10th February 1938, Carol II told Goga that he wanted to form a national unity government, whereupon Goga resigned.⁵ On the same day, Carol II appointed the patriarch of the Romanian Orthodox Church, Miron Cristea, as president of the Council of Ministers, which comprised all the party leaders and former prime ministers, except for PNC and Iron Guard members.⁶ On 11th February 1938, the Council of Ministers declared the state of siege, giving the military authorities the right to censor the press.⁷ During the next days, new elections, which had been called for 2nd March 1938, were postponed until further notice.⁸ On 22nd February 1938, Carol II promulgated a new Constitution, which granted him dictatorial attributes.⁹ The Constitution was approved by referendum on 24th February 1938. It was the cornerstone of Carol II's authoritarian and single-party "New Romania", which imitated the Yugoslavian 6 January Dictatorship, Italian Fascism and German National Socialism.¹⁰

One aspect of Carol II's "New Romania" was the Administrative Law of 1938, which had been planned since 31st January 1938.¹¹ The architects of the Law were the king himself, the ministries of the Interior, of Justice and of Finances and the Royal Institute for Administrative Sciences. The Law was mainly linked to the names of Armand Călinescu and Gheorghe Alexianu.¹²

Călinescu (1893–1939) was the right hand of Carol II. He served as a Minister of the Interior in the Goga cabinet, the three successive Cristea cabinets and became prime minister after Cristea died on 6th March 1939.¹³ On 21st September 1939, he was assassinated by Iron Guard members, probably in reprisal for the killing of Codreanu and of other leaders of the Iron Guard.¹⁴

Alexianu (1897–1946) worked as a lawyer in Bucharest and Cernăuți/Chernivtsi. He had co-founded the Royal Institute for Administrative Sciences, taught as a professor at the Carol II University of Cernăuți, where he had held the chair of Comparative Constitutional Law since 1930, and served as a legal advisor to the Romanian Orthodox Religious Fund of Bukovina. He was the son-in-law of former Minister of Justice Constantin Hamangiu (1869–1932).¹⁵

⁴ For details about the difficult political situation of both the PNC and the Iron Guard, see Armin Heinen, *Legiunea Arhanghelului Mihail. Mișcare socială și organizație politică. O contribuție la problema fascismului internațional*, București, 2006, p. 335.

⁵ Zvi Yavetz, *Viața politică și problema evreiască în timpul domniei regelui Carol al II-lea (1930–1940)*, Cluj, 2006, p. 103–104.

⁶ Royal Decree 854/10.02.1938, in *MOF*, Partea I-a, 10.02.1938, p. 797, nr. 33 bis.

⁷ Royal Decree 856/11.02.1938, in *MOF*, Partea I-a, 11.02.1938, p. 802, nr. 34.

⁸ Royal Decree 857/11.02.1938, in *MOF*, Partea I-a, 12.02.1938, p. 834, nr. 35; cf. Royal Decree 168/21.01.1938, in *MOF*, Partea I-a, 22.01.1938, p. 314, nr. 18; Royal Decree 89/18.01.1938, in *MOF*, Partea I-a, 18.01.1938, p. 245, nr. 14 bis.

⁹ Such as the right of legislative initiative (art. 31), constitutional amendments (art. 97), rule by decree until the convocation of parliament (art. 98) and dissolving the chamber of deputies and the senate at any time (art. 45): *MOF*, Partea I-a, 20.02.1938, p. 954–962, nr. 42.

¹⁰ Armin Heinen, *op. cit.*, p. 341.

¹¹ Armand Călinescu, *Însemnări politice 1916–1939*, București, 1990, p. 372.

¹² Carol II, *op. cit.*, p. 292–293; Report to the king 15037, in *MOF*, Partea I-a, 14.08.1938, p. 3832, nr. 187; see also Gheorghe Alexianu's speech in "Monitorul Ținutului Suceava" (Cernăuți), 15.09.1938, p. 22, nr. 1: "Noapți întregi membrii Institutului Regal de științe administrative au lucrat cu d-l ministru Armand Călinescu, pentru a găsi cele mai bune formule [...]".

¹³ Royal Decree 985/7.03.1939, in *MOF*, Partea I-a, 7.03.1939, p. 1160, nr. 56.

¹⁴ Grigore Gafencu, *Însemnări politice 1929–1939*, București, 1991, p. 336.

¹⁵ "Morgenblatt", 17.08.1938, p. 1 and 3, nr. 5933: Das neue Verwaltungsgesetz in Kraft.; "Glasul Bucovinei", 30.08.1938, p. 1–2, nr. 5418: *Svon de bucurie în Țara fagilor. Semnificația instalării Rezidentului al Ținutului Suceava*; Constantin Radu, *Întâiul Rezident Regal al Ținutului Sucevei*, Cernăuți, 1938, p. 31.

The new Administrative Law was issued on 14th August 1938.¹⁶ Following the Yugoslavian model from 1929¹⁷, it introduced 10 administrative regions (*ținuturi*) with a governor called “Royal Resident”, a regional council and a budget of its own. Each region included several counties, which continued to exist as administrative subdivisions, but lost their councils and budgets.¹⁸ Călinescu argued that the large regions had more means than the smaller counties and that their unhistorical boundaries united the inhabitants of “New Romania” on the basis of real needs, coherent geographical zones, economic spaces and communication networks.¹⁹ The government-run newspaper *România* accused the former political parties of not having abolished the historical provinces, in order to protect their petty interests.²⁰

At the beginning, Călinescu intended to create only 7 administrative regions corresponding to the 7 military districts, but he gave in to public pressure.²¹ For instance, a former county prefect argued that seven regions were too few, as they were too large to administrate, and suggested creating two more regions, one with pre-1918 Romanian and Bessarabian counties around Galați and one with partly non-contiguous Transylvanian and Walachian (pre-1918 Romanian) counties based in Sibiu.²² Furthermore, a group of “Romanian patriots from Bukovina” refused to give up Cernăuți as an administrative capital in favour of Iași. They argued that Cernăuți was the seat of an orthodox Metropolis, Carol II University, a Court of Appeal and several public offices; that the people from Hotin had to pass through Cernăuți on their way to Iași; that it was easier to get from Cernăuți to Bucharest than to Iași; that Cernăuți already had served as an administrative capital and fulfilled all the conditions requested by the new Law. In return, the petitioners accepted to renounce the historical boundaries of Bukovina. They suggested merging Bukovina province with Hotin, Dorohoi, Baia and Botoșani counties: “Thereby, the old borders of Răchitna/Rokytna and Molna [Molnița/Molnyzya?] shall disappear”.²³

Eventually, the 5 counties of Bukovina merged with the Bessarabian Hotin and the Moldavian (pre-1918 Romanian) Dorohoi counties, becoming “Suceava Region” (*Ținutul Suceava*). The region’s seat or “residence” (*Rezidenția*) was Cernăuți, the former capital of Bukovina. According to the Ukrainian Cernăuți newspaper *Time* (*Час/Čas*), Suceava Region was named after the ancient capital of Moldova²⁴ and Alexianu later called “Suceava Region” an historical name.²⁵ However, most

¹⁶ Royal Decree 2919/13.08.1938, in *MOF*, Partea I-a, 14.08.1938, p. 3772–3832, nr. 187.

¹⁷ Закон о унутрашњој управи од 19. јуна 1929. године; Report to the king 15037, in *MOF*, Partea I-a, 14.08.1938, p. 3814–3815, nr. 187.

¹⁸ See: Ioan Pleșa, *Rezidența regală a Ținutului Mureș, in Îndrumător în Arhivele Statului. Județul Alba*, volum 1, București, 1989; Zoltán Györke, *Instituția Prefecturii în perioada interbelică (1923–1938). Proiecții legislative*, in “Revista Transilvană de Științe Administrative”, 2010, p. 91–96, nr. 3; For a German summary of the territorial aspect of the Administration Law, see P. Gauß, *Geographische Neuigkeiten. Übriges Europa*, in “Geographische Zeitschrift”, 1938, nr. 10 (I owe this reference to Anne Delouis, Orléans).

¹⁹ Armand Călinescu, *Spiritul noului regim administrativ*, in *Enciclopedia României*, vol. II, București, 1938, p. 4.

²⁰ *Reforma administrativă*, in “România”, 2.06.1938, p. 1, nr. 1.

²¹ Armand Călinescu, *Însemnări*, p. 389–390.

²² ANB (The National Archives of Romania – Bucharest), Collection: Institutul de Științe Administrative, File: 47, Sheets 193–194.

²³ *Das neue Verwaltungsprojekt*, in “Morgenblatt”, 15.05.1938, p. 5, nr. 5857: “[...] wobei die alten Grenzen von Rachtina und Molna verschwinden.”

²⁴ *Вроцистости настановлення резидента сучавської області*, in “Час”, 1.09.1938, p. 1.

²⁵ *Inaugurarea noului an de studii la Universitatea din Cernăuți*, in “Bucovina”, 26.10.1938, p. 6, nr. 5464.

newspapers, including *România*, asserted that the names of all the ten regions derived from local rivers.²⁶

In 2010, the geographer Kurt Scharr claimed without argumentation that the name “Bukovina” was erased from the administrative vocabulary in 1938.²⁷

Regarding Scharr’s statement, when Gheorghe Alexianu was inaugurated as “Royal Resident” of Suceava Region on 29th August 1938, the dignitaries avoided the term “Bukovina”. It appeared only in the speeches of the commander of the 4th Army Corps and of the representative of the students’ associations.²⁸ However, the name “Bukovina” could not be omitted in the official commemoration of the annexation of Bukovina to Romania in 1918, which was held on 28th November 1938 at the Royal Residence.²⁹ The Bukovinian Bar kept its title even after Romanian Law was extended to Bukovina and the subsisting Austrian Law abolished on 15th October 1938.³⁰ The Gendarmerie continued to call the former province “Bukovina”.³¹ Moreover, the administration itself did not differentiate between Bukovina and Suceava Region all the time. The mayor of the small town Solca congratulated the Royal Resident of Suceava Region on the application of Romanian Law in “Bukovina Region” (*Ținutul Bucovinei*)³² and when the “Bank of the North” (*Banca de Nord*) for the development of Suceava Region was inaugurated, Alexianu himself declared:

During the conference, which I had this morning with the prefects of Suceava Region, the Minister Mr. M. Constantinescu told them that he brought all the possibilities of work and realisation to this land of Bukovina, in order that this beautiful land may grow by its own means.³³

On 2nd February 1939, Alexianu was transferred to Bucegi Region, possibly as a result of his aggressive romanianising policy against the Jews and the Ukrainians, who had protested in Bucharest and Geneva.³⁴ His successor was Gheorghe Flondor

²⁶ *Reforma administrativă*, in “România”, 2.06.1938, p. 1, nr. 1; *Cernăuți – Hauptstadt einer Region*, in “Deutsche Tagespost”, 2.06.1938, p. 1, nr. 4262; *Reforma administrativă*, in “Morgenblatt”, 19.06.1938, p. 1, nr. 5884.

²⁷ Kurt Scharr, *Die Landschaft Bukowina. Das Werden einer Region an der Peripherie 1774–1918*, Wien, Köln, Weimar, 2010, p. 222.

²⁸ “Monitorul Ținutului Suceava” (Cernăuți), 15.09.1938, p. 22–27, nr. 1.

²⁹ *Sărbătorirea Unirii în Ținutul Suceava*, in “Glasul Bucovinei”, 28.11.1938, p. 17, nr. 5489; As the Region Suceava also included the Bessarabian county Hotin, the annexation of Bessarabia to Romania was celebrated at the same time.

³⁰ *Un an de nouă constituție în Ținutul Suceava sub glorioasa domnie a M. S. Regelui Carol II*, Cernăuți, 1939; Royal Decree 3406/30.09.1938, in *MOF*, Partea I-a, 1.10.1938, p. 4599–4600, nr. 228; Iulia Zup, *Übersetzen an der Peripherie. Die Bukowina und ihre deutschsprachige Elite*, in *Kulturen der Peripherie*, ed. Andrei Corbea-Hoisie, Sigurd P. Scheichl, Iași, Konstanz, 2015, p. 123–124.

³¹ E.g.: The National Archives of Romania – Bucharest, Collection: Ministerul de Interne – Diverse (2247), File: 25/1938 II, Sheet: 53: Note dated 22.11.1938 about Iron Guard’s propaganda in Bukovina and Northern Bessarabia.

³² *Bukovina și unificarea legislativă*, in “Glasul Bucovinei”, 6.10.1938, p. 3, nr. 5448.

³³ *O cetate puternică*, in *Un an de nouă constituție*: “În conferința pe care am avut-o în această dimineață cu d-nii prefecti ai Ținutului Suceava, d. ministru M. Constantinescu le-a exprimat și le-a spus că aduce în acest pământ al Bucovinei întreaga posibilitate de muncă și de înfăptuire, pentru ca această frumoasă regiune să se ridice ea singură prin puterea ei.”

³⁴ Mihai Pânzaru, *Gheorghe Flondor, ultimul rezident regal al Bucovinei*, Rădăuți/Bucovina, 2000, p. 30 and 119; Mariana Hausleitner, *Die Rumänisierung der Bukowina. Die Durchsetzung des national-staatlichen Anspruchs Grossrumäniens 1918–1944*, München, 2001, p. 333.

(1892–1976).³⁵ Contrary to Alexianu, who hailed from southern Moldavia (pre-1918 Romania), Flondor was native of Bukovina. He was the son of composer Tudor Flondor (1862–1908) and a nephew, though a political opponent, of Iancu Flondor (1865–1924), the Bukovinian politician who had achieved the annexation of Bukovina to Romania in 1918.³⁶ While reporting on the appointment and the inauguration of Gheorghe Flondor, the Romanian, Ukrainian, Jewish and German newspapers in Cernăuți all underlined that he was a son of Bukovina.³⁷

At the inauguration of the “Bank of the North”, Flondor, who then was the Bank’s chairman, had already dedicated his discourse to Bukovina and not to Suceava Region.³⁸ As a Royal Resident of Suceava Region, he mentioned more often “Bukovina” in his speeches than “Suceava Region”.³⁹

As a conclusion, even if Bukovina disappeared as a toponym from the administrative maps of Romania, the name was still in use in administration, all the more after Flondor was appointed as a Royal Resident.

In 2007, another geographer, Frédéric Beaumont, argued that the Romanian government wanted to give the inhabitants of Suceava Region a new, Romanian identity. Therefore, the government merged the multi-ethnic Bukovinian and Bessarabian counties with the Moldavian (pre-1918 Romanian) Dorohoi county, where the Romanians were in the majority and created a region that brought to mind the pre-1775 Moldavian “Upper Land” (*Țara de Sus*), in order to erase the former Austrian province of Bukovina (1775–1918) from memory. According to Beaumont, the government did not succeed, because the inhabitants of Suceava Region lacked a common project and history and because the people from less well-off Hotin and Dorohoi counties considered it honourable to identify with developed Bukovina. Suceava Region thus became a Greater Bukovina to them.⁴⁰

Regarding Beaumont’s statement, statistics show that Romanian people were in the minority in Bukovina (45%) and in Hotin county (35%), while Dorohoi county was thoroughly Romanian (92%). Merging Bukovina and Hotin county with Dorohoi county created a region where the Romanians were the most populous community, but still in the minority (49%).⁴¹ The result would have been different, had Suceava Region

³⁵ Royal Decree 618/01.02.1939, in *MOF*, Partea I-a, 2.02.1939, p. 529, nr. 27; published also in “Monitorul Ținutului Suceava”, 15.02.1939, p. 55, nr. 3.

³⁶ Moreover, Gheorghe Flondor was the cousin of Iancu Flondor’s son Neagoe, who was the commander of the Iron Guard in Bukovina.

³⁷ *Noul rezident regal*, in “Suceava”, 6.02.1939, p. 1, nr. 28; *Excelența Sa d. rezident regal George Flondor sosește astăzi la Cernăuți*, in “Suceava”, 9.02.1939, p. 1, nr. 30; “Glasul Bucovinei”, 9.02.1939, p. 1, nr. 5546; *Королівський резидент Георгіє Флондор*, in “Час”, 8.02.1939, p. 2; *Ein Sohn der Bucovina*, in “Allgemeine Zeitung”, 4.02.1939, p. 1, nr. 10094; *Cernăuți empfängt den neuen Königlichen Residenten*, in “Morgenblatt”, 9.02.1939, p. 9, nr. 6077; *Vereidigung Sr. Exz. des Statthalters Gheorge (sic) Flondor*, in “Katholische Volkswacht”, 12.02.1939, nr. 7.

³⁸ *Renașterea economică a ținutului Suceava*, in “Suceava”, 15.01.1939, p. 1, nr. 12.

³⁹ “*Wir wünschen den Frieden, wir werden ihn erhalten*”, in “Allgemeine Zeitung”, 15.04.1939, p. 2, nr. 10151; *Der königliche Resident an die Jugend*, in “Allgemeine Zeitung”, 4.06.1939, p. 3, nr. 10190; *Beseitigung der Zwietracht-Aufklärung der öffentlichen Meinung*, in “Allgemeine Zeitung”, 11.10.1939, p. 4, nr. 10298.

⁴⁰ Frédéric Beaumont, *Identités et territoire chez les slaves de Bucovine. Relations interethniques, faits identitaires et territoriaux dans les Carpates orientales (Roumanie – Ukraine)*, Université Michel de Montaigne – Bordeaux 3, 2007, p. 161 and 167–168.

⁴¹ The largest ethnic minorities in the province Bukovina and the counties Dorohoi and Hotin according to the 1930 census (*Recensământul general al populației din 1930*, volum 2.1, București, 1938–1941):

included not only Dorohoi but also Baia and Botoșani counties, as “the Romanian patriots from Bukovina” suggested: Romanians would have had a 57% majority. Therefore, the composition of Suceava Region is no sufficient proof of a romanianising policy. Alexianu took personally a series of radical romanianising measures, such as obligating the Jewish people, and implicitly all the minorities, to speak Romanian in public.⁴² The Romanian government did not oppose his policy,⁴³ but it may have been the motive why Alexianu was transferred to Bucegi Region. According to his own statement, Flondor did not continue Alexianu’s programme.⁴⁴

Călinescu had made it clear that he wanted to erase the historical borders. In the words of independent Cernăuți newspaper “General Press” (“Allgemeine Zeitung”): “The new administrative division makes the old boundaries and the current regionalism all together disappear.”⁴⁵

However, there was no noticeable effort to revive the pre-1775 Moldavian “Upper Land” or to give Suceava Region a distinct non-Bukovinian character. The semi-official newspaper Suceava published several articles, which compared Suceava Region to pre-1775 Northern or Upper Moldova,⁴⁶ and the new bank of Suceava Region was baptised “Bank of the North”. At the same time, official and unofficial texts frequently used “Suceava Region” and “Bukovina” as synonyms, or called the inhabitants of Suceava Region “Bukovinians”.⁴⁷ An ethnographical map for the national youth organisation *Sentinels* (*Straja Țării*) associated Suceava Region with a Bukovinian folk costume.⁴⁸ A *Sentinels’ Guide to Suceava Region* (*Ghidul Ținutului Suceava*) was basically a guide to

#	County	Total	Romanians	%	Germans	%	Russians	%	Ukrainians	%	Jews	%
1	Cernăuți	306.194	78.589	26	19.586	6	3.295	1	136.380	45	51.247	17
2	<i>Cernăuți capital</i>	112.427	30.367	27	16.359	15	1.521	1	11.130	10	42.592	38
3	<i>Cernăuți rural</i>	174.765	47.239	27	2.964	2	1.667	1	112.367	64	5.920	3
4	Câmpulung	94.816	58.104	61	19.109	20	482	1	6.362	7	7.738	8
5	Rădăuți	160.778	89.002	55	17.857	11	1.426	1	13.916	9	11.508	7
6	Storojineț	169.894	57.595	34	8.990	5	1.582	1	77.382	46	15.322	9
7	Suceava	121.327	96.401	79	9.991	8	1.163	1	2.090	2	6.677	6
8	Bukovina (tot. 1, 4, 5, 6, 7)	853.009	379.691	45	75.533	9	7.948	1	236.130	28	92.492	11
9	Dorohoi	211.354	194.553	92	404	0	160	0	120	0	14.720	7
10	Hotin	392.430	137.348	35	323	0	53.453	14	163.267	42	35.985	9
11	Region (tot. 8, 9, 10)	1.456.793	711.592	49	76.260	5	61.561	4	399.517	27	143.197	10

⁴² Residential decision 6907/01.12.1938, in “Monitorul Ținutului Suceava”, 15.12.1938, p. 224, nr. 10.

⁴³ Mariana Hausleitner, *op. cit.*, p. 333.

⁴⁴ Mihai Pânzaru, *op. cit.*, p. 119.

⁴⁵ *Viitorul regim administrativ*, in “Allgemeine Zeitung”, 6.04.1938, p. 1, nr. 9847: “Prin noua împărțire administrativă, vechile granițe dispar și odată cu ele și regionalismul de până acum.”

⁴⁶ Calinic Istrati, *Salutul Hotinului*, in “Suceava”, 6.01.1939, p. 5, nr. 5; *Epoacă de realizări*, in “Suceava”, 14.01.1939, p. 1, nr. 11; Romulus Căndea, *Hotinul se ține bine*, in “Suceava”, 27.03.1939, p. 1, nr. 70.

⁴⁷ E.g.: *Un an de nouă constituție*.

⁴⁸ Teofil Gh. Sidorovici, Aurel S. Goia, *Carnetul Străjerului*, București, 1939.

Bukovina. Its bibliography included works on Bukovina and general literature, but no materials on Hotin or Dorohoi counties.⁴⁹ This situation resulted from three factors:

1) The architects of the Administrative Law of 1938 wanted to end regionalism and to create a unitary Romania. People had to identify with Romania as a whole, not with an historical district or a new administrative region. When Romanian Law was extended to Bukovina, Alexianu declared: "We are no more Bukovinians, we are Romanians!"⁵⁰ The only regionalism, which Alexianu allowed, was pride in being the richest region.⁵¹ Lacking the tradition of the historical districts and the possibility of obtaining such a tradition, the new regions were stillborn, a fact that the Ministry of the Interior recognised itself.⁵²

2) At the same time, the government was not ready to give up the historical provinces, as they had a high symbolic potential. The annual commemoration of the "reunification" of Bukovina (28.11.1918) and Transylvania (01.12.1918) with Romania was the key foundation ritual of the post-1918 Romanian Nation State. The symbolic meaning of the historical provinces for the Kingdom of Romania also emerges from the postage stamps issues: None of them represented the new regions. Instead, even in 1940, an issue dedicated to the *Sentinels* showed the historical provinces: Moldova, Walachia, Dobruja, Transylvania, the Banat, Maramureș, Bukovina and Bessarabia, the last two being embodied by a monastery of Bukovina and the Hotin fortress, both monuments from Suceava Region!

3) At the local level, the former capital of Bukovina, Cernăuți, was the cultural centre of Suceava Region. It housed most of the publishers of the region. Therefore, publications of Suceava Region mainly focussed on Bukovina and often forgot that Hotin and Dorohoi counties also belonged to the region. Moreover, the Romanian Cernăuți press professed a strong Bukovinian belonging and its rare articles on Hotin and Dorohoi were condescending and patronising.⁵³ However, the Romanian Cernăuți newspaper *Voice of Bukovina (Glasul Bucovinei)* denied that a Bukovinian regionalism existed⁵⁴ and the local poet Octav Rusu explained that his love for Bukovina was in fact no regionalism:

Bukovina has always had its own spirit. [...] We now have a literature that does us proud [...] Without making regionalism, the fact that people with a true spiritual comprehension could also be found in an area, where such a modest but pure pulpit appeared, seems to us far more than a sign.⁵⁵

Beaumont's statement that Suceava Region became a Greater Bukovina to the people from Hotin and Dorohoi counties can only be partly verified, as all the unofficial

⁴⁹ Vlad Bănățeanu, *Ghidul Ținutului Suceava*, Cernăuți, 1939.

⁵⁰ "Wir sind nicht mehr Bucoviner, wir sind Rumänen!", in "Allgemeine Zeitung", 25.10.1938, p. 2, nr. 10013.

⁵¹ *Gau Suceava soll der schönste Gau werden*, in "Deutsche Tagespost", 4.09.1938, p. 4, nr. 4339.

⁵² Florin Grecu, *Construcția unui partid unic: Frontul Renașterii Naționale*, București, 2012, p. 184.

⁵³ E.g.: *Istoricul vieții culturale la Hotin*, in "Suceava", 4.01.1939, p. 4, nr. 3; Calinic Istrati, *Salutul Hotinului*, in "Suceava", 6.01.1939, p. 5, nr. 5.

⁵⁴ t.g.c., *Regionalism?*, in "Glasul Bucovinei", 22.06.1938, p. 1, nr. 5364.

⁵⁵ Octav Rusu, *Entuziasm și adevăr*, in "Orizont", 7.1939, p. 1, nr. 2: "Bucovina a avut, totdeauna, sufletul ei. [...] Avem, actualmente, o literatură care ne cinstește [...]. Faptul – fără a face, deloc, regionalism – că și pe meleagurile unde, întâmplător, a răsărit acest prea modest, dar curat amvon, au fost oameni de adevărată înțelegere sufletească este, credem, mai mult decât un semn."; See also: Leca Morariu, *Răspântie bucovineană (Cuvânt rostit la 10 aprilie 1937 în Teatrul Național, Cernăuți)*, in "Făt-Frumos" (Cernăuți), 11.–12.1938, p. 188–189, nr. 6; Regarding Bukovinian regionalism in the 1930s, see the studies of Anca Filipovici and Cristina Florea.

newspapers of Hotin county were suspended in 1938. The independent Dorohoi newspaper “Free Tribune” (“Tribuna liberă”) never associated Suceava Region with Bukovina.

An article published in the review of the local teachers’ association shows that there was a big gap between Bukovina and Dorohoi county. When university professor Leca Morariu came from Cernăuți to Dorohoi, he found it difficult to believe that Dorohoi was at the same cultural level than other Moldavian small towns, such as Fălticeni, Piatra Neamț, Roman and Bârlad, and that the association actually had a quite comprehensive library.⁵⁶

An article in the Cernăuți newspaper “German Daily Mail” (“Deutsche Tagespost”) about children from Nova Žadova, who came for the first time to 40 km distant Cernăuți,⁵⁷ shows that people from the countryside rarely travelled at that time, not only in the larger Suceava Region, but also in the smaller Bukovina province. It therefore is unlikely that the people from Hotin and Dorohoi counties sufficiently knew Bukovina so as to be able to identify with it, all the more as Suceava region existed for less than two years.

As a conclusion, the creation of Suceava Region permitted the people from Bukovina to profess a Bukovinian belonging, although the government fought the old regionalisms.⁵⁸ In Dorohoi county, the administrative division of 1938 seems to have had little impact. The government’s policy and the strong regionalism in Bukovina prevented Suceava Region from becoming an entity of its own, which could have made Bukovina fade in oblivion.

When Romania had ceded Bessarabia and Northern Bukovina to the Soviet Union, Southern Dobruja to Bulgaria and Northern Transylvania and Szeklerland to Hungary, all the regions but Timiș and Olt had lost parts of their territories. As a result, Carol II’s administrative divisions were abolished on 22th September 1940 by the self-appointed leader (*conducător*) of the State, general Ion Antonescu.⁵⁹

SUCEAVA REGION, UPPER LAND, GREATER BUKOVINA OR JUST BUKOVINA?
CAROL II’S ADMINISTRATIVE REFORM IN NORTH–EASTERN ROMANIA (1938–1940)
(Summary)

Keywords: Romania, Bukovina, Hotin, Dorohoi, Interwar Period, Royal Dictatorship, Administrative History, regionalism.

This paper focuses on the territorial aspect of the Romanian Administrative Law of 1938, in particular on the reception of the Law in the counties of Bukovina, Hotin/Khotyn and Dorohoi. It concludes that Suceava Region, created by this Law, failed to erase the memory of former Austrian Bukovina (1775–1918) nor did it revive the pre-1775 Moldavian Upper Land. Periodicals in Bukovina, Hotin and Dorohoi remained uninterested in the new fellow counties. The Law induced a label change, allowing the people from Bukovina to continue to profess a Bukovinian belonging, even though the aim of the Law was to abolish regionalisms.

⁵⁶ *Vizita d-lui profesor universitare Leca Morariu la Asociație*, in “Cuvântul nostru”, September–December 1939, p. 52, nr. 7–10.

⁵⁷ *Landkinder erleben Cernăuți*, in “Deutsche Tagespost”, 21.08.1938, p. 6, nr. 4327.

⁵⁸ A similar situation seemingly existed in Mureș Region, which included Southern and Central Transylvania. An article in the “Sentinels” review of Mureș Region basically identified the region with Transylvania: Teodor Chindea, *Monumente istorice în Ținutul Mureș*, in “Îndrumări și fapte străjerești în Ținutul Mureș”, May–June 1939, p. 36, nr. 1.

⁵⁹ Royal Decree 3219/21.09.1940, in *MOF*, Partea I-a, 22.09.1940, nr. 221.