

The Origin of Transylvanian Romanians in Saxon Historiography (1848-1938)

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Abstract: The paper aims to explore how the medieval history of Romanians in Transylvania is reflected in the Saxon historiography of the second half of the nineteenth century and the first four decades of the twentieth century. In order to understand the motivations behind the different historiographical perspectives and aspects related to the political and social context of Transylvania, the text contains brief references to a number of works written in different historical and social contexts, with very different authors, methodologies, presuppositions and results. Without claiming to provide an exhaustive description of the reception of this theme in Saxon historiography, the article highlights various aspects of the way in which the theme of the origins of the Transylvanian Romanians has been treated by Saxon historians, drawing attention to the heterogeneous nature of the literature devoted to this theme in the Saxon area. Finally, my research aims at answering the question of the existence of a unitary (or at least dominant) perspective in Saxon historiography on the history of the Transylvanian Romanians in the Middle Ages, interrogating the particularities of such an approach and trying to identify its position within the inter-ethnic historiographical debate on the origin of the Transylvanian Romanians.

Keywords: historiography, immigrationist theory, medieval studies, ethnic history.

Rezumat: Lucrarea își propune să exploreze modul în care istoria medievală a românilor din Transilvania se reflectă în istoriografia saxonă din a doua jumătate a secolului al XIX-lea și din primele patru decenii ale secolului al XX-lea. Pentru a înțelege motivațiile din spatele diferitelor perspective istoriografice și aspectele legate de contextul politic și social al Transilvaniei, textul conține scurte referiri

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la o serie de lucrări scrise în contexte istorice și sociale diferite, cu autori, metodologii, presupuneri și rezultate foarte diferite. Fără a pretinde că oferă o descriere exhaustivă a receptării acestei teme în istoriografia săsească, articolul evidențiază diverse aspecte ale modului în care tema originilor românilor din Transilvania a fost tratată de istoricii săși, atrăgând atenția asupra naturii eterogene a literaturii dedicate acestei teme în zona germană. În final, cercetarea își propune să răspundă la întrebarea privind existența unei perspective unitare (sau cel puțin dominante) în istoriografia săsească asupra istoriei românilor din Transilvania în Evul Mediu, interogând particularitățile unei astfel de abordări și încercând să identifice poziția acesteia în cadrul dezbatării istoriografice interetnice privind originea românilor din Transilvania.

Cuvinte cheie: istorie etnică; istoriografie; studii medievale; teoria imigrăționistă.

The continuity of Romanian settlement in Transylvania from the Roman period to the present has been a commonplace in Romanian historical literature ever since the seventeenth century, when Moldavian chroniclers emphasize the Latin origin of the Romanians, whom they identify with the descendants of the colonists brought by the Roman emperors to Dacia. Beyond its purely epistemic value, the theory of continuity has often been invoked to legitimise various political claims made by the Romanians. If Moldavian and Wallachian chroniclers and intellectuals implicitly valued this theory in order to emphasise the noble (imperial) origins of the Romanians, thereby trying to strengthen the reputation of the voievodal courts of Iași or Bucharest, in Transylvania, the issue acquired an immediate pragmatic significance: the antiquity of the Romanians in the region and the prestige associated with Roman imperial origins, considered illustrious at the time, would be exploited – starting with the generation of the Școala Ardeleană – for political purposes. In the second “*Supplex Libellus Valachorum*”, the famous memorial submitted to the Viennese imperial court in 1792 by the two bishops of the Romanians of Transylvania, it is explicitly stated – for the first time in an official document of such importance – that the primacy of the Romanians’ settlement in the region should be the basis for the imperial authorities’ recognition of their right to be counted among the official nations of Transylvania, alongside the Hungarians, Saxons and Szeklers. Accepted until then by the main historians of the time, the theory of continuity found more and more opponents,

especially among Austrian and Hungarian historians and intellectuals, who put forward the idea of a Wallachian migration from the south of the Danube in the first centuries of the second millennium (it is important, however, to mention that there is no unanimity among any of these historiographies in disputing the continuity of the settlements of Romanians in Transylvania).¹ This trend culminated in the theory of the Austrian Eduard Robert Roesler, who published his work "Romänische Studien" in Vienna in 1871.² His book, based on the hermeneutics of ancient and Byzantine sources and on philological arguments, became the main landmark of pro-immigrationist historiography in the following decades. The discussion of continuity extends to this day, and political undertones can be discerned in the positions taken by historians on the subject.

The Saxon historians of the second half of the nineteenth century and the first four decades of the following century do not avoid the subject of continuity, which they approach from different perspectives, depending both on their research interests and on the political and social context of the time. Their contributions are, however, generally lacking in originality or, at any rate, a solid theoretical structure. Most of the time, they consist of positions which recycle previously formulated points or punctual additions to arguments already outlined in the historiography of the problem.³ The relatively small number of articles devoted specifically to this subject indicates the relatively low interest of Saxon historiography in the question of the origins of the Transylvanian Romanians, which – as Professor Adinel Dincă observed in a

¹ For a comprehensive – though apologetic – account of the history of the debate, see Nicolae Stoicescu, *O falsă problemă istorică – discontinuitatea poporului român pe teritoriul strămoșesc* [A False Historical Question - the Discontinuity of the Romanian People on the Ancestral Territory] (Bucharest: Editura Fundației Culturale Române, 1993), especially, pp. 7-102.

² Eduard Robert Roesler, *Romänische Studien. Untersuchungen zur älteren Geschichte Rumäniens* (Leipzig: Druck von Duncker & Humbolt, 1871).

³ In his article on Alexander Philippide's book "Originea Romînilor" [The Origin of Romanians], the germanist Kurt Kurt Klein calls the Saxon contributions to the history of discussion "dilettante attempts": "Die Menge sächsischer Beiträge zur rumänischen Herkunftsfrage darf nicht zur überheblichen Annahme verleiten, dasss sie etwa auf die Linie mit der Arbeit Philippides zu stellen seien. Das ist nicht entfernt der Fall. Es sind Dilettantenversuche; Philippide ist Berufsgelehrter, und einer der ersten seines Faches", Karl Jurt Klein, "Originea Romînilor" ["The Origin of Romanians"], in *Korrespondenzblatt des Vereins für siebenbürgische Landeskunde*, 51/6 (1928): 90-101, especially 101.

recent paper⁴ – began to be of increasing interest to Saxon historians after the integration of Transylvania into the Greater Romania, without, however, becoming a very frequent subject in Saxon historical writing. Thus, it can be said that the contribution of Saxon historiography to the knowledge of the origins of the Transylvanian Romanians is directly proportional to the importance of the subject for Saxon historians. However, an analysis of the attitude of the Saxon intellectual elite towards this subject is not without epistemic value: a radiography of the positions of the main Saxon historians concerned with the Romanian question could reveal both aspects relating to inter-ethnic relations between the nations inhabiting Transylvania and the way in which the various historiographical discourses interact on a sensitive terrain, marked by deep rifts and strewn with numerous trouble spots. Last but not least, a survey of the Saxon historiography devoted to this topic provides an opportunity to reflect on the factors that influence the adoption of certain historiographical premises or theses.

An exhaustive exploration of Saxon historical literature from this period dealing with Romanian issues would be impossible within the scope of this paper. In the following lines, therefore, I shall confine myself to making some methodological observations on how the intentions behind the positions of Saxon historians in relation to the two conflicting theories about the settlement of Roman Dacia in the first centuries after the Aurelian retreat can be interrogated by selectively reviewing some of the positions of the main Saxon historians who have spoken on this issue. I will primarily consider the writings specifically devoted to this topic, but I will also analyse at length the position of Bishop G. D. Teutsch, whose figure has been prominent not only in the “professional” historical discourse of the period under consideration here, but also in the wider Saxon historical imagination, his writings being received beyond the formal limits of historiography. Towards the end of the paper I will attempt to formulate an answer to the question of the existence of a unitary (or at least dominant) position of Saxon

⁴ Adinel Dincă, *Români și sași în Ardealul medieval: contextele documentare și cadrele teoretice ale unei investigații* [Romanians and Saxons in Medieval Transylvania: Documentary Contexts and Theoretical Frameworks of an Investigation], paper presented at the conference *Zilele Academice Clujene. Societățile și instituțiile lor. Aspekte metodologice și abordări istoriografice* [The Cluj Academic Days. Societies and Their Institutions. Methodological Aspects and Historiographical Approaches], Cluj-Napoca, 18-20 October 2023.

historiography in relation to the subject of the origins of the Transylvanian Romanians.

Often having an external motivation, the positions of Saxon historians on the subject of Romanian continuity cannot be explained without understanding the political-administrative realities faced by the Saxon community in southern Transylvania in the second half of the nineteenth century and the first decades of the following century: the events of 1848/49 (in which the Saxon community felt betrayed by the imperialists); the gradual decline of Saxon autonomy (a phenomenon that had been ongoing since the last decades of the eighteenth century), until the complete disappearance of the Saxon University as a political body (1870); the reversal of demographic relations on the former *fundus regius* (abolished in 1867) to the detriment of the Saxons and in favour of the Romanians; the aggressive policy of centralisation and cultural standardisation pursued by the government of Pest after the Ausgleich of 1868; the First World War – when the territories inhabited by the Saxons became a vast theatre of military operations; the integration of Transylvania in the Kingdom of Romania in 1918 and – last but not least – the disappointment of the Saxons at the failure of the Romanian state to honour the promises of autonomy made on the eve of the Great Union. As Andreas Möckel has noted, the entire Saxon historiographical tradition has been directed, since the end of the eighteenth century, towards the protection of Saxon political freedoms, so that Transylvanian political realities cannot be ignored in the process of understanding the motivations behind certain theses formulated in the Saxon area.⁵

However, a strictly socio-political interpretation of Saxon historiographical positions would be reductionist. The existence in the Saxon area of old and sometimes contradictory historiographical traditions, the different professional backgrounds of the Saxons that participated in the debate on the origin of the Romanians and the personal convictions of each historian are factors that have certainly contributed to the shaping of positions on the subject. Last but

⁵ Andreas Möckel, 'Istoriografie și conștiință istorică la sașii ardeleni' [Historiography and Historical Consciousness among the Transylvanian Saxons], in *Transilvania și sașii ardeleni în istoriografie. Din publicațiile Asociației de Studii Transilvane Heidelberg* [Transylvania and the Transylvanian Saxons in Historiography. From the Publications of the Transylvanian Studies Association Heidelberg] (Sibiu – Heidelberg: Editura Hora and Arbeitskreis für Siebenbürgische Landeskunde e. V. Heidelberg, 2001), pp. 9-23.

not least, it is important to remember that Saxon historiography does not exist in isolation from external influences, but is in constant dialogue with other historiographies. Taking into account the above-mentioned aspects, it can be said that treating Saxon historiography as a unitary block is not hermeneutically profitable. In order to understand the motivations behind the Saxon texts on the topic of the Romanian continuity – whose peripheral character in Saxon historiography we have already discussed – it is necessary to analyse each individual historiographical context, an approach that also involves an important prosopographical component. Such an approach goes beyond the limits of this presentation, but the awareness of the heterogeneity of the motivations and personal contexts in which the studies on the topic of Romanian continuity were written could prevent us from unwarranted generalizations, which would alter the epistemical quality of the effort to understand the deep structures at the basis of the different points of view expressed by Saxon historians.

Georg Daniel Teutsch's seminal work on the history of the Transylvanian Saxons, suggestively entitled *'Geschichte der Siebenbürger Sachsen für das sächsische Volk'* (1852),⁶ in which the author explicitly assumes a pro-Saxon biased perspective, begins with a brief excursus on the history of Transylvania before the arrival of the Saxons. The Saxon historian – then rector of the Saxon gymnasium in Sighișoara and a politician involved in the events of 1848/49 – adheres to the theory of continuity, which he succinctly summarises in a paragraph:

Länger als andrethalbhundert Jahre blieb Dakien in harter römischer Knechtschaft. Kaiser Aurelian endlich räumte das von allen Seiten durch Barbaren bedrohte Land (im Jahre 274) und zog die römische Ansiedler über die Donau zurück. Also wurden die Daken der drückenden Herrschaft ledig; doch zur frührern Freiheit und selbsständigkeit sind sie nicht mehr gekommen. Von den zurückgebliebenen romanisierten Daken, die im 9. und 10. Jahrhundert mit Slaven und germanischen Stämmen sich vermischtten, nicht aber von den Römern die aus dem Lande gezogen, stammt das heutige Volk der Walachen.⁷

⁶ Georg Daniel Teutsch, *Geschichte der Siebenbürger Sachsen für das sächsische Volk* (5 vols, Brașov: Druck und Verlag von Johann Gött, 1852-1858).

⁷ Although he adheres to the theory of continuity, Teutsch does not fully adopt the Romanian perspective on the matter, denying the Roman descent of the Romanians (whose ancestors

Although the subject of the continuity of Romanian settlement in Transylvania was not of particular concern to Teutsch, the insertion of this paragraph in his work may have played an important role in the acceptance of the continuity theory by the non-specialist Saxon public (to whom the book is dedicated in several editions). Teutsch's intention in writing these lines is difficult to identify. In the absence of a rigorous critical apparatus, it is almost impossible to determine the historiographical source from which he drew his inspiration (in this respect, it is possible that research into his personal fonds in the custody of the National Archives of Sibiu will provide us with more information). Without being able to state with certainty that this position of the Saxon historian is based exclusively on considerations external to the Saxon historian's interest in the knowledge of history, we can suppose that the favourable attitude towards the Romanians is also motivated by political developments in Transylvania in the mid-nineteenth century. Very involved in the political events of 1848/49 – when he became a deputy for the Saxons in the Parliament of Pesta – the future bishop began to foresee the benefits of appealing to the Romanian minority, which he perceived as a potential ally in the struggle of the Saxon community to preserve its old privileges. The good ties during his episcopate with the Orthodox intellectual and ecclesiastical elite,⁸ as well as the troubled context in which they were developing (the revolution of 1848/49, the relative demographic decline of the Saxons in the Christian Lands in favour of the Romanians and the pressure exerted by the Austrian and, later, the Hungarian authorities on the Saxon community) could be one of the keys to explaining the motivations for such a position. In spite of the great influence of Teutsch's book on the Saxon historical imagination of the time (as indicated by the large number of new editions), the position of the Saxon scholar in relation to the hypothesis of the continuity of the Romanians was not unanimously shared by his contemporaries and successors in historiography.

are, as the above quotation shows, Romanized Dacians), Teutsch, *Geschichte der Siebenbürger Sachsen*, vol. I, p. 7.

⁸ Well documented by Mircea-Gheorghe Abrudan in a monograph dedicated to the connection between Teutsch and the metropolitan Andrei Șaguna, Mircea-Gheorghe Abrudan, *Ortodoxie și Luteranism în Transilvania între Revoluția pașoptistă și Marea Unire. Evoluție istorică și relații confesionale* [Orthodoxy and Lutheranism in Transylvania between the Revolution of 1848 and the Integration of Transylvania in Romania. Historical evolution and confessional relations] (Sibiu/Cluj-Napoca: Editura Andreiană/Presa Universitară Clujeană, 2015), especially pp. 377-403.

The articles written in the Saxon area in the second half of the nineteenth century broadly reiterate the thesis of Roesler, without, however, contributing to the historiographical debate with their own counter-arguments, except to a very small extent. In the last decades of the twentieth century, studies devoted in particular to the question of the origins of the Transylvanian Romanians mainly took the side of immigrationist historiography, polemicising with the partisans of the continuity theory – both Romanian and French or Austrian. Even if it was not written by a Saxon historian, it is worth mentioning the study by Johann Heinrich Schwicker, a politician from Banat, entitled 'Ueber die Herkunft der Rumäner', published in 1877,⁹ as it also had repercussions in the German-speaking south of Transylvania. Schwicker had successfully integrated into the Saxon political environment, which he represented in the Parliament of Pesta from 1887. In this article, the historian reiterates the main arguments in favour of the Roesleerian theory, insisting on the ecclesiastical subordination of the Transylvanian Romanians to the Bulgarian hierarchy. For him, this subordination – deduced from the Romanians' adoption of Middle Bulgarian as a language of worship – is a testimony to the Romanian presence south of the Danube in the first Christian millennium. Karl Goos, an archaeologist from Sighișoara, also takes a similar view in two highly polemical articles published in the 'Korrespondenzblatt des Vereins für siebenbürgische Landeskunde'.¹⁰ In the first paper, published a year after Schwicker's, Goos attempted to demolish each of the arguments put forward by the Austrian Julius Jung, a proponent of the continuity theory, in Jung's study entitled 'Die Anfänge der Romaenen. Kritischemographische Studie'¹¹ and in the book *Roemer und Romanen in den Donauländer*,¹² citing both Roesler and the Hungarian professor Paul Hunfalvy. Goos contributes little to strengthening the immigrationist position: his original contribution to the historiographical dispute consists of a few archaeological observations; he

⁹ J. H. Schwicker, 'Ueber die Herkunft der Rumänen,' in *Das Ausland. Ueberschau der neusten Forschungen auf dem Gebiete der Natur-, Erd- und Völkerwissenschaften*, 39 (1877): 761-768.

¹⁰ Karl Goos, 'Die neueste Literatur über die Frage der Herkunft der Rumäner,' in *Korrespondenzblatt des Vereins für siebenbürgische Landeskunde*, 1/1 (1878): 17-22 and 1/3 (1878): 28-39; Karl Goos, 'Zur Rumänen-Frage,' in *Korrespondenzblatt des Vereins für Siebenbürgische Landeskunde*, 2/1 (1879), 26-32.

¹¹ Julius Jung, 'Die Anfänge der Romaenen. Kritischemographische Studie,' in *Zeitschrift für die österreichischen Gymnasien* 27/1 (1876): 1-19; 27/3 (1876): 81-111; 27/6 (1876): 321-342.

¹² Julius Jung, *Roemer und Romanen in den Donauländer* (Innsbruk: Verlag des Wagner'schen Universitaets-Buchhandlung, 1877).

notes the lack of material traces produced in the early medieval period by the autochthonous population, which would attest to the absence of the Romanised population in Dacia during the migration period.

But the immigrationist direction is not the only position taken by the Saxons in the period under consideration here. Starting from philological positions, authors such as Gustav Kisch,¹³ in an article published in *Korrespondenzblatt des Vereins für sienenbürgische Landeskunde* in 1924, formulated a series of observations on the Slavonic borrowings from Romanian, which he attributed to the coexistence of Romanians and Slavs in Transylvania before the arrival of the Saxons. Far from being a polemical article, the paper consists, for the most part, of a list of Saxon terms of Slavic origin taken, according to the author, on a Romanian route. The existence of these words in the Saxon lexicon would be explained by the coexistence of Romanians and Slavs in Transylvania before the arrival of the Saxons. It is also worth mentioning the study of Karl Kurt Klein,¹⁴ which was occasioned by the publication of Alexandru Philippide's book *Originea Românilor*.¹⁵ Written in a less polemical tone, Klein's article presents the methodology and the main ideas presented by the Romanian historian in a praiseworthy manner, while also outlining a history of the question in the Saxon intellectual space, where he reviews the main contributions written by Saxon historians up to the mid-nineteenth century on the subject of the origin of the Transylvanian Romanians.¹⁶ By declining to judge the validity of Philippide's theories (which accept the immigrationist hypothesis in a different form from that put forward by Roesler),¹⁷ Klein demonstrates that the Romanian question was a point of interest for Saxon historians even before the historiographical confrontations with Romanian historians in the second half of the eighteenth century.

¹³ Gustav Kisch, 'Zur Wortforschung. Erloschenes Slawentum in Siebenbürgen,' in *Korrespondenzblatt des Vereins für siebenbürgische Landeskunde*, XLVII/1-3 (1924): 1-9 and XLVII/4-6 (1924): 25-41.

¹⁴ Klein, "Originea Românilor".

¹⁵ Alexandru Philippide, *Originea Românilor* [The Origin of Romanians] (2 vols, Iași: Tipografia „Viața Românească”, 1923-1927).

¹⁶ Klein, "Originea Românilor", 97-101. He also selectively refers to a few later studies, without attempting to provide an account of all the contributions on the Romanian question written by Saxon historians after 1860.

¹⁷ For Philippide, the repopulation of the territories north of the Carpathians took place during Slavic settlement south of the Danube.

All the above attempts interrogate – by philological, archaeological, or hermeneutical means – the period between the Aurelian retreat and the first centuries after the Hungarian settlement in Transylvania. Another type of approach to the question of the continuity of Romanians in Transylvania comes from legal historiography. I will limit myself to mentioning the main works that fall into this category, both written by Georg Eduard Müller, the most significant Saxon legal historiographer in the first four decades of the XXth century: *Die ursprüngliche Rechtslage der Rumänen im Sachsenlande* (1912)¹⁸ and *Die mittelalterlichen Verfassungs- und Rechtseinrichtungen der Rumänen des ehemaligen Ungarn*.¹⁹ The Saxon historian succeeds in describing in great detail the legal relations that characterised the situation of the Transylvanian Romanians in the Middle Ages, highlighting the inferior status of the Romanians and their dependence on other legal categories. He does not limit his research to the medieval period, but extends it to the mid-nineteenth century, justifying his approach by the small number of primary sources that bear witness to the early medieval centuries. His approach thus follows the structure of legal writings written by both Romanians and Saxons from the eighteenth century onwards, which present a pragmatic history of legal traditions from the first centuries of the Hungarian kingdom. Müller is, moreover, identified with this tradition by a couple of Romanian historiographers²⁰ who accuse him of admiringly and uncritically quoting polemical writings of no scientific value²¹ and of referring to Romanian historiography as a homogeneous bloc incapable of producing reliable scientific works.

¹⁸ Georg Eduard Müller, *Die ursprüngliche Rechtslage der Rumänen im Sachsenlande. Eine bürgerliche Vorstudie, zugleich ein Beitrag zum deutschen Kolonistenrecht in seinem Verhältnis zu fremdnationalem Recht in Ungarn* (Sibiu: Verlag von W. Krafft, 1912).

¹⁹ Georg Eduard Müller, 'Die mittelalterlichen Verfassungs- und Rechtseinrichtungen der Rumänen des ehemaligen Ungarn,' in *Siebenbürgische Vierteljahrsschrift*, 62/1-2 (1938): 1-47.

²⁰ Ilarion Puşcariu – Ioan de Preda – Lucian Borcia – Ioan Lupaş – Ion Mateiu – Silviu Dragomir, 'Studiu critic în legătură cu cartea dlui G. Müller, arhivarul universității săsești' [A Critical Study of the Book Written by G. Müller, the Archivist of the Saxon University] in Ilarion Puşcariu et al. (eds.), *Contribuțiuni istorice privitoare la trecutul Românilor de pe pământul crăiesc* [Historical Contributions Concerning the Past of the Romanians on the Crownland] (Sibiu: Tiparul tipografiei arhidiocezane, 1913), VII-LXXXI, especially XIII-XIV.

²¹ It refers first of all to Wilhelm Brückner's polemical book about the memorandum of the Romanians of the Romanian seats Șăliște and Tălmăciu Land *Beleuchtung dem hohen Abgeordnetenhouse in Pest überreichten Denkschrift der angeblich zum Königs-Boden gehörigen*

The themes of the continuity of the Romanians' settlement in the Crownland and their legal status in the Middle Ages are related not only by their potential implications for immediate political developments in Transylvania, but also by their very nature: by stressing the inferior status of the Romanians in the medieval kingdom of Hungary, Müller is, in fact, in line with the supporters of the immigrationist theory, to which, moreover, he explicitly adheres. For him, the lack of rights of the Romanians in southern Transylvania attests to their later arrival in the region. Apparently and, perhaps, paradoxically, local Romanian historiography – which has offered a very polemical response through the voice of several intellectuals, including Ilarion Puşcariu, Ioan Lupaş and Silviu Dragomir,²² imbued with numerous political comments hostile to the Saxons and even *ad hominem* attacks – interprets the same argument in reverse: if the Romanians had come from south of the Danube after the integration of Transylvania into the Hungarian Crown's patrimony, they would have benefited from privileges specific to *hospites* groups, which may be an argument in favour of the political motivation of both their positioning and Müller's – both predictable in the political context of the time. Successor of Georg Daniel Teutsch on the episcopal seat (and his follower in historiography as well), historian Friedrich Müller takes a similar – and equally foreseeable – position, accepting the hypothesis that the Romanians of southern Transylvania did not enjoy the status of citizens of Braşov or Sibiu²³ at the end of the thirteenth century. Although he agrees with this theory, Georg Müller will virulently criticize the bishop for accepting the Romanian hypothesis concerning the identity of the Romanians mentioned in the documents of 1210 and 1288 and for falsely attributing to

Gemeinden der sogennanten Filialstühle Szelistye und Talmatsch wegen Regelung ihrer staatsrechtlichen Verhältnisse (Sibiu: S. Filtsch's Buchdruckerei, W. Krafft, 1869).

²² Puşcariu et al., 'Studiu critic' [A Critical Study] and Ilarion Puşcariu et al., 'Părerile dlui Müller privitoare la incorporarea celor două scaune filiale, Tălmaciul și Săliște, la pământul crăiesc' [Mr Müller's views on the incorporation of the two subsidiary seats Tălmaciul and Săliște in the Crownland] in Puşcariu et al. (eds.), *Contribuții istorice* [Historical Contributions] (Sibiu: Tiparul tipografiei arhdiocezane, 1913), LXXXII-XCV.

²³ Friedrich Müller, 'Haben 1288 im Hermannstädter Gau und im Burzenland neben den Sachsen auch ungarische Adlige, Szekler und Rumänen gewohnt?', in *Siebenburgische Vierteljahrsschrift*, 58/4 (1935): 281-296.

him the claim that Romanians had enjoyed citizenship in Saxon towns in the thirteenth century.²⁴

Instead of concluding, I will return, as promised in the first part of this paper, to the question of the existence of a Saxon point of view on the topic of Romanian continuity in Transylvania. Taking into account the diversity of opinions expressed by Saxon historians, the peripheral nature of this topic in Transylvanian German-language historiography, and the limited contribution that Saxon historiography brings to this discussion (with the notable exception of Müller's studies), I would be inclined to give a negative answer: Saxon historians do not have a common point of view, and the positions expressed in this debate rather indicate their affiliation to traditions already existing in the Romanian or Central European historiographical space. Without making an exhaustive record of Saxon writings on the origins of the Transylvanian Romanians, it can be said that the general tendency among Saxon historians of the period is to adhere to the immigrationist theory, but the way in which the period preceding the Hungarian conquest of Transylvania is understood differs not only according to the authors' position on the nationalist or political spectrum, but also according to their intellectual and professional training and, implicitly, the premises and methodologies on which they base their historical or philological research. Divergent in terms of their methodology, intentions and epistemic value, and plural in terms of their results, the articles written by Saxon historians do not manage to achieve a sufficient degree of homogeneity to be able to contribute to the formation of a Saxon historiographical view of the origins of the Transylvanian Romanians.

²⁴ Georg Müller even maliciously asserts that Friedrich Müller would not be aware of his earlier work, although it is quoted abundantly in the bishop's study; Georg Eduard Müller, 'Die mittelalterlichen Verfassungs- und Rechtseinrichtungen': 11.