«A sanguine bunch». Regional identification in Habsburg Bukovina, 1774-1919
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Citation for published version (APA):

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PART I - INTRODUCTION AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

1 Historical Overview

Pre-Austrian Days

These days, Bukovina as such can no longer be found on a map. It is a historical region, divided between Ukraine where roughly speaking what was once northern Bukovina is referred to as the Chernivtsi District (Чернівецька область), and Romania, where former southern Bukovina is known as Suceava County (Județul Suceava). However, numerous administrative alterations at both sides of the border distort a one-on-one overlap with the initial Habsburg borders. Geographically, the area is dominated by the Podolian, the Chotyn and the Moldavian Heights and the Dniestr and Prut rivers.

Excavations show that starting with the second millennium BC, it was inhabited by Dacian and Celto-Germanic tribes while there was an influence of the nearby Roman areas from 106 AD. Between the third and sixth century, Goth, Hun and Avar tribes ransacked the region. In the 14th century the Moldavian Principality emerged and centred around the fortress of Suczawa. Starting with the reign of Stephen the Great, the Moldavian lords initiated the construction of the territory’s famous painted monasteries. Romanian nationalists see themselves as the direct successors of the Moldavians and to this day clash with their Ukrainian opponents on the issue of ‘historical rights’. From the beginning of the 16th century, the Moldavian Principality came under the overlordship of the Ottoman Empire.

Habsburg Take-Over and Military Rule

In 1774, Ottoman hegemony of the territory shifted to Austria under still debated conditions. The Habsburg Empire benefited from the weakened position of Constantinople. Russia had wiped Poland off the map and was at war with the Ottoman Empire and was thus perceived as a threat by the Habsburgs. Vienna mediated in a peace treaty which was signed in Küçük-Kaynarca on 21 July 1774 and which assured Russia a southward power expansion. Turkish Moldavia was divided in Russian Bessarabia and Austrian Bukovina.


How exactly Austria conceived the idea of incorporating a part of Turkish Moldavia is unclear. Some claim that in 1773 during a journey through Transylvania Emperor Joseph II developed this strategy, and that the aim was to create a strategic corridor from Transylvania to recently acquired Galicia. In any case, the way the matter was handled was dubious. Empress Maria Theresa allegedly lamented how Austria had been ‘completely unfair’ and declared to be saddened by the way the Empire undoubtedly had to resort to ‘dishonest ways’ to find a solution to the issue. Although some sources mention that at the time, the move was considered ‘a masterpiece of Austrian diplomacy’ and others call it a ‘skilful political operation’, with which the territory was ‘extorted from Turkey as price of Austrian mediation’, most analysts are convinced that some foul play was involved. Even a staunch defender of Austria’s ‘mission in the East’ like Karl Emil Franzos acknowledged that ‘it happens in times of peace that befriended sovereigns bestow horses or precious stones on each other, but that one gives the other one hundred and eighty square miles without any apparent reason is a bit strange’. Romanian nationalist sources, who regard the former Moldavian territories as historical Romanian lands and therefore - anachronistically, retroactively - see the trade-off between the Austrians and the Ottomans as interference in Moldavian/Romanian affairs, claim that ‘Vienna extracted a significant part of Moldavia by bribing the Turks with large sums of money’.

As a justification, the Habsburgs had come up with a historical explanation of sorts: although interpretations vary, the main reasoning was that parts of Northern Moldavia had at one point been part of Galicia-Lodomeria which in turn had belonged to the Habsburg Empire, but it is clear, as it was at the time, that this argumentation was feeble. The Ottomans with their weak power positions obviously had little choice in the matter, though they were also deemed naïve for believing the Austrian historical explanation, or even ‘relieved’ to get rid of the area it was


3 Safran 1939, p. 29.
5 Maner 2007, p. 46.
not able to defend in exchange for Austrian neutrality in the Russian-Ottoman war. More recent studies on Bukovina mostly limit themselves to the neutral conclusion that the transfer of the area from the Ottoman to the Habsburg Empire was the result of ‘successful negotiations’.

The Austrian authorities did not waste any time: before the cession of the Ottoman territory was legalised by the Convention of 7 May 1775, Austrian commander Baron Splény had already established his headquarters at Czernowitz/Cernăuți the August before. Shortly before that, Russian occupying forces had left. The transfer of power had not been without any form of resistance, however. With the negotiations between Habsburgs and Ottomans were still ongoing, the caretaker of the Ottoman Empire in Turkish Moldavia, local nobleman Grigore Ghica III, interfered by means of a letter to the his superiors at the Porte: Ghica insisted that the Austrian troops in the region were limited in number and could easily be chased. He even suggested the population might look for protection of another power if the Ottomans would not prevent an Austrian takeover. Constantinople was obviously not pleased with Ghica’s resistance and sent an execution squad to Ghica which beheaded him in September 1777. In Romanian nationalist historiography, Ghica became the symbol of Romanian resistance against ‘foreign occupation’. Ghica commemorations in Romania in 1875, not accidentally coinciding with the centennial celebrations of the Austrian acquisition of Bukovina, were at the core of Habsburg Bukovina’s biggest ‘treason trial’, the ‘Arboroasa case’. Ghica’s ethnic identity, his motives and his role in Bukovina’s transfer to Austria are still debated today.

The name ‘Bukovina’, introduced by the Austrian rulers in November 1775, had no historical legitimacy and can quite prosaically be traced back to the Slavic- some sources claim more specifically Polish or Polish-Ukrainian - word ‘buk’, meaning ‘beech tree’ and as such related to one of the area’s natural features. Consecutively, ‘Bukovina’ signifies as much as ‘little
beech land’. The name never sat well with Romanian nationalists, who dislike the lack of reference to ancient Moldavia as well as its Slavic roots and maintain that it took Romanian speakers a long time to start using ‘Bukovina’ instead of ‘Austrian Moldavia’ or ‘cordon’ (referring to the military buffer zone the area was designated to be during the first period of Austrian rule). They declare the name as artificial as the Habsburg crownland’s right to exist, but their attempts both in Habsburg days as in post-Austrian times to introduce a Romanian translation of the name (Ţara Fagilor) or a name referring to Moldavia’s former unity (Ţara de Sus, meaning ‘Upper Land’) never caught on: the fact that Romanian national poet Mihai Eminescu - at that time still a teenage schoolboy in the Bukovinian capital - named his 1866 ode to the land ‘In Bukovina’ (La Bucovina) aptly illustrates this. Equal endeavours by German nationalists and civil servants to introduce the German translation Buchenland remained equally unsuccessful; it only appeared regularly as stylistic alternative in German-language texts and later on in the exile community in Germany.

The first years of Habsburg Bukovina were marked by uncertainty and chaos: it was still undecided what kind of administrative status the newly acquired territory would obtain and meanwhile, border surveillance as well as inner security were challenged by smugle, banditry, emigration back and forth and epidemics. Since it was not considered of anything but military use there were hardly discussions about a separate status for the land. Options of incorporating it in Galicia or dividing it between Galicia and Transylvania were considered. The Emperor’s first commanders in Bukovina, Splény and after him Enzenberg, focused on improving and modernising the conditions the Ottomans had left behind without making those chances seem too radical: the main goals were to keep the population satisfied (and thus quiet) and to bring in civilisation and education. The local boyars, soothed by the Austrian consideration for the local Orthodox tradition - they had been granted to take the loyalty oath on the Emperor in front of Commander Splény and Bishop Dosoftei - had initially believed Habsburg rule would be a continuation of the Ottoman swap of ‘autonomy in exchange for tribute’, but rapidly encountered the spirit of Josephinist Enlightenment: Enzenberg convinced Emperor Joseph II that something had to be done about the power position of the Orthodox clergy, which owned a large number of monasteries and estates and which, partly

16 Simiginowicz-Staufe, Ludwig Adolf, Die Völkergruppen der Bukowina, Czopp, Czernowitz 1884, p. 5; Csupor, Tibor, Mikor Csíkből elindultam - a bukovinai székelyek élettörténete, Szépirodalmi Könyvkiadó, Budapest 1987, p. 71; Maner 2007, p. 46.
because of their own inadequate schooling, offered only the most basic education. In 1784 it was decided that all estates owned by the Church were to be administered by the state and all revenues would be transferred to a fund that in turn was to finance clerical expenses. The number of monasteries was to be reduced to three. The regulation entered into force and basically turned the Orthodox Church into a state church. The Bukovinian Church Fund remained a dominant force in the crownland and would even survive it: the Romanian state only dismantled it in 1921.

A Galician District

In 1786, Emperor Joseph II also ended the period of direct military rule from Vienna when on 6 August 1786, he signed the decree which made Bukovina a district of Galicia-Lodomeria. Three provincial courts were allocated to the new district, in the capital Czernowitz, in Suczawa and Sereth which were subordinated to the court in the Galician capital Lemberg. Although the most plausible reason for this decision is the Emperor’s striving after a simpler and more horizontal administration, it met with criticism both in Vienna and Bukovina and its practical implementation proved to be tiresome. Notwithstanding local resistance to the new order, there was dynamism in the development of societal activity and in 1842, a ‘casino for reading and distraction’ was established in Czernowitz. This trend was to continue: between 1851 and 1872, 19 societies were founded while between 1840 and 1857, the population expanded from 334,088 to 456,920. The percentage of Jewish Bukovinians grew from 3.82% in 1850 to 11.79% in 1880. On the whole, however, the decades under Lemberg meant a period of stagnation of reforms; the (at least on paper) existing compulsory education was once again abolished and the fact that the Catholic Consistory in Lemberg managed and used the Orthodox Church Fund resources caused unrest in Bukovina’s leading circles.

Autonomous Crownland Status

In general the revolutionary year 1848 did not cause major turmoil in Bukovina, but it sparked a united and unique joint lobby by moderate liberals, conservative aristocrats and clerics,
headed by Orthodox Bishop Hacman, for crownland autonomy, constitutional reform and equal rights for all confessions. The so-called *Landespetition* also contained some specific Romanian-nationalist demands regarding the use of the Romanian language. Although the initiative was successful and autonomy was granted, the regional constitution drafted in 1850 never entered into force, since absolute monarchy was reintroduced in 1851. As such, Bukovina was still granted the much-desired administrative independence as well as the title of Duchy, but was denied its proper regional Diet (*Landtag*). In 1860, much to local indignation, Bukovina was once more subordinated to Galicia. A joint Bukovinian protest petition with 250 signatures finally resulted in autonomy, in a proper coat of arms clearly referring to the Moldavian past of the region and in the establishment of a Bukovinian regional diet. The judiciary however remained subordinate to Lemberg.

With the installation of a regional political body, nationalist voices influenced by nationalist movements from beyond the crownland borders became louder. The Orthodox Church in Transylvania sought independence from Karlowitz, which was the See of the Orthodox Church in the Habsburg Empire. Transylvania’s bishop Andrei Şaguna hoped to form a joint bishopric with the Bukovinian Orthodox Church, which would give Romanian speakers a clear majority in the new body. Although such plans were opposed by the Bukovinian bishop who had a considerable number of Ruthenian speakers among his clergy and flock, they ultimately fell through in 1867, when the Compromise (*Ausgleich*) resulted in the establishment of the Austro-Hungarian Dual Monarchy: Roughly speaking, the area north of the river Leitha (Cisleithania) was to be administered by Vienna, the area south of the river (Transleithania) by Budapest. Through this settlement, Bukovina now belonged to Austria and Transylvania to Hungary. The founding of a united Orthodox Church which would find itself partly in Austria and partly in Hungary was politically so undesirable that the campaign in its favour immediately stopped. The Compromise also meant that there was no longer a united parliament for the entire Empire. In Vienna, Romanian nationalists from Bukovina thus found themselves cut off from their Transylvanian allies.

*Nationalism on the Rise*

In Bukovina proper, the political balance tilted at the end of the 1870s. Since the regional diet was established, it had been dominated by a stable majority of Habsburg-loyal aristocrats and clerics who identified (increasingly) with Romanian nationalism. The so far largely German-Jewish middle class now gained influence as well as the emerging Ruthenian nationalist movements. As a result, the political agenda was less and less dictated by social issues and more and more by nationalist demands, which meant that confrontations between Viennese administrators and local clerics and politicians intensified. Between 1786 and 1860 the

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33 Turczynski 1993, p. 100.
34 Scharr 2010, pp. 168-175.
influx of Galician immigrants had been strong, partly because of the exemption from military service, cheaper costs of living and lower taxes in Bukovina. After the abolishment of serfdom, many Ruthenian speakers preferred to live among their Orthodox fellow believers than amidst Catholics. The changes within the population turned into the main bone of contention between the Ruthenian and Romanian national movements. Central issue in the debate were the outcomes of Austrian censuses and their defective criterion of ‘language of conversation’ introduced in 1880: multilingualism was as such not taken into account and the presumption that someone’s ‘language of conversation’ implied a national adherence was taken for a fact. Furthermore, the central authorities refused to recognise Yiddish as a language and Jewish as a nationality.37

Remnants of Feudalism and Other Economic Misery

The Bukovinian economy remained dominated by agriculture. Until the 20th century, land cultivation and farming were mainly in the hands of settlers, but the advanced techniques they had brought with them were hardly copied by the local peasantry. Most peasants had not owned land until 1848 and technical innovations were generally met with mistrust. Only after the catastrophic harvests of 1866 to 1868, crop rotation was widely introduced. The changes in relations between landlords and subject resulting from the 1848 events caused problems for the local landowners who found the peasants - now liberated from compulsory labour - unwilling to work even for higher wages. Jewish property steadily increased once the 1867 Constitution had eliminated the last possession restrictions for Jews. Many peasants lost their only recently acquired land to (often Jewish) usurers when they were unable to repay their loans in the difficult years 1866-68. Until the savings bank (Sparkasse) was founded, only private money lending was possible and mainly provided by usurers which in turn provoked outbursts of anti-Semitism. The Orthodox Church Fund continued to be the biggest landowner throughout the years and while it had the opportunity to improve the situation by leasing land to small farmers, it chose to lease land and forests to (again, mostly Jewish) entrepreneurs who were financially able to engage in long-term contracts. Only a very small segment of the rural population, which still made up 70.4% in 1918 consisted of big landowners and leaseholders who made a profit by exporting to the western industrial regions of the Monarchy.

Next to livestock breeding and land cultivation, forestry was its most important pillar and the completion of the railroad Lemberg-Czernowitz-Jassy in 1865 strengthened its prominent position even more. That same railroad proved to have downsides as well, since it facilitated cheap imports from the more industrialised parts of the Empire and thus hampered the development of a proper Bukovinian industrial sector. Although Bukovinian parliamentary deputies continuously demanded financial compensation for the damage these developments

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Bedeutung und Funktion aus der Perspektive Wiens (Mainzer Beiträge zur Geschichte Osteuropas), Lit, Münster 2005, 89-101, pp. 91-94.

37 Hausleitner 2001, pp. 35-40. For more on the lobby for ‘Jewish’ as a nationality and an official status for the Yiddish language, see Part II, paragraph 3.6: Jewish Nationalism in Bukovina.
caused, the issue remained unresolved. Protectionist customs duties imposed by Romania in 1886 were another stumbling block for Bukovinian economic growth. Even after Romania had lifted these in 1891, the crownland only recovered slowly. Ore processing had proved toilsome because Bukovina lacked the necessary charcoal and had to be discontinued already in 1832 for lack of profit. Apart from the Putna glass factory, all glassworks were closed over the years. Some boyars established distilleries, but as a whole entrepreneurial initiatives were limited: the settlers’ descendants mostly supplied the internal market which was modest because of the widespread local poverty. The overwhelming majority of peasants were unable to provide for their own households and were often heavily indebted. In spite of the fact that the region received much more from Vienna than it paid in taxes, it failed to catch up with the more developed crownlands. By the end of the century, social misery often resulted in emigration to the Americas and in rampant alcoholism. Anti-alcohol campaigns initiated by both clerics and civilians were hardly effective. An additional health problem was the population’s unbalanced diet of corn porridge (mamaligă) causing the vitamin deficiency disease pellagra.

*University, Freethinking Alliance and Bukovinian Compromise*

A profound cultural upswing for Bukovina was the establishment of the Franz Joseph University in Czernowitz at the occasion of the centenary of Austrian rule in 1875. It enabled Bukovinians to get an academic education without having to leave their homeland and offered a number of chairs unique for Austria: Orthodox theology and Ruthenian linguistics were only on offer in Czernowitz. As in other circles in Bukovina, nationalist overtones became more dominant at the university. A similar phenomenon occurred in the Bukovinian Orthodox Church, where the continuous rows between Romanian and Young-Ruthenian nationalists made an church split along national lines almost inevitable during the final years of the Dual Monarchy’s existence.

In the early 1900s, all political (nationalist) parties in Bukovina experienced a split between the conservatives, who generally represented a classical, centralist and as such ‘Austrian’ direction and a ‘Young’ current, dominated by Young-Ruthenians and Young-Romanians who stood for social and electoral reforms. In order to undermine the traditional conservative power base, the leaders of the different movements, Aurel Onciul for the Young-Romanians, Mykola Vasylko for the Young-Ruthenians, Benno Straucher for the Jewish and Arthur Skedl for the German nationalists, decided to join forces. They participated in Diet elections in 1904 as the ‘Freethinking Alliance’ (*Freisinniger Verband*) in 1904 and managed to win a majority

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38 Ibid, pp. 40-49.
39 Nistor, pp. 303-304.
41 Turczynski 1993, pp. 156-157.
42 Ibid., p. 174.
(17 out of the 31 available seats), thus ending the monopoly of the ‘aristocrats’ casino’. At the same time, political debates in Vienna as well as in the different crownlands were dominated by discussion on general, equal, direct and secret elections. The leading men of the Freethinking Alliance aspired to introduce those changes not only at the state level, but also at the level of local politics, but their time in office proved too short to achieve results: the Alliance collapsed in May 1905 under the pressure of the intensifying battle between Romanian and Ruthenian nationalists about the balance of power within the Bukovinian Orthodox Church. Onciul’s Young-Romanians and the Romanian conservatives united once more while Vasylko’s Young-Ruthenians and Straucher’s Jewish nationalists strengthened their cooperation.43 However, the spirit of the short-lived Alliance persisted: the election reforms they had proposed had become common good in the local political discourse and their endeavours to ‘fence in’ national interests in order not to let the different nationalist agendas interfere with the way Bukovina was to be administered had already led to the national segregation of institutions, mainly in the field of education.44 Meanwhile, in Moravia the clashes between nationalist Czechs and Germans had led to the ‘Moravian Compromise’ in 1905: voters were registered according to nationality and as such could only support candidates from their own register. In spite of the fact that the new system caused predictable problems - voters were forced to confess to one nationality and the different nationalist factions left no stone unturned to enlarge their respective electoral groups – it aroused a keen interest with the leaders of the now defunct Freethinking Alliance: it sat well with the idea of separate and ‘protected’ national development the Alliance had advocated. A similar Compromise was designed for Bukovina with obvious complications, since, unlike Moravia, Bukovina had more than just two nationalist factions to reckon with. The Bukovinian Compromise was to comprise separate registers for Romanians, Ruthenians, Germans, Jews and Poles. For simplicity’s sake, the small Lippovan (Russian Old-Believer) colonies were included in the Ruthenian, the voters from the five Magyar settlements in the Romanian register. The Jewish register remained a problem since Vienna continued to refuse a Jewish nationality. A solution was found in keeping the Jewish electorate in the German register with a distribution of voter districts which guaranteed a certain number of Jewish deputies. There was little time for the new system to prove its merits: in Bukovina, it was applied only once during the 1911 Diet elections, while the Viennese parliament never got around to implement the register system before the outbreak of the First World War.45

First World War and the End of the Habsburg Empire

Bukovina’s geographical position, only 30 kilometres from the Russian border, put the crownland right in the middle of the battlefields of the First World War from 1914 onwards. Between 1914 and 1917, the territory was occupied and again surrendered by Russian troops. The many changes of ruling authorities meant that the local population not only suffered from wartime shortages and hardship but also faced the constant risk of being charged with ‘treason’, alternately by the Austrian and the Russian military commanders, with executions, internment and deportation as a result. Since voluntary battalions of Bukovinians had helped to make the Russians retreat the first time in October 1914, repercussions were severe after the return of the Russian troops a few months later. Cultural institutions were forbidden and especially the Greek-Catholic (Uniate) Church was heavily persecuted. In July 1916, Romania decided to switch from the Austrian-Hungarian-German-Italian Triple Alliance to the British-French-Russian Entente. In return, it expected to receive Transylvania, Banat and the southern part of Bukovina - the northern part had already been claimed by Russia. The meagre results of Romania’s battle participation soon inspired Russia to claim the whole of Bukovina, but the Russian February Revolution and the following unrest in the Russian army forced Russia to abandon southern Bukovina and, in August 1917, northern Bukovina as well. From September 1917, Bukovina found itself once more in Austrian hands. The future of the crownland remained highly uncertain: while Austria’s Emperor Karl I planned to reshape the Monarchy into a federal state, Ruthenian (now commonly referred to as Ukrainian) attempts to form a proper state from parts of former Czarist Russia and parts of Austria-Hungary failed. Still, they created unrest among Bukovinian Romanian nationalists who saw the plans of the Emperor as an encouragement to unite Bukovina with Transylvania and Banat. In November 1918, a compromise was reached between Romanian and Ukrainian nationalists in Bukovina on how the region was to be divided. The position formerly held by the Austrian governor was now jointly filled by Aurel Onciul for the Romanian and by Omelyan Popovych for the Ukrainian side. That same month however, it became known that a Romanian faction had called for the interference of the Romanian army, which provoked a ‘Ukrainian Legion’ to march on Czernowitz just a few days before Emperor Karl abdicated. Romanian troops occupied Czernowitz on 11 November 1918.

Part of Greater-Romania

In December 1918, a royal decree confirmed Bukovina’s status as part of the Romanian Kingdom. Although a part of Greater-Romania now, tensions in Bukovina remained because the borders of the enlarged Kingdom were not recognised before the end of 1920. Especially in the regions initially designated to become part of a Ukrainian entity, revolts were met by harsh repression, mostly justified with the argumentation that the rebels were bolsheviks. The Romanian government had clear centralist ideas about the future of the country and had little time for minority issues and language questions. During the first ten years under Romanian rule, the liberal party (PNL) dominated and although it claimed to build a modern state in general, its endeavours mostly focused on the protection of domestic industry which
encouraged protectionism and corruption. Modernisations in society lagged behind while
government initiatives mostly meant the destruction of existing structures by means of
random expropriations, exceptional laws and censorship. Bukovina had been backward
according to Habsburg standards, but compared to the state of institutional development of the
state it had joined it was clearly advanced. By the 1930s the ruling National Peasants’ Party
(PNT) aimed for decentralisation and was willing to accommodate national minorities, but
because of the global financial crisis, the means for implementation lacked. With the return of
the liberals in 1933, forced assimilation again put pressure on national minorities. While
Jewish and German organisations still received financial support from abroad, it was mainly
the Ukrainian societies which saw their existence threatened by a lack of means. Ukrainian
activity went underground. In Bukovinian-German circles, the indifference of the Romanian
government and the influence from Nazi Germany sparked a radicalisation. National
minorities often saw their associations restricted to sports clubs. In 1938, the ‘royal
dictatorship’ of King Carol II of Romania ended the free existence of societies and
associations altogether.

Second World War: Deportation and Genocide

In June 1940, in conformity with the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact between Nazi Germany and
the Soviet Union, Moscow sent an ultimatum to Bucharest demanding the restitution of
Bessarabia and the evacuation of northern Bukovina. The Romanian government had no
choice but to accept. Numerous Bukovinians, mainly Jews and Ruthenian speakers, welcomed
the Soviets as liberators. The university was reopened and, after having been German and
after that Romanian, now became Russian. Newspapers were replaced by Soviet propaganda.
Meanwhile, Hitler’s regime had prepared the relocation of ‘ethnic Germans’ (Volkdeutsche)
to Germany from both northern and southern Bukovina. Because of the Molotov-Ribbentrop
Pact, the Germans to be relocated (basically the entire German ‘ethnic group’ from northern
Bukovina, about 43,000 persons, left the territory) enjoyed a protected status. For the other
inhabitants of northern Bukovina, the Soviet occupation meant the risk of refugee status,
48 On daily life in Bukovina during the interwar years, numerous - mostly Jewish - memoirs have appeared over
the years. I mention a number of them here: Katzenbeisser, Adolf, *Geboren in der Bukowina. Geschichte eines
Lebens. Geschichte einer Zeit*, author’s edition, Vienna 1993; Coldewey, Gaby et. al., “*Czernowitz ist gewen an
alte, jidische Schot...*” *Jüdische überlebende berichten*, Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung, Berlin 1999; Kehlmann, Heinz,
*So weit nach Westen - von Czernowitz nach New York*, Rimbaud, Aachen 2004; Sommerfeld, Edith Elefant (with
Czernowitz - Wo Menschen und Bücher lebten*, Verlag C.H. Beck, Munich 2007; Rosenkranz, Moses,
*Childhood: An Autobiographical Fragment*, Syracuse University Press, Syracuse 2007; Hirsch, Marianne and
Spitzer, Leo, *Ghosts of Home: The Afterlife of Czernowitz in Jewish Memory*, University of California Press,
Berkeley 2009.
49 For an impression of how the Nazi regime presented this propaganda program, see Richter, Hans, *Heimkehrer -
Bildberichte von der Umsiedlung der Volksdeutschen aus Bessarabien, Rumänien, aus der Süd-Bukowina und
aus Litauen*, Zentralverlag der NSDAP. Franz Eher Nachf. GmbH, Berlin 1941. For more on the relocation to
deportations and persecution. In southern Bukovina, the transport of Germans to the *Heimat* was a result of a German-Romanian treaty from October 1940. More than 50,000 people departed. The fate of the Romanian Jews was grimmer. Under the pro-German Antonescu regime, Jews were often portrayed as ‘communist enemies’, which was the pretext for a large-scale pogrom in the city of Iaşi in June 1941. In Bukovina, Antonescu had ordered Jews to leave their homes already in June 1940. A year later, Jews were shipped to detention camps. Many perished during the chaotic transfers. In July 1941, Romanian troops started the reconquest of northern Bukovina. From that time deportations of Bukovinian Jews and Roma started to Transnistria (Bessarabia) Around 100,000 people perished in death camps.  

*Aftermath: Split and the End of Communism*

In 1944, Bukovina was once again divided into a northern Soviet and a southern Romanian side. The once multi-faceted society with its many languages and religions had basically ceased to exist: Hitler’s ‘Heim ins Reich’ program had emptied the region of its ‘ethnic Germans’ while the Holocaust had all but annihilated the Bukovinian Jewish population. In the Soviet part of Bukovina, Stalin’s regime reallocated large numbers of citizens from other parts of the Soviet Union to Bukovina, thus altering the demographic composition of what was now called the Chernivtsi District even further. Southern Bukovina remained part of Romania, which became a socialist satellite state soon after. In both parts of the former crownland, the respective socialist regimes applied the habitual methods of centralisation of power structures and nationalisation of production units. Under Nicolae Ceauşescu’s national-communist rule, Bukovina’s famous monasteries played an important role in the nationalist discourse and were well-maintained for this reason. Romanian Bukovina largely escaped Ceauşescu’s infamous rural ‘systemisation’ campaign which ruined many villages across the country, but many larger communities like Suceava (formerly Suczawa) lost their historic centres to communist-style modernisation. Both in the Soviet and Romanian halves, the population remained largely rural, although to a lesser extent so in Soviet Bukovina because of the expanding city of Chernovtsy (the former crownland capital Czernowitz). The impenetrable border regimes severed the ties between the two parts of what used to be Bukovina. This situation only changed after the communist systems had vanished – in Romania in 1989, in the Soviet Union in 1991. The radical changes in the way the population has shifted since the days of Habsburg Bukovina, the lack of contact between the two halves during the communist years, the continuing travel restrictions (only a few small border crossings plus a visa regime between Ukraine and EU member Romania) have eroded the coherence of what used to be one for most of the era between 1775 and 1940.  

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