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Italian Historical Migration and Investments in Modern-day Romania

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Executive Summary

The present master thesis analyses the common historical and economic relationship between Italy and Romania, two countries of Latin origin that have been both founded by the middle of the 19th century, through the unification of different former states of same roots, language, culture and history. The thesis is divided into five chapters. The first chapter covers the middle ages and then the period from the 19th century until 1945, when Italian craftsmen, especially from the provinces of North-Eastern Italy, came to the newly established Romanian Kingdom, laying the foundation for the nowadays officially recognized Italian minority in Romania. The second chapter presents the economic and social relationships between Italy and Romania during the time of the communist regime, which was imposed to Romania by the Soviet Union after World War 2 and lasted until the end of 1989. Chapter three presents the status of the Italian minority after the revolution of 1989 and until today. After the fall of the Iron Curtain, the markets of the former communist states in Eastern Europe were opened to western products and investments. Also Romania opened its economy step by step during the transitional period from communism to capitalism and free market. Many Italian companies used the new opportunities and invested heavily in Romania. In particular, the western historical region of Banat with its unofficial capital Timișoara became the epicentre of Italian invested capital. This development along the reasons why exactly this region became so attractive for Italian companies during the 1990s are presented in the fourth chapter. Chapter five shows the present situation of Italian companies and provides detailed information of their economic activity in Romania.

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I. Historical Migration of Italians to Romania

I.1. Italians in the Romanian Principalities during the Middle-Ages

Very little is known about the migration of people from the territory of today's Italy to the Romanian principalities before the 1800s. Over the years there have been nevertheless Italians that got in contact with the princely courts of Moldavia, Wallachia and Transylvania. Those early Italians were travellers, adventurers, physicians, missionaries, military and civil architects, painters, musicians, chisellers, carpenters or builders.¹

Historical documents certify the presence of Italians on the territory of present-day Romania already by the 12th century. During the reign of the Hungarian King Géza II, between 1142 and 1162, the first foreign settlers started to arrive in Transylvania. Along them were also Italians, but unfortunately no other information about these people has been recorded. Another migration wave was recorded half a century later when alongside Walloons also Italians settled at Varadino (present Oradea, north-west Romania). There they constructed themselves their urban districts already before the Mongolian invasion of the year 1241. The quarters bare the names of their inhabitants, such as Venezia, which nowadays still exists and is called Velenza.² Contemporaneously in the 13th and 14th centuries the ancient Greek fortresses at the Black Sea have been colonized by the maritime republics of Genoa and Venice, first with the approval of the Byzantine Empire and later in compliance with the Ottoman Empire. Those colonies were called Lycostomo (today's Chilia Veche in the Danube Delta), Moncastro (now Bilhorod-Dnistrovskiy, formerly Cetatea Albă, in Ukraine near the city of Odessa) and Vicina, a fortress on the Danube (the exact location is debated by archaeologists and historians). The urban administration of Vicina and Lycostomo were in the hands of the Genovesi. They were ruled by a consul, likewise Italian cities in that times. Businessmen from both Genoa and Venice contributed substantially to the reinvigoration and intensification of commerce through the Romanian ports at the Danube.³ The Republic of Venice had even established a vice-consulate at Moncastro, back then a port of the Principality of Moldavia,

1 N. Luca, *L'Emigrazione Storica dei Friulani in Romania*, Bucharest, Sempre Uni, 2006, p. 33

2 E. H. Bader, R. F. Gurau, *Fortificațiile medievale din Transilvania*, Editura Sfera, Bucharest, 2001, p.169, cit. in Luca, *L'Emigrazione Storica dei Friulani in Romania*, cit., p. 33

3 T.V. Poncea, *Geneza Orașului Medieval Românesc Extra Carpatic (Secolele X-XIV)*, Bucharest, Biblioteca Bucureștilor, 1999, p.110

in the year 1435. The first consuls name was Francesco Diedo.⁴

After 1300 there are mentioned Italian architects and craftsmen, which were invited to construct fortresses and citadels. For example between 1307 and 1315, they constructed a castle for the Hungarian king Charles Robert of Anjou in Timișoara (western Romania, historical region of Banat). Historical records mention also that the castle was given as a gift later on to the Florentine condottiero (knight) Filippo Scolari di Ozora, himself a duke of Timișoara. This first castle was described by his biograph Jacopo Poggia in his mother-tongue as “di muro attornatalo et molti edifici ornato”. One hundred years later John Hunyadi, governor of Transylvania from 1441 and later king of Hungary between 1446 and 1453, established his residence in Timișoara and ordered the construction of a newer and bigger castle (see Figure 1) on the venue of the old one, which had been destroyed earlier by an earthquake. The new modern castle was planed and constructed by Italian architects that were probably originating from Milan.⁵

Figure 1: Huniade Castle in Timișoara



Source: Romania in our hearts, Huniade Castle – Photo 17, <https://romaniainourhearts.wordpress.com/2013/06/22/romanias-most-beautiful-castles-and-palaces-top-50-part-1/huniade-castle-photo-17/>, retrieved on July 31st 2014.

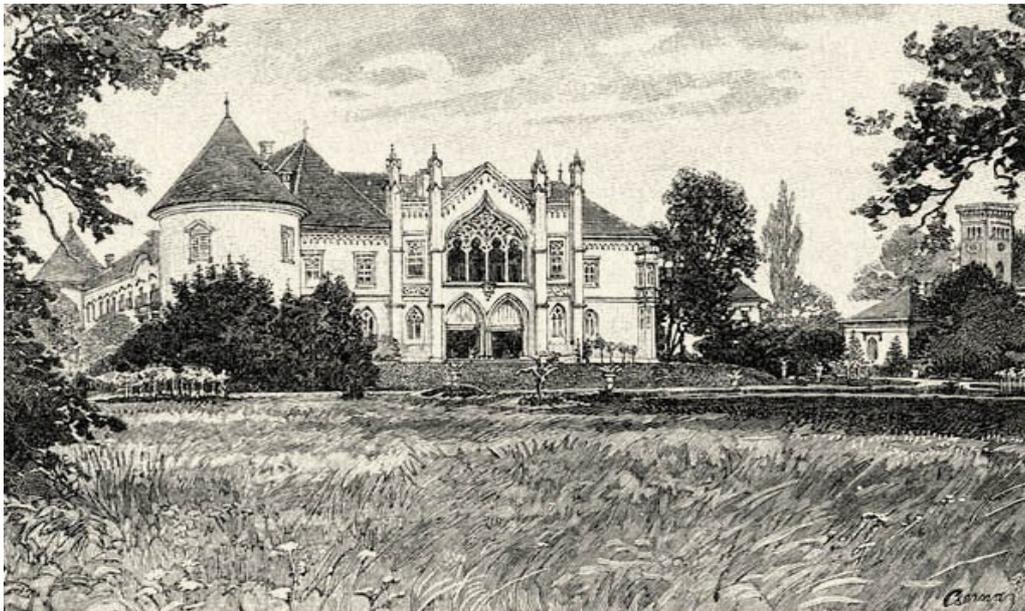
The fortification of castles, citadels and churches were of a central importance for the territory of today's Romania. Stephen III known as “Stefan the Great”, ruler of the Principality of Moldavia for 47 years between 1457 and 1504 and one of the most important rulers in Romanian history, also asked for the services of Italian military

⁴ Luca, *L'Emigrazione Storica dei Friulani in Romania*, cit., p. 34

⁵ *Ivi*, pp. 35, 36

architects. With their help he was able to construct fortresses along the eastern border of Moldavia, back then the river Dniester, creating very strong anti-Ottoman and anti-Tatar bastions for the protection of his own country but also for the entire Christianity. Italian architects and engineers were in great demand throughout the Romanian principalities also in the following centuries. The citadel of Oradea was fortified during Gabriel Bethlen's rule of Transylvania (1613-1629) by the Venetian Agostino Serena and the Mantovan Giovanni Landi. Inside the citadel Bethlen commissioned the construction of a pentagonal palace with an interior court in Italian style to the Veronese architect Giacomo Resti. The Venetian Agostino Serena also constructed the Banffy castle (see Figure 2) in the village Bonțida, Cluj county. Alba-Iulia, another important city in Transylvania, has been modernized by the architect Giovanni Morando Visconti, between 1715 and 1735.⁶

Figure 2: Banffy Castle in Bonțida, Cluj



Source: Wikipedia English, Bonțida Banffy Castle, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Banffy_Castle, last actualization on July 24th 2014, retrieved on July 31st 2014.

Throughout the centuries also Italian painters worked for the Romanian princely courts. Among them were painters such as Masolino Panicale in Timișoara, a certain Mina at the court of Michael the Brave and Giorgio Vernier at the court of Nicolae Mavrogheni. Italian musicians were present at Transylvanian courts since the time of Mathias Corvinus. The more famous ones were Giovanni Battista da Mosto and Georgius Gyrdi. Documents from the 17th and 18th centuries recorded the presence of several Italians at the Wallachian and Moldavian courts. These people were physicists, translators, personal

⁶ *Ivi*, pp. 37-39

secretaries etc.⁷ The Kingdom of Sardinia established a consulate in Galați, an important harbour at the Danube, in the year 1833. Moreover a Catholic church was built in the year 1844 on a plot, which was a gift from the Moldavian Prince Mihai Sturdza to the Kingdom of Sardinia. The construction of the church was financed by the King of Sardinia, Carlo Alberto, and donations of the members of the religious community. Thus, a substantial Italian presence in this town can be assumed to have existed during that period.⁸

I.2. Italians in Romania from 1860 to World War I

The most important immigration of Italians to Romania dates back to the modern era, starting especially in the second half of the 19th century. It was the era of the rediscovery of the natural resources existent in the soil of the Romanian territory. The Austrians were very much interested in the exploitation of iron, silver, gold and other precious metals. In order to reach their economic goals they colonized a part of the Banat (see Map 2 in Appendix), which was back then a province of the Habsburg Empire, with Italian workers from another Austrian province, namely Friuli. Therefore we have to consider these first waves of migration as a transfer of population inside the Habsburg Empire and later the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy. Those people were miners, railway builders, stonecutters or foresters. After their mission was accomplished the Italian workers decided to remain in those areas and to settle for good. Their descendants are living even today throughout the historical region of Banat in towns such as Oravița, Caransebeș, Reșița, Bocșa or Oțelul Roșu. In this region we can find even today family names such as Anzilutti, Buuzzi, Gussetti, Gazzoli, Gottardi, Mattioni, Masutti, Mihali, Palma, Pecci, Partelli and many more.⁹

7 Asociația Italianilor din România – Ro.As.It., Scurt istoric al emigrației italiene din România, <http://www.roasit.ro/html/ro/scurtistoric.php>, retrieved on July 31st 2014.

8 R. Scagno (a cura di), *Veneti in Romania*, Ravenna, Longo Editore, 2008, p. 20

9 Luca, *L'Emigrazione Storica dei Friulani in Romania*, cit., pp. 46-48

I.2.1 The Origin of the Italian Migrants

It is estimated that ca. 60,000 Italians emigrated to the territory of today's Romania in a time-period of 60 years, from 1860 to 1920. 80% of those emigrants were originally from Friuli. The others came from Emilia-Romagna, Lombardy, Puglia, Piedmont and Tuscany. Those people contributed to the development of modern Romania as well as to the europeanization of its inhabitants.¹⁰ Professor Rudolf Dinu from the “Romanian Institute for Culture and Humanistic Research in Venice” identifies the geographical source for the major part of the Italian immigration more generally speaking in the regions of Veneto and Friuli-Venezia-Giulia. He enforces his conclusion by citing statements of Italian officials in Romania contemporary with the migration waves. The Italian minister to Romania in Bucharest Francesco Curtopassi stated about the migration in 1892 the following: “le località Mal, Castellavazzo, Ospitale, Vas – nella provincia di Belluno – Frisone, Forgaria, Castelnuovo del Friuli, Forni di Sotto – provincia di Udine – fornivano alla Romania un numero talmente grande di operai che si sarebbe potuto credere che esse rimanessero disabitate”.¹¹ He is explaining that there are so many Italian workers in Romania originating from the enumerated villages in the provinces Belluno, Friuli and Udine that you might think that these places had been abandoned. Also the General-Consul of Italy in Galați, Giulio Tesi, underlines in 1896 that most of the Italian immigrants from the previous year were originating from Veneto: “La nostra immigrazione temporanea italiana nel distretto, nell'anno decorso salì, dietro le informazioni assunte, a circa 7000 individui, secondo il consueto, nella massima parte, del Veneto.”¹² Similarly the Minister Plenipotentiary Beccaria Incisa reports in the same year 1896 that the immigrants are particularly from the Venetian provinces: “...numerosse frotte di operai giungono qui dall'Italia, ed in specie dalle provincie venete...”.¹³ Another testimony is made by the priest Father Clemente Gatti in a letter to his fellow Father Tarciso: “Assistente spirituale degli operai italiani sparsi in una zona vasta come Veneto, Lombardia, Liguria e Piemonte. Sono tagliapietre, tagliaboschi, muratori, impresari: gente forte e laboriosa del Friuli e del

10 Asociația Italienilor din România – Ro.As.It., Scurt istoric al emigrației italiene din România, <http://www.roasit.ro/html/ro/scurtistoric.php>, retrieved on July 31st 2014.

11 Ministerul Agriculturii, Industriei, Comerțului și Domeniilor, *Buletinul Statistic General al României*, II (1893), No. 4, p. 463, cit. in R. Dinu, “Appunti per la storia dell'emigrazione italiana in Romania, 1879-1914”, in *Italian-Romanian Studies Diplomacy and Society*; Bucharest, editura militară, 2008, pp. 426, 427

12 G. Tesi, “Immigrazione Italiana nel Distretto di Galatz”, *Bollettino del Ministero degli Affari Esteri*, XXXII (1896), No.2, p. 160, cit. in *Ivi*, p. 427

13 *Ivi*, p. 192, cit. in *Ibidem*.

Bellunato, con qualche Trentino. Poi nella città ci sono colonie di industriali Lombardi e Toscani, ed impiegati di banca.”¹⁴ He identifies their origins in Veneto, Lombardia, Liguria and Piemonte and enumerates their professions (stone quarry workers, woodcutters, masons, and entrepreneurs). Furthermore, he describes them as strong people from Friuli and Bellunato (Belluno) and some from Trentino. He mentions also colonies of industrialists originating from Lombardy, Liguria and Piedmont.

I.2.2 Romania as an attractive Destination for Italian Migrants

But what were the reasons for this consistent Italian and especially Friulian-Venetian workers migration to the Kingdom of Romania in the second half of the 19th century? Nicolae Luca mentions eight central causes. First of all Romania's first king Charles I of Hohenzollern-Sigmaringen invited skilled workers from Central and Western Europe to Romania in order to realize his projects of economic and social development in different sectors of the society, such as industry, agriculture and infrastructure. His policy found support among the Romanian political class, which consisted of people who studied in Western Europe especially in France and Germany. Secondly the similarities between the Romanian language and the Italian dialects, in this case the Friulan dialect, has to be taken into consideration. In connection with this cultural aspect has to be seen also the friendly relation with the local Romanian population that accepted and appreciated the Italian immigrants.¹⁵ Dinu writes also about this positive atmosphere. He mentions that the relations with the Romanian authorities and the local population was generally good. The Italian workers were appreciated for their professionalism and the quality of their work as well as their civilized behaviour in society. Professor Dinu quotes again Beccaria Incisa that goes even further claiming the existence of an affinity between the Romanian people and the Italian migrants based on a common heritage or race to use his own word, but also the facility with which they're able to learn the Romanian language: “L'affinità di razza, la facilità colla quale imparano la lingua del paese, la loro perizia e il contegno tranquillo serbato per lo passato – (e che speriamo voglia mantenersi tale per l'avvenire) – li hanno resi finora generalmente benevisi ai rumeni.”¹⁶ A fourth argument is

14 Chiesa Italiana Bucharest, Testimonianza di p. Clemente Gatti-Assistente degli emigranti italiani, <http://www.chiesaitalianabucharest.org/gatti.htm>, retrieved on August 20th 2014.

15 Luca, *L'Emigrazione Storica dei Friulani in Romania*, cit., p. 73

16 E. Beccaria Incisa, “Emigrazione in Rumania”, *Bollettino del Ministero degli Affari Esteri*, XXXIII (1897), No.12, pp. 631, 632, cit. in Dinu, “Appunti per la storia dell'emigrazione italiana in Romania, 1879-1914”, cit., pp. 430, 431

the propagandistic activity of the Italian-Romanian newspaper “La Voce d'Italia“, which promoted Romania and especially the Black Sea region of Dobruja as a new destination for Italian emigrants, emphasizing the advantages in comparison to a migration to the Americas. Luca sees further advantages in the fact that the immigrants received the opportunity to work by themselves and to value their own skills and creativity. A sixth cause for the substantial migration were the low costs of living and housing that offered the chance to save a consistent part of the earnings. Moreover the immigrants had the right to acquire agricultural land, by becoming Romanian citizens after giving up their Italian or Austrian citizenship. The eighth cause as seen by Luca is the mouth to mouth propaganda that had been done back in Italy by the seasonal workers that returned from Romania. Those people told to their relatives, friends or neighbours about the working possibilities and the good earnings offered by the strongly developing Romanian Kingdom.¹⁷ Moreover the immigrants had the possibility to preserve their national characteristics, such as language and Catholic religion, by attending Italian schools (already in 1881 there were two Italian schools in Romania, each one in both Galați and Brăila¹⁸) or enjoying the freedom of religion guaranteed by the Kingdom of Romania.

Professor Rudolf Dinu points also out that there were plans for an organized Italian migration of substantial proportions to the Dobruja, with the aim of a permanent colonization. Marco Antonio Canino, a Venetian socialist republican, poet and war correspondent, founded a lobby group with the aim to promote an Italian colonization to Romania in general and to Dobruja in particular and to redirect at least a part of the 56,000 Italian immigrants going to America each year during the 70s of the 19th century. He contacted both Italian and Romanian politicians in order to find support for his plan in the year 1878. Canino found support in Italy and among a part of the Romanian politicians such as the poet Vasile Alecsandri, or Mihail Kogălniceanu, while others like Constantin Alexandru Rosetti* and Ion Brătianu were not sharing the same enthusiasm. Unfortunately for him the project did not make any progress and was abandoned later on.¹⁹ Nevertheless, Romania remained an attractive destination for the Italian temporary migration, which partly became stable with the years, despite the fact that Canino's plan was not put into practice.

17 Luca, *L'Emigrazione Storica dei Friulani in Romania*, cit., p. 73

18 Scagno (a cura di), *Veneti in Romania*, cit., p. 23

* The Rosetti family was a Greek-Italian noble family originating from the Greek neighbourhood Phanar in Constantinople. The so called Phanariotes, rich orthodox Greek nobles from the aforementioned quarter of Constantinople, had been imposed as rulers to Moldavia and Wallachia by the Ottoman Empire from the beginning of the 18th century until the beginning of the 19th century. .

19 Dinu, “Appunti per la storia dell'emigrazione italiana in Romania, 1879-1914”, cit., pp. 441, 442

I.2.3 Economic Domains in which the Italian Guest-workers activated

The majority of Italian temporary migrants or guest-workers in the Kingdom of Romania by the end of the 19th century were active in three major industrial sectors: constructions (both public and private), mining (especially stone, granite and salt), and forestry. The total number of seasonal migrant workers, moving between their home country Italy and Romania on a yearly basis, was oscillating between 8,000 and 10,000 men between the years 1894 and 1898, according to the calculations of Rudolf Dinu.²⁰ This kind of temporary migration ended however with the beginning of World War I. After the year 1918 Romania was able to increase both its territory and population by reuniting almost the whole Romanian nation into one national state. Great Romania, as it has been called in history books, comprised the Old Romanian Kingdom, Transylvania, Bucovina and Bassarabia (approximately nowadays independent Republic of Moldova). Greater Romania had after 1918 enough human resources in order to conduct construction and infrastructure projects without the comparatively more expensive external manpower.²¹

The importance of the Italians working in constructions can be, however, acknowledged by taking into consideration a statistic from 1898, which shows that among the 10,000 masons working in Bucharest, 6,000 were actually Italians.²² There was basically no construction of major importance at the turn of the centuries, which was not done with Italian man d'oeuvre.

Italian architects played also a crucial role in developing an architectural masterplan of the uprising kingdom. Giulio Magni, one of the famous Italian architects of his time, moved to Romania in 1895 at the age of 36 and became the chief architect of Bucharest. There he found large spaces to put his creative ideas into practice. In 1904 he returned to Italy where some years later he became the chief architect of Rome.²³

There exists a very long list of buildings of highest cultural importance in Romania, which have profited from the Italian know-how, as we are able to discover in the following.

20 Dinu, "Appunti per la storia dell'emigrazione italiana in Romania, 1879-1914", cit., pp. 424, 428

21 *Ivi*, p. 433

22 C. T. Petrescu, *Socialismul în România, 1835 – 6 septembrie 1940*, Bucharest, Biblioteca Socialistă, 1940, p. 141, cit. in Luca, *L'Emigrazione Storica dei Friulani in Romania*, cit., p. 95

23 V. Partan, "Contribuții italiene la arhitectura și muzica din România", *Romulus și Remus*, December 21st 2010, p. 2

The summer residence of King Charles I, the Peleş Castle in Sinaia (see Figure 3), Prahova county, at the feet of the Carpathian mountains, was constructed mostly by foreigners. The main contractor was a company belonging to Pietro Axerio, who was originally from Piedmont. This company was working mainly with sub-contractors from Italy. Princess Elisabeth of Romania wrote in her memoirs that the masons working at the construction of the castle were all Italians.²⁴ Another important working site for Axerio was the Royal Palace Cotroceni in Bucharest. In the year 1897, Pietro Axerio received the task to conduct restoration and systematisation works on the palace. Almost twenty years later in 1916, the same company introduced the canalisation to the Cotroceni Palace. From 1923 to 1928 the company Axerio conducted extensive works of restructuring at the same palace. Pietro Axerio was himself at the service of the Romanian Royal House for 40 years before transferring the company to his son Giovanni Axerio. Other important works had been conducted by Axerio's company at the Kiseleff Palace, works of systematisation and repairing of the heating system, and the Royal Residential Palace in Bucharest, mainly reconstruction after the fire of December 1926. Axerio was also in charge of creating the stucco inside the Catholic Saint Joseph Cathedral of Bucharest. Another important Italian active in Romania during that period was the architect Mario Stoppa. He designed the Royal Palace in Mamaia at the Black Sea, worked together with other architects on the rebuilding of the burned Royal Residential Palace in Bucharest, and was also given the task to restore the Royal Castle in Săvârşin, Arad county in Transylvania. His most important edifice for the cultural heritage of Italians in Romania has obligatory to be considered the Italian Church Santissimo Redentore (see Figure 4), which construction started in 1915 on the central Nicolae Bălcescu Boulevard. The venue had been previously donated by the city of Bucharest. The bells inside the

Figure 3: Peleş Castle in Sinaia, Prahova



Source: own private collection

Axerio. Other important works had been conducted by Axerio's company at the Kiseleff Palace, works of systematisation and repairing of the heating system, and the Royal Residential Palace in Bucharest, mainly reconstruction after the fire of December 1926. Axerio was also in charge of creating the stucco inside the Catholic Saint Joseph Cathedral of Bucharest. Another important Italian active in Romania during that period was the architect Mario Stoppa. He designed the Royal Palace in Mamaia at the Black Sea, worked together with other architects on the rebuilding of the burned Royal Residential Palace in Bucharest, and was also given the task to restore the Royal Castle in Săvârşin, Arad county in Transylvania. His most important edifice for the cultural heritage of Italians in Romania has obligatory to be considered the Italian Church Santissimo Redentore (see Figure 4), which construction started in 1915 on the central Nicolae Bălcescu Boulevard. The venue had been previously donated by the city of Bucharest. The bells inside the

²⁴ M. Haret, *Castelul Peleş*, Bucharest, Cartea Românească SA, 1924, p. 28, cit. in Luca, *L'Emigrazione Storica dei Friulani in Romania*, cit., p. 98

typical Italian campanile had been imported directly from Udine in Friuli.²⁵

Figure 4: The Italian Church Santissimo Redentore



Source: I. Roșu, Pictures from the old Bucharest - "Poze din Vechiul Bucuresti", http://www.qsl.net/va3iul/Files/Bucharest/Bucharest_old/Old_Bucharest.htm, retrieved on August 4th 2014.

Architect Mario Stoppa designed the church together with another Italian architect, Giuseppe Tiraboschi. They inspired themselves from the architecture of the church Santa Maria delle Grazie in Milan. To the construction contributed also the company of the engineers Gambaro and Vignali. Officially the church is until today the property of the Italian state, as it was constructed with donations from the Italian Royal Family, the Italian Government and the Italian community of Bucharest.²⁶

Italian companies played a crucial role also in the construction of the urgently needed infrastructure in the young Romanian state. By the year 1897 those works were done throughout Romania by Italian companies and of course with a great number of Italian workers. An important company was Fratelli Camiz, which worked predominantly in Brăila, Galați and Palanca, where also their registered office was. Their activities comprised water purification, the construction of factories, streets and sideways, as well as railway construction works. Their total number of Italian employees was 700. Another company was Fratelli Giachetti with 300 Italian workers. They worked on the

²⁵ Luca, *L'Emigrazione Storica dei Friulani in Romania*, cit., pp. 92-102

²⁶ Scagno (a cura di), *Veneti in Romania*, cit., p. 72

construction of a railway bridge between Galați and Brăila. The list continues with Locatelli & Bouvier, which participated in the construction of the railway track between Comănești and Palanca, employing also 300 Italians. There was also G. Trolli & C. Scolari with 215 Italian employees. Their business was concentrated on the construction of factories in Slănic Moldova (county of Bacău) and Iași. Further, they made excavations and works of forging and joinery. Italian companies with more than 100 Italian employed workers were also Curti e Mattioli (railway construction Galați-Bârlad, 160 Italian workers), Società veneta per imprese e costruzioni pubbliche with registered office in Bucharest (works of forging and assembly of iron bridges in Cernavodă, Stănișoara, Bacău, Târgu Ocna, Moinești and Pucioasa – 130 Italian workers) and Ferruccio Ferrero (public works, works of forging, and mining in Brăila, Galați, Greci, Hârsova – 118 workers). Other smaller companies were Vincenzo Lapenna (streets in Galați), Rizzardo & Durando (railway construction and pneumatic foundations in Comănești), Carotta (military barracks construction in Tecuci and fortifications in Roman), and Fantoli Villa & C. (military barracks construction in Roman). In total there were 4,154 Italian workers in the consular district of Galați (administrative district of Brăila, Moldavia and Dobruja) in 1897.²⁷

Other successful industrialists were the brothers Federico and Gaetano Franzini from Brescia. They were the owners of a steam-driven sawmill which employed 150 workers, of which one third were Italians themselves. There was also Giovanni Passalacqua, originating from Genoa, who founded and owned the first barge-shipyard on the territory of Romania. And there were many more businessmen and representatives of Italian companies based in Romania.²⁸

27 MAE, *Bollettino del Ministero degli Affari Esteri*, XXXIV (1898), No. 3, pp. 200, 201, cit. in Scagno (a cura di), *Veneti in Romania*, cit., pp. 31-33

28 G. Tesi, "Immigrazione Italiana nel Distretto di Galatz", *Bollettino del Ministero degli Affari Esteri*, XXXIII (1897), No.3, p. 631, cit. in Dinu, "Appunti per la storia dell'emigrazione italiana in Romania, 1879-1914", cit., p.437

I.2.4 Italians who marked and influenced Romania

There were also Italians active in other sectors of the Romanian society at the end of the 19th century. It is compulsory to mention the name of Luigi Cazzavillan, who is honoured by the city of Bucharest with a street that bears his name. Cazzavillan was born in 1852 in Arzignano, near Vicenza. He participated with Garibaldi at the defence of Dijon in 1870/1871. Later he fought as a volunteer in the Italian Legion and ended his tumultuous life by supporting the Serbs in their struggle for independence from the Turks.²⁹ In 1877 he asked to be enrolled in the Romanian Army with the aim to fight among the Romanians in the Romanian-Russo-Turkish War (1877-78) for independence. His request was denied as

Figure 5: Luigi Cazzavillan (wheelchair)



Romanian laws forbid the enrolment of foreigners in the Romanian Army. He participated nevertheless at the Siege of Plevna as a correspondent for Italian newspapers. After the end of the war, he decided to remain in Romania and to marry a Romanian woman. He became active in railway constructions but later he was hired by two important high-schools in Bucharest as teacher for the Italian language. In 1881 he founded the bilingual newspaper "Fraternitatea italo-romana, ziar politic-literar septemanal" (Italian-Romanian Fraternity, political-literary weekly newspaper). One year later the name of the newspaper was changed to "Frăția română-italiană" (Romanian-Italian Brotherhood) with the subtitle "ziar politic-literar bilunar" (political-literary bimonthly newspaper). Between 1884 and 1885 he published also the daily newspaper "Necesarul" (The Necessary), which reached very fast a print run of 5,000 copies, while other established Romanian papers reached 3,000 copies during that time. In 1884 he founded and printed "Universul" (The Universe), a newspaper that became for the next 70 years the most important independent daily in Romania. The newspaper used an accessible

Source: Fabiana 2000, Delcampe, http://www.delcampe.net/page/item/id_184322631.var.TH-RADIVON-SI-LUIGI-CAZZAVILLAN-RRR.lang_uage.E.html, retrieved on September 5th 2014.

²⁹ Luca, *L'Emigrazione Storica dei Friulani in Romania*, cit., p. 126

language and introduced many innovations to the Romanian media of that time. Innovations such as foreign coverage through correspondents, many illustrations and the commercial advertising, which permitted to sell the newspaper for a lower price than its competitors. "Universul" allocated a big part of its advertising space to Italian companies in order to help them getting known by the Romanian consumers and to facilitate a faster acces to the market. Thanks to his donations the construction of the building of the Italian School "Regina Margherita" in Bucharest became possible. The school functioned until 1948 when it was closed by the communist authorities.³⁰ His gift to Arzignano, his place of birth in Veneto, was the construction of a hospital. In Bucharest he also initiated the construction of the wooden Romanian Velodrome, which was inaugurated in 1896, seven years before his early death.³¹ For his contribution to society Luigi Cazzavillan was awarded two high distinctions by the Romanian State: "Răsplata Muncii" (Work Reward) and "Coroana României" (Crown of Romania).³²

The Romanian academic system was influenced from the very beginning by foreign intellectuals. Italians played also in this very important domain a remarkable role. Gian Luigi Frollo has to be remembered in this category of people. He was born in Venice on June 8th 1832 and studied at the Accademia di Belle Arte between 1847 and 1849. Between 1849 and 1854 he went to the University of Padua in order to study mathematical sciences and later on law. In 1856 he graduated and worked for a time at the Venetian provincial tribunal but left already in the same year for Romania, where he was going to spend the rest of his life. Until 1867 he lived in Brăila where he was teaching Latin, Italian and natural sciences at the "Regele Carol I" High-school.³³ In parallel he started his writing career. Frollo published a number of books about the Italian language as well as an Italian-Romanian dictionary. Later, from 1869 until 1878, he became a teacher at the "Matei Basarab" High-school in Bucharest. His academic career began at the University of Bucharest in 1878, where he became a member of the faculty of history of neo-romance languages, an institution he strongly militated for to be established in earlier years. His students described him as a very enthusiastic professor, who tried to induce them his optimism and enthusiasm about the young Romanian nation and its future.³⁴

30 Scagno (a cura di), *Veneti in Romania*, cit., pp. 69, 70

31 Luca, *L'Emigrazione Storica dei Friulani in Romania*, cit., p. 126

32 G. Tarabega, "Vă invităm să citiți...Un italian la București: Luigi Cazzavillan", *Siamo di nuovo insieme*, VI (2012), No. 34-35, p. 24

33 C. H. Niculescu, "Gian Luigi Frollo (1832-1899)", *Studii Italiene*, IV (1957), p. 1, cit. in A. Dorojan, "Un venețian la Universitatea București: Gian Luigi Frollo", *Siamo di nuovo insieme*, II (2008), No. 9, pp. 12, 13

34 I. Bogdan, "G. L. Frollo (notă biografică)", *Convorbiri literare*, I (1900), p. 80, cit. in *Ibidem*.

Frollo enjoyed the trust of the Romanian Ministry of Cults and Public Constructions when he received the official mission to conduct a research on the history of Romanians in the documents of the Venetian archives in 1883.³⁵ With his death, which occurred in 1899, the University of Bucharest lost one of its best professors and academic pioneers.³⁶

Italians introduced to Romania also their culinary tradition. Maybe the most appreciated salami by Romanians, the “Salam de Sibiu”, began its success story in 1910 in Sinaia, when Filippo Dozzi, back then a stonecutter working in Romania since 1885, realized that the weather conditions in the Romanian Carpathians are favourable for the production of dry salami. He decided to establish the “Intreprinderea Individuală Filippo Dozzi” and to use his famous recipe of salami for the mass production. The salami received its name from the customs of Sibiu in Transylvania. Transylvania was back then part of Hungary and Dozzi exported his salami via Sibiu.³⁷ “Salam de Sibiu” became thanks to its high quality and excellent taste a luxury product and its production was expended throughout the years, reaching 100 tonnes by the year 1938. Filippo Dozzi died in 1943 but his heritage survived. He left the company in good hands. His two sons Antonio and Giuseppe ensured the production until the company was nationalized by the Communist Regime at the end of the 1940s. By the time of nationalisation the production reached 120 tonnes per year and the company employed between 40 and 50 employees. “Salam de Sibiu” is going to be recognized as a traditional Romanian product by the European Union and it will be granted geographical origin protection. After receiving this status, “Salam de Sibiu” won't be able to be produced outside Romania, and the Romanian producers will be obliged to respect strictly the original recipe.³⁸ The “Salam de Sibiu” is a great economic and culinary heritage that the Italian immigrant Filippo Dozzi gave to his country of adoption Romania.

35 D. Doboş, “Profesorul Gian Luigi Frollo (1832-1899)”, *Pro Memoria*, IV (2005), pp. 183, 184, cit. in *Ibidem*.

36 I. Bogdan, “G. L. Frollo (notă biografică)”, *Convorbiri literare*, I (1900), p. 79, cit. in *Ibidem*.

37 Salsi, Istoria Salamului de Sibiu, <http://www.sibiusalami.com/en/istoric>, retrieved on August 3rd 2014.

38 S. Tapalagă, Evenimentul Zilei, Salamul de Sibiu, opera unui italian, devine brand românesc, <http://www.evz.ro/salamul-de-sibiu-opera-unui-italian-devine-brand-romanesc.html>, last actualization on May 8th 2014, retrieved on August 3rd 2014.

I.2.5 Statistics and official documents on the extent of the stable Italian population residing in the Kingdom of Romania

Credible statistical data about the number of the Italian stable resident population in Romania is available for the year 1902 and was compiled by the Italian Mission in Romania with the help of the Romanian authorities. According to their data the total number of Italian stable citizens living in Romania was 3943, of which 2873 were males and 1070 females.³⁹ Divided by counties the census delivered the following numbers:

Table 1: Italian residents in Romania in 1902

County	Men	Women	Total	County	Men	Women	Total
Argeşin	51	24	75	Prahova	218	48	266
Bacău	176	41	217	Putna	51	18	69
Botoşani	58	29	87	Râmnicul Sărat	38	2	40
Brăila	44	9	53	Roman	5	1	6
Buzău	74	-	74	Romanaţi	24	9	33
Constanţa	284	124	408	Suceava	14	-	14
Covurlui	13	-	13	Tecuci	23	8	31
Dâmboviţa	83	12	95	Teleorman	20	7	27
Dolj	23	17	40	Tulcea	381	285	666
Dorohoi	6	2	8	Tutova	19	7	26
Fălciu	8	-	8	Vaslui	16	-	16
Gorj	64	26	90	Vâlcea	258	25	283
Ialomiţa	18	6	24	Vlasca	7	-	7
Iaşi	55	44	99	Bucharest (city)	347	164	511
Ilfov	15	9	24	Iaşi (city)	78	33	111
Mehedinţi	61	14	75	Galaţi (city)	124	43	167
Muscel	35	1	36	Craiova (city)	68	39	107
Neamţ	91	11	102				
Olt	23	12	35	Total	2873	1070	3943

Data source: E. Beccaria Incisa, C. Baroli, "La Romania e la immigrazione italiana", in MAE – Commissariato dell' Emigrazione, *Emigrazione e Colonie*, I (Europa), Rome, Tipografia dell'Unione Cooperativa Editrice, 1905, p. 190, cit. in Dinu, "Appunti per la storia dell'emigrazione italiana in Romania, 1879-1914", cit., p.435

³⁹ E. Beccaria Incisa, C. Baroli, "La Romania e la immigrazione italiana", in MAE – Commissariato dell' Emigrazione, *Emigrazione e Colonie*, I (Europa), Rome, Tipografia dell'Unione Cooperativa Editrice, 1905, p. 190, cit. in Dinu, "Appunti per la storia dell'emigrazione italiana in Romania, 1879-1914", cit., p. 435

The number of the Italian residents have to be highlighted especially in two counties, which taken together gave approximately one quarter of the total Italian population in the Old Kingdom of Romania. Those two counties are Tulcea with 666 and Constanța with 408 Italian citizens. Tulcea surpassed even the capital Bucharest itself, which accounted for 511 people. Other counties with a significant number of Italian residents (over 200 individuals) are Vâlcea (283), Prahova (266), and Bacău (217). Tulcea and Constanța are forming together the historical province of Dobruja in the eastern part of Romania at the Black Sea. Those numbers reflect the already mentioned preference of Italian settlers for this region of Romania. Important Italian settlements in the Dobruja, apart from its historical capital-city Constanța, were the villages Cataloi (near to Sulina, Tulcea county), Iacob Deal, Greci, and Turcoaia.

Matteucci, Consular Agent of Italy at Sulina reported about the Italian population in Cataloi in the year 1904. According to him there were 480 Italian stable residents (84 families).⁴⁰ Until 1912 their number had rose to 653 people (111 families), of which basically all of them were working in agriculture, as shown in the inquiry of Di Palma, inspector of the Italian Emigration Agency (ispettore del Commissariato Italiano per l'Emigrazione).⁴¹

Count Fabio Sanminiatielli, president of the “Dante Alighieri Society“ in the year 1915, received a letter from Antonio Mantica, priest at the Italian church in Bucharest, who made a visit to some of the villages in Dobruja. He wrote that he found three very numerous Italian colonies in Iacob Deal, Greci and Turcoaia. The Italian inhabitants were workers at the nearby granite mines and settled in these places together with their families. According to Mantica's recount there were approximately 400 Italians in Iacob Deal (belonging to 45 families, while 80 were singles). In Greci he counted 300 Italians forming 40 families, while there were 80 Italians in Turcoaia (which he wrongly calls Macin). Furthermore, he spoke to the Italian locals and concluded that they don't understand Italian but only Venetian or Friulan: “Notai che non comprendono la lingua italiana che scarsamente e dovetti parlare il loro dialetto veneto e friulano (io sono veneto).”⁴² Another evidence for the overwhelmingly high percentage of Friulans among

40 Arhiva Ministeriului Afacerilor Externe, *fondo Problema 11*, vol. 68, “Il Ministro d'Italia a Bucarest, Beccaria Incisa al Ministro degli Affari Esteri della Romania, Brătianu” June 12th/ 25th 1904, cit. in Dinu, “Appunti per la storia dell'emigrazione italiana in Romania, 1879-1914”, cit., p. 445

41 Arhiva Națională Istorică Centrală din București, *Direcția Poliției și Siguranței Generale*, b. 120, p. 21, 1911, cit. in Dinu, “Appunti per la storia dell'emigrazione italiana in Romania, 1879-1914”, cit., p. 445

42 Archivio della Società “Dante Alighieri” Roma, *Romania*, busta unica, Antonio Mantica al Presidente della Società “Dante Alighieri”, Fabio Sanminiatielli, Bucharest, September 15th 1915, cit. in Dinu, “Appunti per la storia dell'emigrazione italiana in Romania, 1879-1914”, cit., pp. 438, 439

the Italian migration to Romania. Furthermore, it is noteworthy to mention that the village Greci in Tulcea county is today the last remaining compact settlement of Italians in Romania. The descendants of the former Italian settlers were recognized as Italian citizens by the Italian State in 1994 and many people of the younger generations decided to re-emigrate to the country of their ancestors. The elderly, however, remained on the land which they call home since 130 years.⁴³ In the year 2010 160 inhabitants out of approximately 5,800 villagers were of Italian origin.⁴⁴ They form nearly 70 mixed Italian-Romanian families, which still keep the Italian traditions alive.⁴⁵

The development of the Italian stable population in the capital Bucharest was rather fluctuating throughout the years. By the year 1897 there were approximately 800 Italian residents.⁴⁶ The number decreased to 511 in the year 1902, and increased again until 10 years later to a number of 200 Italian families⁴⁷ (exact number of individuals is not available). Although we cannot really speak of an Italian quarter or “Little Italy“, as this areas of Italian immigrant agglomeration where used to be called in America, we may observe that the majority of the Italian community in Bucharest lived along the Calea Griviței (what close resemblance to the word “calle“ meaning “narrow street“ in the Venetian language) and also a bit further away in the newly established quarter Bucureștii Noi. Even the existence of an Italian restaurant called “L'Osteria dai Furlans“, near the Calea Griviței, has been documented.⁴⁸ The stable Italian community started to organize itself in associations throughout Romania in the late 19th century. In Bucharest, for example, the society for mutual assistance “Società Generale di Mutuo Soccorso fra gli Italiani in Romania“ was functioning already by 1875.⁴⁹

The inquiry of the aforementioned inspector Di Palma showed that by 1912 the total stable population of Italians in Romania was of approximately 8000 individuals.⁵⁰ Those numbers reflected the extent of the Italian stable migration to Romania two years before the official beginning of World War I.

43 Dinu, “Appunti per la storia dell'emigrazione italiana in Romania, 1879-1914”, cit., p.440

44 V. Partan, “La Greci s-a sărbătorit hramul bisericii ”Sfânta Lucia””, *Romulus și Remus*, December 21st 2010, p. 5

45 C. Boro Onțeluș, ”Harta istorică a Comunității italiene din Greci, Tulcea”, *Siamo di nuovo insieme*, IV (2010), No. 22-23, p. 29

46 G. Tesi, “Immigrazione Italiana nel Distretto di Galatz”, cit., p. 631, cit. in Dinu, “Appunti per la storia dell'emigrazione italiana in Romania, 1879-1914”, cit., p.436

47 MAE, *Bollettino dell' Emigrazione*, XI (1912), No.11, p. 1207, cit. in *Ibidem*.

48 Luca, *L'Emigrazione Storica dei Friulani in Romania*, cit., p. 126

49 Dinu, “Appunti per la storia dell'emigrazione italiana in Romania, 1879-1914”, cit., p. 434

50 MAE, *Bollettino dell'Emigrazione*, XI (1912), No.11, p. 1207, cit. in *Ivi*, p. 436

By 1915 World War I reached also the Italians in Romania. Although Romania entered the war in 1916, its Italian citizens were requested to follow the order of mobilisation and to join the Italian Army. In spring 1915 a considerable number of Italian men had to leave their adoptive country Romania and to return to Italy in order to fight along their co-nationals. Among those were 600 from Bucharest, approximately 100 from Iași, 48 from Galați, 45 from Cataloi, 40 from Greci, 50 from Iacob Deal and so on.⁵¹ Many of those approximately 1000 Italian men left Romania forever.

I.3. Italians in Romania during the Interwar period and World War II

I.3.1 Statistics and official documents on the extent of the stable Italian population residing in Interwar Greater Romania

The exact number of the Italian population during the Interwar period is difficult to determine. On the one hand there are officially conducted censuses of population. Data is provided by the statistics of the Italian Emigration Agency for the year 1924. According to them there were 13,246 Italian citizens in Romania.⁵² A census of Italians abroad was conducted also by the General Commissariat for Emigration by the middle of 1927 and presented a number of 12,246 Italian citizens being stable residents in the Kingdom of Romania. The Italian authorities reported 8,000 Italian citizens as living in the consular district of Bucharest, which comprised the Romanian historical regions of Wallachia, Oltenia, Transylvania and Banat. Other 3,586 were reported from the consular districts of Galați and Constanța, comprising the historical regions of Moldavia, Dobruja, Bessarabia and Bucovina. The consular district of Brăila (Brăila county and the communes of Măcin, Greci, Iacob Deal and Turcoaia) reported 660 Italians.⁵³ The Romanian authorities on the other hand calculated a total number of 9,649 Italian citizens after the census of 1930 (see Table 2).⁵⁴ The Italian church reported even a total number of ca. 30,000 Italians living in

51 ANIC, *DPSG*, b. 120, pp. 215-217, 219, 232, 1911, cit. in *Ivi*, p. 446

52 MAE, *Bollettino dell'Emigrazione*, XX (1921), No. 4, p. 316, cit. in A. Dorojan, "L'evoluzione dell'emigrazione italiana nelle province storiche romene tra le due guerre mondiali", in *EPHEMERIS DACOROMANA*, vol. XIII, Bucharest, Editura Academiei Române, 2011, p. 213

53 MAE, *Censimento degli italiani all'estero alla metà dell'anno 1927*, Ministero degli Affari Esteri, Rome, Provveditorato Generale dello Stato, 1928, pp. 178-185, cit. in Scagno (a cura di), *Veneti in Romania*, cit., p. 58

54 S. Manuilă, *Recensământul general al populației României din 29 decembrie 1930*, vol. IX, *Structura populației României. Tabele selecționate din rezultatele recensământului general al populației din 1930*, Bucharest, Editura Institutului Central de Statistică, 1940, pp. 472-480 cit. in Dorojan, "L'evoluzione

Romania for the year 1922.⁵⁵ According to the official website of the Italian Church, only the Italian parish in Bucharest consisted of 1,200 families, comprising a total number of 7,000 believers in the year 1928.⁵⁶ These big discrepancies can be explained through the reluctance of people regarding the census, the incapacity of the authorities to take all Italians into consideration, as some of them were migrating inside Romania searching for jobs, or the presence of temporary migrants on the Romanian territory. The church was eventually also considering as Italians some Romanian citizens that had entered the Italian community through marriages.⁵⁷ The Italian church probably did not distinguish also between Italian citizens and naturalised Italians, which had become Romanian citizens in the meantime.

Table 2: Italian stable residents in “Greater” Romania in 1930

Historical Province	Urban	Rural	Total Population
Muntenia	4288	477	4765
Moldavia	1388	268	1656
Dobruja	569	959	1528
Oltenia	542	330	872
Transylvania	118	480	598
Banat	65	33	98
Crişana-Maramureş	48	14	62
Bessarabia	35	3	38
Bucovina	20	12	32
Total	7073	2576	9649

Data source: Manuilă, *Recensământul general al populaţiei României din 29 decembrie 1930*, cit., pp. 472-480, cit. in Dorojan, “L'evoluzione dell'emigrazione italiana nelle province storiche romene tra le due guerre mondiali”, cit., pp. 213, 244

Table 2 shows the total number of the Italian stable population in Greater Romania. The term Greater Romania was used in order to describe the Romanian State that emerged victorious from World War I. Greater Romania doubled its area and increased its population by the factor 2.5 by uniting almost all Romanians into one state but also many ethnic minorities, such as Hungarians, Germans or Jews. By comparing the data provided by Table 1, which shows the number of Italian citizens in the Old Kingdom of Romania in

dell'emigrazione italiana nelle province storiche romene tra le due guerre mondiali”, cit., p. 213

55 Archivio Segreto Vaticano, *Archivio Nunziatura Romania*, b. 9, fasc. 28, f. 120-121, letter of A. Mantica to G. De Lai, February 16th 1922, cit. in *Ibidem*.

56 Chiesa Italiana Bucarest, Storia della Chiesa Italiana SS. Redentore, <http://www.chiesaitalianabucharest.org/mantica.htm>, retrieved on August 20th 2014.

57 Dorojan, “L'evoluzione dell'emigrazione italiana nelle province storiche romene tra le due guerre mondiali”, cit., p. 214

1902, and the numbers of Table 2 for Greater Romania in 1930, we can see that the total number of Italian stable residents in Romania increased also by the factor 2.5. This increase cannot be explained by the unification of the Old Kingdom of Romania with the new regions Transylvania, Banat, Bessarabia and Bucovina. The total number of Italian citizens living in this regions in 1930 was 766 and approximately 12.5% of the total Italian population of Greater Romania. The increase has to be explained through the migration that took place between the two censuses predominantly to the Old Kingdom of Romania, which means to the historical regions of Wallachia, Moldavia and Dobruja. These three regions had the highest number of Italian citizens according to the census of the year 1930. Wallachia had a total number of 5,637 (Muntenia and Oltenia) which accounts roughly for 59% of the total number of stable Italian residents in Romania. There were 1,656 Italians in Moldavia, around 17% of the total, and 1,528 Italians in Dobruja, approximately 16% of the total. According to these calculations the Old Kingdom of Romania, the Romania before World War I, accounted for 92% of all Italians living on the territory of Greater Romania. The Italian population living in Muntenia (eastern Wallachia comprising the capital Bucharest) divided by counties is presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Italian stable residents in Muntenia in 1930

County	Urban	Rural	Total Population
Argeş	77	29	106
Brăila	321	15	336
Buzău	63	32	95
Dâmboviţa	80	50	130
Ialomiţa	14	1	15
Ilfov (Bucharest)	2919 (2918)	18	2937
Muscel	67	65	132
Olt	25	6	31
Prahova (Ploieşti, Sinaia)	660 (408, 155)	237	897
Râmnicu-Sărat	6	11	17
Teleorman	5	8	13
Vlaşca	51	5	56
Total	4288	477	4765

Data source: Manuilă, *Recensământul general al populaţiei României din 29 decembrie 1930*, cit., pp. 472, 474, 476, cit. in Dorojan, "L'evoluzione dell'emigrazione italiana nelle province storiche romene tra le due guerre mondiali", cit., p. 216

Table 3 shows very clearly that the majority of Italians in Muntenia were living in Bucharest. There were 2,918 Italian citizens in Bucharest, which is 61% of the total Italian population in Muntenia and 30% of the total number of Italians living on the territory of Romania in the year 1930. Other important counties in Muntenia were Prahova, with a total number of 897 (19% of Italians in Muntenia), and Brăila, with 336 (7% of Italians in Muntenia). The county of Prahova comprises its capital city Ploiești (408 Italians) and the aforementioned mountain resort Sinaia (155 Italians). Comparatively smaller Italian communities lived in Muscel (132), Dâmbovița (130), Argeș (106) and Buzău (95).

The situation in the western part of Wallachia, the historical province of Oltenia is shown in the following Table 4.

Table 4: Italian stable residents in Oltenia in 1930

County	Urban	Rural	Total Population
Dolj (Craiova)	363 (353)	118	481
Gorj	18	10	28
Mehedinți	50	15	65
Romanați	29	16	45
Vâlcea	82	171	253
Total	542	330	872

Data source: Manuilă, *Recensământul general al populației României din 29 decembrie 1930*, cit., pp. 472-477, cit. in Dorojan, "L'evoluzione dell'emigrazione italiana nelle province storiche romene tra le due guerre mondiali", cit., pp. 238-239

The Italian community in Oltenia was rather small compared to Muntenia. But considerable numbers could have been found in the county of Dolj (481 Italians) and Vâlcea (252 Italians). 41% of the Italians living in Oltenia were residing in its historical capital Craiova (353 Italians). Italians lived also in the villages outside of Craiova. It is worth mentioning the existence of the village called "Italieni" (meaning Italians in Romanian), located 19 km far from Craiova, which had an Italian community comprising in total 14 families by the year 1933.⁵⁸

Statistical data about the historical province of Moldavia and its Italian stable population is presented in Table 5.

⁵⁸ ASV, *Archivio Nunziatura Romania*, b. 25, fasc. 100, f. 67, [1931] cit. in Dorojan, "L'evoluzione dell'emigrazione italiana nelle province storiche romene tra le due guerre mondiali", cit., p. 240

Table 5: Italian stable residents in Moldavia in 1930

County	Urban	Rural	Total Population
Bacău	89	98	187
Baia	16	-	16
Botoșani	8	7	15
Covurlui (Galați)	603 (603)	1	604
Dorohoi	6	8	14
Fălciu	17	-	17
Iași (Iași)	441 (441)	66	507
Neamț	64	42	106
Putna	68	20	88
Roman	15	3	18
Tecuci	4	3	7
Tutova	32	1	33
Vaslui	25	19	44
Total	1388	268	1656

Data source: Manuilă, *Recensământul general al populației României din 29 decembrie 1930*, cit., pp. 472-477, cit. in Dorojan, "L'evoluzione dell'emigrazione italiana nelle province storiche romene tra le due guerre mondiali", cit., p. 229

In Moldavia the counties with a substantial number of Italian stable residents were Covurlui with 604 and Iași with 507 persons. Almost all Italians in Covurlui county were residing in its capital Galați, an important port town on the Danube, which was home to 603 Italian citizens.

Galați received a special attention also from the Italian authorities. Italian interests were represented already since 1833 by the consulate of the Kingdom of Sardinia. Later in 1841 the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies inaugurated its consulate. According to the Italian consulate there were 1500 Italian seasonal workers in 1883 and circa 5000 in 1884.⁵⁹ The 603 Italian citizens counted in 1930 have to be considered the descendants of this early seasonal workers, which some of them decided to remain in Galați.

Italians in Galați enjoyed also a very rich cultural life, which took place in the "Casa d'Italia. This cultural centre consisted of the "Beneficienza" (charity), Chamber of Commerce, recreation rooms where the members of the society could play games and the library "Dante Alighieri". Furthermore, the community possessed a Catholic church and a basic primary Catholic school until the fourth grade.⁶⁰

59 I. Gheorghiu, "Comunità italiana di Galazi", *Siamo di nuovo insieme*, I (2008), No. 10, p. 20

60 *Ivi*, p. 21

The unofficial capital of Moldavia, the city of Iași accounted for the total number of 441, which was basically the entire urban Italian population in Iași county.

The third historical region with a considerable number of Italians living on its territory in the year 1940 was Dobruja. Its data on the Italian population is shown in the following.

Table 6: Italian stable residents in Dobruja in 1930

County	Urban	Rural	Total Population
Caliacra	5	-	5
Constanța (Constanța, Cernavodă)	392 (234, 133)	6	398
Durostor	-	-	-
Tulcea (Sulina)	172 (114)	953	1125
Total	569	959	1528

Data source: Manuilă, *Recensământul general al populației României din 29 decembrie 1930*, cit., pp. 472-477, cit. in Dorojan, "L'evoluzione dell'emigrazione italiana nelle province storiche romene tra le due guerre mondiali", cit., p. 231

Remarkable is the high number of Italians and their urban-rural distribution in the county of Tulcea. From the 1,125 Italian citizens in Tulcea, 953 lived in the countryside. Those were the people living in the aforementioned villages of Cataloi, Iacob Deal, Greci, and Turcoaia (see chapter II.2.5 Statistics and official documents on the extent of the stable Italian population residing in the Kingdom of Romania). Sulina, port town on the Danube, had an Italian population of 114 individuals. Those were the descendants of the specialists, who arrived from Italy after the establishment of the European Commission of the Danube after the Crimean War in 1856.⁶¹ Constanța county's Italians were located predominantly in the urban area. The biggest communities were to be found in the city of Constanța with 234 and Cernavodă with 133 Italian citizens. Caliacra county (forming together with Durostor county the South-Dobruja, which was ceded to Bulgaria with the treaty of Craiova in 1940) had the negligible number of 5 Italian citizens residing on its administrative territory.

Table 7 presents the distribution of the Italian citizens in the counties of the western historical regions Transylvania, Banat, and Crișana-Maramureș, which became part of Romania after World War I.

⁶¹ G. Tarabega, "Sulina, orașul unei glorii apuse", *Siamo di nuovo insieme*, IV (2010), No. 22-23, p. 31-33

Table 7: Italian stable residents in Transylvania, Banat and Crişana-Maramureş in 1930

County	Urban	Rural	Total Population
Alba	8	1	9
Braşov	19	32	51
Cluj	19	2	21
Hunedoara	38	270	308
Mureş	2	10	12
Năsăud	3	11	14
Sălaj	4	-	4
Sibiu	4	93	97
Someş	1	-	1
Târnava-Mică	1	1	2
Târnava-Mare	2	-	2
Trei Scaune	3	30	33
Turda	14	5	19
Transylvania	118	480 (455)*	598 (573)*
Caraş	3	9	12
Severin	14	17	31
Timiş-Torontal (Timişoara)	48 (48)	7	55
Banat	65	33	98
Arad	41	3	44
Bihor	7	8	15
Maramureş	-	3	3
Crişana-Maramureş	48	14	62
Total	231	527 (502)	758 (733)

Data source: Manuilă, *Recensământul general al populaţiei României din 29 decembrie 1930*, cit., pp. 472-480, cit. in Dorojan, "L'evoluzione dell'emigrazione italiana nelle province storiche romene tra le due guerre mondiali", cit., pp. 229, 230, 243, 244

The total number of Italians in the western part of Romania was rather small compared to Wallachia, Moldova and Dobruja. Only the county of Hunedoara with its 308 Italian citizens stuck out. The major part of this group (270 people) was located in the countryside. Sibiu had also 93 Italian residents in the countryside. All other counties had an insignificant number of Italian population. Neither the city of Timişoara, the unofficial

* The given total numbers in the source do not correspond with the summed numbers for each county. The numbers in the brackets are my own calculations.

capital of Banat, had a significant community with its only 48 Individuals. This small community was not foretelling the developments in terms of industrial investments that made Timișoara and Banat the Promised Land of the Italian industry from the beginning of the 1990s until nowadays.

The Italian residents in the remaining two historical provinces Bessarabia and Bucovina, the new north-eastern territories of Greater Romania, are presented in the following Table 8. Their number was very small and therefore of insignificant importance. Bessarabia, the present independent Republic of Moldova (without Ismail county which was attached to Ukraine), had a total number of Italians of only 38. In Bucovina were counted even less, namely 32.

Table 8: Italian stable residents in Bessarabia and Bucovina in 1930

County	Urban	Rural	Total Population
Bălți	1	3	4
Ismail	9	-	9
Lăpușna	24	-	24
Soroca	1	-	1
Bessarabia	35	3	38
Câmpulung	6	4	10
Cernăuți	10	1	11
Rădăuți	4	-	4
Storojineț	-	7	7
Bucovina	20	12	32
Total	55	15	70

Data source: Manuilă, *Recensământul general al populației României din 29 decembrie 1930*, cit., pp. 472-477, cit. in Dorojan, "L'evoluzione dell'emigrazione italiana nelle province storiche romene tra le due guerre mondiali", cit., p. 229, 230

I.3.2 Italian Architects and the Construction of Greater Romania

After World War I many more Italians that immigrated to Romania were intellectuals and graduates from prestigious Italian universities. They were engineers, architects, specialists in economics, professors and so on. Among the most important immigrants from this period was for example Cesare Scoccimarro. He was born in 1897 in Tarcento and graduated as architect from the Academy of Venice in the year 1921. After his graduation he lived in Romania until 1924 when he decided to return to Italy and to continue his career in Udine and later from 1931 onwards in Milan. Another very important architect can be considered Ottorino Aloiso, born in Turin in 1902. He was an architect, engineer, indoor decorator and professor in Turin. Moreover he became Italian champion in long jump. He had the privilege to design and to construct the former Palace of the Romanian Senate, nowadays the headquarters of the Ministry of Interior in Bucharest.⁶² During communism the same building served as headquarters for the Central Committee of the Romanian Communist Party.

Figure 6: Ministry of Interior in Bucharest



Source: own private collection

⁶² Luca, *L'Emigrazione Storica dei Friulani in Romania*, cit., pp. 137, 138

When we talk about constructions in Romania in the Interwar period, we have to mention the name of Geniale Fabbro, constructor and entrepreneur originating from San Giorgio della Richinvelda in Friuli. He migrated to Romania together with his brother Romeo while he was still a teenager and by 1910 he succeeded to found his own construction company. At the beginning, his company participated in the reconstruction of buildings that had been damaged during the Balkan Wars. After World War I the same activities, the reconstruction of public and private buildings, allowed his business to grow and to be in great demand among the constructors of the capital. He received important projects as he was renowned for the high quality of his work. By 1920 his company conducted reparations on important buildings of the Finance Ministry and was commissioned also to work on the building of the parliament. While working for the Finance Ministry he got to know the Romanian architect Stătie Ciortan with whom he started to collaborate very strongly in his later works. Stătie Ciortan was a strong advocate of the Neo-Romanian (or Neo-Brâncovenesc) style, an architectural mix that was rooted in the traditional architecture of the Romanian countryside, the old religious Byzantine architecture and had even influences from the late Italian Renaissance. It became the official national architecture style on the turn of the 20th century. Geniale Fabbro and his company became deeply involved in the construction of buildings, which were characterized by this architectural style. From 1924 until 1932 he participated at the construction of the Ministry of Finance and Customs in Bucharest. He also constructed a residential complex specially dedicated to the employees of the Ministry of Finance and many more private real estates for the Romanian upper-class residing in Bucharest. He was able to make a great fortune from his construction business in Romania. In 1952 he was forced by the communist regime to return to Italy. By leaving Romania he abandoned his many properties, which became confiscated by the communist state.⁶³

63 P. Tomasella, "Un protagonista dello stile Neoromânesc: Geniale Fabbro, maestro costruttore friulano", in C. Luca (a cura di), G. Masi, A. Piccardi, *L'Italia e l'Europa Centro-Orientale attraverso i secoli. Miscellanea di studi di storia politico-diplomatica, economica e dei rapporti culturali*, Brăila-Venice, Museum of Brăila-Editura Istros, 2004, pp. 429-434, cit. in P. Tomasella, "Architetti e costruttori in Romania dalle province Venete (1878-1948)", in Scagno (a cura di), *Veneti in Romania*, cit., pp. 97-102

I.3.3 Italian Culture and Social Life under the sign of Fascism

The fascist regime of Benito Mussolini tried to exert influence also on the Italian communities outside the borders of the Italian State. By 1923 the organization "Fascio italiano in Romania – Assistenza sociale" obtained a room in the parochial house next to the Italian church on the Brătianu Boulevard in Bucharest. Father Antonio Mantica, priest of the Italian Church Santissimo Redentore, was forced to accept the new situation, as the church and the parochial house received substantial subventions from the Italian state. The logotype of the fascist organization was attached on the face of the building and was easily observable from the boulevard by pedestrians. On April 29th 1923, the welfare centre of the Italian National Fascist Party was inaugurated in Bucharest. The fascist flag was placed near to the Italian church and the Italian school.⁶⁴ Fascist propaganda and the influence of the Italian State in the Italian communities living abroad was conducted, amongst others, through social funds that were granted to the local fascist organisations, which distributed these funds further among the local poor Italian population. The organisation "Fasci Italiani all'Estero" (Italian Fascists Abroad), for example, granted the poor Italian residents in Bucharest a total sum of 2,000 Lei in December 1933, with the intention to help them through the harsh Romanian winter.⁶⁵

The Italian State interfered also in the school education by enforcing and shaping the curricula according to the regulations of the "Direzione Generale delle Scuole Italiane all'estero" (Directorate-General of Italian schools located abroad), proving thereby its totalitarian and nationalistic character.⁶⁶ By 1935 in Craiova (historical region Oltenia) existed even an Italian school that "had the honour" to bear the name of the Duce himself. The school was called "Scuola Italiana Benito Mussolini".⁶⁷

A counterbalance to the growing fascist influence on the Italian community was the Catholic Church. The newly appointed parish priest Antonio Mantica founded the Italian Choral Society "Giuseppe Verdi" right after his arrival to the Italian Church Santissimo Redentore in 1938. To Mantica's duties and responsibilities accounted also the assistance

64 R. Netzhammer, *Episcop în România într-o epocă a conflictelor naționale și religioase*, vol. II, Bucharest, Editura Academiei Române, 2005, pp. 1206,1207, cit. in Dorojan, "L'evoluzione dell'emigrazione italiana nelle province storiche romene tra le due guerre mondiali", cit., p. 221

65 ASV, *Archivio Nunziatura Romania*, b. 44, fasc. 230, f. 34, [1934] cit. in Dorojan, "L'evoluzione dell'emigrazione italiana nelle province storiche romene tra le due guerre mondiali", cit., p. 220

66 Dorojan, "L'evoluzione dell'emigrazione italiana nelle province storiche romene tra le due guerre mondiali", cit., p. 223

67 *Ivi*, p. 241

of the old, sick and needy of the Italian community.⁶⁸

The Italian culture was brought also to the Romanian population through specific organizations. The Dante Alighieri Society, established in 1901 in Bucharest⁶⁹, ceased its activities in Romania due to World War I and it was only by 1933 when the Italian Cultural Institute was inaugurated in Bucharest and started promoting strongly the Italian culture in Romania. In the following years many more branch offices of the Italian Cultural Institute had been opened throughout the country in all important cities. The cultural relations between Italy and Romania developed until the start of World War II. The fascist political project of Mussolini's regime encouraged the spreading of the Italian language, culture and books throughout the world.⁷⁰

Particularly in the case of Romania the goal was to thwart the very strong French influence on the Romanian society. Especially the whole Romanian political class considered France as the only true friend of Romania on the international stage. The traditionally excellent relationship with Italy, based on similarities in culture and language, but especially on the common Roman heritage and the status of allies during World War I, seemed to become colder if not even frozen. The leadership of the strong National Liberal Party became even hostile to Mussolini's international policy. The main motive was of course the tight political relationship between Italy and Hungary.⁷¹ Hungary was a traditional enemy of Romania, which was constantly questioning the borders of the Romanian state after World War I and the union of Transylvania, Banat, Crișana and Maramureș with the Kingdom of Romania.

By the end of the 1930s Romania reoriented its foreign policy towards Italy, as it became clear that neither its traditional ally France nor England would have been able to protect its territorial integrity nor to guarantee its political freedom in the upcoming world conflict. Italy received the role of a counterbalance to the very strong German influence both in politics and economy. Bucharest was insisting to achieve a tighter relationship with Rome, but these efforts remained mostly unanswered by Mussolini, as he preferred to continue his special political and economic relationship with Horthy's Hungary.⁷²

68 D. Doboș, T. Sinigalia, *Biserica italiană "Preasfântul Mântuitor" din București*, cit., pp. 83-90, cit. in Scagno (a cura di), *Veneti in Romania*, cit., pp. 72, 73

69 S. Santoro, *L'Italia e l'Europa orientale: Diplomazia culturale e propaganda, 1918-1943*, Milan, Franco Angeli, 2005, p. 110

70 A. Basciani, "La penetrazione culturale italiana nei Balcani nel periodo interbellico. Il caso dell'Istituto di Cultura di Bucarest", *Annuario dell'Istituto Romeno di Cultura e Ricerca Umanistica (Venezia)*, V(2003), pp. 474-483, cit. in Scagno (a cura di), *Veneti in Romania*, cit., p. 72

71 G. Caroli, *Rapporti Militari fra Italia e Romania dal 1918 al 1945*, Rome, Stato Maggiore dell'Esercito – Ufficio Storico, 2000, p. 199

72 Ivi, p. 197

As the war came closer, the cultural relations between the future allies Italy and Romania became nevertheless stronger. The Italian language made its entrance into the Romanian military educative system by the beginning of 1938, thanks to the cooperation of the Italian Cultural institute, represented by its director Professor Bruno Manzone, with the Italian military attaché Lieutenant Colonel Guglielmo Della Porta.⁷³ The classes were optional at first, but became already in February of the same year compulsory for students attending the military high-schools. Italian was taught twice a week exactly as the German language. It was agreed that the Italian State was going to remunerate the language teachers in the first 4 years of the programme.⁷⁴ Another project was initiated by Della Porta, and an Italian language course was established especially for the officers of the Romanian Army. By 1939 he received the approval from the Ministry of Defence and the courses took off with a number of approximately 3,000 enrolled Romanian officers and officials.⁷⁵

The Italian Military also decided to establish four “propaganda centers” (nuclei di propaganda) in the Romanian capital Bucharest, as well as in the strategically important cities Galați, Timișoara, and Constanța. Through these the Italian Military aimed to enhance the patriotism of Italians residing in Romania, but also to influence the local public opinion. They were supposed to publish specific articles in newspapers, to organize conferences and other manifestations, such as the commemoration of the March on Rome, in order to contribute to the spread of Fascism.⁷⁶

The military attaché Lieutenant Colonel Guglielmo Della Porta was not only interested in propaganda issues. Furthermore, he seemed concerned about more urgent problems of the Italian community in Romania, such as unemployment and the subsequent poverty especially among young people. The Romanian Parliament passed a law limiting the percentage of foreign employees to a maximum of 20% in the companies activating in Romania. This law applied even for companies which were founded with foreign capital.⁷⁷ In practice only few Italians were affected by the aforementioned law.

73 Archivio dell' Ufficio Storico dello Stato Maggiore dell'Esercito, *Fondo H-3*, b. 24, fasc. 14 - “Addetto militare rumeno a Roma (Ten. Col. Petrescu)”, Tenente Colonnello Della Porta al Ministero della Guerra, No. 4947, December 22nd 1937, cit. in Caroli, *Rapporti Militari fra Italia e Romania dal 1918 al 1945*, cit., p. 140

74 *Ibidem*, telesspresso 1506/685, Incaricato d'Affari a.i. della Legazione d'Italia in Romania, Capece, al Ministero della Guerra, April 27th 1939, cit. in Caroli, *Rapporti Militari fra Italia e Romania dal 1918 al 1945*, cit., p. 141

75 Caroli, *Rapporti Militari fra Italia e Romania dal 1918 al 1945*, cit., p. 141

76 *Ivi*, pp. 170, 171

77 AUSSME, *Fondo H-3*, b. 3, fasc. 10 - “Miscellanea, agosto 1936-febbraio 1937, Baistrocchi, Sottosegretario di Stato – Ministero della Guerra, al Ministero degli Affari Esteri, No. 28764, April 26th 1936, cit. in Caroli, *Rapporti Militari fra Italia e Romania dal 1918 al 1945*, cit., 2000, p. 172

But those who got fired from the Romanian companies received substantial help from the Italian Legation.⁷⁸

Before World War II around 3% of the Romanian industry was controlled by Italian companies. Italian investments were found throughout branches such as electrical industry, textile industry, transportation, and forestry. As in other countries of South-east Europe, modest Italian investments were also found in banking and insurance.⁷⁹ The most important Italian corporations, or with substantial Italian capital, active in Romania during that period, were “Prahova”, “AGIP”, “Danubiana”, “Xenia”, “Mitrov”, and the “Uzina Electrică Braşov”, whose 50% of capital belonged to the Volpi Group. Prahova was a company specialised in the transport of petrol and was closely cooperating with AGIP. Danubiana was an important sugar producing company. Banca Commerciale Italo-Romena was the most prominent representative of Italian investments in the Romanian banking sector of the Interwar period.⁸⁰ The Banca Commerciale Italo-Romena was established right after World War I, in 1920. It was the first Italian credit institution in Romania and its target customers were the members of the Italian community. Within a couple of years it opened branch offices in Brăila, Constanţa, Chişinău and Galaţi.⁸¹

It is worth mentioning that the director of Banca Commerciale Italo-Romena, Ettore Brunelli, invested in sports and founded the football club Juventus Bucharest in 1924. Juventus Bucharest was created through a fusion between the two older clubs “ROMCOMIT” (an abbreviation of the bank’s name), also founded by Brunelli and financed by the aforementioned bank, and “Triumf”. The new club continued to use the ROMCOMIT-Arena, for those times a modern 15,000-seats stadium in the heart of Bucharest.⁸² Juventus Bucharest was one of the best Romanian teams during the Interwar-period and succeeded to win the Romanian Championship in the season 1929/1930.⁸³ During its activity between the two world wars several Italians or Romanians of Italian origin played for Juventus. Among them were Ricardo De Vittor, Traian Figaro, Gheorghe Smanioto, Giacomo Moretti, who was also part of the management, and others such as Melchior, Miggoti, Locatelli, Bruno and Ferrero.⁸⁴ The club existed under different

78 *Ibidem*, telespresso 865546, Ministero degli Affari Esteri al Ministero della Guerra, August 6th 1936, cit. in Caroli, *Rapporti Militari fra Italia e Romania dal 1918 al 1945*, cit., p. 172

79 M. Ristic, “Allies and adversaires: Neue Ordnung and ordine nuovo 1940/41”, in A. Basciani (a cura di), A. Macchia, V. Sommella, *Il patto Ribbentrop-Molotov, l'Italia e l'Europa (1939-1941)*, Rome, ARACNE editrice, 2013, p. 292

80 Caroli, *Rapporti Militari fra Italia e Romania dal 1918 al 1945*, cit., p. 282

81 Santoro, *L'Italia e l'Europa orientale*, cit., p. 111

82 V. Partan, “Juventus Bucureşti: Contribuţia italiană la fotbalul românesc”, *Siamo di nuovo insieme*, III (2009), No. 11, p. 26

83 *Ivi*, p. 27

84 R. Toma, “Fotbalişti români de origine italiană”, *Siamo di nuovo insieme*, II (2008), No. 10, p. 24

names until 1952, when the communist authorities decided to move the team to Ploiești and to transform it into the club "Petrolul Ploiești".⁸⁵

I.4. Conclusions Chapter I

It can be generally stated that a relevant temporary Italian immigration to the present territory of Romania was initiated by the middle of the 19th century. This first wave was conducted by the Austrian authorities through internal transfers of population from the Habsburg province of Friuli to Transylvania and Banat, in the eastern part of the empire. Those migrant workers were especially active in mining and forestry. Some remained in these regions and became subjects of Romania after World War I. An even more important migration in terms of numbers followed from 1860 until the beginning of World War I in the old Kingdom of Romania. This migration wave was initiated and supported by the first king of Romania, Charles I of Hohenzollern-Sigmaringen, who had a primordial interest in modernizing his back then backward agricultural state. Italian migrants were involved in the construction of buildings, railways and general infrastructure. Big Italian communities were living especially in Bucharest, Wallachia, Moldavia and Dobruja, where they were active in mining and later on settled in a number of villages and became farmers. After World War II the migration rate increased, while this time many more intellectuals, such as architects, engineers etc., searched their fortune in Greater Romania, a country which was strongly developing economically. The social and economic environment in Romania offered great professional opportunities for Italian specialists. Catholic churches, such as the Italian church Santissimo Redentore in Bucharest, and Italian schools were constructed for the growing Italian community all over the country. Noteworthy Italians living in Romania were Luigi Cazzavillan, owner of important daily newspapers, the constructor Pietro Axerio, the architect Mario Stoppa, the salami-producer Filippo Dozzi, the director of the Banca Commerciale Italo-Romena and founder of Juventus Bucharest, Ettore Brunelli, and the priest Antonio Mantica. The Italian community contributed substantially to the construction of Romania as a modern European state.

85 V. Partan, "Juventus București: Contribuția italiană la fotbalul românesc", *Siamo di nuovo insieme*, III (2009), No. 11, p. 28

II. Italian-Romanian Relations during the Communist Period

II.1. The Sovietization of Romania and the Exodus of the Italians

With the royal coup of August 23rd 1944, and the arrest of Marshal Ion Antonescu, Romania changed sides in World War II and declared war to Germany. A time of Soviet occupation began, which culminated with the installation of the communist regime. Already by the middle of September 1944, Bova Scoppa, the Italian minister plenipotentiary to Bucharest, initiated talks with Lavricev, the plenipotentiary of the Soviet Union to Romania. Scoppa requested guarantees for the security of the ca. 10,000 Italian residents and the Italian commercial and industrial companies active in Romania. He tried to defend the interests of Italy but realised very soon that Lavricev was very little or not interested at all.⁸⁶ The Italian patrimony in Romania had a total value of approximately 3 billion Lira (~30 million US-Dollars) in the year 1944.⁸⁷ By the end of 1949 the amount was approximated with 100 million US-Dollars following the Italian authorities, while the Soviets approximated it with a maximum of 6,2 million US-Dollars.⁸⁸ The increased number compared to 1944 is explainable by the inflation of the US-Dollar in the after-war period.

In the meantime, the Soviet Union took over the control of the Romanian economy through the foundation of mixed Soviet-Romanian commercial societies, the so called Sovroms. Those companies were active in the most important sectors, such as in oil production the company Sovrompetrol. The Soviet Union provided specialists and the resulted production was shared “brotherly” 50% to 50% between the two countries.⁸⁹

Moreover the hunt of former collaborators of the fascist regime began very soon. Bova Scoppa pleaded for a differentiated approach by the new authorities and not a general accusation of all Italians in Romania. According to him the guilty individuals had already been arrested by the Romanian and Soviet authorities. The majority of the members of the Fascist Party consisted of people that were constrained through menace and extortion to become members, rather than by their free will. In order to fasten the clarification of this issue, the Italian embassy provided a documentation about a certain number of individuals and their real responsibilities and activities on the territory of

86 Archivio Storico del Ministero Italiano degli Affari Esteri, *Affari politici*, Romania 1945, busta n. 20, fasc. 4, tss. 1035/54, September 16th 1944, cit. in G. Caroli, *La Romania nella politica estera italiana, 1919-1965: luci e ombre di un'amicizia storica*, Rome, Nagard, 2006, p. 347

87 Caroli, *La Romania nella politica estera italiana*, cit., p. 352

88 ASMAE, *Affari politici*, Romania 1949, busta 9, fasc. 1, t. 150, Scammacca to Sforza, 9th November 1949, cit. in *Ivi*, p. 394

89 *Ivi*, pp. 355, 361

Romania during the fascist regime of Benito Mussolini.⁹⁰ According to this document, approximately 20% of the Italian population in Romania adhered to Mussolini's Republic of Salò.⁹¹

On the other hand the new Soviet power aimed to reduce the influence of the Italian authorities on the Italian resident community as much as possible. With their help a new leftist organization called "l'Unione dei patrioti italiani" (the Union of the Italian patriots) was established in Romania. The aim of the Soviets was to substitute little by little the official Italian representatives in the country.⁹² This early approach of total control was unsuccessful in the end, as only a little part of the Italian community accepted the new organization, which was mostly composed by temporary Italian residents, such as commercial agents and soldiers waiting for their repatriation.⁹³

The understanding of the seriousness of the new situation by the Italian community in Romania came early after the Soviet invasion of the country, even before the end of World War II. By January 6th 1945, the Romanian Government was ordered by the Soviet occupiers to arrest Romanian citizens of the German minority (Transylvanian Saxons and Banat Swabians), which were able to work, with the aim to send them to the working camps of the Soviet Union. Men aged between 17 and 45 years as well as women aged between 18 and 30 years were arrested, and transported to the Soviet Union in goods wagons under dramatic conditions. Although this deportation was not part of the armistice agreement between Romania and the Soviet Union, Stalin decided to punish the whole German minority for Hitler's crimes. In total more than 70,000 Romanian citizens of German ethnicity had been deported.⁹⁴ The Italians in Romania realized that the national minorities had an uncertain future in this country and the first departures were initiated. By December 31st 1947 there were still 7052 Italian citizens in Romania, and their number was continually decreasing.⁹⁵

A couple of thousand Italian citizens were expelled from Romania in a first wave by the year 1948, following the nationalisation of Italian companies. Those people were workers and entrepreneurs, whose presence in Romania became undesirable as they were not allowed to continue any economic activity. They were transported by several

90 *Ivi*, pp. 348, 361

91 *Ivi*, p. 362

92 ASMAE, *Romania 1944-1945*, appunto riservato del console Rainaldi, No. 991, April 7th 1945, cit. in Caroli, *La Romania nella politica estera italiana*, cit., p. 357

93 Caroli, *La Romania nella politica estera italiana*, cit., p. 357

94 I. Bulei, *Breve storia die romeni*, Alessandria, Edizioni dell'Orso, 1999, p. 161

95 A. Vigevani, *Friulani fuori di casa in Croazia e in Slavonia*, Udine, Tip. Del Bianco & Figlio, 1950, p. 77, cit. in Scagno (a cura di), *Veneti in Romania*, cit., p. 80

trains until Italy where they were summoned in a camp in Udine.⁹⁶

Starting with 1949, the situation in Romania became worse, as the repressions against the representatives of the old ruling class and opposition parties intensified strongly. Mass arrests followed and a virulent propagandistic newspaper campaign initiated. The civil society became controlled through the means of the Securitate, established in 1948 after the model of Soviet security agencies and under the close guidance of Soviet specialists. A systematic offensive was conducted against the autonomy of the institutions of Christian churches, but particularly those that had strong international connections. On July 17th 1948 the Romanian State unilaterally denounced the concordat from 1927 between Romania and the Holy Seat. With the decree of August 3rd all confessional schools became nationalised and their goods confiscated. The decree of August 4th put the religious cults under the direct control of the State. Furthermore, any direct contact between the national hierarchical organisations and foreign entities became strictly forbidden.⁹⁷ Especially the last provision hit the heart of the Catholic Church in Romania. It aimed to undermine any tie to the Pope in Rome.

Priests of any confession or nationality opposing the “reforms” were arrested by the Securitate. Among them the priest of the Italian Church in Bucharest, the aforementioned Antonio Mantica. He was arrested on December 27th 1949 and kept for five days in the basements of the Ministry of Interior. There he was pressured and finally expelled from Romania. Official protest from the Apostolic Nunciature and the Italian Legation had no effect whatsoever. Mantica was forced to leave Romania definitively on February 7th 1950.⁹⁸ His successor became Father Clemente Gatti, a Franciscan, which came very soon himself into conflict with the new communist

Figure 7: Clemente Gatti



Source: Chiesa Italiana Bucarest, Testimonianza di p. Clemente Gatti - Assistente degli emigranti italiani, <http://www.chiesaitalianabucharest.org/gatti.htm>, retrieved on August 20th 2014.

power. January 30th 1951 he avoided to be expelled only thanks to the intervention of the Italian Legation. Nevertheless the Italian authorities tried to convince him to leave the country, in order to avoid the risk of being arrested and becoming involved in a political process. Father Gatti refused to leave Romania and explained that it was his duty to look after the believers of the Italian parish who counted strongly on him. But on March 8th 1951

96 Caroli, *La Romania nella politica estera italiana*, cit., p. 390

97 S. Grossu, *Le calvaire de la Roumanie chrétienne*, Paris, Éditions France-Empire, 1987, pp. 26-28, cit. in Scagno (a cura di), *Veneti in Romania*, cit., p. 81

98 Scagno (a cura di), *Veneti in Romania*, cit., p. 82

agents of the Securitate broke into the parochial house of the Italian Church and arrested Father Gatti. Nobody knew anything about his situation until September 11th 1951, the day of his process. He was charged with the accusation of being part of a group of spies, traitors and conspirators in the service of the Vatican and the Italian Secret Service (Centro Italiano di Spionaggio). The process was conducted according to the methods, procedures and propagandistic standards typical for the stalinist judicial system. Father Gatti received a jail sentence of 15 years, but was set free already in April 14th 1952 and transported by train until Vienna. He was sick to death and semi-paralysed because of the terrible mistreatment, which he experienced in detention. From Vienna he was further transported to Padua where he died in hospital on June 6th 1952. In 1997 his conviction was declared null by the Romanian Supreme Court and he was rehabilitated.⁹⁹ A late moral reparation for the sufferings that he had to endure in the stalinist jails of the Popular Republic of Romania.

The following transformation of Romania into a communist state made many Italians becoming very fast the symbol of capitalism and therefore the representatives of the "imperialistic" western forces. The new socialist society needed to be liberated from this "evil" influence as fast as possible. Many Italian businessmen, such as Giuseppe and Antonio Dozzi, the owners of the famous „Salam de Sibiu" factory in Sinaia, went to jail together with many other people of diverse nationalities. Their crimes varied from being rich, intellectual or believing in other political doctrines different from the communist one. By the year 1951, six years after the end of World War II, and 5 years after Romania forcibly became a People's Republic, began the exodus of 40,000 Italians (according to Luca) in convoys of 100 persons every 15 days. They were repatriated to Italy by force and were allowed to carry in their luggage personal objects of a maximum of 35kg. Gold was confiscated, if found among the personal objects. Their houses and apartments as well as their companies became nationalized by the communist Romanian state. Only Italians that had become Romanian citizens remained and experienced the catastrophic social experiment of utopian socialism.¹⁰⁰ They lived in terror and were forced to destroy those documents which could serve as evidence for their Italian origin. Most of the people chose to adopt Romanian names in order not to be longer recognized as Italians.¹⁰¹

99 D. Doboş, T. Sinigalia, *Biserica italiană "Preasfântul Mântuitor" din Bucureşti*, Bucharest, Editura Arhiepiscopiei Romano-Catolice, 2006, pp. 108-115, cit. Scagno (a cura di), *Veneti in Romania*, cit., pp. 83-85

100 Luca, *L'Emigrazione Storica dei Friulani in Romania*, cit., p. 141

101 V. Partan, "De la emigrare la integrare", o expoziție de fotografii-document", *Romulus și Remus*, October 26th 2010, p. 2

In the capital Bucharest remained less than 1,000 Italians from formerly almost 7,000 members of the Italian parish. Those who had the financial possibilities migrated back to Italy. Only the old, the sick, and the poor, who did not have the means to leave Romania, remained.¹⁰² Any connection to Italy, Italian culture or language became oppressed for the next 50 years.¹⁰³ The Italian legation was nevertheless trying to help the remaining Italian community with money, food packets and even medicine. But it was very difficult to tell exactly how many Italians were still living in Romania. As it was very complicated to maintain the contact with this parts of the community that were dispersed throughout the whole country. Many of those people avoided contacts with the Italian legacy on purpose, as they were afraid of repercussions by the communist authorities.¹⁰⁴

II.2. Economic Cooperation and Transfer of Technology

A political and economic re-start of the relationship between Romania and Italy occurred by 1955. The newly appointed Italian plenipotentiary Francesco Lo Faro presented its credentials to Petru Groza, the president of the “Marea Adunare Națională” (Great National Assembly), the pseudo parliament of the Peoples Republic of Romania. On this occasion Groza talked to the Italian representative about the cultural ties that bind the Romanian and Italian peoples as well as the friendly attitude of the Romanian government towards the Italian government. Groza insisted on his sympathies towards Italy by recounting personal and familiar memories and by emphasizing the common Latin origins of both peoples.¹⁰⁵ Lo Faro was moreover received by Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej, prime minister of the Peoples Republic and most important communist leader in the country. This was an important gesture, considering the fact that Gheorghiu-Dej had not received any foreign representatives during the prior three years. Gheorghiu-Dej approached the problem of bilateral relations very firmly by claiming that both parties committed mistakes in the past years and that the cold atmosphere may come to an end very soon, providing that the mistakes made by the Italian side were corrected. The Communist ruler criticized the Italian press and radio of being at the service of Romanian political refugees in Italy, who were leading a denigration campaign against the

102Chiesa Italiana Bucarest, Testimonianza di p. Clemente Gatti-Assistente degli emigranti italiani, <http://www.chiesaitalianabucharest.org/gatti.htm>, retrieved on August 20th 2014.

103C. Boro Onțeluș , “Harta istorică a Comunității italiene din Greci, Tulcea”, *Siamo di nuovo insieme*, IV (2010), nr. 22-23, p. 30

104Caroli, *La Romania nella politica estera italiana*, cit., p. 424

105ASMAE, *Romania 1955*, busta 1283, tss. 644/356, Lo Faro to Martino, May 28th 1955, cit. in Caroli, *La Romania nella politica estera italiana*, cit., pp. 419, 420

communist regime of the Peoples Republic. Any mistakes made by the Romanian side remained however unspecified. Gheorghiu-Dej underlined the fact that the Romanian-Italian commercial and cultural exchanges would experience a great development after the elimination of the aforementioned issues. He spoke of a possible Romanian-Italian friendship in the future, while emphasizing also himself the common Latin origins and the strong bonds of the past. Gheorghiu-Dej explained furthermore that Romania was very interested in an increase of deliveries of industrial products from Italy.¹⁰⁶ The Romanian industry was heavily relying on industrial machinery produced abroad, and was hoping to find the needed know-how in Italy. In order to acquire the necessary knowledge several specialists were sent to visit factories for the production of cellulose in Italy. A number of operational plants were planned to be constructed in order to exploit the cane, which existed abundantly in the Danube Delta.¹⁰⁷ Apparently, the Peoples Republic of Romania wanted to have stronger economic relations to the West. In a first phase, Italy seemed to have enjoyed a privileged position, considering the fact that also the USA, Great Britain and France started to show interest for economic exchanges with Romania. Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej praised the ingeniousness and the working capacity of Italians who were able, according to him, to create superior products than the Americans in some industrial sectors.¹⁰⁸

Apart from the cellulose production plants, the Romanian authorities were interested in industrial machinery for the production of motor vehicles. This request needed further negotiations. Nevertheless, the economic exchange experienced a consistent positive development and by 1956 it reached the sum of 16 million US-Dollars (300 billion Lira).¹⁰⁹

In the following year, a delegation of technicians from Fiat accepted the invitation of the Romanian authorities to visit the plant of “Steagul Roșu” (Red Flag), one of the most important sites of the Romanian metal processing industry, in Stalin City (Brașov), Transylvania. During the period of one week the vice director of Fiat, the engineer Giacomo Sosso, visited several sections of the plant and conducted a couple of discussions also with representatives of the Romanian government. During this visit the Romanians exhibited a certain interest to acquire machines from Fiat, but let the Italian side clearly understand that also rival products might have been taken into consideration.¹¹⁰

106Caroli, *La Romania nella politica estera italiana*, cit., p. 420

107*Ivi*, p. 425

108*Ivi*, p. 426

109*Ivi*, pp. 427, 428

110*Ivi*, p. 445

In the following time the Romanians started to become very interested also in other sectors of the Italian industry. ENI, one of the protagonists of the Italian economic miracle, possessed the technology for an efficient extraction of petroleum gas. Romania was, and still is, very rich in this specific resource, and the authorities expected a more efficient processing by the utilization of Italian know-how and modern machinery. In order to realize the desired transfer of technology, the communist authorities suggested the sending of Italian technicians to Romania, with the mission to teach their Romanian counterparts, and the acceptance of Romanian technicians in Italy, with the purpose of studying the Italian industry directly on site. Further interest existed also in the field of chemical-pharmacy, where a cooperation with Farmitalia was desired by the Romanian side.¹¹¹

The Italian-Romanian economic relationship received a great impulse with the signing of a new commercial bilateral protocol on June 5th 1961.¹¹²

Some weeks before, on May 17th, a substantial contract with Fiat had been signed in Bucharest. Fiat agreed to deliver motors for boats of 4,500 tonnes weight. The total amount of the contract was approximately 12 million US-Dollars and its duration was fixed to five years.¹¹³

Also the long-expected visit by ENI's president Enrico Mattei was conducted between June 29th and July 4th 1961. Mattei visited several plants and had discussions with high officials, such as the minister of petrol and chemical industry Florescu, but also with Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej and Ioan Gheorghe Maurer, the newly appointed prime minister of Romania. Mattei showed interest for a stronger cooperation and closure of substantial agreements between ENI and several Romanian state companies. ENI acquired, as agreed in the commercial bilateral protocol of June 5th, 200 million tonnes of petrol from Romanian state companies. In exchange Romania received as payment from ENI the needed machinery as well as the planning and construction of several chemical plants on its territory.¹¹⁴

Another significant agreement was closed between the chemical company Montecatini and its Romanian counterpart on December 20th 1961. Montecatini signed a preliminary contract on the delivery of a plant for the production of ethylene oxide and glycol. The total amount of the contract was 4 billion Lira and the construction started in

111Ivi, pp. 445, 449

112ASMAE, tp, *Romania 1961*, No. 82, June 3rd 1961, cit. in Caroli, *La Romania nella politica estera italiana*, cit., p. 465

113Caroli, *La Romania nella politica estera italiana*, cit., p. 465

114Ivi, p. 466

the spring of the following year.¹¹⁵

Italian companies had the opportunity to present their products on the Italian industrial fair, which was held in Bucharest during the same year. 56 companies from Italy were participating in total. The exhibition provided a great range of products across the metallurgical and mechanical sectors, and was so successful that all parties agreed to repeat the fair also in the upcoming years.¹¹⁶

To this positive trend contributed also the upgrade of the diplomatic missions from legations to embassies. On March 26th 1964, Alberto Paveri Fontana presented his credentials as first Italian ambassador to the Romanian minister of foreign affairs.¹¹⁷

On June 16th Romania and Italy signed the treaty for technical and scientific cooperation. This was an important achievement, which was thoroughly traced by the Romanian government for several years.¹¹⁸

Romania's intention to rely especially on Italian technology for the acceleration of its industrial development was obvious. Further negotiations were initiated for the purchase of a 100 megawatt turbogas power station from Fiat for a total value of 7 million US-Dollars in the same year 1964.¹¹⁹

The coronation of the aforementioned developments was the renovation of the commercial agreements. On September 6th 1965 the Italian minister for foreign commerce, Bernardo Mattarella, signed during a solemn banquet in Bucharest the long term agreement and the treaty for economic, industrial and technical cooperation between Italy and Romania. The final atmosphere at the banquet was indeed cordial and the officials of both countries underlined once again the common historical and cultural heritage.¹²⁰

All this positive events launched a new era of Italian-Romanian economical cooperation, while the ideological differences became of secondary importance in the bilateral relationship. Italy and Romania constructed an important link between the capitalist West and the communist East. It was a truly pioneer work of the upcoming Realpolitik. Romania on the other hand emphasized also its new policy of economic and political independence from the Soviet Union.

115Ivi, p. 467

116ASMAE, ta, *Romania 1961*, No. 149, July 19th 1961, cit. in Caroli, *La Romania nella politica estera italiana*, cit., p. 466

117Caroli, *La Romania nella politica estera italiana*, cit., p. 472

118ASMAE, ta, *Romania 1964*, No. 248, June 16th 1964, cit. in Caroli, *La Romania nella politica estera italiana*, cit., p. 474

119ASMAE, ta, *Romania 1964*, No. 337, August 7th 1964, tp, *Romania 1964*, 247, August 10th 1964, cit. in Caroli, *La Romania nella politica estera italiana*, cit., p. 474

120ASMAE, ta, *Romania 1965*, No. 396, September 3rd 1965; No. 405, September 6th 1965, cit. in Caroli, *La Romania nella politica estera italiana*, cit., p. 474

II.3. Relations between the Romanian and the Italian Communist Parties

The Romanian communist authorities considered Italy to be a country divided into two parts during the 1950s. There was the “democratic” Italy, represented by the left, especially the Italian Communist Party (PCI), and the “antidemocratic” and capitalist Italy under the guardianship of the United States of America, represented by De Gasperi's government.¹²¹

Official diplomatic relations were accordingly very tense between the two states. Consequently, the communist authorities preferred to maintain strong relations with the Italian Communist Party. PCI and its leaders received space in the new Romanian communist press with the aim to propagate their political beliefs. On the 30th anniversary of the PCI on January 21st 1951, the communist official newspaper *Scînteia* (The Spark) dedicated the whole third page to the event. The article had a big illustration of Togliatti, defined as the most loved sun of the Italian nation. Moreover an article signed by Luigi Longo and an editorial about “the glorious fight” of the PCI were published.¹²² Further articles were published regularly in the Romanian newspapers by Italian communists, such as Mario Palermo, Vittorio Flecchia or Enrico Berlinguer, who were also several times on visits in Romania. In those articles they denigrated the achievements of the Italian government and denounced Italy's membership in the NATO. Even articles signed by Palmiro Togliatti or Giuseppe Di Vittorio were published. They pictured Italy as USA's slave and as a simple military base for the imperialistic West and its Cold War strategy.¹²³

Also with other Italian leftist organizations, such as the Italian General Confederation of Labour (CGIL), existed a flourishing cooperation. Visits to Romania were organized on a regular basis. Every year a group of CGIL-members spent their vacations in the recreation house of the main Romanian labour union at Sinaia in the Carpathian mountains.¹²⁴

In August 1962 a meeting between high members of the Romanian Workers Party (PMR) and the Italian Communist Party (PCI) was held in Bucharest. Among the participants were also Nicolae Ceaușescu, the future president of Romania, and Emanuele

121/*vi*, pp. 397, 398

122/*vi*, pp. 396, 397

123/*vi*, p. 400

124/*vi*, pp. 397, 398

Macaluso, who was leading the Italian communist delegation.¹²⁵ During the bilateral discussions Macaluso was eager to defend the PCI from accusations made by the international communist movement. PCI was criticized because of some contradictory declarations by Italian communists, which had been made after the 20th congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union concerning the public denunciation of Stalin's personality cult and its causes. Moreover, some of the Italian comrades showed their disagreement with the Soviet invasion of Hungary in 1956. Macaluso assured the Romanian comrades that there was no doubt on the devotedness of the PCI to the international communist movement.¹²⁶

The Italian communists realized very soon that there were significant differences between the Romanian and the Italian communist parties. The idea that there might be contradictory discussions inside the party was for the Romanian comrades an unimaginable situation, whereas in the PCI it was totally normal to express personal opinions freely. Moreover, the Romanian communists were using a sterile, artificial language, without any substance.¹²⁷

On the next meeting in Romania in September 1964, the Italian delegation consisted of the secretary of the central committee of PCI Mario Alicata, and Arturo Colombi, member of the leadership. The Romanian side was represented again by Nicolae Ceaușescu, as well as by Chivu Stoica, former prime minister and future president of the state council, and Leonte Răutu, head of the ideological department of PMR. The subject of the discussions was the PCI's ambition to follow an independent path to communism. Alicata was suggesting an Italian way to socialism, while at the same time he was emphasizing the unity in diversity of international communism. Ceaușescu agreed with the Italian point of view, and explained furthermore the importance of economic and political independence of Romania from the Soviet Union. Moreover he dared to criticize the Soviet Union for the Cuban missile crisis, as it was an international affair that could have initiated a global war. In that case also Romania would have been implicated automatically, because of its status as a member of the Warsaw Pact. He had the expectation to be consulted by the Soviets in important international matters, which might have directly affected Romania.¹²⁸ According to the Romanian communists, there could not exist a classification in superior and inferior communist parties in the international communist

125S. Santoro, "Il Partito comunista italiano e la Romania negli anni Sessanta e Settanta", *Studi storici*, XLVIII (2007), No. 4, p. 1122

126*Ivi*, p. 1123

127*Ivi*, p. 1124

128*Ivi*, pp. 1125, 1126

movement. They would not accept the guardianship of the Soviet Union.¹²⁹ It was a position on which both the PMR and the PCI seemed to agree upon.

Luigi Longo, secretary of PCI, met with the Romanian leader Nicolae Ceaușescu on the Black Sea in September 1967. They became involved in discussions about the war between Israel and its Arabic neighbours and agreed that the Soviet Union's decision to point out Israel as being the culpable aggressor was a mistake. Furthermore, a rupture of diplomatic ties occurred between several socialist states and Israel, on the Soviet Union's request. Romania promoted a policy of total neutrality towards the conflict and differentiated itself strongly from the socialist block aligned with the Soviet Union as it decided to maintain diplomatic relations with Israel. Ceaușescu asked rhetorically why the other socialist states didn't interrupt their relations with the USA, in the context of the war in Vietnam, as they did on the other hand with Israel. He accused, moreover, the Soviet Union of not doing enough in order to stop the war in Vietnam. This was an opinion closely coordinated with the policy of the Peoples Republic of China towards the Soviet Union.¹³⁰

Romania's antagonistic political position towards the Soviet Union on international issues became more articulated in the following year, 1968, when Ceaușescu permitted himself to criticize and firmly condemn the Soviet intervention in Czechoslovakia. During an organized mass demonstration in the Palace Square in Bucharest, Ceaușescu insisted that no socialist state had the right to interfere in the internal affairs of another socialist state. Moreover Romania refused to participate along its Warsaw Pact allies in the invasion of Czechoslovakia. Ceaușescu put Romania at risk with his speech against the Soviet Union. On the other hand he enjoyed a wave of sympathy by the majority of his people, as well as in western chancelleries. Back then the Romanian people sincerely believed that similar reforms as in Czechoslovakia and a real opening of the country towards the West may become a reality. The following two decades of Ceaușescu's rule were going to teach the world better.

With this unfriendly position towards the Soviet Union, Romania needed, as never before during its socialist history, strong international political allies. Among those were other communist countries such as Yugoslavia, the Peoples Republic of China or North Korea, themselves in rather cold relations to the Soviet Union. Moreover strong links were cultivated with communist parties from Western Europe, as seen in the case of PCI, but also other communist parties from Spain, France, and even Japan, which were

129A. Agosti, *Bandiere rosse: Un profilo storico dei comunismi europei*, Rome, Editori riuniti, 1999, pp. 247-248, cit. in Santoro, "Il Partito comunista italiano e la Romania negli anni Sessanta e Settanta", cit., p. 1126

130 Santoro, "Il Partito comunista italiano e la Romania negli anni Sessanta e Settanta", cit., p. 1133

independent from Moscow.¹³¹

Representatives of PCI and PCR* met in September 1968, one month after the invasion of Czechoslovakia, in order to discuss this important international issue. From the Italian side participated Giancarlo Pajetta and Paolo Bufalini. Pajetta emphasized the unison of the PCI and PCR in the Czechoslovakian matter and warned about the consequences that will occur for the international workers movement. Virgil Trofin, the Romanian representative, condemned on behalf of PCR the invasion of Czechoslovakia and underlined at the same time his party's solidarity with Alexander Dubcek and the Czechoslovakian Communist Party. Trofin expressed his fear that the Soviets may be planning to invade also Romania and reiterated that Romania doesn't want to be the province of any foreign force.¹³²

Although both PCI and PCR stood united against the Soviet aggression, they had different reasons to do so. PCI was supporting the reformed communism of Dubcek for ideological reasons, whereas PCR was interested only in the independence of the national communist parties from Moscow and not in a real reformation.¹³³

On March 16th 1972 the two parties signed a collaboration protocol in Milan, which concerned several different forms of exchange and cooperation. The two parties committed to have common initiatives, in political, economical and cultural fields. The target of the agreement was to enforce furthermore the traditional friendship between the two parties and the two states in general. PCR considered PCI to be a valuable link to the western world. Nevertheless the relations tended to lose their traditional tightness, as the PCI improved its relations also with the Communist Party of the Soviet Union during this time.¹³⁴

The Italian comrades began furthermore to understand the duplicity of Ceaușescu's policy. On one side he gave the impression of being a good communist with his open, non-aligned international policy, but on the other hand the domestic situation was a disaster. Ceaușescu began also to enforce his own personality cult on the society.

L'Unità, the leftist Italian daily newspaper and official organ of the PCI, took even the liberty to openly ridicule Ceaușescu's attempts to act as a mediator of international conflicts, such as between Israel and the Arabs, or the Soviet Union and the Peoples

131R. R. King, "Romania's Struggle for an Autonomous Foreign Policy", *The world today*, XXXV (1979), No. 8, p. 342

* PMR (Partidul Muncitoresc Român = Romanian Workers Party) changed its name in order to become PCR (Partidul Comunist Român = Romanian Communist Party) in 1965.

132Santoro, "Il Partito comunista italiano e la Romania negli anni Sessanta e Settanta", cit., pp. 1134, 1335
133*Ibidem*.

134*Ivi*, pp. 1336, 1137

Republic of China. Israel's foreign minister Abba Eban visited Bucharest in 1973, and conducted discussions with the Romanian authorities on the conflict in the Middle East. According to Silvano Goruppi, the correspondent of *l'Unità* in Bucharest, the discussions had no result whatsoever. But for the Romanian authorities it was rather important to give the impression that they have contributed in a way to the solution of the conflict.¹³⁵

During the year 1974 the relationship between PCI and PCR experienced a further decline. The Romanian comrades were very irritated about *l'Unità*'s news coverage concerning Romania. Even a close analysis of all editions of *l'Unità* from the previous two years was conducted. They felt also very offended by Berlinguer's refusal to revisit Romania although he had received several invitations personally by Ceaușescu, and they accused the Italian communists of duplicity by maintaining normal relations with both PCR and the Soviet communists.¹³⁶

Goruppi suggested to decline any invitation to Romania to Italian communists, such as Berlinguer or Tortorella, and to keep a certain distance from PCR. The Romanian communists should have not received the possibility to claim political advantages from a special relationship with PCI anymore.¹³⁷

However one PCI-member visited the Socialist* Republic of Romania in July 1974. Giorgio Napolitano, today president in office of the Italian Republic, was in charge of the PCI commission of culture during this period. Napolitano recognized that the Romanian regime was more and more isolated. He acknowledged that Ceaușescu's cult of personality was reinforced steadily through propaganda in television, radio and printed press, and that his rule degenerated into a family-dictatorship. Napolitano characterized the status of the Romanian communism as a serious problem concerning also the PCI. But from his point of view it was not advisable to take distance from PCR, as suggested by Goruppi. He proposed to address the issues during informal discussions with the Romanian comrades and to try to exercise a positive influence. Napolitano suggested moreover that *l'Unità* should offer more space for news about Romania and its international political activity in order to keep the Romanians pleased.¹³⁸

135/*vi*, p. 1143

136/*vi*, pp. 1144, 1145

137/*vi*, p. 1146

* Under Ceaușescu, since 1965 the official name of the country changed to Socialist Republic of Romania.
138/*vi*, pp. 1146, 1147

Figure 8: Nicolae Ceaușescu and Giorgio Napolitano in 1974



Source: S. Caroli, Nave Corsara, Le due splendide carriere di Giorgio Napolitano, <http://www.navecorsara.it/wp/2012/05/01/le-due-splendide-carriere-di-giorgio-napolitano/>, last actualization on May 1st 2012, retrieved on September 24th 2014.

Relations between PCR and PCI became definitively very cold in the second half of the 1970s. The main cause was the increasing awareness in the PCI that there was no liberty in Romania and that the human rights were not respected. PCI became a party that accepted pluralism as well as freedom in the society, and this values could not be shared by the communist states behind the Iron Curtain. Moreover the West as a whole started to understand Ceaușescu's brutal regime and to avoid him until his execution in 1989.¹³⁹

II.4. Romania's Economy and Standard of living in the 1970s and 1980s

From the point of view of the national economy, Romania registered a substantial growth in the 1970s. Between 1971 and 1975 the gross national product increased yearly on average by 11.3%. The industrial gross production recorded even an increase of 13.1%, while the investment activity went up by 10.8%. Romania reached the highest economic growth in Europe during that epoch. But it became clear by the second half of the 1970s that the Romanian economy reached its limits. Through the forced industrialisation, the authorities neglected the consumer goods industry and ultimately the prosperity and well-being of the population. Furthermore, manpower from the agricultural sector was shifted to the industry. At the same time the agricultural sector failed to replace the missing workforce with efficient modern machines of the production equipment. The standard of living of the Romanian people remained at the bottom compared with other communist societies in Eastern Europe.¹⁴⁰

But the real problems for the Romanian people were yet to come. Through a continuing trade deficit with the West, as well as an increasing public-sector loan, Romania accumulated a national net debt of 9.35 billion US-Dollars by the end of the year of 1980 (in 1979 it was still 6.95 billion US-Dollars).¹⁴¹ Approximately 5 billion US-Dollars of the total national net debt were owed to western commercial credit institutions, 1.3 billion US-Dollars to the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, and 3.2 billion US-Dollars to western governments and credit grantors from the Middle East. Compared to the year 1971, the national net debt had increased by more than 7.5 fold. According to Pissulla's calculations, Romania would have had a national net debt of 35 billion US-Dollars by 1985, assuming a continual increase of the trade deficit and an interest rate of 12% per year.¹⁴² Ceaușescu chose a different destiny for Romania and its people. No new credits should have been taken anymore from foreign lenders and the country was supposed to be self-sustaining in the energy and commodity sectors until the year 1990.¹⁴³

The 1980s were a dark decade for Romania. In order to pay back the country's international debts, Ceaușescu decided to export most of the food production and to rationalize the electricity and heat supply of the population. The standard of living of the

140P. Pissulla, "Rumänien", in H.H. Höhmann (a cura di), *Die Wirtschaft Osteuropas und der VR China zu Beginn der achtziger Jahre*, Stuttgart, Verlag W. Kohlhammer, 1983, p. 249

141UN, *Economic Bulletin for Europe*, vol. 33, 1981, cit. in *Ivi*, p. 273

142P. Pissulla, "Rumänien", cit., pp. 273, 274

143*Ivi*, pp. 279, 290

population declined severely.¹⁴⁴ People had to queue for hours in order to buy basic aliments, such as milk, eggs or meat of any kind. Even the television programme was reduced to 2-3 hours in the evening, featuring more than half of the time Ceaușescu and his revolting propaganda. Depending on their location in Romania, the people began to watch Bulgarian, Hungarian or Yugoslavian television channels. The only free source of information in Romanian language remained the broadcasts of Radio Free Europe. In order to squash all hopes of any possible movements of opposition to his rule, Ceaușescu intensified the total control of the Romanian people with the help of the Securitate, his feared secret police. Internationally Romania became more and more isolated by the West. Ceaușescu reoriented his foreign policy and economic cooperation to Africa, the Middle East and China.

Romania succeeded to pay its debts entirely by April 12th 1989. According to Ceaușescu, Romania paid from 1975 until 1989 a total of approximately 21 billion US-Dollars to its foreign creditors, and over 7 billion US-Dollars represented only the payment of interest. In Ceaușescu's view Romania became for the first time in its history an independent country, both in economic and political senses. He claimed: "Romania does not longer pay tribute to anybody!". On the other hand Romania became itself a creditor for Third World countries. By 1989 it had to receive 2.5 billion US-Dollars from its borrowers. Although the population payed a huge price for Romania's economic balance, Ceaușescu was convinced that the standard of living increased substantially during the 1980s. According to him all counties, towns and villages experienced a strong development. Every "fair-minded" person had to see the "great" changes, which had taken place in Romania, and which "increased the general level of civilization and living of the whole nation".¹⁴⁵ But the Romanians did not see or feel anything of this "great" achievements unfortunately. Life in the Socialist Republic of Romania was, compared even to other Eastern Block countries, extremely hard and full of shortages.

Taking into account the rising of Mikhail Gorbachev and his politics of Perestroika and Glasnost in the Soviet Union, as well as the anti-communist movements in the surrounding Warsaw Pact states, it was only a matter of time until also the Romanian people broke free. The communist nightmare of the Romanians ended with Ceaușescu's execution on December 25th 1989, following the only bloody revolution in Eastern Europe.

144S. Kast, J. Rosapepe, *Dracula is dead : How Romanians survived Communism, ended it, and emerged since 1989 as the new Italy*, Baltimore, MD, Bancroft Press, 2009, p. 22

145"Nicolae Ceaușescu: "România nu mai plătește tribut nimănui!"", *Jurnalul Național*, April 13th 2009, <http://jurnalul.ro/scinteia/special/nicolae-ceausescu-romania-nu-mai-plateste-tribut-nimanui-504398.html>, retrieved on September 26th 2014.

But the hard times for the Romanian people were not over in the aftermath. A very complicated and unstable transition from communism and state planning to capitalism characterized the following decade of the 1990s.

II.5. Conclusions Chapter II

After Romania was occupied by the Soviet Union and subsequently transformed into a communist state, the Italian population and companies experienced important losses. The total value of the Italian patrimony was approximated to 30 million US-Dollars in 1944 and to 100 million US-Dollars in 1949. It became subject to nationalization by the communist Romanian State and served as well as World War II reparations to the Soviet Union. Furthermore, the Italian authorities in Bucharest prevented the Italian population in Romania from a similar fate as the German minority, which was deported to the Soviet Union in order to help with the reconstruction of the country. Italians were nevertheless expelled from Romania or decided often by themselves to re-emigrate back to Italy in order to escape the new political system that was enforced by the Soviet Union. By the end of the forties the repressions against the former political, economic and religious elites became very strong. Priests, such as Clemente Gatti, and industrialists, such as Giuseppe and Antonio Dozzi, were incarcerated on charges of espionage and other made up accusations. In 1951 began an exodus, according to some sources, of up to 40,000 people of Italian origin. Their houses and business properties became nationalized. Those who chose to remain, gave up their Italian citizenship, took over Romanian names, and tried to hide their Italian origins as good as possible. It is impossible to make an accurate approximation of the total number of people with Italian origins who remained in Romania during communism.

After a couple of years of freezing relations, which originated from the human rights abuses of the communist authorities, the governments of Italy and Romania approached each other again. The Romanian communist authorities realized that a total orientation of economic relations to fellow communist countries was not at all efficient and decided to reorient exports to the capitalist West. Italy was the first western country that was addressed to. The economic exchange increased and reached a sum of 16 million US-Dollars by 1956. Moreover Romania needed modern industrial machinery which was procured amongst others by Fiat. Also exchanges of specialists were conducted in order to make the transfer of technology possible. The oil extraction sector, the chemical-pharmacy

and the cellulose production industry were other important fields in which Romanian companies received technological upgrades from Italian partners. Italian companies received furthermore the possibility to present their products in fairs, which were organized in Bucharest. The two governments signed even bilateral treaties for technological and scientific cooperation and commercial agreements by the middle of the 1960s. Data about the political relations between Italy and Romania are not available for the 1970s and 1980s because the archives are not open for the public yet. Romanian newspapers from that period are full of propaganda, lies and exaggerations, and are not suitable as reliable sources, according to Rudolf Dinu, director of the Romanian Institute of Culture and Humanistic Research "Nicolae Iorga" in Venice. Future works will have to analyse this critical time-period of the Italian-Romanian economic and political relations further.

Apart from the official interstate relations, the Romanian communist authorities maintained special relations with the Italian Communist Party (PCI). Although a certain consent was evident on matters such as the independence of the different national communist parties from the guidance of Moscow, the Italian communists understood very early that the system in Romania developed rather to a dynastic dictatorship than to a political democratic system in the benefit of the society. Accordingly critical and cynical was the news coverage of *l'Unità* about Romania, through its correspondent in Bucharest Goruppi.

The 1970s were characterized by strong economic growth and and improvement of the standard of living of the society, whereas in the 1980s the Romanian people had to pay the bill for Ceaușescu's forced industrialization, which was financed with huge loans from international lenders, such as western governments, IMF and World Bank. By spring 1989 Romania had paid back all its national debts, but the economic situation of the Romanian people remained in a precarious state. The catastrophic social experiment, called communism, ended in Romania with the revolution in December 1989 and the execution of Nicolae Ceaușescu and his wife Elena on Christmas Day 1989.

III. Italian Minority in contemporary Romania

III.1. Unity and political Representation

The remaining small Italian minority started to organize itself after the fall of communism in Romania. In 1990 a group of Friulians founded the “L'Associazione Culturale Rumeno-Friulana, which became in 2005 a member of the organization “Ente Friuli nel Mondo“, under the name “Associazione Culturale dei Friulani di Romania, Fogolâr Furlan“. ¹⁴⁶ Italian associations were established throughout the country.

Another important association was established in Suceava in 1993, by a group of descendants of Italian migrants in the historical region of Bucovina. Their aim was from the beginning to reunify the small Italian communities that are dispersed all over Romania. Consequently, the association was named RO.AS.IT, the Association of Italians from Romania. At the moment it has branch offices in eleven counties and has plans to expand further (see Map 3 in Appendix). RO.AS.IT is very active in the organization of cultural events, such as art expositions, symposiums, and concerts. Moreover, a traditional dancing chorus, called “Siamo di nuovo insieme”, has been established and is attended by young people of the community. The association has published several books about the Italian community in Romania as well as the bimonthly magazine “Siamo di nuovo insieme” and the monthly newspaper “Piazza Romana”, which was called “Romulus și Remus” in the beginning. The majority of its publications are bilingual, offering articles in both Italian and Romanian languages. Since 2004 RO.AS.IT is providing the Italian deputy to the Romanian Chamber of Deputies, the lower house of the Parliament of Romania. ¹⁴⁷

Figure 9: RO.AS.IT. (emblem)



Source: RO.AS.IT.

According to Romanian laws there are 18 recognized ethnic minorities in Romania. Those minorities have the privilege to be represented in the Chamber of Deputies where they organize themselves in the group of minorities. Mircea Grosaru, the former president of RO.AS.IT, was the representative of the officially recognized Italian minority from 2004 until 2014, the year of his suddenly occurred death. ¹⁴⁸

¹⁴⁶Luca, L'Emigrazione Storica dei Friulani in Romania, cit., pp. 141-142

¹⁴⁷M. Grosaru, “Asociația Italianilor din România – RO.AS.IT.”, *Siamo di nuovo insieme*, II (2008), No. 9, p. 29

¹⁴⁸Camera Deputaților, Mircea Grosaru: Sinteza activitatii parlamentare în legislatura 2012-prezent,

His most important achievement, as deputy and representative of the Italian minority, was to contribute essentially to the reintroduction of the Italian as a native language into the Romanian school system. Hence, more than 60 years after the communists closed all Italian schools in Romania, Italian was again introduced in a Romanian school. The Dante Alighieri High-School in Bucharest offers since the school year 2007/2008 the possibility to study an important part of the curricula in Italian on mother tongue level.¹⁴⁹ The beneficiaries of this courses are not only pupils who have Italian ancestors, but as well the children of the Italian expatriates in Bucharest. Also Romanians are of course accepted to the program, given that they possess a very good knowledge of Italian.¹⁵⁰

Figure 10: Deputy Mircea Grosaru



Source: Camera Deputaților, Grosaru, <http://www.cdep.ro/pls/parlam/structura.mp?idm=156&cam=2&leg=2012&pag=1&idl=1>, retrieved on September 21st 2014.

Figure 11: The Dante Alighieri High-School in Bucharest's Titan neighbourhood



Source: Liceul Dante Alighieri, uploads 2013 http://liceuldantealighieri.ro/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/df6e714ff7_liceul-dante-alighieri.jpg, retrieved on September 23rd 2014.

<http://www.cdep.ro/pls/parlam/structura.mp?idm=156&cam=2&leg=2012&pag=1&idl=1>, retrieved on September 21st 2014.

149M. Grosaru, "Editorial", *Siamo di nuovo insieme*, II (2008), No. 8, p. 4

150G. Tarabega, "Dante Alighieri" va avea clasa a IX-a de filologie în limba maternă", *Romulus și Remus*, October 26th 2010, p. 4

III.2. Romanian Celebrities with Italian Ancestors

Among the descendants of the early Italian immigrants is also a small number that is famous throughout Romania. Many of those people have Romanian names though, as they are not pure Italians, but rather only half or quarter. The historical Italian communities were too small not to become assimilated by the Romanian majority. Many of the Italian immigrants married with Romanians or members of other ethnicities living in Romania and their descendants became almost entirely assimilated in the meantime. However, many know their family history and acknowledge their Italian origins.

Figure 12: Cristian Țopescu



Source: Cinemagia, Cristian Țopescu, <http://www.cinemagia.ro/actori/cristian-topescu-63287/>, retrieved on September 22nd 2014

Cristian Țopescu is the most famous and appreciated sports commentator in Romania. Additionally, he is also a recognized sports journalist. He inherited his Italian origin from his grandmother. According to him, his grandmother was a teacher, whose surname was Grimani and she originated from Venice. She was belonging to the noble family Grimani, from which in total three Venetian doges originated.¹⁵¹ Țopescu has been also active in the Italian community by fulfilling the role of a senior editor of the Italian magazine “Siamo di nuovo insieme”. He has been

furthermore elected senator of Bucharest in the Senate of Romania, the upper house of the Parliament of Romania, while being a member of the National Liberal Party (PNL), in the legislative period 2008-2012.

Ileana Stana-Ionescu is a famous Romanian film and theatre actress. She represented the Italian community in the Chamber of Deputies in the legislative period 2000-2004.¹⁵² Stana-Ionescu's Italian mother was called Bianca Mazzocchi. Because of her Italian origins, Ileana Stana-Ionescu claimed also to have had problems with the

151D. L. Brumar, Vedete cu sânge italian, 9am news, <http://www.9am.ro/stiri-revista-presei/LifeStar/77819/Vedete-cu-sange-italian.html>, retrieved on September 22nd 2014.

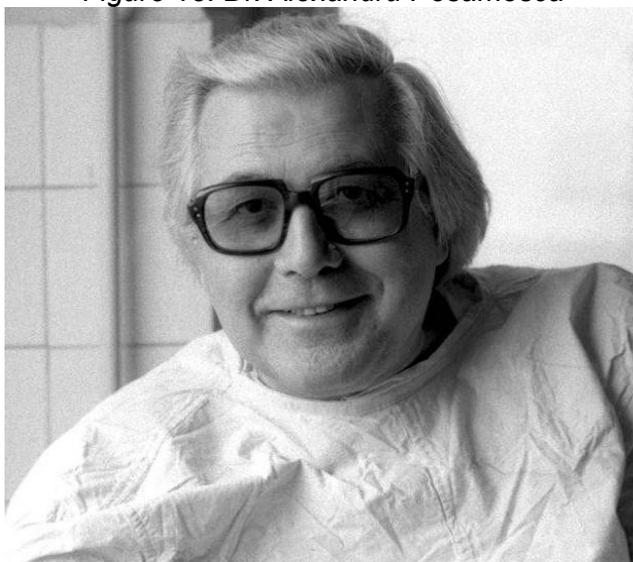
152Camera Deputaților, Ileana Stana: Sinteza activitatii parlamentare în legislatura 2000-2004, <http://www.cdep.ro/pls/parlam/structura.mp?idm=156&cam=2&leg=2012&pag=1&idl=1>, retrieved on September 22nd 2014.

Romanian communist authorities. She was thrown out from the university, because of her contacts with relatives from Italy and her father's participation in World War II as an officer in the Royal Army of Romania.¹⁵³

Another artist with Italian origins is the composer Horia Moculescu. His grandfather Antonio Copetti migrated to Romania in 1898.¹⁵⁴ Moculescu composed more than 500 songs for very famous Romanian pop singers. For many years he was also the presenter of the popular music television programme "Atenție, se cântă!" on the national television channel TVR 2.¹⁵⁵

Italians reached outstanding performances also in other fields, such as medicine for example. Alexandru Pesamosca is considered to have been one of the best surgeons Romania has ever had. He worked in the Romanian health system for more than 50 years and conducted around 50,000 surgeries on children. Pesamosca grew up in Constanța, at the Black Sea. His grandfather originated from around Udine. Pesamosca's father fought for the Italian Army during World War I, but returned afterwards to the Romanian Kingdom and took the Romanian citizenship. Although Alexandru Pesamosca was never an Italian citizen, he received a complete Italian education since he entered Kindergarten. Later on he went to the Italian

Figure 13: Dr. Alexandru Pesamosca



Source: D. Cernea, Remarkable People, <http://www.cernea.net/category/remarkable-people/page/2>, retrieved on September 22nd 2014

school in Constanța where he acquired a good command of the Italian language. He had the opportunity to leave Romania in 1948 at the age of 18, but he took the difficult decision to remain and to dedicate his life to medicine. Because of his international renowned professionalism, he received the opportunity to conduct operations in the USA and China.¹⁵⁶ Pesamosca died at the age of 81 in 2011. In his honour, a section of the hospital "Marie Curie" in Bucharest, where he worked for many years, bears his name.¹⁵⁷

153D. L. Brumar, Vedete cu sânge italian, 9am news, <http://www.9am.ro/stiri-revista-presei/LifeStar/77819/Vedete-cu-sange-italian.html>, retrieved on September 22nd 2014.

154*ibidem*.

155EVZ, "Viața domnului Moculescu, dincolo de țărâmul tabloidelor", *Evenimentul Zilei*, July 3rd 2010, <http://www.evz.ro/viata-domnului-moculescu-dincolo-de-taramul-tabloidelor-899708.html>, retrieved on September 22nd 2014.

156G. Tarabega, "Un nobil cu suflet nobil: Academician Alexandru Pesamosca", *Siamo di nuovo insieme*, III (2009), No. 12-13, p. 14

157D. Cârlea Șontică, "De gardă pentru totdeauna", *Ziarul Lumina*, September 5th 2011,

III.3. Statistics on the extent of the stable ethnic Italians in Romania

The Italian ethnic minority numbers approximately 3,000 individuals in Romania. There were exactly 3,288 Italians in the year 2002. Ten years later their total number decreased slightly to 3,203 persons. According to the data provided by the censuses, the Italians represent the 14th largest ethnic minority in Romania.¹⁵⁸ Table 9 shows the dispersion of the Italians in the capital Bucharest and the 41 counties of Romania.

Table 9: Stable ethnic Italians living in Romania in the census from 2002 and 2011

County	Census 2002	Census 2011
Alba	112	68
Arad	240	291
Argeş	49	72
Bacău	82	91
Bihor	155	160
Bistriţa-Năsăud	15	35
Botoşani	18	20
Brăila	36	43
Braşov	103	119
Bucureşti	646	430
Buzău	27	39
Călăraşi	9	18
Caraş-Severin	55	37
Cluj	124	154
Constanţa	80	60
Covasna	10	16
Dâmboviţa	23	51
Dolj	187	68
Galaţi	64	68
Giurgiu	10	8
Gorj	11	28
Harghita	6	3
Hunedoara	146	115

<http://ziarulumina.ro/reportaj/de-garda-pentru-totdeauna>, retrieved on September 22nd 2014.
158V. Partan, "Minoritățile naționale în strategia europeană", *Piazza Romana*, October 1st 2013, p. 2

Iași	103	99
Ialomița	15	27
Ilfov	40	98
Maramureș	42	52
Mehedinți	15	16
Mureș	67	63
Neamț	61	79
Olt	26	19
Prahova	84	71
Sălaj	20	40
Satu-Mare	36	42
Sibiu	74	69
Suceava	23	59
Teleorman	6	5
Timiș	271	341
Tulcea	134	57
Vâlcea	33	29
Vaslui	10	18
Vrancea	20	25
Total	3288	3203

Data sources: Fundația Jakabffy Elemér, Recensământ 2002, <http://recensamant.referinte.transindex.ro/>, retrieved on September 21st 2014. & Institutul Național de Statistică, Recensământul Populației și al locuințelor 2011, <http://www.recensamantromania.ro/rezultate-2/>, retrieved on September 21st 2014.

Compared to the census in 1930 (see Table 2: Italian stable residents in “Greater” Romania in 1930) the total number of Italians living in Romania today is three times smaller. As it is totally voluntary to declare the ethnicity in the censuses, it is difficult to evaluate those numbers. What does it mean to be of Italian ethnicity after your ancestors migrated to Romania more than a century ago? Those people have been assimilated by the Romanian majority, or they founded mixed families. Did people with mixed ethnic backgrounds, such as the aforementioned Țopescu, Moculescu or Stana-Ionescu, declare themselves to be Italians or Romanians? Of course some opted for the Italian ethnicity, while others considered themselves to belong to the Romanian majority. Therefore, we can state without any reservations that the number of people with an Italian background is higher. An exact approximation is impossible to make.

The official censuses report the highest number of Italians in the capital Bucharest. Their number decreased by one third from formerly 646 individuals in 2002 to 430 persons in 2012. Bucharest's Italian community makes up approximately 13% of the total Italian ethnicity living in Romania. On the second place is the community of Timiș county with 341 persons, an increase by 70 people compared to 2002. Arad county, neighbouring Timiș county, is completing the podium. The total number of Italians in Arad county was 291 in 2011, 51 people more than nine years earlier. Other counties with Italian communities, consisting of more than 100 persons, are Bihor (160), Brașov (119), Cluj (154) and Hunedoara (115). Moreover, it is noteworthy to see that the Italian community has representatives in all counties throughout Romania.

The Italian minority, which has its origins in the migration of the second half of the 19th century and the first three decades of the 20th century, received a strong influx of new members after the breakdown of communism. There are several thousands of expatriates, who are commuting regularly between Italy and those regions of Romania where important Italian investments (see chapter IV) have been conducted in the last 24 years. The majority of these new Italian “migrants” are not taken into consideration by the official census, as their presence in Romania does not have a permanent character.

According to an approximation made by the Italian ambassador to Romania in 2009, Mario Caspito, there were in Timișoara and its surrounding area more than 10,000 Italian expatriates. More than 5,000 Italian expatriates were to be found in Oradea, Bihor county, in the western part of Romania. An exact approximation is again very difficult to be made for this second and more consistent group of Italian temporary community in modern Romania.¹⁵⁹

159G. Tarabega, “Interviu: Există încă o Italie în afara Italiei”, *Siamo di nuovo insieme*, III (2009), No. 12-13, p. 2

III.4. Conclusion Chapter III

Since 1990 the Italian community experienced a revival. The Italians living in Romania started to organize themselves in different associations. The most important and active association seems to be RO.AS.IT, the Association of Italians from Romania. RO.AS.IT. is organizing cultural events, and it is publishing books, as well as the monthly newspaper "Piazza Romana" and the magazine "Siamo di nuovo insieme". Until his death in 2014, Mircea Grosaru, president and founder of RO.AS.IT, represented the Italian minority in the Chamber of Deputies of the Parliament of Romania. Since the school year 2007/2008 the Italian minority, and not only, has the possibility to study again in an "Italian school", namely in the "Dante Alighieri High-School" in Bucharest. Although the Italian minority numbers officially only 3,203 persons, there are many more Romanian citizens with mixed Italian-Romanian origins, such as the sports journalist Cristian Topescu, the actress Ileana Stana-Ionescu or the composer Horia Moculescu. The most famous representative of the Italian community, who even kept his Italian surname, was the surgeon Alexandru Pesamosca, who passed away in 2011.

Quite recently also Victor-Viorel Ponta, prime minister in office and candidate for the upcoming presidential elections in November 2014, announced that he has Italian ancestors. According to him, his family originated from Trieste and was called "Ponte" in the past. They were transferred to Transylvania by the Austrian-Hungarian Emperor in order to work in the construction of roads.¹⁶⁰

Many more Italians live as expatriates in Romania. The biggest communities are to be found in Timișoara (more than 10,000) and Oradea (more than 5000). However, an exact approximation is very difficult to make.

¹⁶⁰Mediafax, Ponta despre numele lui: "Viorel" vine de la nașa, "Ponta" vine de la familia mea, Ponte, din Trieste, July 24th 2014, <http://www.mediafax.ro/life-inedit/ponta-despre-numele-lui-viorel-vine-de-la-nasa-ponta-vine-de-la-familia-mea-ponte-din-trieste-12971076>, retrieved on September 24th 2014.

IV. Investments during the Time of Transition

IV.1. Transition in Romania

The social, political, and economic changes, which have characterized Romania, and other former communist countries in Eastern Europe, in the aftermath of the events of 1989, were part of the general transformation process of the organisation and the structures of the state. This important period between communism and capitalism has been described with the term “transition”.

According to Alina Mungiu-Pippidi, the transition is defined as a difficult process in which the institutions of the communist state, such as the state property, the planned economy, the one-party system, the strictly hierarchical administrative organisation, and the subordination of the economic, social and political life to an official ideology, are substituted with other institutional forms, doctrines and official norms, which are those of the liberal democracies and the market economy.¹⁶¹

Romania's rupture with its communist past was unfortunately not completed with the Romanian Revolution of 1989, or Ceaușescu's televised show-trial and execution. The general impression of many informed Romanians is that the Romanian Revolution was either a coup d'etat from its very beginning, or, which is more probable, it was at first a revolution, which was started and supported by the huge majority of the Romanian people throughout the whole country, but was hijacked, by second-tier members of the former communist party (PCR), later on during the unclear events of December 1989.

It remains the fact that the executive power was taken over by the National Salvation Front (FSN), an organisation which was led by Ion Iliescu, a former high-ranking member of the PCR. Iliescu entered the Romanian Workers Party (PMR) in 1953 and became a member of the Central Committee of the Romanian Communist Party in 1965. Between 1967 and 1971 he served as Minister for Youth-related Issues . He was also secretary of the Central Committee of PCR for 6 months before he dared to criticize the policy of Ceaușescu and was subsequently marginalized and later even expelled from PCR. He was forced to step down from the political stage until 1989.¹⁶² Along Iliescu, other

161A. Mungiu-Pippidi, *Politică după comunism*, Bucharest, Humanitas, 2002, p. 209, cit. in V. Redini, *Frontiere del "made in Italy": Delocalizzazione produttiva e identità delle merci*, Verona, ombre corte, 2008, p. 13

162R. Georgescu, “Ion Iliescu va lansa anul viitor o carte cu amintiri despre Nicolae Ceaușescu”, *Obiectiv*, http://www.obiectiv.info/ion-iliescu-va-lansa-anul-viitor-o-carte-cu-amintiri-despre-nicolae-ceausescu_23408.html, retrieved on September 30th 2014.

74.2% of the members of the FSN-government were former members of the communist nomenklatura.¹⁶³

Figure 14: Ion Iliescu (central) with Nicolae Ceaușescu



Source: R. Georgescu, "Ion Iliescu va lansa anul viitor o carte cu amintiri despre Nicolae Ceaușescu", *Obiectiv*, http://www.obiectiv.info/ion-iliescu-va-lansa-anul-viitor-o-carte-cu-amintiri-despre-nicolae-ceausescu_23408.html, retrieved on September 30th 2014.

By December 22nd 1989, the national television channel TVRL broadcasted that the FSN had taken over, and that they were the new Government of Romania until free democratic elections were organized. The FSN-government introduced several democratic laws, in order to guarantee the freedom of press, as well as the freedom to associate and to establish political parties. Furthermore, every citizen received the right to possess a passport and was given the freedom to travel. Another popular measure was to legalize abortion¹⁶⁴, which had been strictly forbidden from the end of the 1960 until 1989 by a decree of Nicolae Ceaușescu in his attempt to increase the population of Romania until 30 millions by the year 2000.*

163R. Grosescu, "Conversia elitelor comuniste in România în perioada de tranziție", in M.D. Gheorghiu, M. Lupu (a cura di), *Mobilitatea elitelor în România secolului XX*, Bucharest, Editura Paralela 45, 2008, p. 328, cit. in Stoica, "Our Martyrs of 1989 Did Not Die for This!", cit., p. 40

164C. A. Stoica, "Our Martyrs of 1989 Did Not Die for This!": Political Capitalism in Post-Communist Romania", *Historical social research / historische Sozialforschung: Political and functional elites in post-socialist transformation: Central and East Europe since 1989/90*, XXXVII (2012), No. 2, pp. 37, 38

* By 1990 the Romanian population reached the number of 23 million people. Romania's population diminished substantially and reached only 20 millions in 2011. Of those, approximately two to three million Romanians migrated temporarily or definitively especially to Italy, Spain and other states of the EU. Other substantial Romanian communities are to be found in the United States of America and especially in

The FSN-government took the responsibility to organize free legislative and presidential elections. Although it promised not to transform itself into a political party and neither to participate in the elections, yet the FSN decided later on to do exactly the contrary. Civic associations as well as newly founded political parties criticized this decision strongly, but had no power to change the rules of the game. Iliescu on the other hand was running for presidency. As the FSN was able to control the national television and radio, but also thanks to Iliescu's charisma and allegedly important role in the Romanian Revolution, the Romanian people voted massively for him in May 1990. Ion Iliescu became the President of Romania with a total score of 85% of the votes, while the FSN reached a score of 66% of the seats in the new democratic Parliament of Romania. The primordial tasks of the new parliament were the elaboration of a new democratic constitution and the organization of general elections two years later in 1992.¹⁶⁵ Approximately 57.1% of the members of this second post-communist government had been also members of the communist nomenklatura.¹⁶⁶ Thousands of intellectuals and students understood correctly that Iliescu and the FSN were the former second-tier members of the PCR, and organized a permanent occupation of Piața Universității (University Square) in down-town Bucharest. Iliescu "invited" coal miners from the Jiu Valley (southern Romania, historical region Oltenia) to come urgently to Bucharest, to re-establish the order and to "defend" the new fragile democracy.¹⁶⁷ Iliescu presented the protesters in the national media as being "golani" (rowdies, hooligans) and "legionari" (members or sympathisers of the Legion of the Archangel Michael, the Romanian fascist movement in the Interwar period).

The miners responded to Iliescu's call and came to Bucharest. Joined by Bucharest workers, and guided by undercover agents, they beat the protesters brutally. Moreover, they vandalized the headquarters of the main parties of the opposition, as well as those of several civic associations.¹⁶⁸ After the miners fulfilled their mission successfully, they received official thanks from Iliescu and an important part of Bucharest's population considered them to be heroes. These brutal events became known as the "Mineriadă", the

Canada, where hundreds of thousands of Romanians migrated after 1990. The impact of Ceaușescu's anti-abortion-decree, on the Romanian society in general and its women in particular, can be seen in Cristian Mungiu's film "4 Months, 3 Weeks and 2 Days", which received the Palme d'Or award at the Cannes Film Festival in 2007. An informative documentary on the same subject is "Children of the Decree" by Răzvan Georgescu.

¹⁶⁵*Vi*, p. 38

¹⁶⁶Grosescu, "Conversia elitelor comuniste în România în perioada de tranziție", cit., p. 328, cit. in Stoica, "Our Martyrs of 1989 Did Not Die for This!", cit., p. 40

¹⁶⁷Stoica, "Our Martyrs of 1989 Did Not Die for This!", cit., p. 38

¹⁶⁸*ibidem*.

first of totally three brutal riots of miners during the Romanian transition.

Still, the newly appointed government continued with the democratisation of the society by implementing further economic and political reforms. An important economic reform was the legal recognition of the private sector, which made possible the flourishing of small businesses. Peasants received land for their private use, and the collective agricultural farms, the so called CAPs, began to stop their activity. Those reforms were not appreciated by all farmers. Some would have preferred to continue working in the CAPs where they had harvest machines and tractors. Reluctance about the conducted economic reforms was shown also by industrial workers. After the introduction of a couple of radical economic measures in 1991, the miners from the Jiu Valley decided to come again to Bucharest. They forced back then Prime-minister Petre Roman to resign together with his cabinet. All this happened again with the tacit agreement of Ion Iliescu. He appointed in the aftermath a government of technocrats, which was led by the economist Theodor Stolojan. His cabinet took back some of the radical economic reforms of the previous cabinet of Petre Roman.¹⁶⁹ Stolojan's government consisted in a proportion of 47% of former members of the communist nomenklatura.¹⁷⁰

Iliescu won also the elections of 1992 and received a second presidential mandate. His social democratic party PDSR* won most of the seats in parliament, but did not reach an absolute majority in order to govern alone. It had to form an alliance with two national-extremist parties during its rule until 1996. During these four years Romania's government approach to real market reforms was very hesitant. It conducted reforms only partially.¹⁷¹ The transition strategy of the government had four central elements. The price controls were suspended, the privatization was initiated, state institutions were reformed, and incentives for foreign investments were created. It was of central interest for Romania to attract international capital, but the government's main efforts had been conducted only in the area of tax incentives.¹⁷² One of the reasons for this government's failure may be connected with the still high percentage of former communists among his ranks. The percentage of former members of the communist nomenklatura achieved 44%. In the following center-right government, which consisted of a coalition of anti-communist parties,

169*Ivi*, p. 39

170Grosescu, "Conversia elitelor comuniste in România în perioada de tranziție", cit., p. 328, cit. in Stoica, "Our Martyrs of 1989 Did Not Die for This!", cit., p. 40

* FSN was rebranded to PDSR and later on it became PSD, under which name it is forming the present center-left government of Romania.

171Stoica, "Our Martyrs of 1989 Did Not Die for This!", cit., p. 39

172S. P. Ferris, G. R. Thompson, C. Valsan, "Foreign Direct Investment in an Emerging Market Economy: The Case of Romania", *Eastern European Economics*, XXXII (1994), No. 4, p. 82

the percentage fell to only 8.1% only to rise again in the year 2000 to 18.5%¹⁷³ when Iliescu won his third and last presidential mandate, and his Social-Democratic Party (PSD) formed the government, with Adrian Năstase as Prime-minister of Romania. In other words, one out of five officials of the Romanian government, fourteen years after the revolution, was a former member of the communist nomenklatura.

Romania experienced radical social developments during its transition period. One of these developments was the flight of an important part of the urban population into the countryside. The population tried to escape their economic misery by searching to secure their subsistence through farming. In order to understand the dimension of this phenomenon it is possible to compare the percentage of the population active in agriculture before the Romanian Revolution of 1989 and in the subsequent years. By 1989 28% of Romania's population was engaged in agricultural activities. After two years in 1992, this percentage jumped to approximately 40%. Relying on crop could have been only a short-term solution for many disadvantaged people. By 1995 a period of mass migration to EU-countries started, which increased substantially after Romania became part of the EU in 2007.¹⁷⁴

During the transition period Romania was an unstable country as exposed before. It was not only politically unstable but also economically. The few foreign investors during that period criticized especially the ever changing laws, and the insecure legal situation in the country. Commercial laws and custom duties were changing almost every six months. It was therefore very stressful for the investors to remain up to date and within the Romanian legal framework at all times.¹⁷⁵

Moreover, an important part of the Romanian people were against foreign investments in general as they feared a too strong exertion of influence or even a "sold out" of the country. A popular slogan at the beginning of the 1990s was "Nu ne vindem țara!", meaning "We're not selling our country!". Foreign investments were regulated by law 96/1990 of March 14th 1990, which required an extensive process of approving by the Romanian Agency for Development. Moreover this agency was exclusively located in Bucharest until 1995. This bureaucratic obstacle as well as Romania's negative image, also thanks to the "Mineriade" of the beginning of the 1990s, and other negative aspects such as strong delays of reforms and an unstable macroeconomic situation, inhibited a

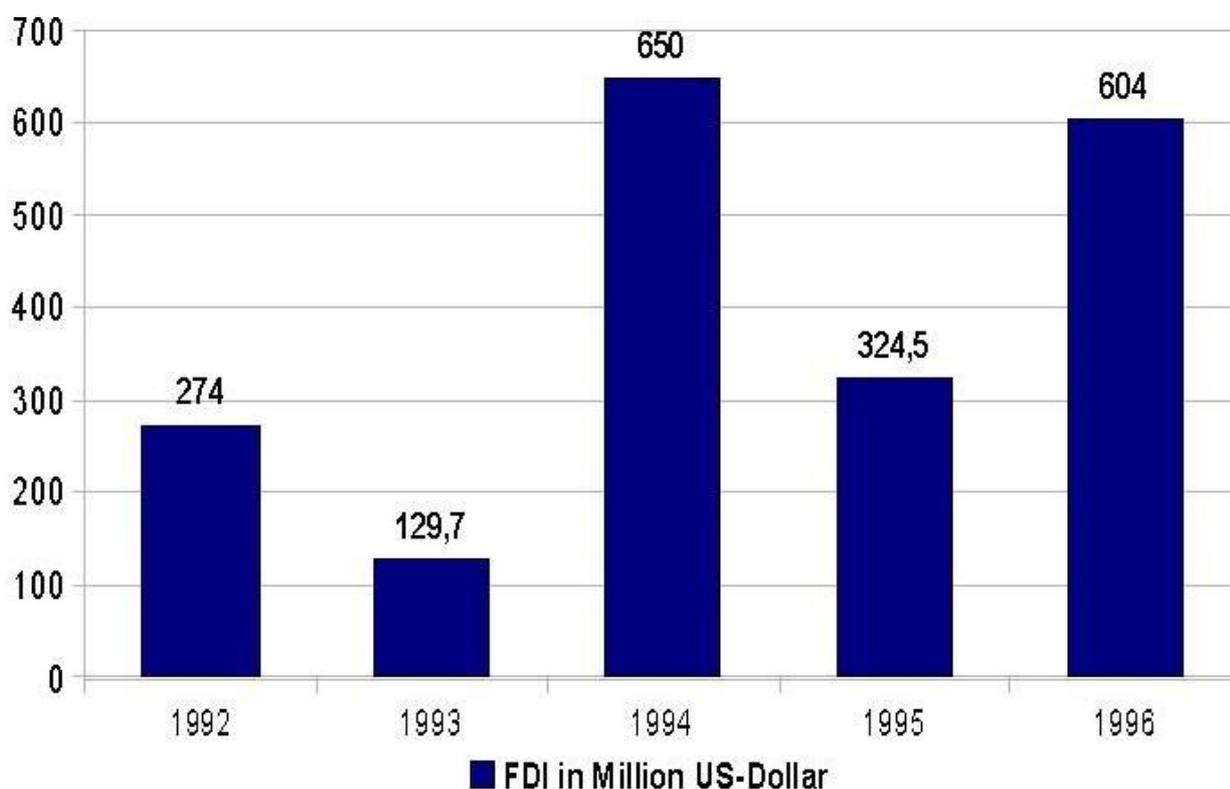
173Grosescu, "Conversia elitelor comuniste in România în perioada de tranziție", cit., p. 328, cit. in Stoica, "Our Martyrs of 1989 Did Not Die for This!", cit., p. 40

174F. Gambino, D. Sacchetto (a cura di), *Un arcipelago produttivo: migranti e imprenditori tra Italia e Romania*, Rome, Carocci, 2007, pp.24, 25

175Gambino, Sacchetto (a cura di), *Un arcipelago produttivo*, cit., p. 174

substantial inflow of foreign investments compared to neighbouring countries. Romania attracted only a fraction of the foreign investments that went to Hungary or the Czech Republic. Between March 3rd 1990 (the date since when foreign direct investments were recorded) until the end of 1996, Romania was able to attract a total sum of 2.2 billion US-Dollars. This number was not even half of the foreign investments that went only in 1995 to Hungary. Divided by years, the foreign direct investments to Romania fluctuated strongly by the beginning of the 1990s¹⁷⁶, as can be seen in Figure 15.

Figure 15: FDI-inflows to Romania between 1992 and 1996



Data source: H.H. Rieser, *Das Rumänische Banat: Eine multikulturelle Region im Umbruch*, Stuttgart, Thorbecke, 2001, p. 425

Until 1992 the investments grew quickly up to 274 million US-Dollars. In 1993 they collapsed to 129.7 million US-Dollars, less than a half compared to the previous year. One year later the investments boomed again and reached approximately 650 million US-Dollars. One quarter of the total sum fell upon the South-Korean corporate group Daewoo's participation in the Olcit car-factory in Craiova.¹⁷⁷ By 1995 the foreign

¹⁷⁶H.H. Rieser, *Das Rumänische Banat: Eine multikulturelle Region im Umbruch*, Stuttgart, Thorbecke, 2001, p. 425

¹⁷⁷*Ibidem*.

investments halved to 324.5 million US-Dollars. In 1996 they rose again up to 604 million US-Dollars.

The FDI was distributed extremely disproportionately throughout Romania. First of all, there was and still is nowadays, a strong difference between the capital Bucharest, the political and economic centre of the country, and the province. In 1995, for example, Bucharest attracted 54% of the FDI, while 60% of the companies with foreign capital had their headquarters in Bucharest. Additionally to Bucharest, there were in total six other counties, which attracted important foreign direct investment: Iași county in the north-eastern part of the country with its important textile industry, which had traditionally strong business relations with western companies as subcontractor; Dolj county at the Danube in the southern part with its joint-venture between Daewoo and Oltcit, which investment of 156 million US-Dollars accounted for approximately 10% of all FDI in Romania between 1990 and 1995. The four other counties, were located in western Romania, while Timiș county attracted by far the largest FDI in this region. It positioned itself on the third place among all counties with an attracted capital of 10% of the FDI that was invested in Romania.¹⁷⁸ For the comparative advantages of Timiș county and the historical region of Banat and western Romania in general, see chapter IV.4.

¹⁷⁸*Ibidem.*

IV.2. Italian Investments in the Romanian Footwear and Apparel Industry

The Italian businessmen were among the first investors to recognize the new opportunities in Romania, when the country opened its doors to the free market economy, right after the Revolution of 1989. The first Italian investments came, at least in the first phase, almost entirely from the Region of Veneto. They were concentrated in the labour intensive sectors of the footwear and apparel industry, and were characterised by a de-localisation of a part of the production and by the development of a working system, which was based on the supply with raw materials and semi-finished goods coming directly from Italy.¹⁷⁹

As can be seen in Table 10, by September 1991, almost two years after the opening of the Romanian market, the investments originating from Italy accounted for an amount of 26.2 million US-Dollar. Italy became thus the third largest foreign investor in Romania, surpassed only by the USA and Germany, the most powerful economies by the beginning of the 1990s. Considering the number of joint ventures, Italy classified even on the second place after Germany with a total number of 624 companies.

Table 10: FDI and joint ventures between March 1990 and September 1991

Country	Total capital invested	Country	No. of joint ventures
USA	31,746,000 \$	Germany	918
Germany	27,323,000 \$	Italy	624
Italy	26,209,000 \$	Syria	541
England	21,804,000 \$	Turkey	536
France	16,435,000 \$	USA	367
Netherlands	16,372,000 \$	Lebanon	315
Switzerland	11,692,000 \$	France	315
Spain	11,223,000 \$	Israel	252
Turkey	8,361,000 \$	Hungary	188
Austria	7,949,000 \$	Austria	187

Data source: Ferris, "Foreign Direct Investment in an Emerging Market Economy", cit., p. 91

179G. Tattara, G. De Giusti, F. Constantin, *Strategies of Italian firms in Romania. Evidence from selected case studies*, MPRA Paper, Ca' Foscari University of Venice, University of Reading, Graduate School of Social Research Warsaw, No. 17765, 2009, p. 4

The relocation of Italian companies to Romania, was characterised, at least in the first years after 1990, by the so called “gazebisti”, small entrepreneurs whose production equipments fitted entirely inside one truck. Those entrepreneurs were often subcontractors of the Venetian textile industry and they possessed valuable managerial and organisational skills. Furthermore, they built up their businesses by relying on their extensive relationships in the textile business of the Veneto Region. Those “gazebisti” were in fact the pioneers, who prepared the ground for future bigger investments by important companies, such as Benetton and Geox, which awaited the economic development of a still very uncertain country. As a matter of fact, the big companies literally encouraged their small subcontractors to relocate abroad. Between 1992 and 2003 the Italian fashion industry lost 250,000 employees inside Italy. A decline of 30% was experienced by the apparel industry, while the employment in the footwear industry decreased by 22%.¹⁸⁰ In the special case of Veneto, Crestanello and Tattara estimated the loss in terms of jobs to amount to 16,426 in the clothing and 18,560 in the footwear production sectors for the year 2005. At the same time the Venetian investments created 31,357 in the clothing and 26,514 jobs in the footwear sectors in Romania. The discrepancies between the numbers from Veneto and Romania are caused by the differences in productivity. According to these estimations, the unemployment in the clothing sector in Veneto would had been only half as big if Venetian subcontractors would had been contracted, instead of relocating to Romania.¹⁸¹

The Romanian county which benefited the most from the relocations was Timiș with its capital Timișoara. By the end of 2002 1,448 Italian companies were active in Timiș (12% of all Italian companies in Romania), of which 392 were originating from the region of Veneto (19% of all Venetian companies in Romania).¹⁸²

Timiș county became known as the 8th province of the Veneto, while the city of Timișoara is sometimes nicknamed “Trevisoara” (remembering the important number of investments originating from Treviso in Veneto).¹⁸³

180D. Sacchetto, “Isolani dell'arcipelago. Delocalizzatori e forza lavoro in Romania”, in F. Gambino, D. Sacchetto (a cura di), *Un arcipelago produttivo: migranti e imprenditori tra Italia e Romania*, Rome, Carocci, 2007, pp. 135, 136

181P. Crestanello, G. Tattara, *Industrial Clusters and the Governance of the Global Value Chain: The Romania-Veneto Network in Footwear and Clothing*, Regional Studies, Ca' Foscari University of Venice, Department of Economics, 2010, p. 7

182Antenna Veneto Romania (a cura di), *Indagine sulla presenza imprenditoriale veneta in Romania*, Mestre, Centro Estero Veneto, 2003, p. 1

183V. Redini, “Del dare e togliere corpo al lavoro. Luoghi, merci e persone nel processo di delocalizzazione delle aziende italiane in Romania”, in Gambino, Sacchetto (a cura di), *Un arcipelago produttivo: migranti e imprenditori tra Italia e Romania*, cit., p. 175

The reasons for the relocation from Italy to Romania were multiple. The most important reason was of course the cheap and abundant labour. Generally speaking, the costs of all factors of production were, and are also today, much lower in Romania than in Italy. According to Crestanello and Tattara the wages of the Romanian workers made up to 25% of the value of the final product, while the other 75% contained the material costs.¹⁸⁴ Moreover, the labour market was very flexible and the taxation laws were favourable towards foreign direct investments. Another important fact was the advantageous geographical position of the western part of Romania. Furthermore, a certain domino effect has to be taken into consideration: When the low-priced Italian-Romanian products entered the Italian home market, they pushed those companies, which were still producing in Italy and were not competitive anymore, into the bankruptcy. The Italian entrepreneurs had to decide quickly if they would follow the trend of relocation or disappear from the market. By word-of-mouth advertising also the last doubters were convinced that they could make a fortune by relocating to Romania.¹⁸⁵

The Romanian textile, apparel and footwear industry became strongly controlled by Italian companies, which represented 85% of this sectors by the middle of the years 2000. Those companies consisted mainly of subcontractors and suppliers, who were processing raw material or half finished products, which were supplied from Italy, and further re-exported the finished products to western markets. Only a negligible part of the production was directed to the Romanian domestic market.¹⁸⁶

The Italian fashion industry offshored and partially outsourced to Romania the labour intensive phases of the production, namely the physical production of the goods, while the capital intensive phases, such as designing, marketing or logistics, which require major competences and investments, remained in Italy.¹⁸⁷ Berger and Locke are giving an example of an unnamed Italian producer of ski boots that relies on complementarity between its Romanian subcontractor and the plant at home in Italy. The plastic moulding - a difficult procedure, which includes trade secrets -, the decoration, and the assembly were done in Italy in a working process that lasted 10 minutes. In Romania, on the other hand, they executed the cutting of the fabric and assembled the liner. These processes lasted 21 minutes, and were conducted in Romania due to the much lower wages. By partly relocating to Romania, this company lowered the costs of production and was

184Crestanello, G. Tattara, *Industrial Clusters and the Governance of the Global Value Chain*, cit., p. 7

185Ivi, pp. 175, 176

186Redini, "Del dare e togliere corpo al lavoro...", in Gambino, Sacchetto (a cura di), *Un arcipelago produttivo: migranti e imprenditori tra Italia e Romania*, cit., p. 184

187Ivi, p. 185

able to continue the production of ski boots in Italy.¹⁸⁸

Very interesting is the fact that the shoes and clothes produced in Romania were labelled with the designation of origin “made in Italy“. In this case “made in Italy“ did not stand anymore for the place of the production, but rather for certain characteristics of the product, which identifies it as Italian, such as the superior quality, the original design, or the typical Italian creativity.¹⁸⁹ Eros Scatolin, international public relations executive at Geox, a Venetian shoe producer with the headquarters in Treviso, explained: “From our point of view, it doesn't matter where you produce, but how you do it. We could keep on producing our shoes in Italy but they should cost much more.” He insisted further: “Outsourcing is a must, not a choice! You have to go abroad in those low labor market cost countries if you want to keep a fair price, and I would add, if you want to survive.” He emphasized the fact that the way a good is produced is crucial, and not the geographical place where it has been physically assembled. According to Scatolin, “the brain and the soul of the company remain Italian, while only the body is foreign”. The body were in that case the 2,000 Romanian employees in the Timișoara plant, who were degraded rhetorically to accessory elements, or means of production.¹⁹⁰

It seems that not only the Italian-Romanian companies are relying heavily on the good reputation of “made in Italy“ products. An impressive number of Romanian companies (with both the “brain and the body“), are branding their products by using Italian sounding names. Their products are not at all cheap imitations. Those companies have rather internalized the characteristics which identify the “soul“ of the “made in Italy“ products. In the Romanian department stores you may easily find shirts from Fabiani or Bigoli, boots from Antonelli and the by now in Romania very famous shoes Leonardo.¹⁹¹ Leonardo, which maintains an impressive number of over 100 retail shops all over Romania and even in the neighbouring countries Republic of Moldova, Bulgaria and Hungary, has among its brands “original” names such as “BACI BIMBI“, “BACIO & BACIO“, “DONA NOVA“, “GIA MORETTI“, “GIOVANNI“, “LUCA & FEDERICO, “MONTEFIORI“ and many others. It has a total number of 70 brands according to their website. The retailer itself is branded as “Leonardo: Calzature & Pelletterie“.¹⁹²

188S. Berger, R. M. Locke, “Il Caso Italiano and Globalization“, *Daedalus*, CXXX (2001), No. 3, pp. 99, 100
189*ivi*, p. 186

190R. Irwin, Made where?, http://www.brandchannel.com/features_effect.asp?pf_id=179, last actualization on October 6th 2003, retrieved on October 3rd 2014.

191Redini, *Frontiere del "made in Italy"*, cit., p. 125

192Leonardo, Branduri, <http://www.leonardo.com.ro/branduri>, retrieved on October 4th 2014.

Generally speaking the Italian managers were satisfied with their choice to relocate to Romania. Their business remained competitive through the economically priced labour, while the high quality was successfully preserved or even enhanced compared to the production in Italy. According to Daniele Mastro, a quality inspector active in Timișoara, the “Italian” products (high quality shoes, apparel) made in Romania exhibited a superior quality to similar products made in Italy. He argued that thanks to the very low wages of the Romanian employees, the relocated companies could afford easily to hire a bigger number of workers, who received a specialisation in a single work process, while the Italian employees were expected to perform several different processes, due to their very high wages.¹⁹³ By 2005 the number of employees in Romania working for Venetian companies in the apparel and footwear industries was approximately 55,000, while 120,000 were working in total for the Italian fashion industry.¹⁹⁴

During the 1990s, the majority of Italian imports of shoes and cloths originated from Romania. After the year 2004 China became the most important source for clothing while it could not overtake Romania as the first country from which Italy imported footwear. The region of Veneto remained, however, very dependent on Romanian imports. In 2006, 33% of the Italian imports of clothing, and 52% of footwear coming from Romania, constituted Veneto's share.¹⁹⁵

The Italian FDI to Romania between 1991 and 2006 (one year before Romania's accession to the EU) totalled approximately 851 million Euros (5.6% of the FDI to Romania). Italy had been during that period the fifth largest investor after the Netherlands, Austria, France and Germany. In terms of the total numbers of foreign resident companies, Italy had been on the first place with 21.519 companies out of 131.943 foreign resident companies. That means that on average the Italian companies invested 39.546 Euros, which is a very small sum though.¹⁹⁶

193Redini, “Del dare e togliere corpo al lavoro...”, in Gambino, Sacchetto (a cura di), *Un arcipelago produttivo: migranti e imprenditori tra Italia e Romania*, cit., pp. 192, 193

194Crestanello, Tattara, *Industrial Clusters and the Governance of the Global Value Chain*, cit., p. 11

195*Ivi.*, p. 5

196F. Gambino, D. Sacchetto, “Forme e limiti della mobilità tra Italia e Romania dopo la caduta del muro di Berlino”, in Gambino, Sacchetto (a cura di), *Un arcipelago produttivo: migranti e imprenditori tra Italia e Romania*, cit., p. 21

IV.3. Technic Development, a Subsidiary of Geox in Timișoara

Geox, the biggest Italian footwear producer and one of the most important worldwide, set up a plant in Timișoara only by the year 2000. The Romanian subsidiary was called Technic Development and was 100% owned by Geox. By 2003 Technic Development was employing around 2,800 workers, who were working in three shifts per day. An important quota of the worldwide turnover of Geox was generated by Technic Development, which itself subcontracted to seven other companies in Romania. It created a network of additional six to seven hundred external workers.¹⁹⁷ Geox's business in Romania was managed through a hierarchical, vertical integration. Technic Development was tightly controlled by Geox and the subcontractors were mainly used as a flexible source of extra capacity when peak demands had to be satisfied quickly. Those companies worked strictly according to Geox's specifications. By 2003 only 4% of Technic Development's employees were Italians. Those were technicians with very high technical abilities. All other employees were Romanian, who were paid according to an incentive scheme, which was tied to the productivity. In this way an increase of the professional skills of the workers was pursued by Geox. Approximately 25% of the workers earned the double amount of the average salary of all the workers taken together. The plant in Timișoara was producing high-quality leather shoes.¹⁹⁸ After nine years Technic Development still employed 900 workers (one year earlier the number of employees reached almost 1,800) and was realizing 5% of Geox's total worldwide production (95% was realized through partnerships with companies in Asia and South Africa). It was producing approximately one million pair of shoes and was generating sales of over 35 million Euros per year. During its nine years of production Technic Development's sales revenues were growing from year to year. Nevertheless, Geox decided to sell its production plant to the Italian entrepreneur Vincenzo Tagliaboschi, who became in turn Geox's subcontractor. In 2009 the level of salaries reached the average of 300 Euros per month, while it was possible to earn up to 700 Euros in better positions, as explained earlier. However, Geox stated that the decision to sell was taken as a result of the reorganization of the production, and was not caused by the increase of the labour costs in Romania. One year earlier Mario Moretti Polegato, the CEO of Geox, assured that there will not be any relocation and that the production in Timișoara was guaranteed.¹⁹⁹

¹⁹⁷Tattara, De Giusti, Constantin, *Strategies of Italian firms in Romania*, cit., p. 4

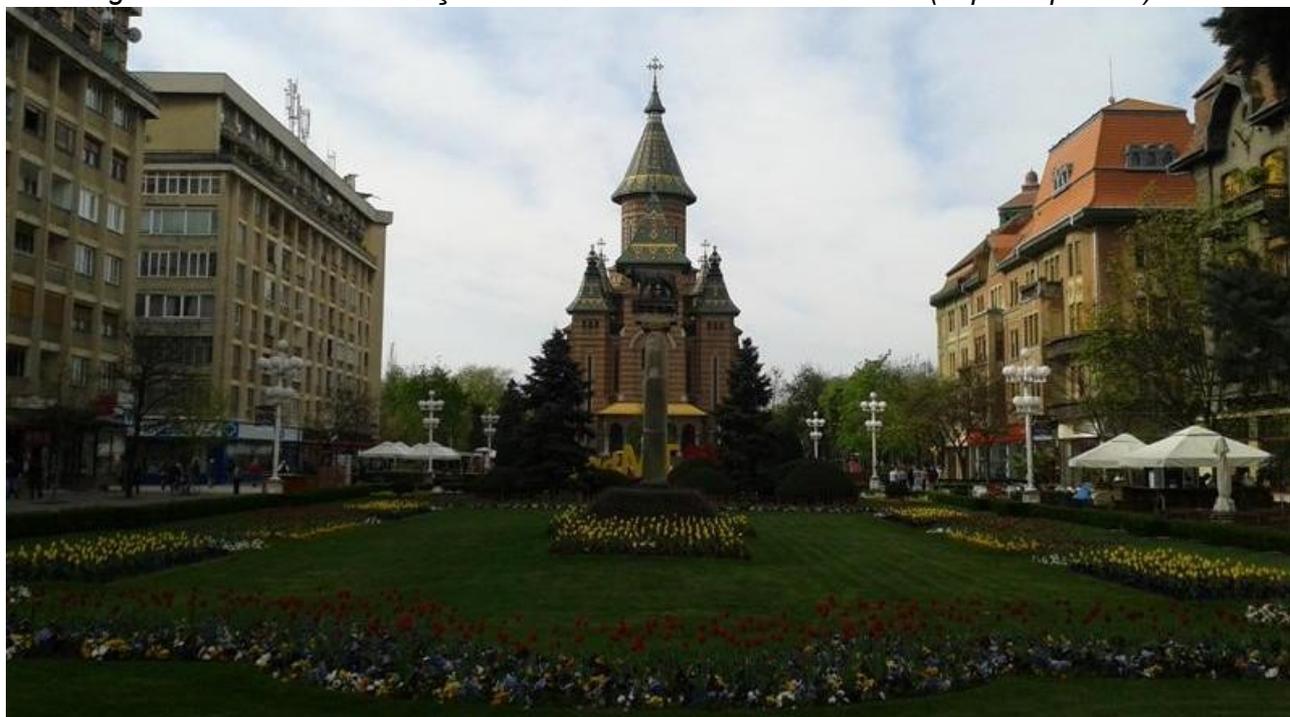
¹⁹⁸Crestanello, Tattara, *Industrial Clusters and the Governance of the Global Value Chain*, cit., pp. 8, 9

¹⁹⁹C. Stoian, "Geox a vândut fabrica de pantofi din Timișoara, unde lucrau 900 de oameni.", *Ziarul*

IV.4. Comparative Advantages of the Banat and the western Regions

The Banat is a formerly multicultural historic region in the western part of Romania (see Map 2 in Appendix for the exact location). Until 1990 it had an important German minority, the so called Banat Swabians, which emigrated almost entirely to Germany and Austria after the fall of the Iron Curtain. Other important minorities still living in the region are the Serbian and the Hungarian minorities. All these three minorities, together with the Romanian majority, which is the indigenous nation, marked the fate of the Banat for centuries. Its multicultural heritage is still visible in the architecture, the multilingualism and the open mentality of its people. The Banat consists nowadays of two counties: the aforementioned Timiș, with the capital Timișoara, and Caraș-Severin with the capital Reșița. Timișoara is also the historical capital of the Banat. With its population of approximately 320,000 inhabitants it is the third largest city of Romania after Bucharest (almost 2 million inhabitants) and Cluj-Napoca, which has only a slightly higher population. Timișoara was also considered to have been the first freed city from Ceaușescu's dictatorship, as it was exactly here where the Romanian Revolution began in 1989.

Figure 16: Down-town Timișoara with the statue of the She-wolf (*Lupa Capitolina*)



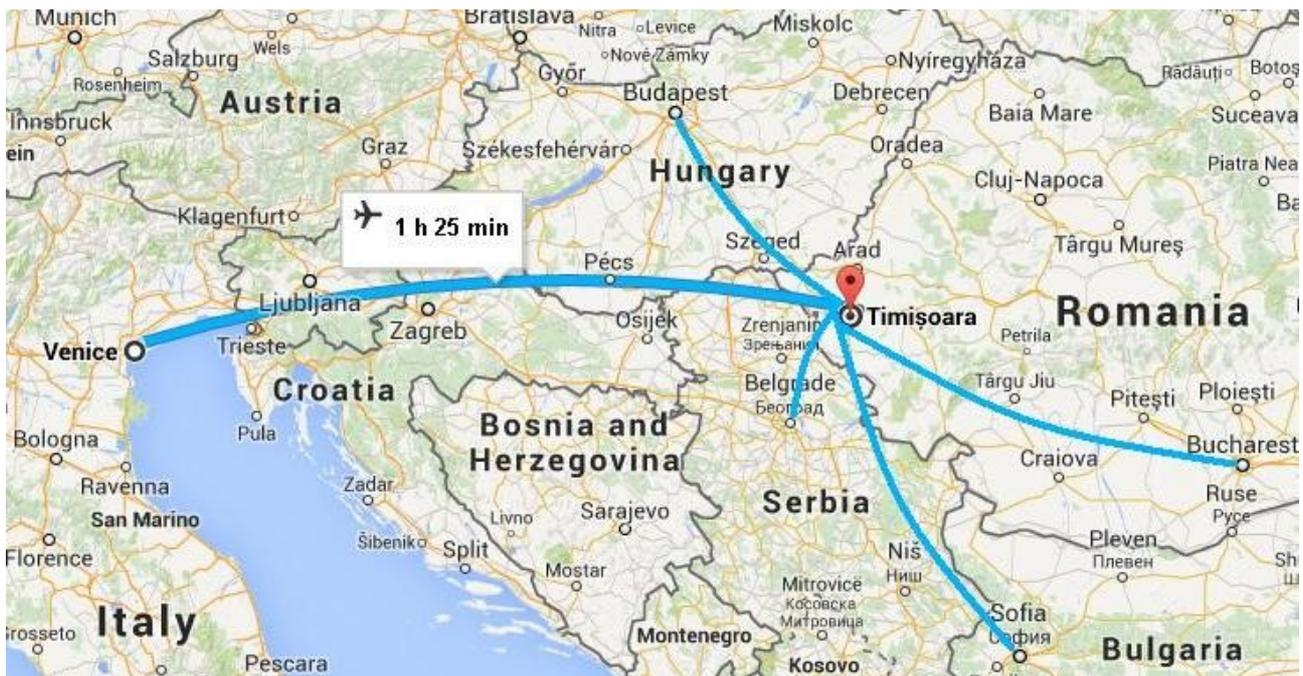
Source: own private collection

Financiar, June 17th 2009, <http://www.zf.ro/companii/geox-a-vandut-fabrica-de-pantofi-din-timisoara-unde-lucrau-900-de-oameni-4560115/>, retrieved on October 4th 2014.

* The copy of the She-wolf was a gift from the city of Rome in 1926, on the occasion of a treaty signed between Mussolini and Averescu. (G. Caroli, *La Romania nella politica estera italiana*, cit., p. 393)

Banat's comparative advantage to other regions of Romania is first of all its western position, which makes a good communication to Central and Western Europe possible (see Figure 17). It is bordering the Serbian province Vojvodina and the south-east of Hungary. Timișoara can be reached by plane within one and a half hours from Venice for example. The region has a comparatively high degree of industrialisation and urbanization, and its population has a good level of professional education. Moreover, an important part of the population is bilingual or even trilingual. Generally speaking, the Banat experienced a higher social development, thanks to its historical status as a province of the Habsburg Empire, than many other underdeveloped regions of Romania. The Banat builds on a century old tradition of cooperation with foreign countries, a soft-skill, which many Romanian regions do not possess. These characteristics are true also for all other western regions of Romania.²⁰⁰

Figure 17: The strategic position of Timișoara



Source: Google Maps, <https://www.google.com/maps/place/Timi%C8%99oara,+Romania/@45.1485228,17.8939122,7z/data=!4m2!3m1!1s0x4745677dcb0fb5a7:0x537faf6473936749>, retrieved on October 5th 2014

200H.H. Rieser, *Das Rumänische Banat: Eine multikulturelle Region im Umbruch*, cit., p. 427

As mentioned before, the geographic position plays an important role. Transportation costs of the goods would increase substantially if the production facilities of the Italian investors would be located in north-eastern Romanian cities such as Suceava, Iași or Bacău, which are up to 800 km further away from the western border with Hungary. It has to be taken also into account that the Romanian high-way system is underdeveloped and that there is no high-speed infrastructure available to reach this part of Romania. Moreover, the country is cut in half by the Carpathian Mountains, which makes their crossing time and energy consuming.

An important factor for the decision of investment in the counties of Timiș and Cluj was certainly the fact that skilled labour was available for the production of shoes and cloths for the Italian fashion industry. During communism this counties had a good developed textile industry, which was represented by big state companies, such as Clujana in Cluj and Guban, Filty and Banatim in Timișoara. The main destination for the Italian investors has always been Timișoara because of its Hungarian border proximity. Cluj on the other hand was regarded more as a second best alternative, but was chosen as it became more difficult to find skilled workers in Timiș, while at the same time the level of the salaries was increasing.²⁰¹

Furthermore, there are certain similarities between the region of Veneto and the Banat. These regions are not only the most economically active of their respective countries, but also the most dynamic and productive ones. They're both the primary representatives, in terms of economical development, in countries with large regional disparities, such as between the north and the south in Italy and the west and the east in Romania. The people of both regions are characterized by a certain distrust towards their capitals Rome and Bucharest.²⁰²

Last but not least, we should not totally forget that there might be a certain cultural link between the Region of Veneto, the home of the majority of Italian companies and businessmen in western Romania, and the historical regions of Banat and Transylvania, considering their common history and heritage as provinces of the Habsburg Empire during the 19th century.

201G. Tattara, G. De Giusti, F. Constantin, *Il decentramento produttivo in Romania in tre distretti del Nord-Est*, Studi sull' Economia Veneta, Università Ca' Foscari Venezia, Dipartimento di Scienze Economiche, No. 05/EV/2006, 2006, p. 7

202Redini, *Frontiere del "made in Italy"*, cit., pp. 28, 29

IV.5. Conclusions Chapter IV

The 1990s have been a difficult decade for Romania. The transition from communism to the free market capitalist system emerged to be more difficult than expected. Romania was not able to break with its communist past, as the new decision makers were recruited mainly from second-tier members of the Communist Party. Economic reforms were not conducted strongly enough and a big part of the society was against the “selling-off” of the state companies to foreigners. Because of this handicaps, Romania was not able to start off on the right foot as other ex-communist neighbouring countries. Nevertheless, mild attempts of reforms were conducted and a certain number of foreign direct investments came to the country. One of the main investors was Italy. The Italian investments derived almost entirely from small and medium-sized companies, which hoped to profit from the very low average salaries paid in Romania, and to survive on an increasing competitive international market. Already famous is the relocation of footwear and apparel companies from the Veneto especially to the county of Timiș and the western region of Romania in general, going so far that Timișoara received the nickname “Trevisoara”. Bigger companies, such as Geox, invested around the turn of the millennium in Romania, and decided to withdraw its production activities almost 10 years later. Taking into account that the Romanian wages tripled since the beginning of the new millennium, it has to be asked if further Italian companies will relocate from Romania to countries such as Albania, Bosnia or Serbia. In case of the big companies, these threats exist for the Romanian economy, and we will see in the subsequent Chapter V that Geox was only the beginning of this “caravan” capitalism, which is always attracted by cheaper countries. A famous exponent of this way of doing business was the Finnish mobile phone producer Nokia, which decided only after three years to close its plant in Cluj county in order to move further east to Asia. But it is improbable that the small and medium-sized Italian investors will leave Romania in the near future. They value the good relationships and the network, which was created along the years with their Romanian business partners. Furthermore, Romania became their second home and they are now committed to the country.²⁰³ Important arguments against a hypothetical relocation are also the strategic good position of the Banat and the instabilities in neighbouring countries such as Ukraine, Republic of Moldova or even Serbia, with its Kosovo issue.

²⁰³C. Sellar, “Europeanizing Timișoara: neoliberal reforms, continuity with the past, and unexpected side effects”, *GeoJournal*, (2013), No. 78, p. 14

V. Italian Companies doing Business in contemporary Romania

V.1. Commercial Exchange between Italy and Romania

The commercial exchange between Italy and Romania reached an aggregate value of 11.77 billion Euros in 2013. Compared to the previous year 2012, the commercial exchange experienced a growth of 3%. Romania has exported a total value of 5.699 billion Euros, 4.8% more compared to 2012, while it imported a total value of 6.071 billion Euros from Italy, 1.4% more than 2012. Italy generated a trade surplus of 373 million Euros in the detriment of Romania.²⁰⁴ Table 11 shows the commercial exchange between Romania and Italy for the period 2005 – 2013.

Table 11: Commercial exchange between Italy and Romania (Romanian perspective)

Year	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Export to Italy in €	4.249	4.596	5.032	5.217	4.493	5.197	5.799	5.443	5.699
Import from Italy	5.008	5.915	6.528	6.618	4.548	5.441	6.250	5.983	6.071
Commercial exchange	9.257	10.511	11.560	11.835	9.041	10.638	12.049	11.426	11.770
Trade surplus	-0.759	-1.319	-1.496	-1.401	-0.055	-0.244	-0.451	-0.540	-0.373

Data source: Italian Trade Agency, *Nota Congiunturale Romania*, cit., p. 5

By analysing the commercial exchange between the two countries in the last years, we can recognize a continuing increase of the total values until the year 2008 when it reached 11.8 billion Euros. It diminished strongly by 2.8 billion Euros in 2009 when Romania felt the repercussions of the international financial crisis. By 2008 the trade surplus from the Italian point of view was 1.4 billion Euros, but it diminished to 55 million Euros in 2009. This development proves that Romania's imports diminished much stronger than its exports to Italy at the beginning of the financial crisis in Romania. In the following years the commercial exchange experienced a recovery and reached 10.6 billion Euros by 2010 and reached its historical peak with 12 billion Euros by 2011. During that period the imports from Italy increased stronger than the exports, which led again to a higher trade

²⁰⁴Italian Trade Agency, *Nota Congiunturale Romania: Gennaio-dicembre 2013*, April 11th 2014, p. 10, <http://www.ice.it/paesi/europa/romania/index.htm>, retrieved on October 6th 2014.

surplus for Italy. In 2012 and 2013 the commercial exchange diminished slightly in order to arrive at the level before the financial crisis.

Italy ranked second after Germany as destination for Romanian exports, and origin country of imports, both in 2012 and 2013. Its quota on Romania's commercial exchange with foreign countries amounted to 11.2% (11.5% of all exports and 11.0% of all imports).²⁰⁵

In 2013 Romania exported to Italy mostly apparel (including leather and fur) amounting to 778.72 million Euros; leather goods (except clothing) and similar for 742.94 million Euros; motor vehicles, trailers and semi-trailers worth 515,61 million Euros and electric and non-electric appliances for household use for 389.16 million Euros.²⁰⁶

The most important imports from Italy to Romania were machinery and equipment for 733.04 million Euros; textiles worth 723.62 million Euros; leather goods (except clothing) and similar for 586.46 million Euros; metallurgical products amounting to 568.29 million Euros; chemical products for 446.15 million Euros; fabricated metal products, except machinery and equipment for a total value of 406.87 million Euros and electric and non-electric appliances for household use for 406.51 million Euros.²⁰⁷

V.2. Italian Foreign Direct Investments in Romania

Romania succeeded to attract a total sum of 50.521 billion Euros as foreign direct investments in the last 10 years (2003 until 2013, see Table 12). It was a substantial increase compared to the numbers from the 1990s (several hundred millions per year).

Table 12: FDI to Romania between 2003 and 2013

Year	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
FDI in billion €	1.946	5.183	5.213	9.059	7.250	9.496	3.488	2.220	1.815	2.138	2.713
Increase in %	60.6	166.3	0.6	73.8	-20.0	31.0	-63.3	-36.4	-18.2	17.8	26.8

Data source: Italian Trade Agency, *Nota Congiunturale Romania*, cit., p. 5

²⁰⁵Italian Trade Agency, *Nota Congiunturale Romania*, cit., p. 12

²⁰⁶Italian Trade Agency, info Mercati Esteri, Scambi commerciali (Romania), http://www.infomercatiesteri.it/scambi_commerciali.php?id_paesi=87, retrieved on October 6th 2014.

²⁰⁷*Ibidem*.

The highest increment in percentage was recorded in the year 2004, when the FDI skyrocketed to 5.183 billion Euros. An increment by 166.3% compared to the previous year 2003. The reason for this development has to be identified in the accession of Romania to NATO in the same year 2004. Romania became a member of the worldwide strongest military alliance and increased thereby not only its security but also it fortified its economic stability. Romania left the grey zone of former communist countries and investing in its economy became less risky for foreign companies. Another important increase by 73.8% took place in 2006, when the FDI reached 9 billion Euros. In 2007, the year when Romania entered the EU, the FDI dropped by 20% to 7.25 billion Euros, only to reach one year later in 2008 a so far maximum of almost 9.5 billion Euros. By 2009 the international financial crisis hit Romania strongly. The FDIs sank by 63.3% and reached only 3.5 billion Euros. Since then the FDIs regressed and reached the bottom in 2011 with only 1.8 billion Euros, the minimum of the last ten years. Since 2012 the FDIs started to grow slowly. In 2013 the foreign direct investments entering Romania reached 2.7 billion Euros. This sum is 26.8% higher than the FDI from 2012. But those numbers are not enough yet to get the Romanian economy back on the fast track of growth. Nevertheless, 6,385 new companies with foreign participation have been founded in 2013.²⁰⁸ Since 1991 until December 31st 2013 a total number of 192,416 companies with foreign participation have been registered in Romania as can be seen in Table 13.

Table 13: Top 10 investments by countries and number of registered companies

Ranking	Country	No. of companies	Percentage
Total	Romania	192,416	100.0%
1st	Italy	37,029	19.4%
2nd	Germany	20,146	10.6%
3rd	Turkey	13,461	7.1%
4th	Hungary	12,266	6.5%
5th	China	10,956	5.8%
6th	France	7,616	4.0%
7th	USA	6,747	3.6%
8th	Austria	6,677	3.5%
9th	Israel	6,567	3.5%
10th	Iraq	5,843	3.1%

Data source: Italian Trade Agency, *Nota Congiunturale Romania*, cit., p. 5

²⁰⁸Italian Trade Agency, *Nota Congiunturale Romania*, cit., p. 5

Italy has been during the last 13 years the most important investor in Romania, in terms of the number of registered firms. Until December 31st 2013 a total number of 37,029 companies with Italian participation had been registered. Hence 19.4%, almost one fifth of foreign companies in Romania, had an Italian participation. 17,883 companies out of the 37,029 were active. During the year 2013, 1,986 new companies with Italian participation have been registered. The Italian companies accounted for 31.1% of all new companies with foreign participation in Romania in 2013.²⁰⁹

On the other hand, the Italian invested capital in the companies was with 1.6 billion Euros rather low compared to other countries in the period from 1991 until December 31st 2013. We can see in Table 14 that Italy positioned itself only 7th, as the invested capital represented “only” 4.6% of all foreign invested capital in companies with foreign participation in Romania.

Table 14: Top 10 investments by countries and invested capital (1991-2013)

Ranking	Country	Billion Euros	Percentage
Total	Romania	37.692	100.0%
1st	The Netherlands	7.300	20.6%
2nd	Austria	4.929	13.9%
3rd	Germany	4.396	12.4%
4th	Cyprus	2.445	6.9%
5th	France	2.108	5.9%
6th	Greece	1.688	4.8%
7th	Italy	1.614	4.6%
8th	Spain	1.129	3.2%
9th	Luxembourg	1.041	2.9%
10th	Panama	0.948	2.7%

Data source: Italian Trade Agency, *Nota Congiunturale Romania*, cit., p. 5

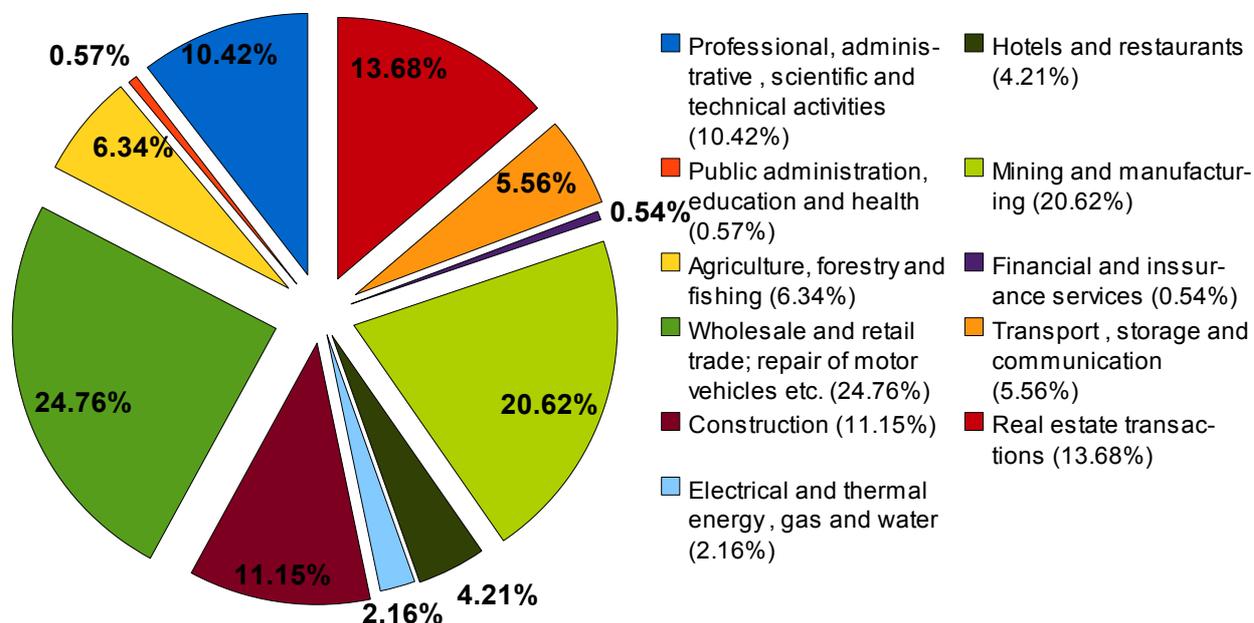
The Italian companies were located throughout the entire territory of Romania by 2013. However, there was still a concentration in some specific zones, especially the west with the county of Timiș, where 2,755 Italian or mixed active companies are to be found. Approximately one third (34.1%) of all Italian companies are concentrated in the western region of Romania, which comprises the counties of Timiș, Arad, Bihor and Cluj. One fifth (21.4%) of the Italian companies are to be found in the capital Bucharest.²¹⁰

²⁰⁹*Ibidem*.

²¹⁰Italian Trade Agency, *Panorama internazionale: Romania*, February 5th 2014,

Figure 18 gives an overview of the industrial sectors in which the Italian companies have been active in Romania since 1990.

Figure 18: Italian investments divided by industrial sectors (no. of companies)



Data source: Italian Trade Agency, *Gli investimenti italiani in Romania*, 2012, p. 5, <http://www.ice.it/paesi/europa/romania/index.htm>, retrieved on October 7th 2014.

Almost one quarter (24.76%) of the Italian companies in Romania were active in the wholesale and retail trade sector. Approximately one fifth (20.62%) operated in the mining and manufacturing sector. In the real estate industry were 13.68% Italian companies active. Construction was with 11.15% the fourth most important sector where Italian companies were active between 1990 and 2012.

If we take into consideration the paid-in capital of the Italian companies, then the mining and manufacturing sector ranks first with 45.45% of the total. Especially those manufacturing sectors, which experienced a boom of investments in the 1990s, have a significant presence. Those are the manufacturers of apparel and leather goods, wood processors and furniture makers, as well as food makers. The financial and insurance sector accounted for 31.34% of the total paid-in capital of the Italian companies in Romania.²¹¹ For the Italian banks and their activity in Romania, see chapter V.5.

<http://mefite.ice.it/CENWeb/ICE/News/ICENews.aspx?cod=43885&paese=66>, retrieved on October 7th 2014.

²¹¹Italian Trade Agency, *Gli investimenti italiani in Romania*, 2012, p.5, <http://www.ice.it/paesi/europa/romania/index.htm>, retrieved on October 7th 2014.

V.3. Astaldi's double-sided reputation in Romania

What were the Italian architects and constructors in pre-communist Romania, is nowadays the company Astaldi Spa. They seem to be the favourite construction company of all Romanian governments since 1990, when it entered the Romanian market. Many people argue that they even received too many contracts from the Romanian state.

Astaldi became one of the key players in the Romanian transport infrastructure sector. The company completed many assignments, such as the A2-motorway between Bucharest and Constanța and the motorway between Arad and Timișoara. It further worked on the modernization of the Henry Coandă International Airport of Bucharest and the Avram Iancu International Airport of Cluj-Napoca, as well as on the modernisation of the railway between Bucharest and Constanța. Very important projects that were completed by Astaldi, in cooperation with other companies, are furthermore the Basarab-overpass in Bucharest, which is an important viaduct with motorway features transiting the city, as well as the modern National Arena, a UEFA 4-class football stadium in which the Europa League final has been held in 2012.²¹²

Figure 19: National Arena in Bucharest (constructed by Astaldi)



Source: I. Costinea, "Arena Națională: construcție complexă de nivel internațional", *Revista Construcțiilor*, IX (2013), No. 93, p. 17

²¹²Astaldi, Romania, <http://www.astaldi.com/group/countries/romania/>, retrieved on October 7th 2014.

In spite of their impressive portfolio, Astaldi reached a couple of times the negative headlines of the Romanian newspapers. In 1997 Astaldi was part of the Italian consortium FAT (Federici Astaldi Todini Italia), which won the tendering procedure for the integral rehabilitation of Romania's first, and for many years only, A1-motorway between Bucharest and Pitești. The consortium committed itself to finish the works within 22 months. The negotiated contract for the total length of 109.6 km was initially 27 million Euros worth. The rehabilitation was completed only after 3 years and the total value of the works increased five fold. FAT offered a guarantee of only 12 months and soon the first defects in the road surface appeared. Although the minister of transport Miron Mitrea threatened to take court actions against FAT, he did not enforce the repairs to be conducted according to the still valid guarantee. Instead of that, the ministry of transport paid another 9 million Euros for repairs by 2003. Two years later, by 2005, the new minister of transport Gheorghe Dobre initiated a new rehabilitation for approximately 3 million Euros, during which a new bitumen layer had to be added to the existing one.²¹³

Astaldi is also involved in the enlargement of the subway network of Bucharest. The Italian constructor is working since 2011, together with a Spanish and two Romanian companies, on the construction of a new metro line, connecting the centre of the city to the neighbourhood Drumul Taberei (south-west Bucharest). The value of the contract with the consortium was 1.2 billion Euros.²¹⁴ By October 2014, Metrorex, the operator of the Bucharest metro, was on the verge of dissolving the contract with Astaldi, due to strong execution delays. Astaldi stopped working for almost two months demanding from the Romanian state an additional sum of 10 million Euros, emerging from unforeseen works that had to be executed. Astaldi resumed the works by October 2nd 2014 and promised to finish by September 2015, as agreed with the Romanian state. In the contrary case, the Romanian government will be forced to pay back non-refundable funds amounting to 200 million Euros to the EU. However, Astaldi promised to search for justice in the Romanian courts.²¹⁵ Moreover, Astaldi signed in the summer of 2012 a contract worth 150 million Euros for the construction of two metro stations, enlarging thereby an older existing line.²¹⁶

213Wall-Street.ro, Bilantul autostrazilor romanesti in ultimele 2 decenii: 14 km pe an, <http://www.wall-street.ro/articol/Economie/65814/Bilantul-autostrazilor-romanesti-in-ultimele-2-decenii-14-km-pe-an.html>, last actualization on June 5th 2009, retrieved on October 8th 2014.

214F. Cojocaru, Economica, Oficial: Metroul Drumul Taberei a devenit prioritar pentru europeni. Pe 7 septembrie intră frezele, http://www.economica.net/metroul-de-drumul-taberei-devenit-proiect-prioritar-europeam-cartitele-varvara-si-filofteia-au-ban_58917.html, retrieved on October 7th 2014.

215DIGI 24, Lucrările la metroul din Drumul Taberei s-au reluat la capacitate maximă, <http://www.digi24.ro/Stiri/Digi24/Economie/Stiri/Lucrările+la+metroul+din+Drumul+Taberei+s-au+reluat+la+capacitat>, last actualization October 2nd 2014, retrieved on October 7th 2014.

216G. Tarabega, "Acord româno-italian în domeniul transportului public", *Siamo di nuovo insieme*, VI (2012), No. 36-37-38, p. 54

V.4. Enel and its imminent withdrawal from Romania

Enel entered the Romanian market in 2005 when it bought 51% of the shares of both Electrica Banat (69.1 million Euros) and Electrica Dobrogea (42.7 million Euros). In 2007 Enel won the public tendering and acquired also 67.5% of Electrica Muntenia Sud, for 820 million Euros. These companies were former state-owned enterprises²¹⁷. In the following years Enel Group was able to generate important profits, culminating in 2012 with a net profit of 195 million Euros. The highest turnover of 1.4 billion Euros was reached in 2013, as can be seen in Table 15.

Table 15: Cumulated turnover and net profit of the Enel Group in Romania

Year	Turnover	Net profit
2008	1.312 billion Euros	154.620 million Euros
2009	1.278 billion Euros	115.330 million Euros
2010	1.295 billion Euros	76.722 million Euros
2011	1.295 billion Euros	79.009 million Euros
2012	1.365 billion Euros	195.291 million Euros
2013	1.462 billion Euros	131.222 million Euros

Own conversions in Euros, according to the average value in each year (<http://www.curs-valutar-info.ro>). Data source in Lei: C. Mailat, "5 motive pentru care ENEL a decis să plece din România", *Capital*, July 23rd 2014, <http://www.capital.ro/5-motive-pentru-care-enel-a-decis-sa-plece-din-romania.html>, retrieved on October 8th 2014.

Also Enel reached the negative headlines in Romania on charges of corruption in June 2014. The Romanian Anti Corruption Agency (DNA) claimed that Enel Muntenia Sud did not respect the investment commitments, which were agreed upon in the privatization contract between Enel and the Romanian State. Enel was able to do so with the tacit accord of the Romanian authorities inside A.N.R.E., which is the national regulatory authority for energy. Corrupt officials inside the control and reception commissions received bribes from Enel, according to DNA. Enel, on the other hand, claims to have respected all contractual stipulations. According to their data, investments in the amount of 1.9 billion Euros have been conducted since 2005, the year of their entrance in the Romanian market. DNA claimed furthermore that Enel was supposed to be advantaged in

²¹⁷M. Scărișoreanu, "Ce îi oferă statul companiei ENEL ca să nu plece din România?", *România Liberă*, September 25th 2014, <http://www.romanialibera.ro/economie/companii/ce-ii-ofera-statul-companiei-enel-ca-sa-nu-plece-din-romania--351073>, retrieved on October 8th 2014.

the privatisation process of the atomic power plant operator Nuclearelectrica. Another irregularity concerned high tariffs for the consumers by charging green certificates, a tax for the production of renewable energy, twice. More than one million customers of Enel Muntenia Sud received overcharged bills. Enel announced that it awaits the results of the enquiry before refunding any money. In the meantime more and more affected customers began to issue complaints. DNA accused a vice president of A.N.R.E., the director of Enel Muntenia Sud and a third businessman of illegal activities in the detriment of its customers and the Romanian State.²¹⁸ It has to be specified though that the accused persons are all Romanian citizens.

On July 11th 2014, approximately one month after the corruption issue became public, Enel officially announced that it wants to sell its 64.4% share in Enel Muntenia Sud, its 51% shares in both Enel Banat and Enel Dobrogea, as well as its 100% share in its service bureau Enel România. Those companies are operating in total a grid of 91 thousand kilometres and are distributing 14TWh of electricity each year. The Enel Group has a market share of 34% in the distribution segment. Moreover, it is supplying 9 TWh each year to approximately 2.6 million consumers, of which 2.4 millions are households (market share of 20%) and the rest companies (market share of 38%). Enel is also one of the biggest investors in the renewable energy sector in Romania. It has a total installed power of 500 MW in windmill-powered plants particularly in the Dobruja region of Romania. Those assets are not for sale yet. According to Enel, the possible sale of its Romanian non-strategic subsidiaries are part of a greater international restructuring programme, which has the aim of reducing its outstanding debts, and are not linked to any hypothetical dissatisfactions with their business activities in Romania. Enel also announced its request to withdraw from the Slovakian market.²¹⁹

218DIGI 24, Scandalul ENEL Muntenia. DNA a ascultat telefoanele suspectilor, <http://www.digi24.ro/Stiri/Digi24/Actualitate/Justitie/Scandalul+Enel+Muntenia+DNA+a+ascultat+telefoane+suspectilor>, last actualization on June 11th 2014, retrieved on October 8th 2014.

219D. Ionascu, "Enel pleacă, rețelele rămân. În locul italienilor trebuie desemnat un operator capabil să gestioneze financiar și tehnic afacerea", *Adevărul*, July 13th 2014, http://adevarul.ro/economie/afaceri/enel-pleaca-retelele-raman-stat-In-locul-operatorului-italian-trebuie-desemnat-unul-putin-fel-capabil-gestioneze-afacerea-1_53c2a2180d133766a862083a/index.html, retrieved on October 8th 2014.

V.5. Italian Banks in Romania

There are three important banks with Italian capital that are offering their financial services on the Romanian market. Those are UniCredit Țiriac Bank, with a market share of 7.6% in 2013, ranking 4th among all banks active in Romania*; Intesa Sanpaolo with 1.4% market share (16th) and Veneto Banca with 1.3% market share (17th).²²⁰

UniCredit entered the Romanian market in 2002, when it bought the Turkish Demirbank Romania. Later, in 2007 it integrated HVB Țiriac Bank and the current denomination emerged. UniCredit Țiriac Bank has approximately 600,000 clients and a network of 188 bank branches throughout Romania.²²¹

Figure 20: UniCredit Țiriac Bank's headquarters in Bucharest



Source: Mărgulescu, Moldoveanu, archdaily, http://www.archdaily.com/261774/unicredit-tiriac-bank-hq-westfourth-architecture/5022f4ed28ba0d4e9700003a_unicredit-iriac-bank-hq-westfourth-architecture_dsc_8022-jpg/, retrieved on October 7th 2014.

* The Romanian banking system is controlled by Banca Comercială Română (part of the Austrian Erste Group), with a market share of 17.5% in 2013; BRD (former Banca Română pentru Dezvoltare, now part of the French Group Société Générale), with a market share of 13% and Banca Transilvania, with a market share of 8.9%.

²²⁰Italian Trade Agency, *Romania: il sistema bancario nel 2013, 2014*, p. 2, <http://www.ice.it/paesi/europa/romania/index.htm>, retrieved on October 7th 2014.

²²¹*vi*, p. 3

Ion Țiriac, holder of 45% of UniCredit Țiriac Bank's shares and one of the richest Romanians, has decided to sell his participation for 700 million Euros. The transaction will be conducted by the end of 2014 and it will be the highest transaction in the Romanian banking system since the beginning of the international financial crisis in 2008.²²²

The UniCredit Group is further represented on the Romanian market through UniCredit Leasing Corporation, UniCredit Insurance Broker, Pioneer Asset Management, UniCredit Consumer Financing and UniCredit Business Integrated Solutions.²²³

The bank Intesa Sanpaolo entered the Romanian market by the acquisition of the local West Bank from Transylvania, which was mainly focused on small and medium-sized companies and on Italian investors. After the global fusion between Intesa and Sanpaolo in 2007, Romania became a strategic market and a priority for the expansion of the group. By 2007 Intesa Sanpaolo Bank had 50 bank branches throughout Romania. Until 2013 they upgraded to a total of 72 bank branches.²²⁴

Since 1980, the beginning of the darkest decade during communism, there was an Italian bank in Romania. Banca Italo-Romena was a joint-venture, which was taken over by Veneto Banca in the year 2000. Veneto Banca's target was to create in Romania a better financial assistance for the numerous Italian entrepreneurs, who relocated their production activities to Romania.²²⁵ By 2014 Banca Italo-Romena was rebranded and its headquarters in Bucharest became officially the headquarters of Veneto Banca in Romania. It operates furthermore a network of 22 agencies, of which 5 are located in Bucharest and other 16 in the most important cities of Romania.²²⁶

Another important Italian organization at the service of the Italian entrepreneurship in Romania, although not a bank, is Unimpresa Romania, which is the largest association of Italian companies outside Italy. It was founded in 2004 with the purpose to unite, organise and represent the Italian entrepreneurship in negotiations with the Romanian national and local authorities. Unimpresa's headquarters is in Bucharest, but it maintains many local branches. The branch in Timișoara is the largest and best established, thanks to the important number of Italian expatriates living in the city and the surrounding Timiș county.²²⁷

222D. Ionascu, "Țiriac vinde participația de 45% din UniCredit Țiriac Bank către grupul Italian", *Adevărul*, June 19th 2014, http://adevarul.ro/economie/afaceri/Tiriac-vinde-participatia-45-unicredit-Tiriac-bank-grupul-italian-1_53a2e04b0d133766a8b81456/index.html, retrieved on October 7th 2014.

223Italian Trade Agency, *Romania: il sistema bancario nel 2013*, cit., p. 4

224*Ibidem*.

225G. Tarabega, "Intervista con Giulio Simonelli, Direttore Generale alla Banca Italo Romena", *Siamo di nuovo insieme*, V (2011), No. 28-29, p. 15

226Italian Trade Agency, *Romania: il sistema bancario nel 2013*, cit., p. 5

227Sellar, "Europeanizing Timișoara", cit., p. 14

V.6. The "investments" of the Italian Mafia

Unfortunately, not all Italian businessmen and investors are honest people. During the last years the presence of the Italian Mafia in Romania became evident. According to Paolo Sartori, attaché of the Italian Interior Ministry to Romania, the Italian Mafia arrived right after the fall of the communist system. They easily found enough persons with whom to collaborate with. At the beginning their main activity was money laundering. It was very easy to invest in a former socialist economy. The Mafia massively invested in real estate and the commercial and industrial sectors. It took part in the privatization process during the transition. In the last years money laundering activities were detected also in investments in the agricultural business and gambling. Other illegal activities are drug-trafficking, arms trade, and international trafficking of stolen goods, especially cars. Sartori estimates that the Italian Mafia has laundered hundreds of millions of Euros in Romania. Approximately 100 Italians have been extradited from Romania to Italy in the year 2013. In the last years Romania became a refuge for important internationally wanted mafiosi.²²⁸

Recently the head of the Camorra clan Vincenzo Cesarano, called "O muss", considered to be one of the most dangerous Italian criminals, has been extradited to Italy. An arrest warrant had been issued on his name by the Tribunal of Naples on April 26th 2012. Cesarano was hiding in his villa in a village in Călărași county approximately 100km south-east from Bucharest.²²⁹ His arrest was possible thanks to the very good cooperation between the Romanian Police and their counterparts from Italy. The two authorities established an Italian-Romanian task force and are conducting a common project called ITA.RO with the mission to fight against the Italian criminals in Romania and the Romanian criminals in Italy.²³⁰

The Italian Mafia invests also in the business of waste disposal. It is believed that the Camorra is transporting the waste from Naples and the province of Campania through the Dardanelles to the harbour of Constanța at the Black Sea, from where the waste is

228R. Durlan, Anchetă Speciale, "Mafia italiană a spălat sute de milioane de euro în România", <http://anchetespeciale.ro/mafia-italiana-spalat-sute-de-milioane-de-euro-romania/>, last actualization on June 6th 2014, retrieved on October 1st 2014.

229S. Ghica, "Vincenzo Cesarano, liderul clanului Camorra prins în România, a fost extrădat în Italia", *Adevărul*, June 5th 2014, http://adevarul.ro/news/eveniment/vincenzo-cesarano-liderul-clanului-camorra-prins-romaniaa-fost-extradat-italia-1_53903eb70d133766a850ae1d/index.html, retrieved on October 1st 2014.

230Polizia di Stato, Archivio notizie, Preso il boss della camorra Vincenzo Cesarano, <http://www.poliziadistato.it/articolo/view/33468/>, last actualization on May 16th 2014, retrieved on October 1st 2014.

transferred via trucks to different waste disposal sites throughout Romania. According to sources inside Interpol, the waste business network of the Camorra is flourishing in Romania. At the surface the waste disposal is managed by Romanian companies. But behind those companies are the companies of the Camorra or other Italian Mafia fractions.²³¹

The most important exponents of the Camorra in the waste business are the brothers Giosue (Joshua) and Ciro Castellano, the grandsons of Pupetta Maresca, the first female boss in the history of the Camorra. The brothers are living in Romania and they are conducting their commercial operations under the cover of restaurants and luxurious clubs, which they run throughout the country.²³²

Further investigations of the Italian Police led to the arrest of several persons involved in the waste business of the Mafia in July 2014. The managers of the “Glina” waste disposal site near Bucharest, the Romanian Victor Dombrowschi and the Italian Sergio Pileri, were arrested on charges of money laundering in favour of the Mafia. Several accomplices were also arrested simultaneously both in Romania and Italy. The Italian authorities believe Massimo Ciancimino, the son of former mayor of Palermo and famous Cosa Nostra boss Vito Ciancimino, to launder his father's money through a complicated scheme of different companies. SIRCO SPA, an Italian company from Palermo, holds 51% of the shares of the Romanian company AGENDA 21, which further holds 82% of ECOREC, the company managed by Victor Dombrowschi that is in charge of the “Glina” waste disposal site. The prosecutors are convinced that the company ECOREC, which runs the largest landfill site in Europe, acted as a façade for Massimo Ciancimino, the son of Don Vito.²³³

The cooperation between the Italian and the Romanian police seems to bear fruits. Just recently, the Romanian police arrested 30 persons, both Italian and Romanian citizens, in the western city of Oradea. Those people were operating an illegal printing plant for the “Napoli” fraction of the Italian Mafia, which they used for the production of

231C. Horvat, “Mafia napolitană sufocă România cu gunoaiele italienilor”, *Cotidianul*, December 3rd 2010, <http://www.cotidianul.ro/mafia-napolitana-sufoca-romania-cu-gunoaiele-italienilor-130983/>, retrieved on October 1st 2014.

232*ibidem*.

* The problem of the Glina waste disposal site and its connection to Mafia related money laundering activities was the subject of Euronews' broadcast “reporter” from January 18th 2013 under the title “Is the mafia's dirty money being laundered in Romania?”. The broadcast can be watched on <http://www.euronews.com/2013/01/18/is-the-mafia-s-dirty-money-being-laundered-in-romania/>, retrieved on October 1st 2014.

233P. Răchiță, “Legături cu mafia italiană: Administratorii gropii de la Glina au fost reținuți.”, *Romania Liberă*, July 14th 2014, <http://www.romanialibera.ro/actualitate/eveniment/legaturi-cu-mafia-italiana-administratorii-gropii-de-la-glina-au-fost-retinuti-343032>, retrieved on October 1st 2014.

false money bills. The authorities were able to confiscate false money with a nominal value of 13 million Euros that were supposed to arrive in several states of the EU. The Italian and Romanian authorities investigated for two years until they decided to annihilate the counterfeiters.²³⁴

V.7. Conclusions Chapter V

Italy is, after Germany, Romania's most important trade partner. It accounted for 11.5% of Romania's exports and 11.0% of all imports in 2013. Their commercial exchange reached the value of 12 billion Euros by 2011 and declined slightly in the following years, because of Romania's decline of imports. Romania's exports to Italy consist especially in apparel, leather goods, motor vehicles, trailers and semi-trailers, and electric and non-electric appliances for household use. The products that are imported from Italy are belonging to the categories machinery and equipment, textiles (the raw material for the Italian companies in the Romanian apparel industry), leather goods, metallurgical products, chemical and fabricated metal products, as well as electric and non-electric appliances for the household use.

Italy ranks first among the enterprises with foreign capital in Romania with 37,029 companies, representing 19.4% of all foreign ones, in 2013. The big majority of these companies were small and medium-sized enterprises. On terms of the invested capital, Italy ranks 7th, with a total of 1.6 billion Euros invested capital between 1991 and 2013.

Approximately one third of the Italian companies are concentrated in the western counties of Timiș, Arad, Cluj and Bihor, while one fifth are to be found in the capital Bucharest.

Divided by their activities, almost one quarter of the Italian companies in Romania are obtaining their profits in the wholesale and retail trade sector, followed by the real estate sector with 13.7% and constructions with 11%. Considering the paid-in capital, 45% are active in the mining and manufacturing sector (especially apparel industry, footwear, wood processing and food makers). On the second place is the financial and insurance sector, with 31% of the total invested Italian capital in Romania.

²³⁴apa, "Falschgeldfabrik der italienischen Mafia entdeckt", *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, September 26th 2014, <http://www.nzz.ch/panorama/falschgeldfabrik-der-italienischen-mafia-in-rumaenien-entdeckt-1.18391612>, retrieved on October 1st 2014.

Important Italian financial institutions in Romania are UniCredit Țiriac Bank, with the fourth largest market share of 7.6%, Intesa Sanpaolo and Veneto Banca, through its Romanian subsidiary Banca Italo-Romena. The Italian entrepreneurship is organized within Unimpresa Romania, the largest association of Italian companies outside Italy.

Among the bigger Italian companies active in Romania are Astaldi and Enel. Astaldi is a known name in Romania, thanks to its participation in big projects of fundamental importance, such as motor-ways, airports, the subway in Bucharest and the newly constructed football stadium National Arena. Unfortunately, Astaldi has been several times in the negative headlines of the Romanian media by reason of delays, poor quality (especially in the motor-way constructions), but also substantial price increasings between the initial price at the acceptance of bid and the final price at the completion of the assignments. Astaldi is considered to be one of the favourite companies of the Romanian authorities, as it was able to receive substantial public contracts during the rule of all post-communist governments. Enel entered the Romanian market in 2005 and is controlling through its Romanian subsidiaries 34% of the energy distribution market. It is also one of the most important investors in the Romanian renewable energy sector. By June 2014, Enel was accused by the Romanian National Anti-corruption Agency (DNA) of involvement in a corruption scandal, concerning the non-fulfilment of contractual stipulations and illegally overcharging the bills of approximately one million customers. One month later, in July 2014, Enel surprisingly announced its will to sell all its activities in Romania, except the windmill-powered plants in the renewable energy sector.

Another important "investor" in Romania is the Italian Mafia which is involved in money laundering, and in the waste disposal industry. The total amount of black money invested by the Mafia is difficult to approximate but we can speak of several hundred million Euros. Additionally, important mafiosi are using Romania as a refugee, such as the recently arrested Camorra-godfather Vincenzo Cesarono, who was immediately after extradited to Italy.

VI. Conclusion of the Thesis, Closing Remarks and Forecast

The Romanian community in Italy is omnipresent. It is by far the largest group of foreigners with approximately one million persons. These people are enjoying a rather negative reputation, thanks to a minority of law breakers among them, but especially due to their role as scapegoats, as attributed often by parts of the Italian media.²³⁵ The common Italians know little about Romania and its common Latin heritage with Italy. One of Silvio Berlusconi's better jokes summarized the common Italian-Romanian history very metaphorically: "In ancient times the Romans invaded Dacia (today's Romania) under the Emperor Trajan. Now, 2,000 years later the Romanians are invading Italy during the mandate of President Traian (Băsescu)."²³⁶ But not only the Roman ancestors of the Italian people migrated to Romania. Only 150 years ago, the Italians were in a similar position as the Romanians today. An important migration wave especially from Friuli and Veneto to the Kingdom of Romania took place between the middle of the 19th century until Romania became a communist dictatorship, after World War II. It is estimated that up to 60,000 Italians temporarily worked or settled for good in Romania. Those people were constructors that helped modernizing the infrastructure, others were farmers searching for a better life abroad. Later on, the Italians started to found companies and to participate actively in the flourishing Romanian economy of the interwar period. An emigration to Romania was preferable to a migration across the Atlantic Ocean, due to the relative proximity to the Italian fatherland. Most of the Italians decided or were forced to leave the country as the communist regime imposed their regime of terror. Companies and estates were nationalized by the new rulers. The small number of Italians which remained behind the Iron Curtain, decided to live without attracting too much attention, and often even to adopt Romanian names. In the meantime, the communist authorities resumed the economic and technological cooperation with Italy. Furthermore, a special relationship existed between the Romanian Communist Party and its Italian counterpart PCI. Important Italian communist politicians, such as current President Giorgio Napolitano, conducted visits to Bucharest on different occasions. The relation between the two parties became frozen in the last decade of Nicolae Ceaușescu's tyrannical regime. After the

²³⁵Caritas, Stranieri in Italia, Oltre 1 milione di romeni in Italia, primato in Ue, http://www.stranieriinitalia.it/attualita-oltre_1_milione_di_romeni_in_italia_primato_in_ue_16849.html, last actualization on March 23rd 2014, retrieved on October 9th 2014.

²³⁶Newsin, ziare.ro, Băsescu le-a spus afaceriștilor austrieci glume știute de la Berlusconi, <http://ziarero.antena3.ro/articol.php?id=1218008898>, last actualization on August 6th 2014, retrieved on October 9th 2014.

bloody Revolution of December 1989 the Italian minority thrived again. According to the last census in 2011, there are 3,203 stable citizens of Italian ethnicity in Romania. Thanks to Romania's friendly laws towards national minorities, there has been even an Italian deputy in the Parliament of Romania, since 1991 until 2014. There are several Italian organisations which conduct cultural activities and publish newspapers and magazines in Italian language. The numbers of the Italian community in Romania increased also thanks to tenth of thousands of Italian expatriates, especially in Timiș county and the western part of Romania, where important investments by Italian companies were conducted since the beginning of the transition period in the 1990s. Especially small and medium-sized companies were relocated from the Italian apparel and footwear manufacturing industry to the Banat region of Romania. Its unofficial capital Timișoara became known as “Trevisoara“ among the Italian expatriates living in Romania. The reasons for the relocation were primarily the lower costs of production but also the availability of a skilled labour-force. Moreover, the location of the Banat in the western part of Romania is strategically important and easy reachable both by plane and car from the Region of Veneto, the origin of the majority of investors. Italy became the second most important trade partner of Romania, with a commercial exchange of approximately 12 billion Euros. There are 37,029 companies with Italian participation in Romania (1st rank) that invested 1.6 billion Euros between 1991 and 2013. There are concentrations of Italian companies in the western part of Romania (counties of Timiș, Arad, Bihor and Cluj), as well as in the capital Bucharest. Big players that are doing business in Romania are, amongst other, Astaldi and Enel. These are two companies with successful businesses and important projects in constructions and the energy sector, both of strategically importance for Romania. Unfortunately, these two companies enjoy a rather ambivalent reputation, due to corruption charges and negative headlines in the Romanian media. Likewise regrettable is the presence of the Italian Mafia and its money laundering businesses. Moreover, internationally most wanted mafiosi were arrested in their hide-outs in Romania.

Romania seemed to have recovered from its economic difficulties, considering the 3.5% GDP growth in 2013 (Italy's GDP shrank by 1.9%). Only in the first two months of 2014, 282 new Italian companies were registered in Romania.²³⁷ It seems that Romania remains, at least for the moment, a privileged destination of Italian foreign direct investments.

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List of Abbreviations

AMAE	Arhiva Ministeriului Afacerilor Externe
apa	Austria Presse Agentur
ASDA	Archivio della Società "Dante Alighieri"
ASMAE	Archivio Storico del Ministero Italiano degli Affari Esteri
AUSSME	Archivio dell' Ufficio Storico dello Stato Maggiore dell'Esercito
ANIC	Arhiva Națională Istorică Centrală din București
ASV	Archivio Segreto Vaticano
CAP	Cooperativa Agricolă de Producție
CGIL	Confederazione Generale Italiana del Lavoro
DPSG	Direcția Poliției și Siguranței Generale
ENI	Ente Nazionale Idrocarburi
FAT	Federici Astaldi Todini Italia
Fiat	Fabbrica Italiana Automobili Torino
FSN	Frontul Salvării Naționale
MAE	Ministero degli Affari Esteri
MAICD	Ministerul Agriculturii, Industriei, Comerțului și Domeniilor
PCI	Partito Comunista Italiano
PCR	Partidul Comunist Român
PDSR	Partidul Democrat Social Român
PSD	Partidul Social Democrat
PMR	Partidul Muncitoresc Român
PNL	Partidul Național Liberal
RO.AS.IT	Asociația Italienilor din România
ROMCOMIT	Banca Commerciale Italo-Romana

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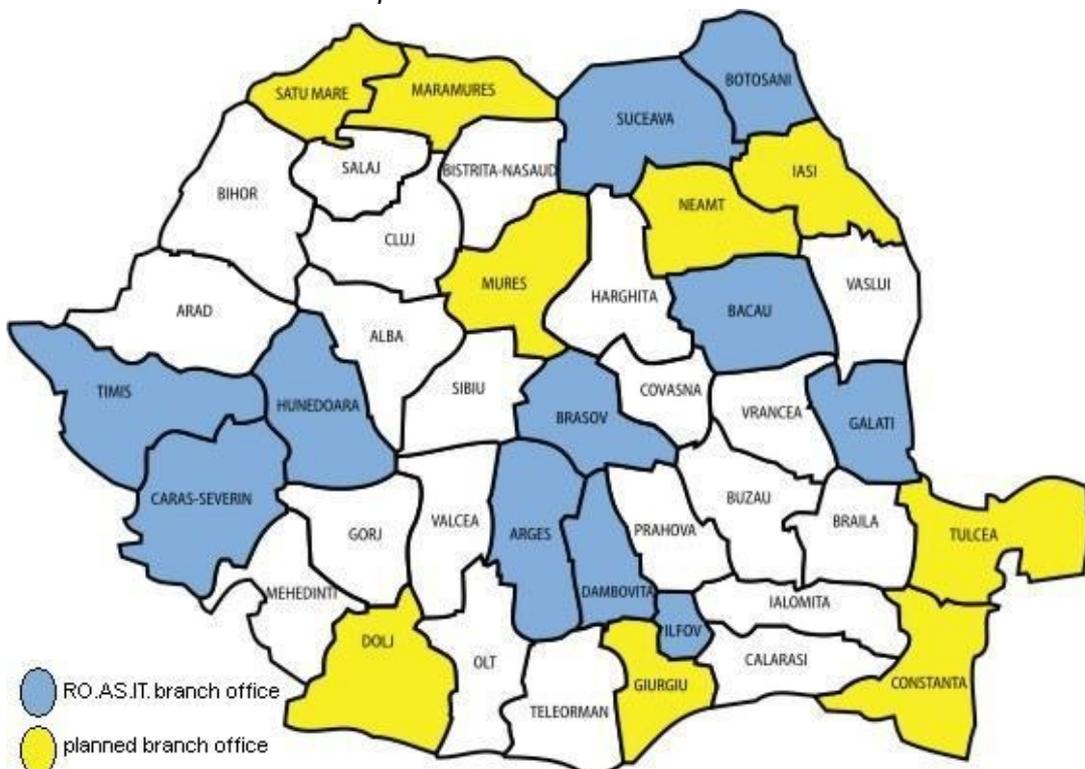
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Source: Harta României, Harta României pe Regiuni Istorice, <http://www.hartaromaniei.co/harta-romaniei/harta-romaniei-pe-regiuni-istorice/>, retrieved on September 17th 2014.

Map 3: RO.AS.IT branch offices



Source: Asociația Italianilor din România – RO.AS.IT., Filiale RO.AS.IT., <http://www.roasit.ro/html/ro/1filiale.php>, retrieved on September 21st 2014.

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