

## THE PORTRAIT OF A SOCIOLOGIST ADVOCATE

Carmen Albert\*

Keywords: *Cornel Grofșorean, Social Institute of Banat-Crișana, monographic campaigns.*  
Cuvinte cheie: *Cornel Grofșorean, Institutul Social Banat Crișana.*

(Abstract)

Although Timișoara did not have a University to concentrate an academically elite, there has been an exceptionally intellectuality who was constantly preoccupied to form provincial individuality. One of the most remarkable representative personalities in the Banat was Cornel Grofșorean. The study deals in the first part about his personality with some biographical details. In the second part there is an analyses of a scientifically research manuscript.

Born in the 1881 in the village Periam, he was the child of Ioan and Iulia. He graduates primary school in Debeleanca and Covăcița and secondary in Panciova, Becicherecul Mare, Lugoj and Sibiu. In 1905 he graduated the University from Budapesta and in 1906 the Law Academy in Oradea. In 1907, graduate the Commercial Superior School from Kesmark. In 1909 got the PhD at the Cluj University.

Cornel Grofșorean opened a law office in Lugoj, short time after that had been to war in Italy between 1915–1918.

At the age of 38, accepted the first public job at Reșița, and then he got into the politics, became member of Partidul Poporului ruled by gen. Alexandru Averescu. The public responsibilities did not stop here. He become mayor of Timișoara two times and then deputy in 1926. After that, he quit political affaires and never gets back.

In 1932 while was the mayor for the second time, he set up with Iosif Nemoianu and Victor Blașian, Social Institute of Banat-Crișana. The moment was very important, special guest coming from Bucharest was Dimitrie Gusti. He was not there by chance, but on purpose. The activity of the new Institute follows the Romanian Social Institute ruled by Dimitrie Gusti. The pattern of the monographic campaigns based on his concept, used as a pattern of as well. The specific of Banat claims for this pattern to be adapted, Gusti's scheme being very flexible.

Cornel Grofșorean was at the first chief section, director and at the 1938 president of the Institute. From the beginning, the activity based on public conferences and later on, monographic campaigns. These focused on the main problems existing in the region such as lower down the birth rate, loosing identity for the Romanians peasants or the industrial influence on peasants.

One of the most important moments in the ISBC existence was the participation at the Peace Conference. In 1943 Cornel Grofșorean was contact by Alexandru Marta and Silviu Dragomir, to represents Banat at the Peace Conference doing some reports of the significance aspects.

At the second part, the study deals about a scientific material made by Cornel Grofșorean called "*The research of Banat village*" for an exceptional occasion, which was the World Sociology Congress in Bucharest 1939. The participation of Social Institute of Banat-Crișana through Cornel Grofșorean at this event means an international recognition of importance and prestige. Unfortunately the study made for this, was never presents because the Second World War started.

The Social Institute of Banat- Crișana<sup>1</sup> can be considered, without exaggeration, the pillar of Romanian sociology in the inter-war

Banat. Apparently the statement can be considered un- founded, if we think that during that time there was no faculty of sociology, a profile seminar or a university which could concentrate, even from the perspective of other sciences, the preoccupations of social research. Despite all these the Banat had, as compared to other historical provinces, a great chance: the existence of an exceptional intellectual elite who contributed substantially to the formation of provincial identity and individuality.

In the attempt to outline the profile of inter-war Banat, a history of the intellectuals would be desirable. Who were those who imprinted the

\* Muzeul Banatului Montan, Reșița, B-dul Republicii, nr. 10, albertcarmen89@gmail.com

<sup>1</sup> Its research was finalized in the last years with some papers among which the most important are: C. Albert, V. Leu, *Din istoria cercetării sociologice în Banat: Dimitrie Gusti, Anton Golopenția, Cornel Grofșorean și Institutul Social Banat-Crișana (1932–1944)*, *Banatica*, XIV, (1996), 345–385; A. Negru, *Din istoria cercetării românești: Institutul Social Banat-Crișana*, Cluj-Napoca, (1999); Carmen, C. Bălan, *Institutul Social Banat-Crișana*, Timișoara, (2001); C. Albert, *Cercetarea monografică în Banat (1859–1948)*, Reșița, (2002).

mark specific to the environment in which they lived? What accomplishments did they have? How did they contribute to the achievement of the destiny of a province with such an individuality? These are questions to which if we give answers, we could write such a history, that of the inter-war intellectuals in Banat.

Regarding us, we will stop on a certain personality who has founded the most solid research structure of inter-war Banat by founding the Social Institute Banat-Crișana and the adherence to the national movement imprinted by the Sociologist School of Bucharest. The personality we refer to is Cornel Groșorean, thus, trying to achieve in the first part a short biographic outline which constitutes an analytic demarche previous to a monography dedicated to this one, and in the second part the analysis of a study achieved by him in manuscript in order to be presented to the 14th World Congress of Sociology which was to take place in Bucharest.

Cornel Groșorean was born in Banat in 1881, on the 27<sup>th</sup> of October in the village Periam. His grandfather George (born in 1826) was the mayor of Comloș and married to Eva Pesecan (1828–1873) had several children (Persida, Nicolae, Miletie, Ioan, Marta, Maria, Saveta, Iuliu, Vichentie). Ioan (1850–1925) married to Iulia Dogariu (1852–1913) had two children Cornel and Cornelia<sup>2</sup>. The dates about his family are relatively few, one of them refers to his grandfather about whom Cornel Groșorean said: “*he was one of the founders of the united church, however, after his death the children turned back to orthodoxy, so that one of my uncles was an orthodox priest*”<sup>3</sup>.

At his birth, his father Ioan, was a chief of cabinet for the subprefect of the Torontal County, the baron Tallián Béla, who insisted to be the child's godfather. Cornel also received the name Béla at his baptism in the Orthodox church of Pesac. This fact was later on speculated by his political opponents, attributing to Cornel Groșorean, certain Hungarian origins. He graduated the primary school at Debeleanca and Covăcița, the secondary school at Panciova, Becicherecul Mare, Lugoj and Sibiu at the German confessional gymnasium. He passed his baccalaureate in 1900 at the Romanian highschool in Beiuș<sup>4</sup>. He passed

some years during his childhood at Bozovici where his father was a notary, a fact recalled on the occasion of the campaign in the Almăj Valley, when he saw again, with excitement, after 40 years, the house he lived in. In 1905 he passed his degree at the University in Budapest and in 1906 at the Law Academy in Oradea majoring in administrative sciences. A year later, he also graduated the Superior School of Commerce-Textile in Késmárk, as his graduation diploma proves which is to be found in the archive of the Mountaineous Banat Museum in Reșița<sup>5</sup>. Probably, during this period he met Berta Luiza, of Hungarian origin, a widow with two children, whom he married in Budapest, marriage which lasted until 1913. Cornel Groșorean remarried after many years to much younger Anuța Klesner who was beside him until the end and about whom Groșorean emotionally confesses in his diary years later, her devotion during the hardest times:

“*A year ago I was dying, and I was left in the care of a single person, Anuța. Everybody left me, first of all my children (...) Often we did not have money neither for the medicines, nor for food, the office was neglected, without encashments, without fortune... Only good God and Anuța know what soul tempests we had gone through. This poor woman has suffered so much beside me... When we started our marriage we barely had a spoon and a fork, Cori was almost grown-up and she had many demands, I was a clerk with a fixed salary and honest to stupidity, then I was fired and on the streets (...) ill, exhausted, poor, persecuted, without any protection, without any friend, I made my future by myself, conquering though hard and restless fight each step of the way. Counting exclusively on my brain and my hands and on a single friend, Anuța*”<sup>6</sup>.

In 1909 he presented his PhD paper at the University in Cuj, becoming a law PhD. In 1911 he met at Teregova, probably when visiting his father who was prime-praetor, Oszkar Iaszi, who conducted the Hungarian movement of Sociologic research, the future minister of nationalities in the government of Hungary, this one advising him to study social sciences. The moment is relevant for Cornel Groșorean's destiny who after a while

colleague and good friend with Todor Manojlović one of the most important vanguardist of Serbian literature.

<sup>5</sup> A short biographic presentation of Cornel Groșorean is published in Romanian in the introductory study to the volume Carmen Albert, *Documentele Institutului Social Banat-Crișana II, Corespondență*, Timișoara, (2009), 417p.

<sup>6</sup> Cornel Groșorean, *Jurnal*, document which is in a private collection.

<sup>2</sup> C. Groșorean, *Arbore Genealogic*, Serviciul Județean Caraș-Severin al Arhivelor Naționale (SJCSAN), Fond Muzeul Județean Reșița, nr. 380, dosar 3/1898.

<sup>3</sup> Domnul dr. Groșorean răspunde d-lui Bocu, *Ecoul*, 12 aprilie 1936, 4.

<sup>4</sup> Ioan Olărescu, *Comloșu Mare și Lunga*, Timișoara, (2001), 93. At Becicherecul Mare (Zrenjanin in Serbia today) was

has followed his advice.<sup>7</sup> After the PhD, he settled down at Lugoj as an intern-advocate and in 1913 he opened his own law office. During this “*lugo-jian*” period, his preoccupations were headed not only towards the professional field but also towards some civic nature activities, participating voluntarily in public activities of reformation of the village in the field of education and health, supporting some village conferences. The active cultural life in Lugoj, which he will remember with great joy over the years put him in contact with famous personalities of the universal culture whom he will proudly evoke in his correspondence: George Enescu and Pablo Casals.

The First World War brought about Cornel Grofşorean’s mobilization and his sending on the Italian front from 1915 until 1918, as an artillery officer, participating in the battles of Doberdo and Piave. We do not know much about this part of his life, his front diary was unfortunately lost, as like a many other sources from the First World War.

After the war, aged only 38, Cornel Grofşorean accepts the suggestion of George Dobrin and becomes prime-praetor in Reşiţa parish in 1919, in an atmosphere tensioned by a small salary, trying to pacify 8000 Bolshevick workers.<sup>8</sup> It is the first public dignity, a new stage in his life has opened, that of his involvement in the political activity. His affective affiliation took place in 1920, when friend with Avram Imbroane (leader of the National Union of Banat), he became close to the People’s Party which was then governing and he accepted the post of sub-prefect of Caraş-Severin County. A year later he becomes the mayor of Timişoara, a position in which besides the numerous reforming initiatives, was also the effort of reconstructing the Romanian identity, introducing the Romanian language in the local public administration, so that “*in touch with the public, the clerk should speak as much as possible in the solicitor’s language.*”<sup>9</sup> He was mayor for a short time. The fall of the Marshall Alexandru Averescu’s government has been followed by Grofşorean’s replacement at the City Hall of the town with Stan Vidrighin in 1923. After his own confession, then a vast denigration campaign started followed by a mass-media war with the aim of denigrating him which later on degenerated in a

<sup>7</sup> About the affinities between these two, more details in Carmen Albert, Cornel Grofşorean și Oskár Jászy în Gh. Popovici, C. Albert (coord.) *Studii și cercetări bănațene*, Reşița-Novi Sad, (2012), 150–162.

<sup>8</sup> Domnul dr. Grofşorean răspunde d-lui Bocu, *Ecoul*, (1936), 4.

<sup>9</sup> Dare de seamă asupra activității de primar șef al Timișoarei, Arhiva Muzeului Banatului Montan (AMBM) MD 34/9759.

long series of trials at Timișoara Law Court<sup>10</sup>: “*this battle lasted for months because I did not remain impassible but the result of the campaign was that for two years no one dared to open the door of my office*”<sup>11</sup>.

Restless, Cornel Grofşorean has founded “The Association of Petit Bourgeois” having 2000 members with the aim to encourage the activities of the Romanian bourgeoisie and to protect it from the influence and pressure of the political parties. Not much later, he became a member of the Banatian Law Circle, Rotary Club and Lojii Del, a part of the Great Symbolic Hungarian Lodge in Budapest<sup>12</sup>.

On political plan, his activity is marked by the procurement of a deputy mandate in 1926 from the part of the People’s Party. Again for a short time, because disappointed by the political rhetoric in Romania, Grofşorean definitively ends his political career retiring from the party in 1927 and never coming back on this realm. He still remained an admirer of marshall Averescu and his policy, being attached, as he himself confesses “*to the right movements, not to the legionarism.*”

In 17 August 1931 he comes back to the Timișoara City Hall during the governing of Iorga-Argetoianu, until 18 June 1932. Benefitting of his position of high public dignity, he together with other intellectuals (Iosif Nemoianu and Victor Blașian), founds the Social Institute Banat-Crișana on 21st May 1932 with the headquarters at Timișoara/subsidiary at Arad and the journal with the same name.

At the beginning chief of section, then vice-president, president (once with the affiliation of the Institute to the Institute of Social Research of Romania in 1939) and director of “The Journal of the Social Institute Banat-Crișana”, Cornel Grofşorean used his authority, his qualities of organiser and his leader skills, founding the infrastructure of the Institute and subsequently directing the monographic campaigns as his whole activity. He was not president from the beginning because the legislation of the time imposed that the institutions of this nature should have a full professor in this position, and this was the rector of the Polytechnic, Victor Blașian, the only superior education institution in town.

<sup>10</sup> SJCASAN, Fond Muzeul Județean de istorie, inv. 380, dosar 157/1927–1931, 1–5.

<sup>11</sup> Cornel Grofşorean, Informațiune, 1930, AMBM, MD 34/9751.

<sup>12</sup> The adherence happened on the 16th April 1910, according to the information received from Mr. Atilla Varga, to whom we kindly express our gratitude.

Afer constitution, ample manifestation in which all Timisoara's elite took part, having as special guest, Dimitrie Gusti who has honored the meeting coming from Bucharest accompanied by the general secretary of the Romanian Social Institute, Alexandru Costin, the program of research was fixed. The minutes of the meeting undoubtedly reflect an attitude of adherence to the Gustian ideology and practice from Cornel Grofşorean's part in his intention to reform rural life, Dimitrie Gusti being a remarkable personality with important results in sociologic research.

The professional relationship with Dimitrie Gusti deepened during the years, also contouring on the personal dimension, Grofşorean appealing often to him in problems which were not related to the monographic research. However, the several function held by him (director of the Royal Foundations, director SR, minister of Public Instruction etc.) and his merits of exceptional researcher of the Romanian rural area, turned Dimitrie Gusti into a person always in attention, whose advice Grofşorean did not hesitate to ask. This fact made contacts with other remarkable researchers, (Traian Herseni, H.H.Stahl, Anton Golopenţia, Sabin Manuilă, Octavian Neamţu) identifying his intellectual authority and the social significance of the Institute's activity.

The ethnic and cultural diversity of Banat imposed a modification or adaptation of Gusti's paradigm according to realities, starting with the objectives specific to monographic research, themes, methodology, organisation, the structure of the teams etc. Finally, it resulted a paradigm with specific marks, original as compared to the reference in Bucharest, where in 1921 The Romanian Social Institute operated and the Banatians took it as a model. This reunion meant in fact the extension in Banat of the Eugenian movement supported by the Sociologic School in Bucharest, understood as a way of defying of the social problems and the reformation of the village, based on biologic principles such as the law of hereditary determinism<sup>13</sup>.

Thus, the study of the organisation and action of the Social Institute Banat-Crişana can offer some basics for a more clear understanding of monographic research in a cultural context different from the rest of the country. The absence of a university which should provide human resources in the direction of field research was compensated in a certain measure with the regimentation of the intellectuals practicing liberal professions (doctors,

jurists, teachers, engineers, agronomists) who had competences both regarding the academic research and the elaboration of some regional policies meant to solve the observed critical situations.

The performances of the Banatian Institute were pretty soon obvious. At first, focused on the segment of public conferences, the Institute has also started some monographic campaigns 2 years after its foundation. In fact this was its meaning: researching the problems of the village. Thus, themes such as: the decrease of demographic birth rate, loosing the Romanian identity in some localities, the identification of the folkloric specificity were studied. The end is to form a "monography of Banatian border", a regional project which was just partially finalised. The social and political objectives of such a vast research were presented to Dimitrie Gusti<sup>14</sup> and can be synthesised in some directions:

1. direct contact with the rural population in order to regain their trust so that such expressions as "*it was better under the Hunagarian government*" should not exist and national desolidarization should not be produced,
2. the differences between intellectuals and peasants should gradually disappear
3. The grasp of corruption acts in local administration and their eradication.

The highlight moment of the Institute, exclusively administrated by Cornel Grofşorean is represented by his participation in the Peace Conference. Contacted by Alexandru Marta and then by Silviu Dragomir in 1943, Cornel Grofşorean enrolls for the second time the Social Institute Banat-Crişana in the difficult process of representation at the Peace Conference. The memoirs that resulted, although they did not arrive at the European institutions due to the political conjuncture, they show the professionalism of those who have drawn it, many of them members or collaborators of the Institute (Melentie Şora, Traian Birăescu, Traian Topliceanu, Ghorghe Cotoşman, Cornel Grofşorean, Emil Botiş şi alţii).

Of course the management of this institute was not always harmonious and liniar, the different problems which appeared, especially of financial nature, many times have put under the question mark its existence. In 1937, Grofşorean even thought of suspending the activities of this Institute<sup>15</sup>. This did not stop its activity then, at

<sup>13</sup> Maria Bucur, *Eugenie şi modernizare în România interbelică*, Iaşi, (2005), 75.

<sup>14</sup> Carmen Albert, *Documentele Institutului Social Banat-Crişana, II, Corespondenţa*, Timişoara, (2009), 138.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibidem*, 229.

the insistence of the General Assembly, the project being rejected, but later on in 1946 after 14 years of operation.

„The Journal of the Social Institute Banat-Crișana”, issued during the period 1933–1946, having as director C. Grofșorean, wanted to be “a faithful icon” of the Institute’s activities. Thus, a quantitative analysis shows the percent of 52,31% (2071 pages)<sup>16</sup> of the field – sociology, expressing the essence of this journal and the specific of the Institute’s researches. This aim was surpassed from the beginning, Grofșorean intending through the reflection of the encountered realities to form an adequate political culture, both at the level of elite and of the receiving public, considering it a sine-qua-non condition of the state’s survival. The percent of 30,06% (1190 pages) for history and 4,62% law and policy<sup>17</sup>, reflects a point of view which is also original as compared to the conception in Bucharest: “*The moment has come to elaborate the Romanian history of Banat which should mirror the life of the native people as it was from early times until our days. But balancing our modest powers we do not have the courage to proceed at drawing up a definitive work but we decided to elaborate first a series of studies and monographies referring to the different ages in Banat’s past which we will publish*”<sup>18</sup>.

Thus, the Historical Bulletin of the Journal was created and in 1943, the journal appeared in the form of two bulletins: historical and sociological, the percent of the last ones being smaller, this being due especially to the absence of some monographic researches which should draw attention<sup>19</sup>.

Cornel Grofșorean’s contribution in the contents of the journal was considerable, very many of the studies and reviews, published under his name or under the pseudonym Omega, were dedicated to the intern and international political events, to the world geopolitical context, comentaries and critical reflection connected to the position and interests of Romania towards other European nations.

The manuscripts which remained in an impressive archive (memoirs, diaries, correspondence) show the same interest, especially when he speaks of Romanians, wherever they are, of Romania and its borders. Not by hazard was he seriously

<sup>16</sup> Andrei Negru, *op. cit.*, p. 139–166.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>18</sup> \*\*\*Cuvânt înainte, *Revista Institutului Social Banat-Crișana*, XI, (1943), 12.

<sup>19</sup> The last campaign that in Naidăș was published in a small number of copies and none was kept. The materials of the campaign, as many as they were saved, were published by Carmen Albert, *Documentele Institutului Social Banat-Crișana I*, Timișoara, (2003), 406 p.

involved in the problems of the Romanian minority in Yugoslavia, and this even before the appearance of the Institute in Timisoara. This was one of the reasons for which the Institute was constituted, the idea appearing once with the Congress of Romanian Refugees in Yugoslavia in 1929.<sup>20</sup>

Born and formed during the Austro-Hungarian monarchy, Grofșorean could not have another conception on the state and Romanian people, than a nationalist one. The Hungarisation policy supported by that time’s authorities was deeply felt and had as effect – a phenomenon which was also seen in other intellectuals in Banat – the engagement in the fight for national politic emancipation. A particular fact is that, in his case, he did not have these convictions from youth. The evolution of his thinking, from the left of socialist nature to the right-wing nationalism, make C. Grofșorean a controverted personality who is even more interesting.

Having heart problems, Cornel Grofșorean died in January 1949 and was buried in Luoș, the town where he started from, many years ago. Ion Luca Ciomac, an old collaborator, in his letter of condolences, writes sadly to the widow: “*By his death, the Banat has a great loss because Ph.D. C. Grofșorean was not only a great Romanian, a great cultural man, but a Banatian whom no one can replace now. Our circles have gone through an irreparable loss and there will pass a lot of time until a man with his stature, thinking and his soul could be formed*”<sup>21</sup>.

The absence of a University in Banat which should form specialists directed towards social research, made more difficult the mission of the Social Institute Banat-Crișana, in his intention to reform. Lacking a profile academic environment, the research itself was not in a happier situation. Despite all these, the theoretical studies regarding the researched aspects, the sociologic information and the analysis of monographic results, published or which remained in manuscript did not lack. The prestige of ISBC was well known in Bucharest and the relations that Cornel Grofșorean had with the Sociologic School have constituted the premises favourable for its inclusion and that of the Institute to a manifestation of great importance, the 14<sup>th</sup> International Congress of Sociology which was to take place in Romania. Hosting in Bucharest in

<sup>20</sup> Carmen Albert, Cornel Grofșorean și problema reprezentării românilor la Congresul Minorităților de la Geneva, *Studii și cercetări*, Zrenianin-Novi Sad, (2010), 157–188.

<sup>21</sup> Ion Luca Ciomac, Scrisoare, 1949, SJCSAN, Fond Muzeul Județean Reșița, nr. inv. 380, dosar 215/1943.

1939 this event represented an international recognition well-deserved by the Romanian Sociologic School and its founder Dimitrie Gusti, whose fame has surpassed the borders of the country. The representation of the Institute of Timisoara through Cornel Grofşorean, meant more. For a regional institute without university youth, without the exceptional funding that the Social Romanian Institute in Bucharest had through the program of Royal Funding or Rockefeller, ISBC has succeeded performances which made it remarked and invited to such well-known manifestations.

Having in view his participation in the Congress, Cornel Grofşorean has conceived a study, not very large, entitled “*The research of the Banatian village*”<sup>22</sup>, which we approach in the following pages in order to illustrate the capacity of synthesis of the author which contains in some pages the essence of the monographic activity of the institute and also the performance for which he became famous and praised by the press of the time, and by Dimitrie Gusti himself.

In this study, Cornel Grofşorean realises a short incursion on the activity of the Institute that he was leading for 7 years and which became known by some accomplishments, even if it did not reach because it could not the standards of the Social Institute of Bucharest. From the beginning of his study, he highlighted the research character applied specifically to the Sociologic School that has inspired him. The need to adopt this type of research resulted from the new political configurations which followed the first world war which has determined mutations, dislocations, new social relations, new challenges determined by the update of society, changes negatively received by a rural population in its majority illiterate. The experience of states in Europe, he says, has proved that the governors have not succeeded to solve the difficult problem of post-war reconstruction, because they did not bother to understand the new realities, so the reforms did neither have the necessary adherence nor the anticipated consequences.

Furthermore, Grofşorean states that this orientation towards concrete research has also characterised the activity of the Social Institute Banat-Crişana, being the only possible in that respective geopolitical context. The only problem that arise, was the concentration of activity towards a certain social unit which must be investigated. The mentioning of this problem is very important, it constitutes one of the particularities which made a

<sup>22</sup> Cornel Grofşorean, Cercetarea satului bănaţean, SJCSAN, Fond Muzeul Judeţean Reşiţa, nr. inv. 380, dosar 80/1938.

difference between the activities of the two centres. The Gustian principle itself of applied research is based on the existence of social units which existed under the form of family, village, town, region, state, nations<sup>23</sup>. If Gusti school was centred upon the social unit “*village*”, those in Timișoara, according to their own realities which did not resemble the rest of the country, have fixed as social unit “*the problem*” which existed in the respective village, problem which must be solved. Operating on the same Gustian scheme, thus, those in Timișoara have found the most adequate solution, professor Gusti’s paradigm proving to be extremely adequate, which proves once more the flexibility of his way of thinking<sup>24</sup>.

The accent on the “*problem*” was also due to the difficulty of constituting the research teams, difficulties due, as we have said, to the lack of a university. In this situation “*a voluntary team*” was constituted of specialists in different fields, who have taken the difficult task of investigating the problems in the village which was pre-established by the program of campaign<sup>25</sup>.

The first problem considered important was that of the depopulation, the demographic indicators presenting for the Banatian province some alarming figures<sup>26</sup>. This is why it was considered as pertinent the investigation of the phenomenon in two villages, establishing the resemblances and differences, resulting the only monographies published in volume<sup>27</sup>. The decrease of birth rate in Banat, illustrated by the realities of the two localities preoccupied the Banatian intellectuals who could foresee some possible negative consequences for this province, incorporated not long ago to the Romanian state. The preliminary researches on this theme, especially those of Petru Râmneanțu<sup>28</sup>, an important representative of the Eugenist movement in Banat, have illustrated this phenomenon as having significant consequences for the future

<sup>23</sup> Ilie Bădescu, Școala Gusti: perenitatea unei paradigme, *Sociologie Românească*, III-2, (2005), 6.

<sup>24</sup> Cătălin Zamfir, Ce a lăsat Dimitrie Gusti sociologiei postbelice?, *Sociologie Românească*, III-2, (2005), 11-14.

<sup>25</sup> The topic of the congress was dedicated exactly to the “social units”.

<sup>26</sup> The problem of depopulation in Banat analysed by the Banatian Institute was detailed in the study signed by Carmen Albert, Fenomenul depopulării în Banatul interbelic, *Populația României, trecut, prezent, perspective*, Cluj-Napoca, (2006), 337-346.

<sup>27</sup> \*\*\* *Anchetă monografică în comuna Belint*, Timișoara, (1938); \*\*\* *Monografia comunei Sârbova*, Timișoara, (1939).

<sup>28</sup> Petru Râmneanțu, *Studiu asupra depopulării Banatului, Rezultatul anchetei demografice din comuna Vărădia jud. Caraș*, Timișoara, (1933).

of the province, the situation resembling that of France after the First World War<sup>29</sup>. As such, those in the Banatian Institute were trying to convince the authorities to initiate some concrete programs for the amelioration of the situation. The results of the inquiry have shown “*a slow degeneracy*”, manifested by luxury, divorces, abortions etc, caused by the peasants’ emancipation, especially the women’s who were considered guilty for this state of the problem.

Another investigated problem was referring to the loss of Romanians’ identity in the locality Pojejena de Jos, situated in the Clisura Dunării, a region inhabited in a large proportion by the Serbian minority who has assimilated in a large measure the Romanians. The alteration of the spoken language, the mixture of traditions and customs, were the signs that the things were evolving towards an unwanted direction for the future of the Banatian province and because the Romanian administrations installed after the Union have not taken any measures, some interventions were imposed. Another point of interest was represented by the direct contact with the rural population from which arise “*the hatred towards every gentleman, a hatred towards the town, a hatred against Bucharest*”<sup>30</sup>. The correspondence and the studies published subsequently have revealed the mistrust of the population in the town dwellers who have come in the village, a fact observed in all the monographic campaigns of the Social Institute Banat-Crișana, as well as those led by Dimitrie Gusti or his collaborators<sup>31</sup>. It seems that it was a general reality, that of the existence of a social class of peasantry having an insufficiently exploited potential, totally ignored by the town dwellers, the only contacts with these ones being on the occasion of collecting taxes and in electioneering. According to the principles of Eugenia to which the Banatian Institute has adhered, it was imposed to transform this class in a real force through education in the peasant schools, Community Center and through the Social Service founded by Dimitrie Gusti, these offering a real chance towards emancipation<sup>32</sup>. The conclusion to which they arrived was that “*denationalization*” was produced due to the precarious state of the economy of a region,

<sup>29</sup> Maria Bucur, *op. cit.*, 102, *apud*. V. Noveanu, Mișcarea eugenică în Franța, *Buletin eugenic și biopolitic* 3, 1–2, (1929), 26–31.

<sup>30</sup> Carmen Albert, *Documentele Institutului Social Banat-Crișana II, Corespondența*, Timișoara, (2009), 138.

<sup>31</sup> Zoltán Rostás, *Atelierul Gustian o abordare organizațională*, București, (2005), 63–69.

<sup>32</sup> Maria Bucur, *op. cit.*, 191.

where the administration has become indifferent towards the needs of the population and the state represented by the Silvan Offices has become the exploring agent together with the Factories and Domains Reșița, the Romanians loosing both the religious feelings and the national ones.

The manuscript we refer to continues the presentation of the Institute’s campaigns, with that at Ohaba-Bistra (1938), its themes being the influence of the industry on the autochthon Romanian element. Its research is imposed in a period of industrial boom, a component part of the modernizing wave which has come over Romania. The peasants’ dislocation from the rural to the urban environment, could have unwanted influences, thus it was to be researched in what measure these were beneficent for a large part of the population who come from villages and they were hired at the Franț Ferdinand Factories. The Romanian migrant peasants were risking to become poor in the corrupted environment of towns and to become some proletarians incapable to support an imminent war which was already threatening the destructuring of Romania’s territory. Cornel Grofșorean considered that the arduous problem would be in its essence: “*if the machine, the machinism forms or deforms the Romanian peasant; in what strata will we have to recruit the phalanx of the industrial workers. In other words: the industry will proletarianize the Romanian peasant or will it open for him the road towards urbanization?*”<sup>33</sup>.

The manuscript also makes reference to the campaign which was going on for the drawing of the monography of Bozovici, corresponding to a general work plan made at Bucharest. The imposing of Social Service by law, has attracted after itself the reorganisation of the institutes founded after the model of the Romanian Social Institute in Bucharest, which has become in the meantime the Institute of Social Research of Romania. These modifications of organisational structure were followed by changes of the research method, choosing to make monographies of an area or region, an older suggestion made by Anton Golopenția and put into practice on this occasion<sup>34</sup>. The activities being in development, Grofșorean sum up only at expressing his admiration towards the Law of Social Service which foresee the compulsoriness of effecting voluntary work in villages for the cultural uprise of the peasantry. The law itself had a large international recognition being undertaken and

<sup>33</sup> Dimitrie Gusti, *Note personale*, Biblioteca Academiei Române- Manuscrise, Fond “Dimitrie Gusti”, IX (21).

<sup>34</sup> \*\*\* *Sociologia militans*, III, București, MCMLXXI, p. 203.

adapted by several European states having great success even abroad, but other kinds of interests have determined its suspension after less than one year of operation, without having the time necessary for implementation and evaluation. Dimitrie Gusti in some personal notes on this theme, writes disappointed: “*I have received the visit of a State Subsecretary who communicated confidentially as a sign of great esteem and admiration for me and my work that ‘from an order from high quarters’. I understood (...) it will start a campaign in the newspapers against S(ocial) S(ervice) and which can point at orders and arrests*”<sup>35</sup>.

Thenceforth in the manuscript, Cornel Grofșorean approaches methodological questions which have particularised the activity in Banat as compared to that in Bucharest, explaining the need to constitute research teams made up of specialists from different fields, instead of young students for the work of collecting data. The difficulties generated by the absence of University and sociologists, the first who should go on the field and the others to interpret the obtained data, have determined a re-formation of the research team by hiring “professionists” keeping the same scheme: frameworks and manifestations. Thus, 40 intellectuals (jurists, doctors, teachers etc) during three weeks in their rest leave discovered and researched, the practical interventions being of small proportions because here is another difference: in Banat there were no Royal Foundations which for three months to deal with the recovery of the observed deficiencies. Subsequently, there was a change of letters with Dimitrie Gusti for the foundation of regional Royal Foundation, which was not materialized<sup>36</sup>.

Cornel Grofșorean clearly highlights in this study, the practical importance of the studies resulted after the research, they represent, in his opinion, only the starting point for some theoretical analyses. Otherwise, the objective established from the beginning was reached, which is to achieve: “*real ascertainment, proposals and practical conclusions about the country’s governors, made by professionists*”. Practicing an applied sociology, ISBC was co-opted in the framework of the Social Research Institute of Romania, transforming itself in a “subsidiary”, changing its status and accepting *volens nolens* the new obligations which they received. One of the consequences remarked with satisfaction, was that the “permanent members of the team”, meaning a stable team of professionists

which were also remunerated, which did not happen before in the Banatian Institute. After this moment of reorganisation after which the Banatian Institute became a “subsidiary”, then the monography of a “country” was achieved – Almăj Country. Thus, a continuity in the research activity was insured, under the new face of the institute unfolding the monography of the parish Bozovici.

The monography of a parish was Anton Golopenția’s “invention”. A close collaborator with Dimitrie Gusti, originary from Banat, Anton Golopenția has taken the idea of constituting a “model parish” from the doctor George Banu, the leader of the Social Medicine Institute<sup>37</sup>. Preoccupied by actions of social medicine, he has conceived some pilot-centres of action and research which by extension could easily become social parishes. Anton Golopenția proposed this new methodology, being convinced that only in this way they will succeed to end Dimitrie Gusti’s ambitious project, the monographies of all the villages in Romania.

Cornel Grofșorean, through this material with which he was to participate in the World Sociology Congress, he was trying to argue that in Banat it was created a counterpart to the Sociologic School in Bucharest, capitalizing the opportunity to exist and research in a province atypical by history, culture, mentalities but which was confronted with the same problems as the rest of the country. The Social Institute Banat-Crișana through its achievements has represented until its end the social research centre of Banat, promoting a methodological direction advanced for that period, aligning next to the Romanian Social Institute in the current of the international monographic movement contributing to the outline of the provincial specific of Banat. Due to the unfavorable political context, the World Congress of Sociology was postponed, Cornel Grofșorean’s communication has remained in manuscript but the expressed beliefs are to be found in all the studies published afterwards, the author manifesting consistency in supporting his ideas and projects. Influenced by Dimitrie Gusti, a great personality of the Romanian culture, Cornel Grofșorean has placed in the centre of his activities and interests the problems of the Banatian village, ensuring next to other intellectuals, the institutional framework of developing the social research by founding and supporting the activity of the Social Institute Banat-Crișana.

<sup>35</sup> Dimitrie Gusti, *Note personale*, Biblioteca Academiei Române- Manuscrite, Fond “Dimitrie Gusti”, IX (21).

<sup>36</sup> SJCASAN, dosar 184/1937, f 1–5.

<sup>37</sup> Zoltán Rostás, *op cit.*, 70.