

BOOKS

Baumgartner: "Moldavia, a Great Magyar Cemetery."

Dr. Alex. Baumgartner, former professor at the Jászvásár Academy, has written an interesting book in which, with a profound knowledge of his subject and a critical examination of data, he proves that *the part of Moldavia stretching from the Carpathians to the river Sereth was an ancient Magyar settlement area, where the Magyars had been living long before the arrival of the Rumanians.* Owing, however, to unfavourable conditions the Magyars of Moldavia gradually became Rumanian in speech. Despite this *there are still about 125.000 so-called "Csángó" Magyars of pure Magyar race in Moldavia, of which Southern Bukovina was once a part. It now belongs to Rumania and there are 15.000 Magyars there who are Rumanian subjects.*

The "Csángó" Magyars of Moldavia and their nearest neighbours, the Széklers, form an ethnic unit. The author proves that at one time the "Csángó" Magyars occupied a much larger territory than the one they inhabit today. This is also admitted by the Rumanian historian, M. Radu Rosetti. In proof that the Magyars had taken possession of the areas lying between the Carpathians and the river Sereth before the arrival of the Rumanians there, Dr. Baumgartner points out that the names of places, mountains and rivers are Magyar. He puts the number of Rumanianized Magyars in this district at about 200.000. According to the opinion of other reliable statisticians, the total number of Magyars in the "Regat" (Old Rumania) is about 250.000; and this is no exaggeration.

The Rumanian statistics for 1930 showed 70.989 Magyar settlers in the "Regat". Of these 35.754 lived in Moldavia and Bukovina and 35.235 in Wallachia and Seremia (Muntenia, Oltenia). The Magyars of Wallachia and Seremia are almost all town-dwellers, although there are some small settlements in the mining districts; while with the exception of one or two thousand, those of Moldavia and Southern Bukovina live in country districts. The greater part of the former are new settlers,

but the great majority of the latter are autochthonous inhabitants. In addition there are also settlements of Széklers who joined them in the Middle Ages.

The Rumanian statistics are very unreliable; for we must remember that in recent years the Rumanians have regarded the Magyars of Moldavia as being completely Rumanianized, and therefore they have made bold to register them as such in the census papers. Besides this the scrutineers were instructed not to enter any persons as Magyars except those who settled in Moldavia after the first Great War. This was a miscalculation on the part of the Rumanians, for the Magyars of Moldavia consider themselves Magyars, even if a small fraction has become Rumanianized in speech. This is proved by the case of the 2000 Rumanian-speaking Roman Catholic Magyars of that region, who have declared themselves to be of Magyar nationality. And how many more there are who in the face of their own declarations were not registered as Magyar nationals. That in this respect the census figures were falsified, may be seen from the Rumanian statistics themselves. For in County Bákó 5502 persons whose mother-tongue was registered as Hungarian were stated by the Rumanian census to be Rumanians, not Magyars. Where, if this were true, did those people learn to speak Hungarian? Not at school, for not even the alphabet is taught in Hungarian in the Moldavian schools. Or did perhaps Rumanians become Magyarized in Magyar surroundings? There are pure Magyar villages in Moldavia, and Rumanians settling in them do become Magyarized, but the number of the latter cannot exceed one or two hundred souls all told. In mixed villages this process is not observable; there the Magyars become bilingual, though they speak Hungarian better than Rumanian. In Rumania the schools and the Administration take great care to prevent the Rumanian villages situated in districts where the Magyars are in the majority from becoming Magyarized. One instance will suffice to show how this is managed.

In the area lying between the rivers Ojtoz and Szalánc there are seven purely Magyar and two half-Magyar, half-Rumanian villages. Then there are three wholly Rumanian villages and two in which the majority of the inhabitants are Rumanians. Only one of the Magyar places of settlement is a market-town. As such it could not be spirited away, but the other six do

not figure as separate villages in the Rumanian statistics; they have been attached to Rumanian villages, and were not dealt with separately by the census. Had they been, how strange it would have looked to find a Magyar majority of ninety or ninety-five per cent at Diószeg (Tuta), Szitás (Nicoresti), Ujfalu (Satul-Nou), Szőlőhegy (Pargaresti) and the two villages of the name of Szalánc (Slamc). The aggregate population of these villages is 7641 souls, while the total Rumanian population of the entire district does not amount to six thousand. Besides this juggling with the Magyar villages the Rumanian Administration has grouped them so that, by absorbing them to Rumanian villages, it has been possible to show 15.909 Rumanians to the 7641 Magyars. In the district surrounding the town of Bákó the situation is even more favourable to the Magyars, for two or three Magyar villages of over a thousand inhabitants each lie so close together that deliberate chicanery had to be resorted to in order to establish anything but a Magyar majority. The unreliable nature of the Rumanian census is proved beyond a doubt by its own figures. *Unquestionably the number of Magyars is as large as the Rumanian statistics make it*, but to establish their exact number we must have recourse to other sources of information. As already stated, the number of Roman Catholics is our key, and the number of Roman Catholics in Moldavia is 109.000. Of these four or five thousand are not Magyars, which leaves roughly 105.000. About 10.000 of that number have become Rumanianized in speech, but remain Magyar in feeling, as the Rumanian statistics themselves prove (v. supra). To the 95.000 Hungarian-speaking Magyars of Moldavia we must add the 10.000 of Bukovina who migrated from Moldavia to that province, where their Rumanianized forefathers had lived. Then it will be seen that there are 105.000 Hungarian-speaking Magyars in Moldavia and Bukovina and 125.000 who are Magyar in feeling. On this computation it is no exaggeration to put the number of Magyars in the "Regat" at 250.000, for there are large masses of Magyars in the big towns, especially in Bucharest.