



The Impact of the Politics and Models of Administrative Organization upon the Romanian Territory in the Communist Regime

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Politics of economic development in the socialist period

The politics for electrification. The evolution of the politics for the National Energetic System 1950-1990. The technologies of production, transportation, distribution and consumption of the electric energy of our country closely followed the development process of the same domains going on at a global level. In 1945 the total power of the electric plants functioning in Romania was of 720 MW. The total production on inhabitant was of 72,4 KW in 1938 and of 80 KW, a lot less than the world average, and a lot under the average of the European consumers, which for that period was of 400 KW per inhabitant¹.

The politics of electrification of the country have been put into practice by the communist regime through the Plans of Electrification conceived on periods of 10 years. In 1950, Romania adopted the ten years Electrification Plan (1951-1960) meant to establish the basis of an energetic system capable of sustaining the economic development of the entire country.

The Decree no. 76 of March 23, 1950, for the production, the transportation, the distribution and the selling of the electric energy², establishes the exclusivity right of the State upon the production, the transportation, the distribution and the selling of the electric energy (with the exception of the particular case of Sovrompetrol who has the right to produce, transport, distribute and sell electric energy, art. 34).

The State exerts of this right through the Ministry of Electric Energy, and for the one concerning the distribution and the selling of the electricity produced in the plants of the Popular Assemblies and the energy they produce for the local necessities, through the respective Popular Assemblies themselves.

The principles established by this Decree are the following:

- the maximum capitalization in optimum conditions of the hydro energy and of the inferior coal;
- the restraints in the use of the natural gas, the superior coal, liquid fuel and wood for producing electricity;
- the development of electric installation and the building of higher power and higher efficiency plants on the principle of the concentration of the electricity production;
- the development of the transportation and distribution installations;
- the coordination of the building of electric plants with all the other problems concerning the total territorial planning of the water courses;
- the solving of the problem of fuel, electricity and other form of energy waste and of the exploitation expenses.

The Ministry of Electric Energy could ask the producers and transporters to maintain and exploit the respective installations *“in the purpose of using the total available electric energy power, within the State Plan”* (art. 7).

¹ Dătescu, C., Ilie, I., Conferința Națională a Energiei [The National Conference on Eenergy]- Neptun, 13-17 June 2004, *Evoluția structurii Sistemului Energetic Național [The evolution of the National Energetic System]*.

² Buletinul Oficial nr. 31/31 martie 1950 [The Official Bulletin no. 31/31 march 1950].

Thermal power stations have been built to cope with the continuously increase of the electric power consumption. The first new vapour thermal power stations, had low vapour parameters and unit powers of 12 to 20 MW (Ovidiu – 36 MW, Doicești – 120 MW, Comănești – 24 MW, Borzești, Paroșeni, Fântânele). At the same time, a series of diesel generating sets have been installed as well. Subsequently, the installation of larger sets, having larger parameters ranging between 25-50 MW, according to the higher technological levels of those years, 98 bar at 510 °C, has been given priority. In that period the plants of Sîngeorgiu de Pădure (150 MW) și Paroșeni (150 MW) were put into function. Concurrently, the technical and economical basis for the introduction of central-heating systems for the new urban and industrial consumers has been elaborated and the central heating station of Borzești became functional /was put into function.

In what the hydro-technical appliances are regarded, in conformity to the Electrification Plan of the 1951-1960 period, the following hydro-electricity plants were built and put into function: Văliug on Bârzava River, Moroieni on Ialomița River, Sadu V in Sadului Valley, Aștileu on Crișul Repede River, Gura Râului on Cîbinului Valley etc.

A special attention has been given to the hydroelectric appliances on Bistrița River. This working complex was subject to the H.C.M. no. 1182 of November 15, 1950, that also regulated: the construction of the Bicaz dam, with an accumulation capacity of 1,2 mld m³ of water, the building of the Stejarul hydroelectric power station, and of other hydroelectric power plants, the territorial planning for irrigation systems in Siretului meadow and on a surface of 300.000 ha in the North of Bărăgan Plain, the construction of a navigable channel on the Siret River, the building of an electric energy transportation line in the purpose of assuring the electric power for Moldavia and of establishing a connection between it and Muntenia and Transilvania.

Some of the effects of this complex territorial planning have been among others:³

- the movement of the population from the settlement perimeter (about 12.000 people inhabiting 20 villages and about 3 000 households);
- the development of a new town - Bicaz;
- the building of the road surrounding the lake, connecting the town with Transylvania through Bicazului Gorges on the route Lacul Roșu Lake – Gheorgheni, and on the Bistricioara Valley through Borsec-Toplița, then with Dornelor Depression on Bistrița Valley, with Neamțului Depression through Petru Vodă Pass and with Cracău-Bistrița Depression on Bistrița Valley;
- the changes in the network of settlements.

At the end of 1960 the installed power was of 1.779 MW, with a capacity of usage of about 4.250 h per year. The average rhythm of power increase for the period 1951–1960 has been of 13,7%. That year marked the closure of the first stage, with the respective creation of a unique national energetic system, which was obtained through the development and interconnection of more regional energetic systems. Consequently, in 1960 Romania disposed of a fundamental network of 110 KV shaped under the form of a multiple diagonals closed-circuit, which practically included all the big electric energy consumption and production knots from the entire territory of the country.

The especially intense high rhythm of development of the entire national economy required important growth of electric energy quantities that could no longer be economically transported through the previous 110 KV network. Therefore, in the following years, the 220 KV respectively 400 KV voltages were added. In 1961 the first line of 220 KV in the country is put into function between the localities Bicaz and Fântânele, meanwhile in 1963 the first international line of 400 KV began functioning on the route Luduș–Mukacevo (URSS) – Lemesanz (RSC).

The period between 1960 and 1970 is marked by the use of high power sets (100–315 MW in condenser system plants with intermediary overheating) in the thermal power stations is marked through the usage of high power units in the thermal power stations of Luduș, Craiova, extension to Borzești, Deva, extension to Paroșeni, Oradea, and Bucharest-South.

Even from the beginning of this period the thermal power stations from Brazi are put into function (200 MW). They represent the beginning of a series of units of superior parameters

³ Pop, Grigor, 1996, *România Geografia Hidroenergetică*, Presa Universitară Clujeană Publishing House, pp. 50, 56,57.

level (137 bar and 570⁰ C). The heat supplying is continually developing through the thermal power stations with units of 25, 50, 100 MW.

In the period 1960 – 1966, 12 hydroelectric plants were put into function on Bistrita Valley, downstream Stejarul: Pângărați, Vaduri, Piatra Neamț, Roznov I and II, Zărnești, Costișa, Buhuși, Racova, Gârleni, Bacău I and II.

During this decade, important hydro-energetic works were projected and executed, as follows:

- the establishment on Arges River-Vidraru dam, the hydropower plant on Argeș River, the Topolog dam; the Vidraru Lake that has a length of 15 km and a capacity of 465 mil. m³. this complex establishment determined changes in the transportation and tourism functions in the entire area. The road network of Vidraru Lake, which is complementary to the Transfăgărășan route succeeded in putting in value the natural tourism potential of Făgăraș mountains as well;
- the 15 hydro-power stations cascade downstream the Argeș River: Oești, Albești, Cerbureni, Valea Iașilor, Curtea de Argeș, Noapteș, Zigoneni, Băiculești, Mânicești, Vâlcelele, Merișani, Budeasa, Bascov, Pitești, Golești with a total installed power of almost 187 MW;
- the Teliuc dam and the Cinciș artificial lake on Cerna River;
- the hydro-energetic establishments from Firiza and Baia Mare.

For the period 1960–1970, the average increase in production was of 16,8% per year. The national energetic system was mainly provided by thermo power plants representing at the end of 1969, 80% of the installed power and producing 88% of its energy. During this stage the links of the national energetic system were strengthened through introducing the electric energy transportation voltage of 400 KV, thus establishing the interconnection with the neighbouring energetic systems.

The development of the energetic branch for the decade 1971–1980 is characterized by the fact that during this period the energy balance lacks in efficiency. Besides, the hydrocarbons and the methane gas are more efficiently used as raw material in the chemical industry. The main thermo energetic objectives were formed by the great condenser electric plants, by using brown coal from Oltenia (Rovinari, Turceni). There were built or improved in capacity thermo plants such as: Bucharest-West, Govora, Iași, Palas Constanța, Galați, Brăila.

The period in between 1970-1980 represents a powerful increase in the hydro-energetic potential of the country. Ever since 1972 the hydro-electric plant of Porțile de Fier I (2.150 MW) came into function at its full potential of 1068 MW, followed by the establishments on Lotru and Vidra rivers namely Ciunget, Brădișor, Mălaia with a total installation power of 643 MW. Consequently, establishments of great value were built on the banks of the interior rivers as well as on the Danube: the Paktinu establishment on Dofanei Valley, the Olt hydro plants (Râmnicu Vâlcea, Govora, Dăești, Râureni, Băbeni, Ionești, Zăvideni, Strejești, Arcești), the establishments of Fântânele-Mărișel and Tarnița on Someșu Mic River, the one from Stânca-Costești and the hydro-technical system of Cerna – Motru – Tismana.

After 1980 other hydro plants were put into function both upstream and downstream Olt River, thus resulting a 27 hydro stations system with a total installed power of 1.103,9 MW.

After the petrol crisis of 1973, the balance of the primary energy consumption is oriented so as to cover a maximum quota of need out of internal resources, limiting the use of the imported fuel.

The quantity of electric energy produced in hydro plants in the period between 1950 and 1978 grew 62 times. In 1981, we had an electric energy production of over 70 billion KWh, 2,5 billion KWh bigger than that produced in 1980.

The evolution of the energetic system for the following period brought an increase in the production capacities, by considering the reduction of the use of natural fuel and focusing on the building of hydro-technical stations and of a nuclear plant, with 700 MW units, at Cernavodă. Worthy to mention are the hydro-energetic establishments from the rivers Sebeș (the Oașa dam and the downstream establishments), Crișul Repede, the Danube with Porțile de Fier II, Râul Mare Retezat, Timiș – Bistra, Someșu Mare, Dâmbovița, Teleajen, Buzău and Siret, but also the micro-hydro plants with an installed power of less than 1 MW, placed on smaller rivers.

In 1993 the installed power of the hydro energetic system was of about 5.862 MW, which represents a degree of effectiveness of the hydro-energetic potential of 40%, when the total hydro-energetic potential is considered to be of 14.900 MW⁴.

Thus, the basis of the Romanian energy policy has been established, fact that led to the development of a unique national energetic system, based on the rational use of primary energy resources, with priority given to the use of inferior fuel (brown coal) and hydraulic energy.

The politics of territorial spreading of the production forces in a territorial profile.

Following the ending of the nationalization processes of the main production means in 1948, and of the communal agricultural exploitations in 1962, the Socialist State became the owner of almost the entire national economy and up to 1989, it practiced a planned and up to bottom ruled economy, meant to lead to the accomplishment of the political desiderates of the Communist Party, conducting Romania towards communism, which was considered to be the supreme form of political organization of a state at that time.

The politics of harmonization of the territorial development was based, according to the Communist Party Doctrine, on the *equilibrated and harmonious territorial spreading of the production forces in a territorial profile*. The equilibrated distribution of the production forces was meant to stop the population migration towards, economically speaking, more dynamic areas, and to insure the harmonious development of all the country localities.

During the period of 1950–1965, we were only at a starting point in matters of rationally spreading the productive forces in the territory. The economically less developed regions, registered dynamics superior to the national average. The regions without an industrial past were forced into the industrialization era, therefore, the “*discrepancies relatively and absolutely dived*”⁵.

The regions that have mainly benefited from the industrialization process are: Maramureș, Oltenia, Dobrogea, Iași and the Hungarian Autonomous Region. These regions registered a relatively high increase in the volume of investments as compared to the more developed regions but in absolute terms, the highest increases were registered by the more developed centres that offered superior conditions for efficiency growth.

The more developed regions, Brașov, Banat, Bucharest, registered during the same period an over average dynamics, hence they continued the process of concentrating the production in the most important centres. In comparison with Oltenia, Dobrogea and Moldavia, that together provided only 19,6% in 1955 and 21,6% in 1965 from the national industrial production, the regions Bucharest, Banat, Brașov, Hunedoara and Prahova held 62% respectively 60,5% of the entire national industrial production, which denotes the fact that the situation was quite similar to that of 1938.

During this period, some regions such as Iași and Suceava did not benefit from industrialization almost at all. In the regions: Mureș, Hungarian Autonomous Region, Maramureș, Oltenia and Suceava the investment effort was translated in the accomplishment of some road and railway objectives practically absent in the past⁶.

The industrial plants consolidated in the period 1945 – 1965 can be grouped as follows⁷:

- *Bucharest* which concentrated about 20% of the country's production.
- *The Sub-Carpathian Group* with the platforms: Ploiești – Câmpina – Târgoviște, Comarnic – Sinaia – Bușteni – Azuga, Pitești – Colibași, Râmnicu-Vâlcea – Govora – Ocelele Mari.
- *The South-West Group* with the platforms: Valea Jiului, Hunedoara, Reșița – Ocna de Fier – Doman – Secu – Bocșa Română.
- *The Group within the Centre of the country* with the platforms: Brașov, Sibiu, Mediaș – Târnăveni – Copșa Mică, Cluj – Turda – Câmpia Turzii – Ocna Mureș, Târgu Mureș – Toplița – Reghin – Gălăuțași.
- *The East Group* with the platforms: Onești – Comănești – Moinești, Roznov – Săvinești – Piatra Neamț – Bicaș, Bacău – Buhuși – Roman.

The following platforms were starting to take shape towards the end of the period 1961 – 1965:

⁴ Pop, Grigor, *România Geografia Hidroenergetică*, Presa Universitară Clujeană Publishing House, 1996, p. 219.

⁵ Popescu, Gh., *Dezvoltarea economică în profil teritorial a României 1900-1985*, Publishing House Sincron, 1994, p.127.

⁶ idem.

⁷ Ibidem.

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- *North – East:* Vatra Dornei – Câmpulung; Gura Humorului – Suceava.
- *Nord – West:* Baia Mare – Baia Sprie – Ferneziu – Băiuț – Baia Borșa.
- *South – East:* Constanța – Cernavodă – Medgidia – Năvodari.
- *Oltenia:* Târgu Jiu – Țicleni – Bălteni – Craiova, *and the platforms:* Galați – Brăila, Timișoara – Arad.

In agriculture, as a result of the politics for dividing the production into zones, up to 1965, the following areas were shaped:

1. *The cultivation of cereals and animal breeding:* the Romanian Plain – the Tisa Plain – the Moldavian Plateau – the Dobrogea Plateau.
2. *Animal breeding and cultivation of plants:* Transylvania Plateau – the Western Plateaus – The Getic Hills – the Oriental Carpathians.
3. *Viticulture:* Odobești – Panciu – Dealu Mare – the Getic Plateau – the Târnavelor Plateau.
4. *Animal Breeding and tree growth:* the high hills of the Southern Carpathians – the Lipova Hills – the Caransebeș Corridor – Mehadia – the Almaj Depression etc.
5. *Animal breeding:* the Oriental and the Southern Carpathians, and the Apuseni Mountains – the Danube Delta and Meadow.
6. *The complex pre-town areas*⁸.

The development of transportation in the period 1945–1965 determined an increase in the efficiency of the economic relationships of the country. New heavily important railways knots have been built, as follows:

- *Salva – Vișeu* (45 km) built in order to connect Maramureș to the centre of the country;
- *Bumbeșt – Livezeni* (31 km and 39 tunnels) directly linking the coal Basin (Hunedoara) and the regions from the South part of the country, which previously made an avoiding curve of about 200 km. Thus we have finally achieved a connection between the two neighbouring regions Oltenia and Hunedoara. Later on, in 1971, these too were also connected through the modernized road from the Jiului River Defile;
- *Bucharest – Roșiorii de Vede – Craiova* (209 km) which shortened with about 49 km the distance between the capital and the city of Craiova, it eased the traffic on the route Bucharest – Pitești – Craiova;
- *Făurei – Tecuci* (90 km);
- *Piatra Neamț – Pângărați – Bicz;*
- *Constanța – Dorobanț.*

There were also built railways in between: Târgu Jiu and Rovinari (15 km); Strehaia and Ploștina; Piatra Neamț and Bicz; Mintia and Crăciunești; Lupeni and Uricani.

In the same period of time, important national roads such as: Cernavodă – Medgidia – Constanța; Constanța – Hârșova; Constanța – Cobadin; Bucharest – Urziceni – Vadu Oii; Urziceni – Buzău; Roșiorii de Vede – Caracal – Craiova – Turnu Severin; Bucharest – Ștefănești – Lehliu; Târgu Jiu – Târgu Cărbunești – Râmnicu-Vâlcea etc. were modernized as well. Although numerous investment objectives and important technical infrastructure changes for both industry and agriculture were accomplished, and despite the fact that the preoccupation for a better territorial spreading of the production powers had been an important coordinate of the economic policy, still great discrepancies are maintained among and within the regions of the country, and between some areas and localities. In 1965 about 40% of the industrial production of the country was obtained in the regional residences. Even if the new solutions for the territorial spreading of the producing powers were superior to the old ones, improving the rational economic *liaisons* in the territorial profile, the process of homogenization of the social production was still in its first steps. The creation of industrial type structures determined massive movements of the rural population towards the urban county centres, and even intra-county ones, it being the main source of brute force for both industries and services. Consequently, along with the formation of these industrial structures, the movement of the working force gradually decreased in intensity, the active population being in a continuously increasing route due to the natural increase factor.

⁸ *Dezvoltarea economică a României 1944 – 1964*, Bucharest, The Publishing House of the R.P.R. Academy, 1964, p. 543.

In 1985, 12,8% of the Romanian urban population, lived in towns numbering up to 20.000 inhabitants, 44,6% in towns with 20.001 – 200.000 inhabitants and 42,6% in towns with over 200.000 inhabitants (17,4% in Bucharest)⁹. The average population of a town, except for Bucharest, gradually grew from 24.497 inhabitants in 1968, to 39.806 inhabitants in 1985.

Having in mind the harmonious development of the socio-economic national complex, both generally speaking and within the territory, the communist regime conceived a politics of territorial spreading of the investments. Their volume for the period 1981–1985 was about 20 times bigger than for the period 1951–1955. In the more developed regions (Bacău, Braşov, Hunedoara, Neamţ, Prahova and the Bucharest municipality), the dynamics was under the national average, while in the more underdeveloped counties the investment effort rapidly grew as follows: in the Bistriţa-Năsăud county 51 times, in Botoşani county 58 times, in Călăraşi 44 times, in Covasna 106 times, in Harghita 92 times, in Mehedinţi 149 times, in Olt 135 times, in Satu Mare 42 times, in Sălaj 41 times, in Teleorman 57 times, in Vâlcea 67 times, in Vrancea 47 times etc.¹⁰ However, generally speaking, the volume of the investments was mainly oriented towards the more developed centres. The arguments for such an action were that those areas accomplished to a greater stand the conditions of a rapid growth in efficiency of the new objectives, and on the other hand, the massive investments in the somehow better developed areas were imposed by the needs of extending or technically improving the already there existing objectives.

In the period 1966–1985, the average annual rhythm of growth of the volume of industrial investments was of 8%, superior dynamics being registered in counties like: Alba 11,8%, Arad 13,7%, Bihor 8,9%, Bistriţa-Năsăud 16,1%, Botoşani 9,1%, Braşov 11,8%, Buzău 10,1%, Caraş-Severin 10,3%, Constanţa 18,6%, Covasna 16,6%, Dâmboviţa 11,3%, Gorj 12,9%, Harghita 9,2%, Iaşi 11,6%, Mehedinţi 17,3%, Satu-Mare 13,0%, Sălaj 14,3%, Suceava 9,5%, Timiş 12,9%, Tulcea 12,9%, Vaslui 17,8%, Vâlcea 16,8% etc., centres that were generally poorly industrialized in 1965¹¹. *The industrial production* nationally grew seven times in the same period of time, with an annual rhythm of 10,2%. Superior dynamics were registered in 26 counties as it follows: Argeş 12,5%, Bistriţa-Năsăud 14,5%, Botoşani 11,6%, Buzău 13,5%, Călăraşi 11,7%, Constanţa 10,4%, Covasna 11,7%, Dâmboviţa 11,2%, Dolj 11,0%, Galaţi 14,5%, Gorj 11,6%, Harghita 10,1%, Ialomiţa 1,9%, Iaşi 12,7%, Mehedinţi 10,7%, Olt 15,1%, Satu Mare 10,9%, Sălaj 16,6%, Teleorman 11,7%, Tulcea 12,8%, Vaslui 13,6%, Vâlcea 12,7%, Vrancea 11,8% etc.¹².

The Directive Project of the IX Congress of the P.C.R. regarding the plan of five years from between 1976 and 1980 underlined that „*within the next five years the process of balanced development of all the counties and the process of territorial systematization will be focused upon*”. The project established that at the level of 1980, an industrial production of 10 billion lei be accomplished per each county. At the end of the communist regime period, Romania had a super-dimensioned and inefficient industry, with high energy consumption for productivity. This sector was based upon a numerous, under qualified work force, mainly drawn from the rural space. Many of the industrial branches were still relying on autochthonous mineral resources, characterized by large variety but poor content, that could not be efficiently valorized by the outdated technology.

Especially after 1980, this extensive type industry faced energetic deficit. The politics of shading unemployment through stock production, and the strategy of tacitly accepting inefficiency, hidden behind the false statistic reports, turned the Romanian industry into a dysfunctional and inadaptably rigid branch of economy. The economic failures were reflected in the socio-political fields as well, determining the fall of the communist regime.

The impact the administrative policies and models had on the Romanian territory during the Communist regime

Until the end of the World War II, the imposed administrative divisions did not have a major influence, the territory developing in a normal, natural manner.

In this way, the settlements developed by valorizing their momentary local potential, without keeping into account the regional or national benefits. Consequently, this course of

⁹ *Anuarul statistic al R.S.R. [The annual statistics of R.S.R.], 1986, p.19.*

¹⁰ Popescu, Gh., *Op. cit.*, p.151.

¹¹ *Anuarul statistic al R.S.R. [The annual statistics of R.S.R.], 1969, p.468-472, 1986, p.234.*

¹² *Anuarul statistic al R.S.R. [The annual statistics of R.S.R.], 1986, p.95*

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action resulted in indefinite structures, patterns and forms – especially in the rural areas - which generated complex problems of planning once the new legislation was adopted.

The next period is characterized by determinant interventions of the Communist state, the administrative organization being correlated to the active up-bottom economic policies having a major impact on territorial development. There are three key moments – thresholds during this period:

The first key-moment (threshold) is represented by the territorial-administrative organization from 1950 in 28 regions which included districts similar to the soviet ones from that time in the Soviet Union called “raioane” – administrative sub-divisions of the regions, towns and communes – the administrative model was imported from the Soviet Union. This territorial-administrative organization involved the development of small regional centers which encountered difficulties in performing the administrative and the socio-economic functions. Some of these centers had precarious administrative endowments and they were characterized by a low degree of industrialization – for example: Bistrița – Rodna region; Bârlad - Bârlad region, Roșiorii de Vede - Teleorman region.

The next key moment is the decreasing of the number of regions to 16. After the stage from 1952 when the number of the regions was reduced from 28 to 18 – Arad and Bârlad regions being dissolved – an administrative solution was found to organize larger regions with *small and intermediary centers* (above 50,000 and 100,000 inhabitants, respectively). Important changes took place in the sense of the economic and social consolidation of the regional seats and of some seats of the districts called “raioane” which developed their technical infrastructure and institutions. Some of the big urban centers remained in the shadow of the regional seats. It is the case of Arad which experienced a period of under-development in comparison with Timișoara – even though before it had a more developed industry. Timișoara knew how to benefit from its status of regional seat, thus creating a gap, their rivalry being present also today, even though after 1968 both Timișoara and Arad had the same rank: county seats.

Certain regional seats were not established in the most economically developed towns; for example in Hunedoara region, Deva was established as regional capital and not Hunedoara which was characterized by a more developed economical status. All these considered, Deva did not occupy the first place within Hunedoara regional hierarchy, even though efforts for industrialization have been made there. Deva remained focused on administrative and services functions, while Hunedoara developed further and even stressed this industrial development. The functional complementarity of the two towns mentioned is due especially to the fact that after 1968 they became part of the same county.

Another example would be the situation of other two towns: Galați and Brăila which before World War II were both county seats - for Covurlui county and for Brăila county, respectively. During 1950-1968, Galați was a regional seat, while Brăila – as a district seat (seat for the administrative sub-division of the region called “raion”) was subordinated to Galați. This administrative advancement of Galați had determined the development of numerous administrative institutions, the advantage of carrying out the economic plan, an advanced process of industrialization and a major cultural advancement. This gap created between the two towns maintained even though, after 1968, both towns became county seats.

The successive changes, decreasing the number of the regions from 28 to 18 then to 16, as well as all the inner changes, within the regions and the districts. highlight the fact that this administrative model was not appropriate for the Romanian administrative framework. The arguments presented in the notes that constitute the foundation of the law from 1950 emphasized the need to eradicate the differences that existed among the administrative units. The same arguments – focusing on the inter- and intra—regional disparities – were the focal points for the approval of the administrative law from 1968 which dissolved this model – another proof that it did not solve the territorial disparities.

The third key moment is represented by Law no. 2 from 1968 which divided Romanian territory in smaller unites – the traditional counties, at first 39, then 41 (Law for administrative organization from 1981). This stage determined the *extension of the process of industrialization from large urban centers towards intermediate and small ones*. Several new county seats developed – which did not have a significant industry before (Vaslui, Slobozia, Alexandria, Zalău, Bistrița, Sfântu Gheorghe and Miercurea Ciuc etc.).

Some of the towns that functioned as county seats before the war lost this status and thus experienced a process of lagging behind in comparison to the new county seats, even though there have been periods in time when one could compare them (Năsăud and Bistrița, Rădăuți and Suceava) or even involutions from a demographic and economic point of view (Huși, Oravița, Sighetu Marmăției).

Table 1. Demographic dynamics of the population for several towns from Transylvania.

	1850	1857	1930	1941	1956	1992	2002
Târgu Mureș	7.671	9.418	38.517	44.933	65.194	164.445	150.041
Alba Iulia	4.972	5.683	12.282	15.489	14.776	71.168	66.406
Turda	7.691	7.867	18.934	28.717	33.614	61.200	55.887
Reghin	4.227	4.721	9.290	13.595	18.091	39.240	36.126

Târgu Mureș which was, for a very long period of time, an administrative seat for various administrative units of first rank (district called “comitat”, county, district called “ținut”, region) had a constant and positive evolution.

Alba Iulia experienced a major evolution, because of the position it had within the administrative hierarchy, the dynamics of the population shown in the table below highlights the degree of this evolution especially in comparison with Turda which did not occupy the position of county seat after 1950. One can find that in 1956, Turda had a population twice as numerous as Alba Iulia, while in 1992, Alba Iulia was more advanced demographically speaking.

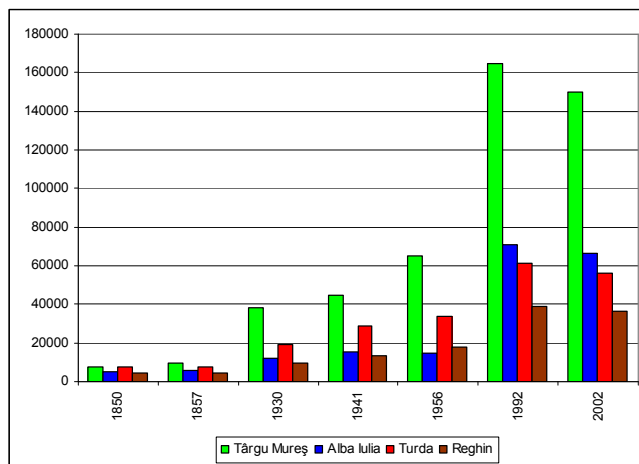


Figure 1. Demographic dynamics of the population for several towns from Transylvania.

Economic development resulted in the extension of the urbanization process. In 1975, urban population was characterized by an increase of 335% as compared with the value from 1930, and compared with the 51% increase of the total population.

As a consequence of the industrialization process, the process of urbanization extended itself by the development of the towns through a rural-urban migration. Thus, during 1956

and 1975, some industrial centers experienced an increase in population: Hunedoara – ten times; Baia Mare - three times; Reșița – 2,6 times. The following towns doubled their population: Bacău, Constanța, Craiova, Galați, Piatra Neamț, Pitești, Deva, Alba Iulia, Vaslui, Râmnicu Vâlcea, Baia Sprie, Gherla, Eforie and Hațeg¹³.

The process of industrialization also determined the setting up of new towns: Dr. Petru Groza, Gh. Gheorghiu-Dej, Moldova Veche, Motru, Orșova and other towns were established as such once some rural settlements developed: Bicaz, Călan, Câmpeni, Comarnic, Covasna, Cugir, Luduș, Olănești, Tușnad, Uricani¹⁴.

Territorial administrative organization had an impact on the urbanization process. County seats developed the most precisely because of their administrative function. For example, Galați and Brăila were both county seats for Covurlui and Brăila counties, respectively. During 1950-1968, Galați functioned as a regional seat as compared to Brăila which was only a district seat (seat for the administrative sub-division of the region called „raion”) and it was subordinated to Galați. This administrative advancement Galați had determined the development of numerous administrative institutions, the advantage of carrying out the economic plan, an advanced process of industrialization and a major cultural advancement. This gap created between the two towns maintained even though, after 1968, both of the towns became county seats.

¹³ Lăzărescu, C., (1977) Urbanismul în România, Ed. Tehnică, București, p. 13.

¹⁴ Gusti, G. (1974), Forme noi de așezare, Ed. Tehnică, București, p. 158.

The Impact of the Politics and Models of Administrative Organization upon the Romanian Territory in the Communist Regime

Territorial-administrative organization marks the long-term evolution of the settlements and determines the establishment of *the system of settlements*. For example, the dissolving of Turda county in 1950 – with a prolonged shape towards East-West including and following the shape of Arieș water basin – and the setting up of Cluj as a regional seat and then as a county seat determined important changes. Thus, the system relationships among the settlements centered on Cluj municipality and the investments had the same course. In this way, Turda was neglected as it did not have the function of an administrative seat, the courses of supply changed and the settlements on Arieș Valley lagged behind, even though the valley was overlapping a national road (Turda – Câmpeni – Ștei –Vârtop mountain pass).

The system of settlements represents the association of neighboring urban and rural settlements, their multiple cooperation for common development, the complementarity and the socio-economic inter-dependence among the nucleus of the system and the settlements that are polarized by it. The system of settlements is also defined as “a free association of neighboring settlements – no matter of the type of area: urban or rural – within which relationships of cooperation are established, as a consequence of a differentiated and unequal (as dimension and quality is concerned) territorial location of the functions and of the central endowments, respectively”¹⁵. The establishment of sub-urban communes, the way in which these have been subordinated to the towns, determined the consolidation of the relationships between these units and the polarizing urban centres until the two areas (urban and sub-urban) conjoined. Sub-urban communes, eliminated as an administrative level through Decree-Law no.38 /1990, followed different courses of evolution. Those that were in the proximity of towns valorized the advantages of this location and they were integrated in the urban areas, becoming districts of those towns. The ones located at great distances from towns experienced a lagging behind process, even involutions and massive emigration.

The establishment of the following urban systems: Brașov–Codlea–Râșnov–Zărnești–Săcele, Deva–Hunedoara, Alba-Iulia–Sebeș, Constanța–Năvodari–Eforie–Mangalia is focused on the cooperation of the towns that form them on relatively long periods of time, as being part of the same regional or county administrative units. Other systems of settlements had been determined by important transport infrastructures which, at their turn, had been established precisely because of administrative decisions (national roads connect county seats). One such example would be Sibiu–Râmnicu Vâlcea urban system which includes also Ocna Sibiului and the towns: Cislădie, Brezoi, Călimănești, Olănești and Băile Govora. It is important to highlight the fact that the establishment of new county seats and new towns or communes needed, in accordance with the laws in force, a process of re-classification of the public roads. In this way, those roads that unite county seats are national roads, the connection among the county seats and the communes and towns, included in that county, is made through county roads and the commune centers are connected to the villages that form the communes through commune roads. The only system of settlements that can evolve to form a conurbation is Galați – Brăila and it will not succeed this attempt due to the administrative organization. The two towns are situated in different counties and have a history in rivalry thus making cooperation impossible. In the present framework of regional development, such an attempt has no chance, but a solution still exists in a re-organization in such a way as to include both of the towns in the same county.

Even though the economic and regional policies from the Communist regime caused many imbalances in the process of development, *not all the results of the system of planned economy were inadequate and inefficient*. The Agricultural Reform from 1945, followed by the process of collectivization made – by sacrificing human lives and rural traditions – the amalgamation of agricultural lands possible, thus giving way to a more efficient production – through the distribution and the extension of the agricultural exploitations. Extending the electricity throughout the country and setting up the National Energetic System represented the foundation of the future development of economy. During this period, because new urban settlements developed, the national system of settlements was relatively balanced - a process that still needs adjustments even nowadays.

The public transport systems have been efficient and benefic, the degree of predominance of one type or another of transport (for goods or for persons) was a favorable

¹⁵ Surd, V., (2004), *Geografia Așezărilor*, Ed. Presa Universitară Clujeană, p. 174.

one - both from the point of view of the economic efficiency and of the environmental protection. The investments in education have to be also noted, the educational infrastructure developed then is now the foundation of the modern one.

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