

EL DIVORCIO EN UN CONTEXTO MULTIÉTNICO Y
MULTICONFESIONAL. UN ESTUDIO DE CASO EN
TRANSILVANIA EN EL SIGLO XX

Divorces in a Multiethnic and Multiconfessional Environment. A Case Study on the Transylvania in the 20th century*

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Abstract

This study aims to present and discuss some of the issues relating to the stability of (ethnically and confessionally) mixed marriages in interwar Cluj, including the impact of the ideological atmosphere and the political context on domestic life and the vulnerability of a couple's relationship to social pressures. The choice of period allows the examination of interethnic relations in an interwar period, where notions like nationalism, xenophobia, and eugenics made and unmade govern-

Resumen

El presente trabajo busca presentar y discutir algunos de los temas relacionados con la estabilidad de matrimonios mixtos (entre etnias y confesiones religiosas) durante el periodo de entreguerras en Cluj. Estos temas incluyen la influencia de la ideología y el contexto político sobre la vida doméstica y la vulnerabilidad de la relación de pareja frente a las presiones sociales. El periodo estudiado permite el análisis de las relaciones interétnicas de entreguerras, en una época en la que conceptos tales

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ments. The choice of location too allows the study of interethnic relations in a city inhabited by four considerably populous ethnic groups and seven confessions.

By using a sample of 2,500 marriages contracted in 1922, 1930, and 1938, the analysis aims at assessing the duration of marriages in relation to their types (monogamous or mixed) and several independent variables, such as age at marriage and the spouses' professional status.

Key words

divorce, intermarriage, Transylvania, Cluj, interwar.

como nacionalismo, xenofobia y eugenesia alzaban y derrumbaban gobiernos. El lugar estudiado, además, permite el examen de las relaciones interétnicas en una ciudad habitada por cuatro grupos étnicos notablemente numerosos y siete confesiones religiosas. El análisis de una muestra de 2500 matrimonios contraídos en 1922, 1930 y 1938 intenta relacionar la duración de los matrimonios con el tipo (monógamo o mixto) y con otras variables tales como la edad al casarse y la situación profesional de los cónyuges.

Palabras clave

divorcio, matrimonio mixto, Transilvania, Cluj, entreguerras.

Without a doubt, divorce is a symptom of modernity. And if «marriage and divorce are communicating vessels»¹, then changing patterns and expectations in marriage would lead to changing attitudes towards divorce. More so, if considered marriages are, in spite of an adverse ideological context, mixed. This is because once the first rule is broken – marry inside your own group –, what could stop the second one – do not separate – being broken as well? The aim of this paper is to analyze the interplay of all these factors – ethnicity, denomination, urbanization, social status, secularization – in influencing a changing attitude towards marriage, during a period and in a geographical space marked by the transition towards modernity.

Since no statistics or databases referring to mixed marriages or divorces for interwar Transylvania exist, we chose to focus our research on a single urban environment, the city of Cluj. This city offers the ideal frame to analyze this sort of behaviour. The former capital of Transylvania, Cluj was during the interwar period the largest city of this province and one of the most cosmopolitan, having a population consisting of four main ethnicities and seven denominations.

Naturally, the fate of the city has closely been linked to that of this province. Transylvania belonged to Hungary and the Habsburg Empire from the Middle Ages until the end of World War I, when Transylvania was given to Romania. The city of Cluj was marked, in its turn, by these changes: the replacement of the Hungarian with the Romanian administration in 1919, the consolidation of the position occupied by the new authorities, during the 1920s, to which were added the great economic crisis of 1929-1933, and then the troubled period from before the outbreak of World War II.

The study is structured in three main parts. After the first section dedicated to describing the historical context that underlies the problematic of modernity and marriage dissolutions, the second part will present the main quantitative markers and the theoretical premises that have guided our work. In this context we will also detail the sources used, the civil status

1. K. Matthijs, A. Baerts and B. Van de Putte: “Determinants of Divorce in Nineteenth-Century Flanders”, in *Journal of Family History*, Vol. 33, No. 3, 2008, 239-261, *cit.* p. 240.

registers of the city of Cluj, namely marriage registers. In the last and most substantial part, we analyze, using a logistic regression model, the associations between the ethnical/confessional background of the spouses and the odds of marriage dissolution.

The phenomenon of divorce and its aspects have been thoroughly explored in the international scientific field, either from a sociological or a historical perspective. On the other hand, the situation in Romania is different. Due to certain historical peculiarities (the isolation during the communist regime and the lack of financial resources after its collapse), the Romanian research in this domain remained far behind the international trend. The present paper is a small contribution in the attempt to narrow this gap.

Historical Context

After 1918-1919 Transylvania was included in a state whose territory and population doubled. Thus, in this province, to the tensions existing before the war and to those triggered by the economic and social crisis were added those caused by a series of measures taken by the new state, such as universal male suffrage, the emancipation of the Jews, or the land reform. At the level of the elites, disgruntlement stemmed from the fact that in the annexed territories, only few of the intellectuals and the tradesmen were of Romanian extraction: they were primarily Hungarians, Germans and Jews and, although they accounted for a minority in the new state, they occupied better social and cultural positions. This situation was to persist for a long time. According to the 1930 census, only 58.2% of the urban population was represented by the Romanians, who formed a compact mass especially in rural areas where, in Transylvania, they had a strong sense of regional identity combined with a broader ethnic-national consciousness.² In addition, the ethnic communities that had become minorities in the new Romanian state often went through identity crises. One such example is that of the Saxons, in whose case there was a diminishment of the «Saxon» identity related to Transylvania in favour of an affiliation to the broader German community.³

In this context of unrest and turbulence, the city of Cluj was invested with special significance. The Romanian history of Cluj began when the city was taken over by the Romanian administration. This, in all appearances, amounted to a genuine conquest and the Romanianisation of Cluj became a priority policy for the authorities, notwithstanding the fact that the local population proved hostile, resorting to all manner of vexations against the Romanian newcomers (who had difficulty in finding housing since the majority Hungarian landlords would reluctantly rent to them; this led to forced requisitioning measures, to «requisition vouchers, on which many a time tears were spilled: of joy, by the poor Romanians, who, until they received these vouchers, would loiter aimlessly on the streets of Cluj, looking

2. M. Szilágyi-Gál: “The Nationality of Reasoning: Autochthonist Understandings of Philosophy in Interwar Romania”, in B. Trencsényi et al. (eds.), *Nation-Building and Contested Identities: Romanian and Hungarian Case Studies*, Budapest, Iași 2001, 81-92, *cit.* p. 89.

3. C. Cercel: “The relationship between religious and national identity in the case of Transylvanian Saxons (1933-1944)”, in *Nationalities papers*, Vol. 39, No. 2, 2011, 161-180, *cit.* p. 169.

for a home, and of grief, by the chauvinistic minority members, forced to make room for one or another of the usurping nation's detested sons»). The situation was elucidated, without right of appeal, in a very suggestive «Address to the Hungarian Fellow Citizens of Cluj», which Gh. Bogdan Duică, a Professor of Romanian Literature at the University of Cluj, submitted to the town's citizens:

The future is ours, but this future does not threaten you with extinction or with contempt or even with ill-intent. It is with this future that you must start coming to terms now. It would be wise if you reconciled with this idea right now, so you ought to show us your goodwill. Do make a little room for us, as we request: for the representatives of the Romanian state, for the Romanian professors, for the Romanian students. All of us have come to Cluj with peaceful thoughts, with the decision to live with you in peace and to honour one another, to collaborate, you with us and we with you, for the development of our common Homeland. Therefore make room... Now you must come to terms with fate, now you must make room to us.⁴

Thus, after the Romanians took over its administration, Cluj, dominated by a Hungarian majority, became a hotspot for the systematic and deliberate policy of Romanianisation, which started by taking over all the institutions and replacing the Hungarian officials with Romanians. This special attention also had beneficial effects, in the form of massive investments in infrastructure, industry, the education system, etc. Their purpose was twofold: on the one hand, every effort was made to increase the Romanian element in industry and commerce; on the other hand, this deployment of forces had a demonstrative role, showing the advantages of the «new regime» compared to the situation before the war.

All these changes have had significant demographic effects: in the first years of the new regime there was a mass emigration of the Transylvanian Hungarians (especially civil servants and students) to Hungary, as well a substantial inflow of Romanians, many from the Old Kingdom, who were eager to occupy posts in the public sector. The city's population grew from 60,000 in 1910 to 100,000 in 1930, 70% of this increase being due to the Romanians; in 1930, the Hungarians were still, however, the clear majority - 54% of the total population (according to the criterion of mother tongue), while the Romanians accounted for only 35% (the data in the 1930 census must, nonetheless, be considered in the context of the manipulative pressures towards Romanianisation in those times; the Jews were computed as a distinct Yiddish-speaking nationality, even though, during the dualistic period, the vast majority of the Jews had declared themselves as Hungarians, in terms of the spoken language).

One of the most sensitive issues raised by this diversity was that of mixed marriages.⁵ In general, the Romanian elite in Transylvania did not look favourably upon this kind of marriage. Mixed marriages were considered to have long-term consequences on the social and cultural evolution of the nation. This hostility was more pronounced in areas where the

4. O. Buzea, *Clujul 1919-1939*, Cluj 1939, 68-69.

5. On this subject, see also the study of Ș. Lanțoș: «Căsătoriile mixte în Clujul interbelic», in *Studia UBB, Series Sociologia-Politologia*, 1-2, 1992, 59-73.

Romanian element was a minority compared to other ethnic groups, notably the Hungarians. It was considered (an opinion unsupported, however, by the statistical data) that most mixed marriages were concluded between older Hungarian women and younger Romanian men, who thus reached a position of inferiority, no longer having any authority over the language spoken in the family, the religion practised therein, the customs and traditions abided by, or child-rearing. In this way, in the long run, a numerical imbalance between the Romanians and the other ethnic groups was reached, in favour of the latter.⁶

On this account, the strict control of mixed marriages was necessary not only from the point of view of ethnic purity, but also for reasons of national security, lest the families founded by the Romanians should become a kind of «Trojan horse» of minority irredentism.⁷

Data

The most important sources used in the present analysis are the civil registers kept in the archive of Cluj Townhall. Because the pieces of information revealed by the aforementioned registers had to be picked up page by page in a relatively short time, we were compelled to select a limited number of years in order to build our database. We have used the data for the years 1922, 1930 and 1938 because they are significant years in the history of the city. The year 1922 was coeval with the stabilisation of the Romanian administration; 1930 immediately followed the outbreak of the Great Depression; 1938, finally, was the last year before World War II, when the administration was replaced once again.

The registers include data on the spouses' name and denomination, their residence address and occupation, their birth and marriage dates. At the same time, pieces of information on the spouses' civil status, birth place and ethnicity are to be found only in certain years.

By studying a sample group of 2,590 marriages concluded in 1922, 1930, and 1938, our investigation aimed at assessing marriage stability depending on type of marriage (homogamous or mixed). We also control for other spouses' characteristics, such as age at marriage or professional status. From the sampled marriages 1,267, that is 49%, were mixed (interfaith), while 380 ended in divorce (Table 1).

6. Anonymous: "Căsătoriile mixte în Transilvania", in *Universul: Foaie politică ilustrată*, 54, No. 1, 26.02.1937, 3.

7. B. M. Thorne: "Assimilation, Invisibility, and the Eugenic Turn in the "Gypsy Question" in Romanian Society, 1938-1942", in *Romani Studies*, Vol. 21, No. 2, 2011, 177-206, *cit.* p. 182.

TABLE 1. Evolution of marriages and divorces in Cluj

	1922	1930	1938	Total
Total marriages	890	762	938	2590
Confessionally mixed marriages (%)	461 (52)	374 (49)	432 (46)	1267 (49)
Ethnically mixed marriages (%)	240 (27)	160 (21)	200 (21,3)	600 (23)
Divorces (%)	112 (12)	110 (14)	158 (17)	380 (15)

Source: Our marriage database. Calculations by the authors.

The data available to us, based on which the analysis of intermarriages and divorces in Cluj has been conducted, only provide information about the confession of the spouses, mentioning nothing about ethnicity. However, since the city is a multi-ethnic and multi-confessional centre par excellence, we can ask to what extent confession may be a relevant and reliable indicator for the ethnicity of the two. Based on data about Cluj's ethnical and confessional distribution (Tables 2-5)⁸, we could infer a person's ethnicity from his/her confession.

TABLE 2. Ethnicity - Absolute values - nationality;

Ethnicity/ Year	Total	Romanians	Hungarians	Germans	Jews	Others
1900	49295	6039	40845	1784	-	741
1910	60808	7562	50704	1676	-	495
1920ⁿ	83542	28274	41583	2073	10633	979
1930	100844	34836	54776	2702	6691	1403
1930ⁿ	100844	34895	47689	2500	13062	1655
1941	110956	10029	97698	1825	831	320

Source: <http://www.kia.hu/konyvtar/erdely/erd2002/cjetn02.pdf>.

8. The data are provided by the Censuses taken in 1900, 1910, 1920, 1930, and 1941 and published online on the page <http://www.kia.hu/konyvtar/erdely/erd2002.htm> (last visited 08.05.2016).

TABLE 3. Ethnicity – Percentages

Ethnicity/ Year	Total	Romanians	Hungarians	Germans	Jews	Others
1900	49295	12,2	82,9	3,6	-	1,3
1910	60808	12,4	83,4	2,8	-	1,4
1920 ^a	83542	33,8	49,8	2,5	12,7	1,2
1930	100844	34,6	54,3	2,7	6,6	1,8
1930 ^a	100844	34,6	47,3	2,5	13,0	2,6
1941	110956	9,0	88,1	1,6	0,8	0,5

Source: <http://www.kia.hu/konyvtar/erdely/erd2002/cjetn02.pdf>. Calculations by the authors.

If we compare the data on ethnicity with those on confession, we may notice that under the Hungarian administration (1900, 1910 and again in 1941), the (ethnic) weight of the Romanians was a few percentages lower than that of the Orthodox and the Greek Catholics put together (Tables 3 and 4). In the 1930 census (under Romanian administration) the two values were very close. The reverse was found for the Hungarian population. In this case, the censuses from extreme years of the range indicate a Hungarian ethnic population above the sum of the weights of the «Hungarian» confessions (RC, R and U). In the latter case the explanation is simpler, resulting from the comparison of the data from the 1930 census, for the two variants: ethnicity by declared mother tongue and by nationality. There were 54,776 persons who declared themselves to be Hungarian according to first criterion and only 47,689 according the second (see Table 2). The difference of over 7,000 people may be accounted for if we look at the data for the Jewish citizens. Here we have a difference of 6,371 people in favour of those declaring themselves of Jewish nationality. Obviously, this may be explained by the fact that almost half of the Jews in Cluj indicated Hungarian as their mother tongue. This explains, for the period before 1918 and the one after 1940, their absence from statistics by ethnicity and their presence in confessional statistics. According to this succinct analysis, we may, with good approximation, consider that confession is a reliable indicator for the ethnicity of a couple. In this sense, as a general rule, we will consider those of GC [Greek Catholic] or O [Orthodox] confession, as ethnically Romanian, those of RC [Roman Catholic], R [Reformed] or U [Unitarian] confession as Hungarian ethnics, while the vast majority of the Evangelical Lutherans are German ethnics. Consequently, also as a general rule, the marriages between GC and O will be interpreted as confessionally mixed, but ethnically homogeneous, and the same will hold true for those between RC, R and U.

TABLE 4. Confession – Percentages

Conf./ Year	Orth.	Gr.-Cath.	Rom.-Cath.	Ref.	Ev.	Unit.	Moz.	Others
1910	2,3	14,2	31,3	34,1	3,3	3,2	11,6	0,0
1930	11,9	22,6	20,1	26,7	2,4	2,1	13,4	0,8
1941	2,0	10,4	29,4	36,6	2,4	3,7	15,1	0,4

Source: <http://www.kia.hu/konyvtar/erdely/erd2002/cjfel02.pdf>. Calculations by the authors.

TABLE 5. Weights of the confessions in Cluj according to the census and the sample (1930)

Conf./Year	Orth.	Gr.-Cath.	Rom.-Cath.	Ref.	Ev.	Unit.	Moz.
Census	11.9	22.6	20.1	26.7	2.4	2.1	13.4
Sample (%)	104 (13.6)	158 (20.7)	149 (19.5)	206 (27)	11 (1.4)	15 (2)	115 (15)

Source: Census of 1930 and our marriage database. Calculations by the authors.

Comparing the weight of the confessions in the city's population, according to the Census of 1930, with their distribution in the case of the married couples in Cluj in the same year, we may notice fairly close values (the differences are under 2 percent) (Table 5). This similarity between the census data and those calculated for the spouses' confession and occupation allows us to conclude that sociologically, marriages represented a fairly accurate model of Cluj as a whole.

Research questions

Investigating the stability of marriages in interwar Cluj we attempt to address several research questions, such as: How deep is the influence of the ideological atmosphere or political context upon the domestic sphere? How vulnerable is the couple to social pressure? Is romantic love able to overcome cultural differences? Our main aim is to assess the role of ethnical and confessional dissimilarity (mixed marriages) in the process of marriage dissolution. What better period to investigate interethnic relations, than the interwar age when notions like nationalism, xenophobia, or eugenics made and unmade governments. What more appropriate place to scrutinize interethnic relations, than a town where four ethnic groups - quite substantial numerically - and seven denominations lived together.

Two distinct but not independent evolutions must be taken into consideration when analysing marriage dissolution in the last two centuries.

Firstly, starting with the second half of the nineteenth century, divorce became an increasingly frequent event in the life of European families, and not only theirs. In order to integrate the various factors that contributed to this development, Phillips created an explanatory model inspired by exchange-oriented approaches.⁹ According to this theory, the experience accumulated by the couple on the marriage marked is determinant for the probability of a divorce: the gains they have from the current marriage, the barriers to divorce they observe, the alternatives available to the current marriage. A marriage has chances as long as the couple's investment in that marriage is smaller than the profit gained. On the one hand, the spouses have expectations on the standard of living, affection, sexuality, domestic duties, and on the other hand they must take into consideration the associated factors of marriage dissolution (economic independence, social pressure, relationship with the children).

Secondly, from the onset of the Divorce Revolution to present day the association between divorce and social class did not remain unchanged. Initially – second half of the 19th century and beginning of the 20th – higher social strata were more likely to divorce. Because of the social and legal obstacles against divorce, it could be regarded as a «cultural innovation»¹⁰. As, generally speaking, «innovators» in a society belong to the elite, social class is likely to have a positive impact on divorce in preindustrial or at the beginning of industrialization societies. The occupations of individuals belonging to culturally superior groups (doctors, professors, artists) are marked by stronger personal and professional freedom, which enables their members to take more innovative, atypical action when confronted with crisis.¹¹ Afterwards, as legal and social fences fall apart divorce becomes more common in lower social strata, more vulnerable to factors of marital stress.

For historians, determining all these factors is often impossible due to the absence of direct data. One can nevertheless attempt to measure «the prospect of a discrepancy»¹² between the expectations and fulfillments experienced inside the couple or the factors that might influence the way in which the spouses evaluate a possible divorce. Thus, religious heterogamy can indicate potential conflictual expectations, and the socio-professional status can be relevant from the perspective of the advantages or disadvantages involved by a separation. Taking advantage of the opportunity provided by the particular situation of the city of Cluj in which different ethnical and confessional groups – quantitatively significant – coexisted and interacted, we wish to analyze the influence that mixed marriages have had on the stability of the family.

9. R. Phillips, *Putting Asunder: A History of Divorce in Western Society*, Cambridge 1988.

10. M. Kalmijn, S. Vanassche and K. Matthijs: «Divorce and Social Class During the Early Stages of the Divorce Revolution: Evidence From Flanders and the Netherlands», in *Journal of Family History*, Vol. 36, No. 2, 2011, 159-172, *cit.* p. 160.

11. *Loc. cit.*, p. 168-169.

12. F. van Poppel: «Family breakdown in nineteenth-century Netherlands: Divorcing couples in The Hague», in *The History of the Family*, 2, 1997, 49-72, *cit.* p. 62.

Results

Looking at the proportion of marriages ending in divorce according to the type of marriage (homogamous or mixed) (Table 6), one notes visibly higher proportions in the case of confessionally mixed but ethnically homogamous marriages (19% as compared to 10%) or in the case of confessionally and ethnically mixed marriages (23%).

TABLE 6. Proportion of marriages ending in divorce, according to the type of marriage
R – Romanians; H – Hungarians.

		Marriage		Total
		Stable	Divorced	
Type of marriage	homogamous	89.4%	10.6%	100.0%
	confessionally mixed, ethnic homogamous (R)	80.5%	19.5%	100.0%
	confessionally mixed, ethnic homogamous (H)	80.7%	19.3%	100.0%
	confessionally and ethnically mixed (R&H)	76.4%	23.6%	100.0%
	other mixed	80.8%	19.2%	100.0%
Total		84.5%	15.5%	100.0%

Source: Our marriage database. Calculations by the authors.

There is nevertheless no difference between the types of homogamous or mixed marriages as to the length of the union until divorce. The average duration of a marriage ending in divorce is of 11-12 years.¹³

Beyond the bivariate analysis (Table 6), we wish to see in which way the type of marriage influences its risk of ending in divorce, in terms of confessional and ethnic homogamy or exogamy, controlling at the same time the various characteristics of the spouses. In order to reach this goal we will build a model of logistic regression, with the dependent variant referring to divorce and having two categories, i.e. the occurrence or non-occurrence of divorce. The main independent variable is the type of marriage (mixed or homogamous). As the results in Table 6 suggest, we see that the odds of divorce are higher in case of marriages with a higher degree of cultural dissimilarity between the spouses due to confessional or ethnic

13. Similar values also in F. van Poppel, "Family breakdown..." *loc. cit.* 60-61; S. Wolfram: "Divorce in England 1700-1857", in *Oxford Journal of Legal Studies*, Vol. 5, No. 2, 1985, 155-186, *cit.* p. 177. Data refer to the second half of the nineteenth century.

differences. The odds of marriage dissolution are maximum in the case of spouses that belong to both different confessions and different ethnic groups.

TABLE 7. Results of logistic regression model. Odds ratios for marriage dissolution
R – Romanians; H – Hungarians.

		Odds ratios	Sig.
Type of marriage	homogamous	1	
	confessionally mixed, ethnically homogamous (R)	1.65	.017
	confessionally mixed, ethnically homogamous (H)	1.85	.000
	confessionally and ethnically mixed (R&H)	2.15	.000
	other mixed	1.84	.000
Occupation of the groom	liberal professions, clerks and owners	1	
	craftsmen, tradesmen, services, military	0.53	.000
	workers, farmers, day labourers	0.39	.000
	other	0.15	.002
Occupation of the bride	liberal professions, clerks and owners	1	
	craftsmen, tradesmen, services, military	1.27	.333
	workers, farmers, day labourers	1.01	.960
	housewife	1.21	.308
	other	0.85	.835
Groom's age		0.96	.001
Bride's age		0.97	.005
Year of marriage	1922	1	
	1930	1.14	.387
	1938	1.64	.000

Source: Our marriage database. Calculations by the authors.

Compared to homogamous marriages (same confession, same ethnicity), those confessionally mixed but ethnically homogamous (Romanians) have 65% more chances of ending in divorce (Table 7), marriages confessionally mixed but ethnically homogamous (Hungarians) have 85% more chances, those mixed both ethnically and confessionally are the most

fragile (having more than double chances of ending in divorce as compared to homogamous marriages), while the rest of mixed marriages have 84% more chances of ending in divorce.

Discussion and conclusions

One must first note that data on both the proportion of marriages interrupted through divorce (Table 6) and the result of logistic regression (Table 7) suggest that the religious differences between the newly weds are more important than ethnicity to the probability of a divorce. Ca. 19 % of all interconfessional marriages end in divorce, while in the case of ethnically mixed ones (that are, fatally, also mixed confessionally!) the percentage is of 23 %. Taking as reference the 10% of divorces in the case of homogamous marriages, the conclusion is that the confessional component plays the most significant role in the divorce in marriages that are both interethnic and interconfessional. One should note the fact that the spouses' religion makes the difference, having the most significant contribution to the differentiation of divorces among heterogamous and homogamous couples.

From the perspective of the exchange-oriented model, the above mentioned conclusion implies the fact that religion is a more important factor than ethnicity in the expression of one's identity and thus a more important cause of potential conflict. Confessional differences seem to have been, in inter-war Cluj, a more serious reason than ethnic belonging for potential conflicting expectations of the spouses.

Three observations can be made on this issue. First of all, the importance granted to the religious element suggests a traditional, conservative society, yet unconquered by the modern spirit of secularism. And yet, paradoxically, the same society takes with one hand what it gives with the other. Continuing the metaphor, what divorces take mixed marriages give! Whereas the characteristics of divorces seem to point at a concern in one's own religious identity, the almost 50% of marriages contracted between partners of different confessions tell a different story ... The second observation refers to the contradiction between the attitude, partially sensitive to confessional aspects, partly apparently indifferent to religious precepts that, though they do not completely exclude the idea of divorce (the case of RC and GC), they do not support, but tolerate it (the Protestant Churches, the Orthodox Church). One can only speak of a simulacrum of piety, of formal, superficial belief, reduced to appearances? We believe that the third observation can provide a possible way of solving this contradiction. One's belonging to a certain confession can be considered an element of self-identification, a way of separating and defining individuals belonging to a certain group. Both in the case of Hungarians and Romanians there were distinct historical reasons that led to this situation. The Hungarians, beside the Germans, have dominated Cluj politically and culturally until the beginning of the twentieth century. Though the solidarity of the leading elite was always fractured by confessional belonging, clearly defined, it was also separated in the effort to ensure a post-Reformation *modus vivendi*. This development marked the Hungarians' self-image, with the confessional aspect as the most important element of self-identification, besides their belonging to one of the «estates». The Romanians, in their turn, though experiencing a different political and cultural development, found in confession a strong identity factor for

at least two reasons. On the one hand, the Church was the institution through which they had gained national consciousness, and on the other hand, the same Church that had meanwhile split (GC and O) has segregated that national consciousness, dividing people and creating identities. Applying these data to the topic at hand, it means that the history of the inter-war Cluj family renders, on a local scale, the history of Transylvania at large.

The different chances of Romanians and Hungarians of going through divorce – from the perspective of confessionally mixed but ethnically homogenous marriages – might also be explained through the different degree of accepting divorce by their respective confessions. Taking into consideration the above mentioned observations, one can presume that, at least partially, religious commandment played a role in the spouses' decisions. In the case of Romanians, Greek-Catholicism was the majority's confession and it did not recognize the institution of divorce and in the case of Hungarians the Reformed held the majority and they did admit the possibility of divorce. Another cause of the difference in «chances» between Romanians and Hungarians might reside in the ethnical mix of the RC. What we call confessionally mixed, ethnically homogamous (M) is not as homogamous as we have suggested so far. The Roman-Catholics are the issue here. Though largely Magyarized¹⁴, they were probably the most heterogenous confession in Cluj, hosting under the umbrella of the same confession groups of population of diverse ethnic origin (Hungarians, Germanics, Slavs). Thus, the mixed marriages of the Hungarians – and we mainly envisage the most numerous ones, between Roman-Catholics and Reformed – can hide, besides the confessional component, an ethnic element that could increase the conflict potential in those families.

By comparison with men with liberal professions and clerks, all others have lower chances of ending their marriage through a divorce. We should note the positive association with social status as it confirms a certain stage of development in the evolution of inter-war Cluj society. The same correlation between social status and divorce can be identified in Western society at the beginning of the Divorce Revolution period (the second half of the 19th and beginning of the next century).¹⁵ Seen through the lenses of this marker, Cluj is in a stage of belated pre-modernity as compared with Western Europe. In the case of women's occupations, there are no noticeable differences in the odds of them ending their marriage in divorce. As concerns the latter aspect, we should take into consideration the fact that over 60% of the women were housewives, and among those active outside their home most were maids or other service providers (cooks, seamstresses, etc.).

14. This is suggested by the analysis of the grooms' signatures in the marriage registers studied. Even if the name of one of the spouses has a Slavic resonance, for instance, the graphic peculiarities of the signature betray the Hungarian influence.

15. K. Matthijs, A. Baerts and B. Van de Putte, "Determinants of Divorce..." *loc. cit.*, 254; P. M. de Graaf and M. Kalmijn: "Change and Stability in the Social Determinants of Divorce: A Comparison of Marriage Cohorts in the Netherlands", in *European Sociological Review*, Vol. 22, No. 5, 2006, 561-572, *cit.* p. 570; also on the effects of education on divorce A. Matysiak, M. Styrac and D. Vignoli: "The educational gradient in marital disruption: A meta-analysis of European research findings", in *Population Studies: A Journal of Demography*, Vol. 68, No. 2, 2014, 197-215.

The older the bride and groom at marriage, the lower the risk of the marriage failing. One can make two comments on this point. A possible explanation is conditioned by the situation on the marriage market, i.e. by the supply. The later in the spouses age the marriage was concluded, the later the possible divorce would happen, but on the marriage market the supply was increasingly lower as the sought-for partners were older. The high percentage of marriages ending through the death of one of the spouses might also play a role. A third comment address the same topic but from an opposite angle. It has been suggested that the younger the persons at marriage, the more difficult to foresee the future characteristics. The degree of uncertainty about the partner's characteristics is higher for teenagers, because some essential elements in the matching process are not yet clearly formed, as they develop only as adult roles are assumed.¹⁶ Consequently, uncertainty comes not only from the imperfect information about the existing traits, but also about the ones that would develop in the future. In other words, the sooner one contracted a marriage the higher the risk to see one's expectations shattered, as well as the probability of ending the marriage in divorce.

In 1938 the odds of a marriage to end in divorce were 64% higher than in 1922. No differences can be noted between 1922 and 1930. As the investigated sample covers only these three years and not the entire interwar period, we cannot be certain whether it is a trend or a conjectural phenomenon. However, at least two explanations can be found: one economic, the other socio-political. In the former case, one can see in the risk of ending the marriage in divorce one of the consequences of the Great Depression beginning with the late 20s. There was no instant effect but the ongoing economic and financial problems that affected Romania throughout the entire fourth decade of the 20th century could lead to tensions among economically vulnerable couples. The other explanation is related to the socio-political circumstances in the 30s: the emergence of far right ideologies, the rise of a more and more aggressive nationalism, the stressed political instability. Hand in hand with the complex social reality peculiar to Cluj town, the unsettled political atmosphere put even more pressure on families and became another risk factor for their stability.

16. V. K. Oppenheimer: "A Theory of Marriage Timing", in *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 94, No. 3, 1988, 563-591.