

**SOME CONSIDERATIONS REGARDING THE HISTORICAL
EVOLUTION/INVOLUTION OF THE REGION IN ROMANIAN
LAW FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF NATIONAL SECURITY**

Abstract:	<p><i>In order to understand the biunivocal relationship from the binomial national security-regionalization we chose the special case of the geo-historical space Argeş-Muscel, with the tragic consequence of the disappearance from history of Muscel County, thinking that in order to understand the present we must first find and decipher the past from the multitude of unpublished facts that are insufficiently known or even overlooked, due to various political calculations of the time, it was deliberately left to lie in oblivion.</i></p> <p><i>The history of the administrative-territorial delimitations of Romania is a living, inexhaustible magazine, which from closed circuit or eminently secret archives reveals documents and events that decided the fate of the Romanian nation and major conflicts starting from petty pride, wars and long processions of catastrophes, their responsibility or the cynical division of areas of influence around the globe. The biunivocal aspect is concerning the meaning of the interinfluence between the components of the relationship thus we will focus on such an important phenomenon for Romanians in the present study. We do not want to be prophetic or pessimistic, but in our past, looking through the older or more recent history of Romania, it is difficult, if not impossible, to find a period of time in which we were a truly independent state and sovereign.</i></p> <p><i>Was it the fault of our geographical position, in contact with the great players of history? Is it because of our national spirit inclined to obedience and servility? Or is it due to the fact that for centuries we have not had leaders with respect for the nation and love of country? By surrendering piece by piece, for vain promises, in an infamous barter in which we have always been the deceived ones, the basic components of the nation's sovereignty, state security is at an extremely dangerous level.</i></p>
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Introduction

Muscel County was a mountainous administrative unit of the first order in the Kingdom of Romania, located in the historical region of Muntenia and is located in the NW of this province on the old road that, coming from Transylvania over the Bran Pass, passed through the Câmpulung depression and reached, over peaks and ridges, in the Argeş valley, in the ancient capital, Câmpulung. Hence, the close ties that this county has always had with Transylvania, perhaps more than with the rest of the country. Câmpulung, known as the first royal residence in Wallachia, originates here the first document known in Romanian, Neacşu's Letter. The first documentary mention dates from 1300 (other sources mention the year 1292), Câmpulung being the oldest city in Wallachia¹. For those of today, who no longer know anything about the ancient history of these lands - well, the anti-Romanian allogeneic, traitors of the nation and the country, have eliminated history as a subject in school in Romania, and about the history of Romanian law and state it reminds nothing of the law students in our country. Instead, for the nostalgic, in Câmpulung there is a boulevard that has long been called "Pardon" Boulevard. This is because it was so crowded those frequent clashes between passers-by inevitably led to apologies expressed everywhere by the phrase "Sorry!". The boulevard looks desolate, almost deserted, an eternal construction site under construction.

From the perspective of regionalization, human society has undergone, in the modern era, major changes in political, social, cultural and economic terms. These transformations, which experienced an accelerated pace in the twentieth century and continue into the 21st century, have led human society for the better. The lives of communities and individuals have generally been improved. In many parts of the world, deep injustices and inequities have been eliminated, by securing fundamental rights and by quality leaps in life. At the same time, however, this context has brought with it the coagulation of currents that undermine fundamental values of human society. Aggressive secularism, radical tendencies to redefine the family, marginalization of Christian-moral values is a manifest reality. The Romanian society was not isolated from these developments. Coming out of a long totalitarian period, Romania and its inhabitants are still struggling to find themselves, to rediscover those common values, which are part of its intimate

¹ *Câmpulung Muscel*, <https://sites.google.com/site/campulungarge>, (21.09.2021)

fabric, such as the territorial administrative organization. From this common identity, our history, shared by an overwhelming percentage among the citizens of Romania, interwoven into our national ethos and which influences the social, cultural and political manifestations of the Romanians, is part of our common identity, being the reference to which we refer as a common standard, timeless and absolute.

Starting from these considerations, from the multitude of problems, we try to configure, in our approach of scientific research, the historical evolution of the concept of region. The term comes from the word „king” who means to rule, to divide. E. Reclus defined it as a space that serves as a basis for the administrative division of nation-states¹. Starting from the natural regions, to the homogeneous, historical, cultural regions, we arrived at the functional region, later included in the spatial theory and in the regional development, including the economic growth. The growth pole theory, founded in the 1950s, made the connection between the development of cities and regions, the growth pole being seen as an economic unit able to induce regional structural changes, found in the growth rate and growth of regional production. In a century, the evolution of the concept of region has led to the understanding that behind this widely used word, often excessively; there is a geographical, economic, human, cultural and historical reality. The relativity of the notion of region depends on the reporting scale, so the variable geometry of the term has led to many challenges, especially in the '70s and '80s, being proposed other concepts, such as area, functional space, macro functional space². From the same period dates a new revival of concerns about the concept of region, related to regional development. The region, going through several phases of evolution, including the one of system-region and region of development, ends up being considered as the operational notion most adapted to a period in which the state loses importance, through globalization. This led to the assertion that today's world is no longer a world of states but of regions, hence the idea of fragmenting Europe into regions and considering them as the basis of continental cooperation. At the same time, the region can be a framework for analysis and differentiated development to reduce inequalities at the level of a state or part of the European continent. The region is a conceptual structure and therefore its meaning can vary from one culture to another and between members of different communities and legal coagulation followed the historical context, internal and external, of Romania's evolution.

¹ *Fundamentele procesului de regionalizare în România*, <https://cdn.cursdeguvernare.ro/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/Raport-CONREG-I-final.pdf>, (21.09.2021)

² Antoine S. Bailly, *The Region: A basic Concept for understanding Local Areas and Global Systems*, <https://journals.openedition.org/cybergeog/333?lang=fr>, (21.09.2021)

About the evolution of the administrative-territorial organization of Romania in the interwar period

According to one opinion, "although the first regulations regarding administrative-territorial organization begin in 1864, together with Law No. 394 of March 31, 1864 for urban and rural communes and Law No. 396 of March 31, 1864 for the county councils, the Romanian unitary national state was only consolidated in 1918, when the Great Union was built. This event marked the completion of the state and national unity by carrying out the unification of the Old Kingdom of Romania with the historical provinces of Bucovina, Bessarabia and Transylvania. From the territorial administrative point of view, the newly integrated historical provinces were organized according to the legislation specific to the state of which they were a part, which remained temporarily in force. Thus, during the period between the Great Union, which took place on December 1, 1918 and up to the time of the Law on administrative unification, on June 14, 1925, 4 administrative regimes worked on the Romanian territory, namely: Austrian, Hungarian, Russian and the one from the old kingdom, each having its own characteristics"¹.

As these administrative regimes were adopted under the imperative of different systems and circumstances, the four administrative cut-offs had their own characteristics, relative to the political and socio-economic reality of each region, characteristics that induced significant imbalances throughout the country. In the immediate period following, the legislator's main concern was to ensure the unity of regulation on the level of constitutional and administrative law, because it aimed directly at the organization of power and state administration. Regarding the means of achieving the unification of the legislation, two possible variants have been identified: either the extension of the application of the existing legislation in the Old Kingdom of Romania and in the historical provinces, or the elaboration of new normative acts, which will replace the existing ones, by synthesizing the existing ones better regulation of each branch of law. The main advantage of extending the existing legislation in the Old Kingdom of Romania was the fact that it would have ensured a fast pace of legislative unification, thus achieving an immediate integration of the historical provinces. On the other hand, the legislation was adapted to the social, political and economic needs existing in the territory of the Old Kingdom, needs different from those existing in the new provinces, an aspect that could have created serious imbalances.²

The unification of legislation by the second method created the premises of a superior legislation both from the point of view of the legislative technique and the content. However, this method involved a much longer period of time, in

¹ Iasmina Petronela Rada, *Regiunea în dreptul românesc – evoluție istorică și perspective de viitor*, "International Conference of Doctoral Students in Law, Studies and Legal Research", Timișoara, 2019, <https://www.universuljuridic.ro>, (21.09.2021)

² Emil Cernea, Emil Molcuț, *Istoria statului și dreptului românesc*, Universul Juridic, București, 1999, p. 249

which to study the existing legislative systems, in order to identify and synthesize the useful parts of each system. Finally, both methods were used in the process of legislative unification, being applied the extension in certain branches of the law (for example: constitutional law, civil law, criminal law, criminal procedural law) and the elaboration of new normative acts in the other branches. (for example: financial law). Regarding the territorial administrative organization of Romania, it was tried to create a new normative act, which proved to be, finally, an extension of the existing legislation in the Old Kingdom of Romania. Throughout history, the Romanian state has undergone a multitude of administrative reforms, thus knowing various forms of territorial administrative organization, implemented through a succession of normative acts.

The first normative act after the accomplishment of the Great Union, which regulated the territorial administrative organization of the newly formed Romanian state, was the Law for administrative unification of 1925¹, which was a materialization of the legislative project elaborated by the liberals who were in government at that time. This divided the territory of Romania into counties, urban and rural communes and plateaus, conferring the first two legal personalities. Shortly after the adoption of this first normative act by the territorial administrative organization of the newly formed Romanian state, following the coming to government of the peasants, a new legislative project was drafted which provided for a reorganization. This project was debated and adopted by the Parliament on August 4, 1929, materializing through the Law for the organization of the local administration, which introduced for the first time the ministerial directorates, in order to decentralize the central power and establish higher regional structures. The law renews the idea of the historical regions organizing the territory of the country in 7 ministerial directorates named after the chosen cities administrative centers: Bucharest, Cernăuți, Chisinau, Cluj, Craiova, Iași and Timișoara².

The last administrative reform, until the outbreak of the second world conflagration, was carried out after the introduction of King Carol II, under the regime of the new Constitution of February 27, 1938, when the Administrative Law of August 14, 1938 was adopted, a normative act introducing a new territorial administrative unit, besides the existing ones, respectively the county. The breakdown by land was similar to the ministerial directorates, but the approach was different, because the historical provinces were not taken into account in their delimitation and the motivation was based on a statement regarding the real needs of the new Romanian twin inhabitants³. The 10 lands newly established had the status of administrative - territorial units with legal personality and economic,

¹ *Legea nr.95/1925 pentru unificarea administrativă*, ”Gazeta Oficială”, Part I No. 128 of June 14, 1925

² Radu Săgeată, *Organizarea administrativ-teritorială a României. Modelul interbelic*, ”Urbanism Magazine”, No. 11, 2012, <https://www.academia.edu/16016457> (16.09.2021)

³ Armand Călinescu, *Spiritul noului regim administrativ*, ”Enciclopedia României”, II, 1938, pp. 134-137

cultural and social attributions, and their administration was entrusted to a royal resident. In 1940, in the context of the territorial losses of that year, it returned to the division of the Romanian state into counties and communes, as administrative-territorial units with legal personality, heritage and own budget¹.

The legal regulation of the region in the history of the Romanian state

Although the concept of region and the phenomenon of regionalization appear as a novelty in Romanian law, they are not entirely foreign to the historical evolution of the Romanian state. Over time, several projects were proposed for organizing the local administration, which included, among others, the establishment of the region as a territorial administrative unit, of which we mention the following:

- In 1862 Barbu Catargiu proposed to divide the Romanian Principalities into four regions, namely Moldova de Sus, Moldova de Jos, Muntenia and Oltenia².

- The project was resumed in 1912 by Petre P. Carp, who proposed the division of Romania into six regional constituencies³.

- The same idea was also resumed in 1921 by Constantin Argetoianu, in whose project of organizing the local administration there was also found the creation of nine regions⁴

- And in the Parliamentary debates on the Law for the organization of the local administration in 1929, the regional organization of the Romanian territory was discussed.

Despite the fact that over the years there have been numerous discussions and regionalization projects, only in 1948 the region is aware of a constitutional consecration in Romania, when it is recognized as a territorial administrative unit together with communes, plazas and counties. Subsequently, following a new administrative reform generated by the coming into power of a pro - Soviet government, by the Jude Bolshevik sources, and by the establishment of the communist regime, the Romanian territory knows a new division, based on the criterion of social economic complexity. Thus, the counties were abolished, and Law No. 5, of September 7, 1950, normative act that was characterized by a perfect centralism, divided the territory of Romania into regions, cities, districts and communes. The source of inspiration for this administrative-territorial division

¹ Benonica Vasilescu, *Organizarea administrativ-teritorială și evoluția legislației în domeniul administrației publice locale*, "Buletin de Informare Legislativă", No. 4, 2013, p. 8

² Barbu Catargiu, *Discursuri parlamentare*, <https://www.scribd.com/document/388177951>, (21.09.2021)

³ Constantin Gane, *PP Carp și rolul său în politica internă a țării*, vol. II, "Universul", 1936, p. 360-361, <http://dspace.bcuc.ro/handle/123456789>, (21.09.2021)

⁴ Adrian Onofreiu, *Un proiect de regionalizare a României din 1921. Cazul județului Bistrița Năsăud*, "Revista Bistriței", No. 28, 2014, <https://www.academia.edu/20346133>, (21.09.2021)

was represented by the Soviet model, and the novelty constituted one of the two territorial administrative units, identical to those existing in the territory of the USSR, respectively the regions and districts, created in order to exercise a much greater control of the central power over local administration. The main declared purpose of the administrative reform was the economic development, and in the subsidiary we find the facilitation of the approximation of the State apparatus to the population of the country.

Therefore, the new territorial administrative division did not take into account the historical regionalization, but was based on the economic criterion, the new administrative units being considered as "territorial units operationally from an economic, political and administrative point of view"¹. Moreover, from a political perspective, between 1952-1968, in the center of Romania there was a Hungarian autonomous region, established according to the Soviet model. It was an experiment imposed by Soviet dictator Stalin under pressure from communist leaders in Budapest, by a constitution formulated in Moscow. In this sense, in 1950, in Romania, the first post-war administrative reorganization took place following the Soviet model. Thus, the 58 counties were transformed into 28 regions and 177 districts. Two years later, following the amendment of the law, a first reorganization of this system takes place, following which by merging ten districts from the former Mures and Stalin regions, the Hungarian Autonomous Region is established. The Hungarian Autonomous Region existed in this form until 1960. The region's residence was in Târgu Mureș, and its territory covered an area similar to that of the present Covasna and Harghita counties, as well as the eastern part of Mureș county. The region had about 13,550 km² and a population of approx. 730,000 inhabitants mainly of Hungarian ethnicity. The official languages of the region were Romanian and Hungarian. The establishment of the Hungarian Autonomous Region was a simple political experiment whose mentality fits perfectly with the Soviet model, which no state with popular democracy in the Moscow sphere of influence, dared to elude².

Within this imposed model and with the help of the autochthonous tails, the appropriate legal framework was also created, according to which the region was a territorially delimited administrative-economic unit, on which the central state bodies directly supported in carrying out the Party and Government policy. The region was directly subordinated to the central organs of the State and consisted of districts and cities of regional subordination (those localities, which, from an economic and political point of view, were of particular importance for the whole region). The district was a territorial unit, economically, politically and administratively operative. It was subordinated to the region and was made up of cities of district subordination (those localities, which, from an economic and political point of view, were of particular importance for the whole district) and common. Thus, the notion of region was characterized by a strong centralism,

¹ According to art. 7 of Law No. 5/1950

² *Regiunea Autonomă Maghiară*, https://Regiunea_Autonomă_Maghiară, (21.09.2021)

being considered an instrument by which the central power exercised control over the local authorities. After returning to the forms of territorial administrative organization before the communist regime, respectively the county and the commune, and until the adoption of Law No. 151/1998 regarding the regional development in Romania, the notion of "region" has not known any legislative consecration.

The aforementioned normative act did not, however, create a new territorial administrative unit in Romania, but development regions constituted by their voluntary association, the purpose being an exclusively economic one. It should be noted that the notion of region and the concept of regionalization have known in Romanian law a completely different meaning than at European level. While around the Romanian concept of regionalization, the declared idea of citizens' access to the management of local public affairs revolved around the purpose, the aim really being a predominantly political one, controlling the central power over the local administration, at European level were based on economic considerations. In countries such as France or Italy, for example, the engine of regionalization was the removal of the state from the economic crisis, by creating an intermediary structure that would allow economic factors much easier access to the participatory decision-making process. In Romania, on the other hand, all the argumentation for regionalization has a predominantly political and administrative character, without taking into account the economic side and our current reality, in a Euro-Atlantic context.

Brief analysis of the current reality

The constitution in force at the moment in Romania does not make any reference to regions, but to the concept of decentralization. For a better understanding of constitutional terminology, a legal analysis of some diametrically opposed notions, namely centralization and decentralization, but also of the principle of local autonomy, is required. Centralization is the system that, while acknowledging the existence of a local interest, does not provide the mechanisms for its promotion from an organizational and functional point of view. From the organizational point of view, the centralization is transposed by a hierarchical subordination of the local authorities to the central authorities, and from a functional point of view, by the fact that the decision documents are issued by the central authorities and implemented by the local ones. Therefore, local public authorities do not have the initiative to promote the interests of local authorities. Even when the legislative system confers certain responsibilities in this respect, they are limited and, consequently, do not offer a real possibility of asserting the identity of local authorities.

Decentralization is that system based on the recognition of the local interest, distinct from the national one, the local authorities having both organizational structures and their own heritage, in order to achieve the local interest. The basis of decentralization is both political and administrative. On the one hand, at the political level, decentralization aims to ensure the participation of

citizens in the management of local authorities through the local authorities chosen by them. On the other hand, at the administrative level, decentralization is based on the principle that the authorities chosen by the citizens should know best the local needs and take the necessary measures to achieve them. Decentralization is inextricably linked to local autonomy, in the specialized doctrine the opinion that local autonomy constitutes a right is outlined, and administrative decentralization represents a system that presupposes it¹.

This assertion does nothing but designate the right of local authorities to have decision-making powers in matters of local interest. Thus, the principle of local autonomy could be defined as representing the capacity of local authorities to manage their local interests and problems according to their own reason, without the intervention of the central authority, but by observing the provisions of the legislation issued for the field under debate². The absence of a regulation at the constitutional level of the region does not prohibit the creation of such structures, which would confer a high degree of decentralization to the Romanian state. This process, however, would be a laborious one which would first of all involve the creation of a legal basis to ensure the implementation of a new administrative model. Moreover, territorial administrative reorganization must ensure a functional and viable system. As a consequence, the change cannot be sudden, but must be done step by step in order to ensure the acquisition and adaptation of the old concepts, but also the implementation of the new ones with maximum efficiency in order not to create an administrative instability, which would inevitably lead to an economic one and social. Now, after these brief theoretical considerations, from a legal point of view, let us dwell on an area very dear to me, to the Argeş-Muscel geo-historical space, where I saw the light of day, examining the temporal coordinates of the land that gave the first capitals of our homeland.

About the geo-historical space Argeş-Muscel

5.1. Specific issues

Regarding the writings related to the geo-historical space Argeş-Muscel, we emphasize, mainly, the steps belonging to the traditionality. Such volumes, having diversified content, illustrate, by reference to the level of known information, historical, geographical, linguistic, economic or demographic aspects, the role of personalities originating from this part of Romania, other valuable details. Among the authorities in this field, who analyzed realities specific to the mentioned area, we nominate: Nicolae Iorga, George Ioan Lahovari, Constantin D.

¹ Corneliu Liviu Popescu, *Autonomia locală și integrarea europeană*, All Beck, Bucureşti, 1999, p. 56

² Andra Karla Sienerth, *Theoretical aspects of regionalization*, "Polis, Journal of Political Science", No. 3, 2014, p. 43, https://www.ceeol.com/search/article_detail?Id=290553 (21.09.2021); Andra Karla Sienerth, *Regionalization in the interwar political discourse in Romania*, <https://www.ssoar.info/ssoar/bitstream/handle/document/55858/ssoar-sp-rpsr-2017>, (21.09.2021)

Aricescu, Constantin Giurescu, Aurelian Sacerdoțeanu, Constantin Alessandrescu, Dan Simonescu, Gheorghe Pârnuță, Augustin Z.N. Pop, Nicolae Leonăchescu, Florian Tucă, Dan Zamfirescu. In turn, some local authors have stopped on their favorite areas¹.

According to the Encyclopedia of Argeș and Muscel, I, Pitesti, 2008-2014, "the present county Argeș, a name superimposed on the legendary ancient hydronym Ordessos/Argesis, has, by uniting with the Muscel, since 1950, statistically, the area of 6,826 km², which represents, approximately, 2.9% of the territory of today's Romania, and the number of inhabitants is, on average, 645000 people. It has three municipalities, four cities, 95 communes being a well-known historical, economic, and cultural, social, and spiritual, and tourist area. After January 1, 2007, it is part of the Southern Muntenia Euroregion"². The official residence, the municipality of Pitesti, was attested by a written document (May 20, 1388), bearing the seal of Mircea cel Bătrân (1386-1418). At the Court of Argeș and Câmpulung, former royal capitals, there are important voivodal and royal necropolis. The first reference to the former Argeș county dates, it seems, from August 13, 1437. The record, reproduced in *Documenta Romaniae Historica, B, Romanian Country*, Volume I, Bucharest, 1966, reminds, on page 50, of "Lănjești din Arghis", from the current locality Lunca Corbului (Argeș). Even the graphics from the old traditional county coat of arms, as reproduced in the in an older encyclopedia, document that "Argeș County is part of the mountain counties. It is located in N-V Muntenia, on the upper valley of Argeș and on the old road that, coming from Transylvania, on Turnu-Roșu, reached the former residence of the voivodes, Curtea de Argeș. And today this road is the shortest between Sibiu and the current Capital of the country. Coat of arms: blue shield, with a golden eagle, taking its flight from a green mountain with three pools symbolizes the extent of the dominion of the Argeș voivodes, over the entire country of the Romanian Country"³.

The name of Muscel is subsequent: April 30, 1536, during the time of Mr. Radu Paisie/Peter from Argeș (1535-1545). There was, temporarily, in this area, the Pădureț County, notified, on July 19, 1498, during the time of Mr. Radu cel Mare (1495-1508), then merged with the Muscel. According to the Encyclopaedia of Romania, Bucharest "Muscel County is part of the mountain counties of Muntenia and is located in the north-east of this province on the old road, coming from Transylvania, over the Bran pass, passing through the Câmpulung depression and reaching, over the peaks and peaks, in Valea Argeșului, in the capital of the times, Curtea de Argeș. From here, the close ties that this county has always had with Transylvania, more than perhaps with the rest of the country. Coat of arms: blue shield, with a golden eagle, with red beak and claws, standing on a green oak

¹ Petre Popa (eds.), *Enciclopedia Argeșului și Muscelului*, Vol. III (L-R), Universitatea din Pitești, Pitești, 2012

² *Ibidem*, p.12

³ Dimitrie Gusti, (eds.), *Enciclopedia României*, București, 1938, p. 33

branch symbolizes the beginnings of the Romanian Country reign in this county. It is the old heralded coat of arms”¹.

Over the centuries, the general evolution of the Argeş-Muscel area has been approached as demographic, economic, social, cultural, and religious. The two entities are defined medieval and resized by the legislation of 2/14 April 1864, elaborated during the time of Alexandru Ioan Cuza (1859-1866), having lands, nets, urban or rural communes, villages. According to the territorial organization decided by the Romanian sovereign, Carol II (1930-1940), Argeş and Muscel counties became part of Bucegi County, governed from Bucharest (1938-1940), and in the 1940-1944 stage, were integrated into Region IX, structure condensed to military criteria, established by the head of state, Marshal Ion Antonescu (1882-1946). As of November 30, 1944, Romania had 58 counties. Some southern Argeş settlements belonged to Teleorman County². Based on the Law No. 5, from September 6, 1950³, the vast majority of localities in Argeş, Muscel, Olt, Vâlcea formed the Argeş Region (1950-1952; 1961-1968)/Piteşti Region (1952-1961). It was divided into the districts: Băbeni-Bistriţa, Costesti, Curtea de Argeş, Drăgăneşti Olt, Drăgăşani, Găeşti, Horezu, Muscel, Piteşti, Potcoava, Râmnicu Vâlcea, Slatina, Topoloveni, Vedea, totaling 15 800 km², 5,6 of villages. From January 1, 1961, Băbeni-Bistriţa and Topoloveni were dissolved, followed shortly by Vedea. By Law No. 57, from February 16, 1968⁴, was reverting to the administrative organization by counties. However, compared to the traditional situation, Argeş and Muscel remained united, a situation that continues even today, painful for us, the Muscelen, who, by abolishing Muscel County, we remained homeless.

Geographically, the heights of the Fagaras mountains, from the Southern Carpathians, unite Argeş, to the north, with the counties of Sibiu and Braşov; the seeded ridges of the Leaota Massif, the hills of the Getic Plateau and part of the Romanian Plain constitute the eastern bridge with Dâmboviţa county; The Găvanu-Burdea plain borders it, to the south and south-east, with Teleorman and Olt counties; the water company, between the rivers Argeş and Olt, gives its vicinity, to the west, with the counties of Valcea and Olt. The relief, like a huge amphitheater, is deciphered, from the north to the south, from the Moldovean Peak (2,544 m) to the alluvial plains. Piedmont lands occupy more than half of the previously mentioned territory. On the valleys dug by water in mountains and hills, on the beautiful plains and mosses, along roads and highways, as well as in the plain, there were early settlements. The material and spiritual life of Argeş-Muscel

¹ Petre Popa (eds.), *Enciclopedia Argeşului și Muscelului*, Vol. III (L-R), Universitatea din Piteşti, Piteşti, 2012, p. 15

² *Ibidem*

³ *Lege nr. 5 din 7 septembrie 1950 pentru raionarea administrativ-economică a teritoriului Republicii Populare Române*, ”Buletinul Oficial”, No. 77 of September 8, 1950

⁴ *Legea nr.2 din 16 februarie 1968 privind organizarea administrativă a teritoriului României republicată*, ”Buletinul Oficial”, No. 54 of 54 of July 27, 1981

has gone up, through the centuries and millennia, with the uninterrupted evolution of the other traditional lands. There is no older or new building in this area, which does not mention the personality of the Romanian people, their efforts for independence, unity, progress, civilization. Here was Ctitoriei Country, the cradle of the formation of the primordial feudal state, often called Muntenia or Valahia, here were the first princely residences, from the Court of Argeş and Câmpulung, from here was issued the first coat of arms of Basarabil, symbolizing the beginnings of the reigns and the extent of its dominion, in the 14th century, over all the inaccurate geography, including the north of the Danube mouths¹.

5.2. The role of the Argeş-Muscel area during the Middle Ages

Efforts to maintain our medieval structures have often focused on these places. Thus, on November 12, 1330, the voivode of Argeş, Bessarab I the Founder (c. 1310-1352), obtained the emblematic victory from Posada, from the beginnings of the Perisans, about which he will also mention the chronicler Martin Strykowski from Poland: "Hungarian King Carol, rising a terrible war on the mountain lord Basarab, he was completely defeated ... so that with his few he barely escaped"². On October 10, 1394, the army led by the voivode Mircea cel Bătrân (1386-1418) faced the armies of the legendary Sultan Baiazid (1389-1402), the Romanian army obtaining in Rovine, somewhere, on the Plain south of Piteşti, as many think analysts of the period, a resounding success. "It was a great war", notes in 1620, the learned monk Michael Moxa, how dark the widow by the crowd of arrows... and Baiazid lost his army altogether. At the Court of Argeş, Mr. Nicolae Alexandru (1352-1364) established the first Orthodox metropolis of Muntenia (1359). Sixteenth-century documents recorded important aspects regarding the role of the Argeş-Muscel area during the time of Mr. Neagoe Basarab (1512-1525), the one who left us, among others, the Episcopal Church of the Court of Argeş, aureolized with the Ballad of Manole Manole, as well as the famous philosophical texts brought together under the Generic Teachings. Then, during the Radu voivode of Afumaţi (1522-1525), one of his 19 fights with the Turks was carried to Rucăr, on the way to Brasov (1522). Particularly important are the facts of the first unifier of the Romanian Countries, Mihai Viteazul (1593-1601), spent, in 1595, in Stoenesti, between Câmpulung and Târgovişte, later, November 25, 1600, near the old residence of the Court of Argeş, where he employed his last one. military initiative south of the Carpathians. Not long ago, Mr. Matei Basarab (1632-1654) installed, at his residence in Câmpulung, a printing press. They maintained, with the people of these places, at the same time, the voivodeships Vlad Călugărul (1481-1495), Constantin Serban (1654-1658), Serban Cantacuzino (1678-1688), Constantin Brâncoveanu (1688-1714), but also some Phanariotic rulers. (1716-1821), whose legislation and codes, will direct our pre-modern administration. In

¹ Petre Popa (ed.), *Argeş. Cartea eroilor*, Argeş, Piteşti, 1984, p. 23-43

² Petre Popa (ed.), *Enciclopedia Argeşului și Muscelului*, Vol. III (L-R), Universitatea din Piteşti, Piteşti, 2012, p. 17

1793, in Pitesti there was the seat of an Orthodox episcopal chancellery, subsequently transferred to the Court of Arges¹.

5.3. Argeş and Muscel in the modern and contemporary era

Argeş's book lists important and significant concepts or moments during the national events of 1821, 1848, 1859, 1877, 1918. As proof, Tudor Vladimirescu, the initiator of innovative actions from 1821, who had served temporarily in the administration of the Muscel, included the city Piteşti, as a Nordic strategic point of eventual resistance, in the plans of the revolutionary movement, elaborated with the direct agreement of some patriotic luminists. The precipitation of the events did not allow, however, the application of those envisaged, on the contrary, the Vladimiri citizen became captive of his allies, the leaders of the Greek Aether, in the camp established at Goleşti, paying, on May 27, 1821, with his life, somewhere near Targoviste, the daring of to raise the wishes of the lower nation to the value of European cardinal requirements². Traditionally, until the eighteenth century, Arges county was coordinated, territorially, from the Court of Arges, residence becoming, then, the city of Pitesti. Between 1831-1864, both Argeş and Muscel were governed by survivors, replaced, by the Law of administration, from April 1, 1864³, with prefects (French inspiration). The county councils also appear. According to the Organic Regulation, applied, effectively, between 1832-1858, Arges county had the plains Aref and Loviştea, as well as six nets: Arges, Galesesti, Oltul de Jos, Pitesti, Topolog, Vâlsan. Similar structure we also meet in Muscel county: Argeşel, Dâmboviţa, Nucşoara plains; the rivers and vineyards. Over time, many changes will occur.

An important success of the management of the two counties was the establishment of the village state schools, by applying the Command of the Department of Internal Affairs, dated, Bucharest, January 14, 1838. The activity was coordinated by the Eforia Schools in collaboration with the Great Logistics of Church Works. At the beginning of the decade, national (normal) schools for the campuses of Campulung (1832) and Piteşti (1833) were set up, which prepared the first teachers for rural institutions. Thus, for example, on April 2, 1839, in the Podgoria net (Muscel) primary schools were considered open. Argeşen and Muscelen were actively involved in the Revolution of 1848, noting several personalities from this area, such as: Ion C. Brătianu, Dumitru C. Brătianu, Ştefan C. Golescu, Nicolae C. Golescu, Radu C. Golescu, Alexandru C. Golescu (Albu), Alexandru G. Golescu (Black), Constantin D. Aricescu, Ion D. Negulici, Nicolae Kretzulescu, Carol Davila. It should be mentioned that, for the most part, the members of the Provisional Government from 1848 came from such places, and at

¹ *Ibidem*, p.8

² *Ibidem*

³ *Legea nr.394 din 31 martie 1864 pentru comunele urbane si rurale*, "Gazeta Oficială", March 31, 1864

Rucăr, the executive board was recalled for a short time, at a time of disorientation of the leaders of the revolution¹.

In order to achieve the unification of the Romanian Principalities, respecting the ones provided by Article 5 of the High Emperor Firman, elaborated by the Ottoman Chancellery, regarding the elections for the Ad-hoc Assembly of Muntenia, the Argesians chose to represent them, by the expressed will, on September 17th. 1857, as deputies, for Scarlat Turnavitu, Dumitru C. Brătianu, Ion C. Brătianu, Tudosie Murgescu, and the Muslims preferred Stefan Golescu, Alexandru G. Golescu (Black), Constantin D. Aricescu, Ion Tică. Among those who met the Lord of the Union, Alexandru Ioan Cuza, in Bucharest (February 7, 1859), together with other officials, were the piteșten Nicolae Coculescu and Eftimie Nicolau. For a few months, in June 1859, the prince visited the residence of Argeș, and Mrs. Elena Cuza arrived here on October 3, 1863².

During the War of Independence (1877-1878), most of the mobilized Argeșians and Muscels were part of the 4 Dorobant Regiment, the 2 Calarasi Regiment, the 4 Hunters Battalion. To begin with, the Dorobans defended the Danube line, then, through the General Headquarters Order, they will participate in the fighting with the Turks from Capitanova, Rahova and Vidin, and the military units of the horsemen were in the group of those who conquered Rahova, Haltagi, Desa, Tatar, Mahala, Smârdan, Inova. The hunters, having the command in Calafat, will take over (November 25, 1878), after completing the hostilities and achieving the expected success, the control over the city of Constanta, directly contributing to the establishment of the Romanian administration on the territory of Dobrogea in the stage between the peace treaties in San Stefano (February 19, 1878) and Berlin (July 13, 1878). Before the festivities in Bucharest (8/20 October 1878), the Government of Romania, together with the future king Carol I, concentrates the army in the strategic triangle Pitești-Câmpulung-Târgoviște, which highlights the importance given to the Argeș-Muscels area at the end of the Russian-Turkish conflict of 1877 -1878³. It should be noted that the martyrs of independence, originally from the counties invoked, are recorded, after 1984, in the original commemorative work „Argeș. The book of heroes” unique bibliophilia in Romania, being inscribed at the same time on the monuments existing in all localities in this part of the country, together with those who fell on duty in 1913, 1916-1918, 1941-1945⁴.

Argeș and Muscel were connected to the national efforts of Romania's participation in the First World War (1916-1918), the event favoring the Great Union from 1918. The military from Pitești were located, on August 21, 1916, in the area of Transylvanian operations, which- however, they were unfavorable. Towards the end of November 1916, they arrived, through Buzău Pass, in

¹ Petre Popa (ed.), *Op. cit.*, p. 16

² *Ibidem*

³ *Ibidem*, p. 9

⁴ Petre Popa (ed.), *Argeș. Cartea eroilor*, p.12

Moldova, participating, between July 22 - August 1, 1917, in gaining the victory against the Maras Central. It should be noted that the 4th Argeş Regiment, stationed, for a while, in Iasi, passed Prut, on February 24, 1918, ensuring the order during the debate of the Decision of the Union of Bessarabia with the Romanian State, adopted on March 27, 1918, then cantoning in Husi. He returned to Pitesti at the end of 1918. Special reasons prompted the Romanian Government to consolidate the military support from Bessarabia, united with the Motherland, in which the 4th Argeş Regiment left from Bucharest to Chisinau (February 25, 1920), being kept beyond. by Prut, until September 15, 1922. For exactly one month, King Ferdinand was crowned at Alba Iulia, becoming the first monarch of Greater Romania. The distinguished and glorious trajectories also had the military units from Câmpulung, found in 1916, on the Dobrogean Front, or in Mateiaş, Valea Mare-Pravăţ, Dragoslavele. The participation of our country, for the period 1941-1945, in the Second World War (1939-1945), brings this area back to the forefront of the events of the respective stage. The offensive to the east was officially motivated, starting with June 22, 1941, along with Axis, through the historical obligation of the reintegration of Bessarabia, Northern Bukovina and Herţa County into the local territory. We highlight the fact that, according to the final notes of the Government of the Soviet Union, from June 1940, several families of Romanians from the aforementioned provinces will take refuge in Argeş-Muscel, finding honorable jobs and jobs here. The reorientation of Romania's foreign policy, in August 1944, resulted in the participation of local military units on the Western Front, as far as Slovakia and Austria, comparing the human tragedies of the eastern stage of the war. The years 1941-1945 increased the blood contribution of the citizens of Argeş-Muscel to the altar of the supreme sacrifice, symbolically raised in the spirit of peace, democracy, freedom and independence of the people¹.

5.4. Argeş and Muscel during the communist period

After the defeat of Fascist Germany, Romania enters the sphere of influence of Moscow. Soviet troops remain in bases close to the cities of Pitesti, Campulung, Curtea de Argeş, until 1958. Since the beginning of the expression of the post-war communist regime, in the northern area of Muscel and Arges have been organized various opposing groups, the most active being led by Gheorghe Arsenescu. and Toma Arnăuţoiu (officers), called Muschal's Haiducii, annihilated by the State Security in the six decade of the 20th century. Many of the fighters and supporters have been captured, tried, sentenced to years of imprisonment or executed. At the same time, in the residence of Argeş there was the famous prison of the drastic detention, where ingenious techniques were used to re-educate the detainees through torture, which generated the phrase Piteşti Experiment, a sad memory for the history of these places. In the southern settlements, the opposition aimed, as a priority, to counteract the collectivization of agriculture and the expropriations of executors. The systems promoted and applied during December

¹ *Ibidem*, p. 10

1947 (abolition of the monarchy and the establishment of the Romanian People's Republic) - December 1989 (military coup), gave the Arges-Muscel area a certain contradictory identity, in the sense of canceling, for example, the local organizational pluralism, by imposing the exclusivity of the dominant pyramid, a phenomenon superimposed, however, favorable resizing of urban structures, intensive industrialization, establishment of agricultural farms, eradication of illiteracy and unemployment, maintaining the religious balance, granting certain school or professional facilities.

The ideas promoted in the interwar period, by the national leaders from this part of Romania, the liberals Ion I.C. Brătianu (1864-1927), Vintilă I.C. Brătianu (1867-1930), the peasants Armand Călinescu (1893-1939), Ion Mihalache (1882-1965), or other militants close to them, were totally repudiated after 1947. At the same time, leftist parliamentarism has propelled it into the arena of political life. national and international, on the endocrinologist scientist Constantin I. Parhon (1874-1969), born in Câmpulung, Muscel, first president of the Presidium of the Great National Assembly (1947-1952), but also Nicolae Ceausescu (1818-1989), deputy from Pitesti in the supreme legislative forum of the country, for 17 years (1952-1969), the first president of the state (1974-1989). Until 1990, Argeş was, for a long time, the fourth industrialist state of contemporary Romania, holding, for successive decades, the national monopoly of the manufacture of cars, the primordality of the Petrochemical Platform Pitesti-Sud, the prevalence of certain processing branches, or from the fields of electricity , forestry, fruit growing, viticulture, school construction, hospitals, apartments, large commercial complexes. As a result, from 1966, significantly, dozens of foreign delegations, from all continents, visited the city of Pitesti, considered an archetype of the application of the Doctrine of the multilateral socialist developer¹.

5.5. Romania in the contemporary Euro-Atlantic context

After 1990, the Argesians and the Muscels have adjusted, in a relatively short time, to the principles of the individual initiative, price liberalization, market competition, the current financial system, privatization, the concepts of continentalization. Compared to other counties, the economic and social concerns remained for almost 20 years, in general, multivalent. As proof, the restructuring of the companies did not generate an exaggerated rate of layoffs, the amount of foreign investments was constantly expressed, and the constructive pace was obvious. However, since 2005, the industrial potential of Argeş, compared to the level of 1989, has decreased considerably: the closure of large productive capacities in the Pitesti-Nord, Pitesti-Sud, Câmpulung, Curtea de Argeş areas, including the demolition of plants or factories; loss of foreign markets; decrease of wage income; the exodus of the skilled labor force; bankruptcy of various small and medium-sized companies; reducing budgetary expenses. As a result, after 2010, there are few companies that undertake large-scale projects, the city of

¹ *Fundamentele procesului de regionalizare în România*, [https://cdn.cursdeguvernare.ro/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/Raport-final_\(14.09.2021\)](https://cdn.cursdeguvernare.ro/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/Raport-final_(14.09.2021))

Pitesti tending to become a molded bank of domestic or international bank or commercial speculation, but less productive base. It is commendable that one of the largest state university campuses in Romania is being built here, and the city continues to transform, every spring, starting in 1978, into a capital of tulips, tourism being promoted aggressively. The political life offers various alternatives, the cultural-ecclesiastical institutions advancing differentiated projects. The severity of the world crisis of 2008-2010 was clearly expressed in Argeş-Muscel. Romania's membership in NATO (2004) and the European Union (2007) favors the optimism of overcoming uncertainties including in this part of the country.

From the perspective of regionalization, the European Charter on local autonomy, adopted in Strasbourg on October 15, 1985, makes a distinction between local and regional authorities. Defining local autonomy as "the right and the effective capacity of local public administration authorities to solve and manage, within the law, in their own name and in the interest of the local population, an important part of public affairs, the normative act contains elements of differentiation between the structures local and regional ones. In this sense, we find that the latter are much larger structures than the former, endowed with elected bodies and their own heritage"¹.

Romania signed the Charter on October 4, 1994 and ratified it by Law No. 199 of November 17, 1997² for the ratification of the European Charter of Local Self-Government, adopted in Strasbourg on October 15, 1985. The normative act is limited to declaring that by the notion of regional authority, provided in art. 4 paragraphs 4 and 5 of the European Charter, is understood county authority of local public administration. Therefore, it is not regulated in any way what the role of the counties is or what is the relationship between them and the structures of local autonomy. For a better understanding of these aspects, it would be necessary for the Romanian legislative system to define the two concepts used in the ratification of the European Charter on local autonomy, respectively the one of regional authority and county authority, making a clearer correlation between the two concepts and a definition of their features. In other words, it is time we hit upon the fundamental question: Why are they against regionalization? And because this question is not an academic one, it is only the fruit of Alexis de Tocqueville's reflection: „A central power, however enlightened and learned it may be, cannot comprehend all the details of the life of a people" curated in his work "On democracy in America"³. Rather, I think it is (regionalization) the dream of a perfectly synchronized society, similar to a clockwork mechanism, which has tormented many of the "modernizers" who influenced the industrial age. The lack of space prevents us from offering an explanation of the meaning of this

¹ *Ibidem*, p. 4

² *Legea nr.199 din 17 noiembrie 1997*, "Monitorul Oficial", No. 331 of November 26, 1997

³ *Fundamentele procesului de regionalizare în România*, [https://cdn.cursdeguvernare.ro/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/Raport-final_\(14.09.2021\)](https://cdn.cursdeguvernare.ro/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/Raport-final_(14.09.2021))

parallelism. It is clear, however, that from this perspective the decision-makers are trying to discover us as something decisive by its importance. For us Romanians, regionalization is not a mere obligation assumed by treaties, it is not a custom; it is linked to the intimate secrecy of our lives. And if we consider that regionalization is often confused with regionalism, things get complicated, becoming a true regionalism vs regionalization.

6. Romania caught in the trap of regionalism v.s. regionalization

6.1. Specific issues

Regionalism represents the awareness of common interests (the region being perceived as a territory considered homogeneous by the people who inhabit it) and at the same time the aspiration to participate in the management of these interests. In other words, a community that considers itself capable of solving local problems to the detriment of the state, considered too remote and too large. Regionalism can be viewed as a two-way term: "a top-down movement (regionalization), and a bottom-up movement (regionalism)"¹. Both are concepts that describe movements at the regional level, interacting with each other. However, there is a difference: "regionalism as a term encountered in the discourse of politicians, which can lead to federalization (a territorial assembly with a common history and culture that can acquire competences for public policies)" and regionalization which is "an administrative action aimed at the creation of cooperation spaces and defines new administrative-territorial units"². The regionalization has as a starting point the regional imbalances or their awareness: the state can thus recognize a regional identity (the region being this time a territory considered homogenous by the state) and can take the necessary measures for the regions to participate in managing their own businesses. Therefore, regionalization means the desire to reach a balance of economic development, by rising the level of the less developed areas, and for this, regionalism militates for the region to reach the decision-making power. Whether it is regionalism or regionalization, decentralization is the main benefit of the two terms. The decentralization brings with it the multi-level governance process.

6.2. About multi-level governance

According to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), which encourages multi-level governance, decentralization has made local and regional governments stronger and their capacity to formulate and implement policies is supposed to increase. Local and regional governments, concerned that their economies are increasingly exposed to global competition, are now expected to influence public policies so that they have a real and positive impact on improving the competitiveness of the regional economy and the well-being of the population. As for the European Union's vision, on multi-level

¹ Călin Sabin Ghiolțan, *Descentralizare și politici regionale*, file:C:/Users/Downloads/Course, (14.09.2021)

² *Ibidem*

governance it is rendered by the Committee of the Regions - an advisory body representing local and regional authorities in the EU. Its role is to make local and regional views on EU law known, launching reports or "opinions" on European Commission proposals: The Union must work in partnerships by promoting a culture of multi-level governance. Also, to be considered is the Council of European Municipalities and Regions, founded in Geneva in 1951, which is the largest organization of local and regional authorities in Europe, its members being over 50 national associations of cities, municipalities and regions in 40 countries. Together, these associations represent approximately 150,000 local and regional authorities. The European Regions Assembly, founded in 1985, is the largest independent network of regional authorities throughout Europe, bringing together over 250 regions from 35 countries, together with 16 interregional organizations. They are lobbyists of local and regional interests in Brussels. Together, in December 2011, they signed the document "Governance in partnership - United to build a stronger Europe, a document that underlined, at the time, the role of multi-level governance in line with the objectives of the Europe 2020 strategy. Great Britain, with all the obstacles it has come up with, has chosen the road.

For us, article 120 of the Constitution stipulates the following regarding the decentralization of Romania: The public administration from the administrative-territorial units is based on the principles of decentralization, local autonomy and decentralization of public services. This is the basic principle of decentralization in Romania, but in practice it is completely lacking and remains a principle only on paper. Decentralization can be a guarantee of the stability of a functioning democracy. Romania is a member of the EU, and in Europe the principle of subsidiarity is a basic term. Europe is one of the decentralized local communities, which allows for faster collaboration and development of regions and local communities. I do not know if Poland's model is the most appropriate, but their success in achieving decentralization would not have been possible without the massive support of Germany, the US. We know that Poland has a different culture and mentality as a people, it quickly went to privatization in the 1990s leading to a policy of liberalization, Poland had Solidarnosc in the 80s. What didn't happen with, or in Romania. On the other hand, they are the only country with which we can compare in many respects: geographical position, size, population, level of regional disparity like West-East.

6.3. About the regionalization of Romania, between the hammer in Budapest and the anvil in Bruxelles

In principle, Romania needs a decentralization/regionalization process in order to streamline the development needs of the regions and to give them the chance to develop at their own pace. However, this process will have to be implemented very carefully, as there is a risk that this process will lead to a strengthening of bureaucratic procedures and at the same time to accentuate the phenomenon of corruption at local/regional level. It is the duty of the experts to propose different formulas, taking into account these risks, and which will be decided at political level: reorganization with or without counties, what budgets,

with or without direct elections, the duration of the mandates, the functional prerogatives that will be held by these regions etc. For this, a political will and a debate are needed that will generate a consensus at national level and to which all political, local and social actors will take part. From Brussels the regionalization is seen differently than from Budapest, and Bucharest has to decide what will be the way forward. Until then, there would be a need to understand and analyze the advantages/disadvantages and benefits/risks that may arise during the regionalization: a complex process of research and debate on the topic of regionalization, on the network, on multiple levels, having a period sufficient, but still limited, to give the opportunity for timely decisions at national level. The regionalization must be the consequence of the internal desire of the Romanians, implemented by the decision-makers through an authentic participatory democratic process. Until then, our attempt to address the need for interdisciplinary regionalization research that we are tempted to pursue, given that we are all interested in being best managed, is hampered by the inability of policy makers. To help them, we offer some points of possible regionalization of Romania.

6.4. Theoretical benchmarks of the process of regionalization of Romania

Even if we do not agree with the regionalization of our homeland, this fact cannot prevent the beginning of its realization. If it happens, we dare to have our opinion too, as the region has gone through several evolutionary phases, including the system-region and the development region, and has come to be considered as the most suitable operational concept for a period in which the state loses in importance through globalization. This led to the assertion that today's world is no longer a world of states but of regions, hence the idea of fragmenting Europe into regions and considering them as the basis of continental cooperation.

The relationship between territorial cohesion and regional development is a complex one, despite an apparent simplicity: it is not entirely a relationship of subordination, but rather a relationship of a reciprocal nature, in which the concept of region is fundamental. Unlike the concept of regional development, outlined over several decades, the concept of territorial cohesion is a relatively new one, initially having only a socio-economic connotation. Subsequently, this concept has expanded to the territorial level, due to the fact that we can not only talk about harmonious relations between economic branches and social categories, but also between them, human communities and the space in which they live. Or, in such a context, in order to achieve an approach congruent with what is academically expected for deciphering the mechanisms that govern territorial development, the concept of region cannot be ignored. It provides a framework that, with the benefits of decentralization, can support stronger endogenous development. It is generally accepted that the region is a vast area, with many subspaces placed on different levels of development¹.

¹ *Fundamentele procesului de regionalizare în România*, [https://cdn.cursdeguvernare.ro/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/Raport-final_\(14.09.2021\)](https://cdn.cursdeguvernare.ro/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/Raport-final_(14.09.2021))

European cohesion policy and structural funds, as the main instrument, contribute to major territorial changes through regional policies. In this context, the region remains a basic concept, at which both competition and cooperation on a European scale can be promoted. European territorial development has gone through a transition period between two financial planning periods: 2007-2013 and 2014-2020. This period was one of critical analysis of the actions already taken and a period of anticipation of changes that could offer adequate solutions for the exit from the crisis and the implementation of actions more focused on results. Numerous documents, policies and implicit instruments have been conceived as support to anticipate the period from 2020-2030, the most important being the Europe 2030 Strategy, Cohesion Policy, Partnership Contract. To achieve a united Europe, where territorial cohesion is the dominant one, regional development is one of the most important objectives. All the experience gained by the countries of the European Union, including Romania, in this field has shown that a better territorial distribution of resources, together with a higher exploitation of the complex of potential elements, existing at local or supralocal level, become factors of economic growth and social equity. For a long time, the harmonious development of all regions of a state has been discussed, taking into account their balanced development. Such a development mainly meant reaching parameters related to the development of the industry and the full use of the surplus human potential in these regions. Territorial cohesion is, however, a much more productive and comprehensive concept than balanced or harmonious development, including elements of territorial coherence and synergy¹.

The bottom line is that the region has been and remains a framework not only for theoretical debates, but an administrative framework, adopted by many countries at European level to measure territorial disparities and to better organize the territory at the sub-national level. The results obtained, using the region as an instrument in achieving territorial cohesion, demonstrate its capacity to ensure a real development of the respective state. However, regarding the need for administrative regionalization in Romania, we have some reservations related to the concrete situation, with a general level of development well below the European average and even of the countries of Central Europe, with regional gaps that may deepen and involve adopting flexible territorial development policies, which will gradually alleviate these disparities. On the other hand, the low financial resources available to the country should be taken into account in order to induce accelerated economic growth in the lagging regions and in the proximity of the developed regions and European countries. In such conditions, the need to redefine the regional development policy and its territorial projection emerged, taking into account, on the one hand, the particularities of the Romanian space and the progress made in implementing a development policy for at least two decades, and, on the other hand, the achievement of the objectives appeared in the new documents of the European Union along the lines of increasing cohesion at the

¹ *Ibidem*

continental level. From this perspective, we think that the reconsideration of the concept of administrative region in Romania, but especially its implementation, in the European sense, would be based on three fundamental findings:

a) The very good results obtained by some of the countries of the former communist regime, which, adopting a regional administrative framework, were able to benefit from all the opportunities offered by the EU. In such a framework, the decentralization process has been continuously improved and found in the increased capacity to meet the challenges caused by globalization, but also by the economic-financial crisis. In this case, the example of Poland is already well known. An efficient decentralization at the level of the present counties is not possible, due to their small size. Taking over many functions from the center and locating them in 42 territorial entities, would minimize the potential for cooperation and implementation of regional projects, on the one hand. On the other hand, the costs of such decentralization would be enormous, given the hypertrophy of public services at the level of each county residence.

b) The present regions of development did not have an important role, the experiment belonging to the past. Established in 1998, it has not added any coherence in the management of territorial development processes. To move to a new quality, the development regions must be transformed into administrative regions, with their own elective bodies, assuming responsibility in the regional development process. Moreover, at the Green Paper launching conference for defining the regional development policy in Romania (May 1997), it was publicly stated that the life of the development regions should not exceed 10 years. These have represented a provisional framework for the implementation of pre-accession policies in the EU, provisionally maintained and these lines will appear and which will probably have as their purpose the permanentizing or disappearance.

c) Development regions cannot be considered as a form of territorial management, capable of supporting multi-level governance. In this sense, the dynamics of the social-economic life showed that the development regions, made up of associative bases, have the character of framework elements with a small role in the territorial development itself, as long as the decisions are taken in a vision in which the county is the element key and the only authorizing officer. The way in which the funds are distributed in the current development regions does not take into account the projects of inter-county character, but only locally, rarely trans-county.

Starting from these findings, it is possible to define, synthetically, some elements that demonstrate, on the one hand that this is not possible anymore (having only statistical regions, without administrative attributes), and on the other hand, that Romania must - and optimize the territorial structures in which the development process takes place. Without imposing a certain order in relation to the importance of the arguments for the necessity of creating the regional administrative framework, we note the following:

1) After two decades of operation, the development regions could very easily see that their effectiveness was much reduced, that the definition and

implementation of their own regional development policies are very difficult. This situation results from:

- lack of inter-county projects;
- insufficient resources for co-financing large projects;
- inability to manage intra-regional gaps and develop interregional cooperation;
- weak direct cooperation with the developed regions of the EU, without resorting to central structures;
- the associative character - the splitting of the funds through projects distributed to the component counties.

2) The current moral, economic-financial and social crisis tends to accentuate the gaps - the need to optimize the decision-making and organizational flows in the territory; in the current system, the poorly developed counties have less and less chances to recover the development gaps, a fact demonstrated by the evolution of the main socio-economic indicators;

3) Low absorption rate of EU funds - the inability of counties to support large projects with regional impact;

4) Lack of regional coherence with real effects at the level of counties and localities; for example, an intermediate level of planning (between county and national level) is missing, which reduces the chances of an optimal horizontal (between county) and vertical (national - county) correlation;

5) The way of allocating the European funds in a competitive system has maintained and encouraged the county's identity, in the absence of a higher administrative structure - which also concerns the inter-county cooperation.

The present context of Romania's development has benefited from a vision defined at continental level by strategic European documents: the EU 2020 Strategy and the Territorial Agenda 2020. Their implementation has implied, objectively, the existence of administrative regions, as the basis of an authentic territorial decentralization. national level. The future seems a little optimistic from this perspective, especially since the process of territorial development has been complicated by the intervention of a wide range of actors, especially at local, supralocal and regional level, which makes impossible the ability of the "Center" to manage territorial processes. So, it appears, again the natural question: Is the Romanian society connected at the time of the transition to the administrative regions? For a good part of the population and actors of the economic-social and political life, the current moment of crisis is considered to be inadequate, as the territorial development can benefit from the current status of the regions, with their development agencies, which are considered capable of manage the funds accessed from the EU¹.

Obviously, not the European Union obliges us to improve the territorial framework of governance, on the contrary, we could say that some states would be interested in accessing only a small part of the funds. Through the new incentive

¹ *Fundamentele procesului de regionalizare în România*, [https://cdn.cursdeguvernare.ro/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/Raport-final_\(14.09.2021\)](https://cdn.cursdeguvernare.ro/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/Raport-final_(14.09.2021))

tool, the states that manage to attract the allocated money, can receive through redistribution the amounts that have not been attracted by other states. Therefore, it is very important for each state to improve its tools and internal capacity to absorb all the money that it owes and, if possible, to even benefit from situations like the one described above. Let us not forget that the second largest financial contributor, said goodbye to Brussels, and not to the Europeans. Considering the above and the fact that the national development funds spent did not have the effect of amplifying the benefits, but on the contrary had only very limited effects, we consider that this is the best time to achieve a viable regional administrative construction and with immediate utility. For this, the following must be considered:

- Facilitating access to the funds allocated by the EU in the financial year 2021-2027 and increasing their absorption capacity at regional level;
- Failure to achieve this framework would now delay the establishment of administrative regions for the next financial year of the EU itself;
- Territorial institutional reconstruction, so that the regions can have decision-making capacity and competences similar to the regions of most European states;
- The intensification of interregional cooperation at European level and the need for urgent inclusion of the regions of Romania in such networks;
- Romania is the only member state, larger than the EU average, which has no administrative regions;

Apart from the ones mentioned above, the current moment is extremely favorable, because it is coupled with two necessary conditions and less commonly encountered in the political evolution of a society:

- a) Organizing the Referendum for the Constitution - the unique possibility to state the regions as administrative territorial entities;
- b) The beginning of a government represents another opportunity to align the administrative-territorial structure of Romania with the new perspectives of development in the EU.

The bottom line is that any delay would bring damage that is difficult to assess at this time. The costs of implementing such a structure are estimated to be very low, because decentralization cannot be done immediately after the administrative framework is established, but it is strengthened as the institutions specific to the different levels of governance are built. Finally, the process of territorial definition and delimitation of administrative regions should be based on well-defined principles, criteria and indicators that start from the fundamental idea that they do not represent the current result of the spatial distribution of "development", which does not mean revitalization some forms of territorial administration that were effective in certain historical periods, but which represent a framework for the future spatial projection of development. In other words, the construction of the new administrative regions aims to easily reach long-term and ultra-long-term development targets. Then, it is built on the evidence that an administrative region must be built on a multicriteria basis. All the regionalization that were based on single-criteria analyzes did not resist, which is why the

sustainable regions, with beneficial effects on the space, are those that are based on several criteria covering a large part of the diversity of the regional components. Another important issue is the one based on the fact that the counties have proven effective throughout history and that these, in the regional construction, must be adopted as such. Therefore, the future administrative regions will be groupings of counties, on a multicriteria background. Apart from these general principles, we can identify several guiding principles, which are essential for the regionalization process. Synthetically, these are the following:

- the functionality, meaning the assurance of a "freedom" of movement of the material and information flows, which will ensure the synergistic development of all the component counties and their assembly;

- complementarity, representing the essence of the functionality through the variety of resources and functions held by the localities and territorial subsystems;

- solidarity, resulting from a spirit of social equity between places and sub-regions; such a principle is built in time, as the rich and poor areas of a region are aware that they must cooperate to develop together and avoid the emergence of conflict-generating phenomena;

- the diversity results from the variety of the natural, economic, social and cultural potential of the future region, all contributing to the morphogenesis of territorial relations of dependence, which will converge towards functionality and solidarity;

- competitiveness is a regional goal, which can be achieved under the conditions of clear individualization of assets and territorial excellence; this principle will have to maximize the potential of intelligence and cooperation within the created regional framework;

- the expected administrative effectiveness is based on a relatively equal accessibility for all the inhabitants of a region, on a system of competences based on undivided responsibility.

- the contiguity, respectively the need to ensure a territorial continuity, which will ensure the optimum functionality and connectivity of all the components of the region. It is also avoided to create regions that contain enclaves that can fragment the regional territory and internal flows¹.

There would be more to discuss, but we leave to the various specialists the further investigation of the process of regionalization in Romania, but we must not forget that everything done by the human hand is satirical, only God is eternal, eternal! So, we dare to conclude our scientific research project with a few conclusive formulations.

Conclusions

Compared to the previous ones, we can conclude that the Romanian legislation is deficient in terms of regulating the concept of region. Moreover, although this notion was legally regulated at one point in the history of the

¹ *Ibidem*

Romanian state, both its meaning and its defining characteristics were completely different from the way in which the notion of region at European level is regulated today. Thus, not only is the region currently understood as a territorial administrative unit of its own, with legal personality, its own governing bodies and its own heritage, but its main features are represented by a strong degree of decentralization and local autonomy. Thus, the regionalization done in Romania in 1950, in the Stalinist era, is in antithesis to what today means a process of regionalization, since at that time it was intended to exercise as much control of the central power over the local administration. As a consequence, the legal regulation of the notion of region at that time can in no way serve as a standard for a current legislative consolidation. Only if we do not consider that the USSR since then is the EU today! Or vice versa! Nothing is new under the sun, says the Ecclesiastes!

Considering that a possible territorial administrative reorganization must provide a functional system, which can be implemented with the minimization of the possible negative effects on various plans, in order not to create larger imbalances than the ones existing at present, it will be a real challenge for the Romanian legislator creating an adequate legislative framework. Rather, we support the elements of Professor Cătălin Vrabie on e-government - a concept also known as e-gov e English - as one of the most interesting challenges of public administration worldwide¹. Therefore, we wanted the pages under the eyes of the approved reader to be realistic and balanced, dissociated, as far as possible, by political connotations, subjectivism, collateral influences. We support, in principle, the conception of the American analyst Charles Beard, who concludes: "History must be, first and foremost, a son of its time". We hope to successfully integrate the a priori non-biased meanings, formulated through the diversity of stories, many with a certain degree of novelty and originality. In this regard, in addition to the bibliography read or the archival funds consulted, a special role was played by discussions held directly with specialists in the fields of activity. The last aspect supposes both the moral assumption of the authenticity of the related ones, as well as the provision of certain essential details, necessary for the future researchers, exempted from the efforts made by our efforts. Therefore, preserving, including by this way, the essence of the evolution of the Argeş-Muscel area over the last half century, we will maintain, with certainty, the perpetual secular sustainability of everything around us. Moreover, we dare to say, for Romania, our blessed part of God, so often and so tried in its tumultuous and millennial history.

Moreover, in another key interpretation, we dare to say, for Romania - our God-blessed part, so often and much tried in its tumultuous and millennial history - that the prospect of an administrative-territorial regionalization according to the canons of the European Union, it can lead to the loss of national sovereignty which would amount to an attack on national security. It would not be for the first time, because if we take a look at the older or more recent history of Romania, it is difficult, if not impossible, to find a period of time in which we were a truly

¹ Cătălin Vrabie, *Elemente de e-governance*, ProUniversitaria, Bucureşti, 2014, p. 76

independent and sovereign state. Was it our fault for our geographical position, in contact with the great players of history? Is it because of our national spirit inclined to obedience and servility? Or is it due to the fact that for centuries we have not had leaders with respect for the nation and love of country? Or as Mircea Malița said, "we have come to hand over almost all the attributions of an independent and sovereign state. We have exported whole trunks of our sovereignty and our ability to have an interest. The national interest has never been programmed or announced as the goal of this transition"¹. We no longer have any of the basic components of sovereignty. And here we have in mind the political, military, legislative, legal and economic sovereignty. They were ceded, piece by piece, for vain promises, in an infamous barter in which, always, we were the deceived ones.

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¹ Mircea Malița, *România și-a cedat suveranitatea*, <https://www.qmagazine.ro/mircea-malita-romania-si-a-cedat-suveranitatea/>, (10.09.2021)

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