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EVERYDAY LIFE IN BESSARABIA IN THE 1930s OF THE 20TH CENTURY
611.02. HISTORY OF ROMANIANS (BY PERIODS)

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Abstract of the doctoral thesis in History

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CONTENT

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK OF THE RESEARCH	4
THE BASIC CONTENT OF THE RESEARCH	8
GENERAL CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	25
BIBLIOGRAPHY	28
LIST OF PUBLICATIONS OF THE AUTHOR ON THE THEME OF THE THESIS.....	31
ADNOTARE	32
ANNOTATION	33
АННОТАЦИЯ	34

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK OF THE RESEARCH

Actuality and importance of the topic addressed. The history of everyday life constitutes an innovative field of contemporary historiography, situated at the interdisciplinary intersection of history, cultural anthropology, sociology, political science, legal sciences, and communication studies. This research paradigm makes it possible to deconstruct grand political narratives and reconstruct the complex facets of human existence in relation to personal identity, alterity, the intimate space of the family, and the public space of the community.

Relating everyday life to a specific historical period is essential for decoding the continuities and discontinuities that shaped individual and collective biographies. From this perspective, the interwar period represents, for the Romanian space, a historical period defined by the national unity achieved following the Union of 1918, a phenomenon that shaped a distinct collective mentality. Within a relatively short period, the Romanians of Bessarabia underwent profound transformations under the impact of new political realities, economic reforms, and the complex processes of unification and modernization of the unitary national state – structural components that reshaped their everyday existence. In this general context, investigating the 1930s in Bessarabia acquires major academic relevance, being framed within a fundamental historiographical inquiry into the transformations of the population's everyday experience generated by the multifaceted interaction between the vectors of state modernization, the persistence of traditional structures, the effects of the global economic crisis, political transformations, and the regional particularities of the period.

If the first post-Union decade was one of national consolidation and the integration into a single system of all Romanian provinces that had previously belonged to different empires (the Russian Empire and the Austro-Hungarian Empire), the second decade following the Union was marked by a profound economic and social crisis, which inevitably disrupted domestic political life as well. Romanian citizens – direct witnesses to these radical developments – had to adapt rapidly and on a daily basis to this intense flow of transformations that reshaped their lives in a difficult interaction with their own existence. Despite the unifying and modernizing policies implemented by the institutions of the Romanian state, the population of Bessarabia displayed behaviour strongly marked by traditions and patriarchal patterns of conduct that remained firmly rooted throughout its historical development. From this perspective, the research analyses everyday life not as a linear process, but as a tense amalgamation between the assimilation of new norms and the preservation of old practices.

The everyday life of the Romanians of Bessarabia during the interwar period shaped both collective and identity-related mentalities, representing a form of existence different from that of the previous – imperial – period, but which was subsequently subjected to violent intervention through the political and ideological mechanisms of the Soviet period.

In the public and family spheres, a collective memory that was either nostalgic or critical of the “Romanian period” was transmitted across generations. This identity marker often combines subjective memory with ideological distortions subsequently imposed during the Soviet period through violent political and propaganda mechanisms. A rigorous assessment of this way of life through the perspective of contemporary scientific research is imperative in order to provide a valid scientific foundation capable of countering the biased approaches of the past.

Consequently, there is a need to approach everyday life in Bessarabia during the 1930s by highlighting both its general and specific features, based on the historical, sociocultural, and spiritual factors analysed through the historical evolution of the area under study and grounded in historical information as well as a wide variety of primary historical sources.

The motivation for choosing the subject derives directly from the absence of a scientific monographic study in Romanian and international historiography that addresses, in an integrated, analytical, and comprehensive manner, the dynamics of everyday life in Bessarabia throughout the fourth decade of the twentieth century. The study thus provides an indispensable scientific and cognitive basis for understanding how local communities experienced, negotiated, and assimilated the process of integration into the cultural and political space of Romania, while also offering a valid foundation capable of countering subjective and biased assessments of the past.

Research problem lies in the existence of a profound contradiction and structural asymmetry between the intensive efforts to integrate Bessarabia institutionally, legislatively, and administratively into Romania and the persistence, among the population at large, of sociocultural structures, mentalities, and everyday practices inherited from the Tsarist period. This conceptual tension is intensified, on the one hand, by the significant gap between state policies aimed at accelerating modernization and the resistance of traditional patterns of behaviour – visible in the acute divide between urban and rural environments – and, on the other hand, by the critical distance between official legal norms and the actual everyday behaviour adopted by the population of Bessarabia during the period under consideration.

The purpose of the scientific research is to reconstruct and analyse everyday life in Bessarabia during the 1930s in the context of the socio-economic, political, cultural, and religious developments in interwar Romania.

Following the clarification of the purpose, the following **objectives** were established:

1. To analyse the historiography and documentary sources to identify the level of research concerning everyday life in Bessarabia during the 1930s;
2. To identify the main demographic, socio-economic, and political factors that influenced everyday life in Bessarabia during the period under study;
3. To examine the influence of the cultural and spiritual environment and the presence of the Army on everyday life in Bessarabia;
4. To investigate the material conditions of everyday existence through an analysis of housing, clothing, food, and access to healthcare;
5. To reconstruct family practices and experiences, the stages of the life cycle, moral norms, and behavioural patterns characteristic of Bessarabian society.

Research hypothesis. The integration of Bessarabia into Romania did not result in the rapid standardization of everyday life, but rather produced a combination of traditional practices, institutions, and modern models, with the pace of transformation varying according to the social environment, urban/rural setting, and economic level.

Synthesis of the research methodology and justification of the selected research methods. As a synthesis of the specialised literature examined, deeply influenced by the scientific tools of historical anthropology developed by the *Annales School* in France [13], the concept of *everyday life* refers to a range of ordinary activities that form an individual's daily routine, such as family, food, housing, clothing, hygiene, health, social practices, etc. Depending on the social category, political life, administration, the army, international relations, etc. may represent components of everyday life or external factors influencing it. For example, for a military person, the army may constitute a component of everyday life, whereas for a civilian far removed from military life, it represents an external factor.

The *Annales School* provided theoretical concepts for the interdisciplinary integration of historical facts and events, particularly everyday life, with direct implications for the socio-humanistic sciences. In the present case, everyday life was examined in relation to Bessarabia throughout the 1930s. Several scientific research methods were employed, with the historical method remaining the fundamental one. Consequently, the scientific approach relies predominantly on fundamental and applied scholarly literature in the field of history and its related disciplines (archival studies, onomastics, genealogy, etc.), as well as neighbouring fields (ethnography, anthropology, historical sociology, geography, etc.). The *historical method*, together with the *systemic method*, is used to identify the specific chronological dimension of everyday life in Romanian Bessarabia. *Synchronous analysis* is applied to investigate everyday life in Bessarabia during the same period as in other Romanian provinces, thus identifying

hesitation or openness towards modernization, as well as delays in relation to certain developments incompatible with local traditions. Through the *structural method*, the links between different components of everyday life can be established (population, urban and rural community activities, culture, art, religion, etc.). The application of the *critical analysis method* allows for the examination of different dimensions of human behaviour, including hygiene culture, morality, vices, etc. The *comparative method* consists in identifying the general and distinctive features of different aspects of everyday life in Bessarabia by relating them to the realities of the other Romanian provinces. The analytical approach is complemented by dichotomous approaches focusing on the differences between urban and rural environments and between civilian and military environments, while also highlighting the changes and specific features of lifestyles recorded across different chronological segments of the period under study. The *methods of visual anthropology* consisted in interpreting iconographic sources (period photographs) to better understand the components of everyday life (family, housing and clothing, food, infrastructure, etc.). This made it possible to corroborate the diversity of historical sources. Statistical information, particularly the statistical data of the 1930 General Population Census, was interpreted through *analysis* and *synthesis*, thus moving from the *quantitative* to the *qualitative* dimension of the inherent elements of everyday life. *Critical analysis* makes it possible to corroborate the diversity of sources and critically address various aspects of everyday life. The *interdisciplinary approach* enables the combination of historical methodologies with concepts from sociology, anthropology, economics, demography, etc., in order to reconstruct the mentalities, social behaviours, and impact of state policies on the everyday life of the Bessarabia population during the period under study. The *chronological* and *problem-oriented principles* provided the theoretical framework of the research and focused attention on the stated scientific topic. The theoretical and methodological components constitute the scientific foundation that opens new perspectives for investigating everyday life in Bessarabia.

Chronological framework. The chronological framework of the research covers the 1930s, a period that broadly corresponds to the second interwar decade following the Great Union of 1918. The lower chronological limit (1930) is determined by the outbreak of the Great Depression, whose repercussions were directly and profoundly felt across all dimensions of everyday life in the Romanian space.

The upper chronological landmark is set at 28 June 1940, the moment of the annexation of Bessarabia by the USSR, which caused a brutal rupture in the region's natural evolution and a radical transformation of the daily existence of the local population, forced to adapt to the

constraints of the Soviet occupation regime, thereby marking the end of the historical framework within which everyday life is studied in the present work.

The temporal development of Bessarabia everyday life was affected by economic difficulties, the intensification of extremist movements, and the transition from democracy to dictatorship. Therefore, this chronological arc is not perceived as homogeneous or uniform from the perspective of everyday life.

THE BASIC CONTENT OF THE THESIS

The doctoral thesis in history consists of annotations in Romanian, English, and Russian, a list of figures and abbreviations; an introduction; three chapters divided into subchapters; general conclusions and recommendations; bibliography; appendices; a declaration of responsibility; and the author's CV.

The **Introduction** includes the following elements: the relevance and importance of the topic addressed, the positioning of the topic within international, national, and regional historiographical concerns, the research problem, the purpose and objectives of the thesis, the research hypothesis, a synthesis of the research methodology and justification of the selected research methods, the chronological period, the geographical framework, the novelty and originality of the study, the scientific results obtained, the theoretical significance, the practical value, the validation of the results, and an overview of the thesis structure.

In **Chapter 1, "Historiography and Historical Sources"**, the study examines the historiographical areas related to the topic, including interwar Romanian historiography, Soviet historiography, historiography in Romania, Western historiography, and historiography in the Republic of Moldova, as well as an analysis of classified historical sources.

Depending on the perceptions of the period, the specific characteristics of the socio-cultural environments, the impact of successive political regimes, the ideological turbulence that marked the twentieth century, and the temporal distance from the phenomena described, the state of research concerning the evolution of everyday life in Bessarabia during the 1930s may be divided according to the following chronological, political-historiographical, and geographical levels: interwar Romanian historiography and historiography from the years of the Second World War, Soviet historiography, historiography in Romania, historiography in the Republic of Moldova, and Western historiography.

The analysis of interwar historiographical production and that of the Second World War period reveals an approach strongly conditioned by the political context of the 1918 Union and by the imperatives of national unification. Within this framework, the everyday life of the

Romanians of Bessarabia was reflected primarily through the educational and cultural system, the authors of the period themselves being representatives of the intellectual elite, while historical writing displayed a pronounced emotional-patriotic dimension, subordinated to the integrative discourse of the period. Structurally, the historiography of the period under consideration followed two complementary directions. The first category includes native researchers (Ștefan Ciobanu, Petru Cazacu, Gheorghe Bezviconi, Alexandru Boldur), who provided rigorous statistical analyses and works focused on the development of culture and society. The second category consists of visiting documentarians (Emanoil Gheorghiu, Ion Mateiu, Ion Nistor), who acted in a dual capacity: both as researchers of the phenomenon and as direct historical sources.

In Soviet historiography, the issue of everyday life in interwar Bessarabia did not constitute an independent research topic, being conceptually marginalized. Due to strict ideological barriers, the everyday realities of the population of this province were not analysed from the perspective of social history or mentalities but were politically instrumentalized. As demonstrated by researcher Valentin Burlacu, in Soviet Moldova historical scholarship paid tribute to the communist propaganda system [14]. This academic instrumentalization in the Moldavian SSR was not an isolated phenomenon but represented a continuation of ideological directives previously implemented on the left bank of the Dniester. Through the instrumentalization of scholarship subordinated to party and state bodies, and through the replacement of social-history or mentality-based analysis with Comintern slogans, this academic discourse did not seek to reconstruct everyday life in Bessarabia during the fourth decade of the twentieth century, but functioned exclusively as an instrument of identity engineering and justification of territorial annexations.

The evolution of historical writing in Romania reflects a gradual transition from geopolitical censorship during the communist period towards methodological diversification in the post-communist era. The study of the everyday life of Romanians during the interwar period as a distinct field of scientific research may be associated with the name of historian Ioan Scurtu. The researcher considers that “everyday life – that is, life from day to day – constitutes the most important part of human existence” [18, p. 7].

While under the totalitarian regime the issue of interwar Bessarabia and everyday life was severely restricted – surviving only fragmentarily in related studies of ethnography, anthropology, or the history of mentalities – the collapse of ideological barriers enabled Romanian historiography to align itself with Western paradigms of microhistory. This conceptual shift established the history of everyday life as an autonomous and fundamental field

for understanding human existence, providing complex analytical frameworks. The rediscovery of interwar Bessarabia beginning in the 1990s followed a trajectory that evolved from reconsidering the political process of state and identity integration towards more specialized thematic research.

In researching the subject of everyday life in interwar Bessarabia in general, and that of the second post-Union decade in particular, we identify two major stages in the development of research on this topic within the historiographical discourse of the Republic of Moldova.

While in the 1990s historiographical works were directed towards recovering the “blank spots” in historical research concerning the interwar period, with studies being published to counterbalance the strongly ideologized Soviet historiographical discourse, we also observe a discourse strongly marked by national revival, the recovery of national identity, the rehabilitation of prominent historical figures, and a return to the message conveyed in the works of historians of the Union. After 2000, we observe a diversification of the scientific issues addressed, including a focus on narrower topics and methodological synchronization with international scholarship. Following an “archive revolution,” authors gained access to a greater number of historical sources, which consequently contributed to improving historiographical discourse. Historiography in the Republic of Moldova (including works jointly produced by authors from both banks of the Prut) concerning the interwar way of life reveals a return to national values and a rediscovery of one’s own identity, deeply marked by the interference of the political factor during the Soviet period [12; 15; 16; 17; 23, pp. 240-248]. At the same time, we identify imbalances in historiographical discourse concerning urban versus rural everyday life, which the present study seeks to investigate.

Western authors analyse everyday life at the intersection between the Romanian state’s extensive modernization efforts (such as educational policies) and the resistance of realities on the ground: administrative instability, identity divisions, border vulnerabilities, and religious or political conflicts.

The rigorous corroboration of specialized literature with historical sources constitutes the methodological foundation necessary for a profound and nuanced reconceptualization of everyday life in Bessarabia within the specified chronological framework.

During the research, unpublished materials identified in the *archival holdings* of the Republic of Moldova and Romania were studied. The documentary corpus identified in the holdings of the National Agency of Archives covers the central and local interwar administrative-territorial levels, as well as association-related and cartographic documents [2]. Another set of unpublished documents examined by us was found in the National Archives of

Romania [1]. At the Romanian National Military Archives, the Central Archival Repository in Pitești, “General Grigore Constandache”, we identified historical sources reflecting the general perceptions of Romanian military garrisons in Northern Bessarabia in relation to the environment in which they operated [3].

Another type of historical sources used in the preparation of the study consists of *documents published* by Romanian historians. The official framework of interwar Romanian everyday life, including that of Bessarabia, was provided by *fundamental laws* and *legislative acts*. A personalized history of everyday life was captured through the eyes of eyewitnesses of the period under consideration. In this regard, we used *diaries*, *memoirs*, and *interviews* of personalities who experienced the dynamic pulse of everyday life in Bessarabia.

Another category of documents used in the present study concerns *oral sources*. In this respect, the interviews with historian Vladimir Potlog are relevant, as they provide testimonies reflecting components of private life, such as rural life, clothing, relations between civilians and the military, and imagological perceptions [4].

Publicistic materials from the contemporary press recorded the various components of everyday life. An important historical source extensively used in the preparation of the present study consisted of *statistical data*. A fundamental source was the General Population Census of Romania of 29 December 1930, which provides extensive information relevant to the research topic, namely the population of Bessarabia during the 1930s from the perspective of various factors, including sex, marital status, age groups, households, disabilities, floating population, ethnicity, mother tongue, religion, literacy, place of birth, household status, collective households, household size, knowledge of the Romanian language, citizenship, age, population according to occupational status, education and ethnicity, professional categories, and others [5].

Throughout the preparation of the study, attention was also given to the diversity of *iconographic sources* capable of covering multiple aspects of everyday life. In this regard, we studied the collection of photographs concerning interwar Bessarabia held in the photographic collection of the National Library of Romania. An important iconographic source identified by us in the archival holdings is Fund F. 2983, “Gheorghe Bezviconi”, of the National Archives Agency, which provides a series of images depicting the everyday life of the Bessarabian elite during the period under study. The photographic collection of the Orhei Museum of History and Ethnography provides iconographic sources concerning rural life in Bessarabian villages during the period addressed in the present study.

In the particular context of researching everyday life in Bessarabia during the 1930s, the systematic corroboration of historical sources constituted an imperative methodological

necessity, determined by the structural complexity of the object of study. The daily routine of the population – marked by the dynamics of hygiene, nutrition, or cultural consumption – cannot be fully captured by any single document considered in isolation. Corroboration was essential in mediating between the tendency of state archives to record primarily social problems and deviations (as institutions documented society mainly in moments of crisis, thus risking the projection of an artificially negative image of the province) and the distorted presentation of reality found in memoirs and iconographic sources (marked by propagandistic interests, personal cultural shocks, or aesthetic staging). At the same time, the confrontation of sources facilitated an epistemological transition from the quantitative approach of censuses and statistical yearbooks to the qualitative dimension of oral history and the contemporary press.

Chapter 2, “Socio-Economic, Political and Cultural-Institutional Factors of Everyday Life in Bessarabia during the 1930s”, focuses on the study of the population from a quantitative perspective in the context of demographic processes, politics in everyday life, population income and expenditure, cultural and religious life, and includes a case study on the impact of the Romanian Army on everyday life.

On 1 January 1940, the total population of Bessarabia was 3,191,016 inhabitants, representing an increase of 326,614 persons of both sexes compared with the population census of 29 December 1930, or 11.4%, corresponding to 1.2% annually. This was a significant increase, even though population migration also increased during this period. According to historian Nicolae Enciu, between 1930 and 1940, fluctuations ranged from 27,000 to 50,000 persons per year (or 9-20%) [21, pp. 55-75; 14, pp. 242, 336]. The balance between the rural *versus* urban environment clearly favoured the rural world.

The everyday life of the majority of Bessarabians, who lived in rural areas, was deeply connected to the land, agricultural temporality, and the economic constraints of rural survival.

The deeply patriarchal character of households (where men held decision-making power) contrasted sharply with the everyday reality of physical labour in the fields, where women represented a numerically larger share of the population and carried a double burden, domestic and economic. Bessarabian everyday life was deeply sacralized, with the institution of the Church and religious affiliation constituting the principal social bond and the strictest normative filter of morality and public interaction. Collective mentality was dominated by conservatism, traditionalism, and an organic resistance to the assimilation of Western-style modernization dynamics characteristic of major urban centres. Many small Bessarabian towns (for example, Hotin and Orhei) had a strongly ruralized profile, where inhabitants continued to practise agriculture, blurring the actual socio-cultural boundary between village and town.

While the 1920s were marked by the great enthusiasm of the Union generation, whose representatives became fully involved in Romanian political life, strongly influenced by the dynamic activity of the National Liberal Party (PNL) and the National Peasant Party (PNȚ), as well as by the active involvement of citizens in public life, the 1930s, profoundly marked by the global economic crisis and the uncertain international situation, emerged as a period of crisis for the democratic system, an intensification of the far-right movement, and the establishment of royal dictatorship.

The political element permeated everyday life in the Prut-Dniester area, shaping preferences for specific political forces. Democratic life gradually shifted towards dictatorship.

Through the weakening of local authority (the fluctuation of prefects), bureaucratic centralization in 1932, and Carolist uniformization in 1938, politics ceased to be an external legal framework and increasingly intruded into the daily life of citizens. Disillusionment with the image of the politician became apparent, shifting from an image of honesty and concern for the public good towards that of a miserly, mercantile individual interested solely in petty and personal objectives. While in the 1920s urban and rural everyday life was animated by the dynamic debates of the PNL and PNȚ, providing an outlet for public expression, in the 1930s the public sphere became controlled and standardized. People were compelled to restructure their daily sociability: critical discourse disappeared from cafés, markets, and gatherings out of fear of the security apparatus, while enrolment in the National Renaissance Front became a prerequisite for retaining employment or obtaining administrative favours. Leisure time and public rituals were appropriated by manifestations of the cult of the personality of the king, with politics becoming an oppressive and compulsory presence in everyday life.

Everyday life in Bessarabia during the 1930s was affected by climate crises, the collapse of agricultural prices, and fiscal pressures, triggering mechanisms of community self-defence and migratory trends that nevertheless endangered the cohesion and continuity of traditional rural communities. Although theoretically integrated into the unified national market, Bessarabia suffered from a peripheral geographical position compounded by asymmetric tariff policies in railway transportation. The great distances from the main maritime ports and western borders substantially increased logistics costs; consequently, Bessarabian export products were sold locally at undervalued prices, while necessary imports were disproportionately expensive. Investigations during the 1930s concerning population income and expenditure demonstrate that part of the goods produced on an agricultural holding was consumed by the owner's family, while another part remained intended for sale on the market.

The cultural-spiritual foundation left a major imprint on the everyday life of the population of Bessarabia during the fourth decade of the twentieth century. This determining factor of everyday life was rooted in a collective mentality formed over several centuries, while also being strongly influenced by traditions, cultural interactions, religious feelings and devotions, adaptation to new innovations and contemporary perceptions, currents of opinion, and paradigm shifts.

From a cultural-institutional perspective, it should be noted that cultural centres were established in Bessarabia, and by the end of the fourth decade they were the most numerous throughout the Romanian cultural space. These institutions represented the most important forms of community education, constituting authentic structures for the emancipation of society and the spiritual reintegration of the population within Romanian culture, while creating spaces for intellectual and spiritual communication among the population [22, pp. 134-145].

The educational system had a major impact on the population. Indeed, during the interwar period, the establishment of the Faculty of Theology (1926) and the Faculty of Agricultural Sciences (1933), branches of the University of Iași, laid the foundations of higher education in Bessarabia. The establishment of these faculties was in line with the interests of the indigenous population, which was predominantly Orthodox and primarily engaged in agriculture and animal husbandry. Thus, the prerequisites for the formation of an indigenous intellectual elite were emerging.

The Church encompassed the entire spiritual, cultural, and economic universe of the community. This cohesion was rooted in the social realities of the period and exerted a dynamic influence on society as a whole, including the practical aspects of everyday life. Religion represented the moral and chronological axis of everyday life. Religious holidays structured work, rest, social behaviour, and public ethics.

Collective piety arising from religious sentiment can also be observed in certain religious practices documented during the period. In addition to the celebrations officiated by the Church, villagers observed a wide range of customs that the Christian ecclesiastical institution did not accept; these rituals – regarded as a social evil – involved the veneration of pagan deities, resulting in the coexistence of separate calendars associated with celebrations that contradicted Christian religion. The combating of these superstitions was entrusted to members of the Church, who were instructed to address them through both word and deed.

Therefore, it was proposed that, in addition to advice, minor penances should also be imposed during confession.

The presence of the Romanian Army in Bessarabia during the 1930s represented a complex process of “defensive modernization”, in which cultural assimilation, literacy, and infrastructure development were closely linked to discipline intended to protect the population against security challenges from the eastern side of the Romanian state. On the one hand, the army emerged as an indisputable element of modernization, social assistance, and cultural engineering. On the other hand, the same everyday reality was profoundly shaped by its function of coercion, control, and surveillance of state structures. Prolonged states of siege and the inflexible rigor of military courts constantly reminded the local population that Bessarabia was viewed through the lens of extreme geopolitical vulnerability. This normative and administrative pressure inevitably generated tensions between civilians and the military.

The correlated analysis of the five factors – population, administrative-political, financial, cultural-spiritual, and military – reveals that the everyday reality of Bessarabia was not merely a reflection of policies adopted in Bucharest, but rather a space of negotiation, adaptation, and epistemic tension between the normative project of the unitary national state and the challenges generated by local social structures.

Chapter 3, “Practices and Experiences of Everyday Life in Bessarabia”, examines the family and the life cycle, housing and clothing, food, healthcare and the health condition of the population, morality and vices.

Regarding the preservation of traditional forms of social expression, Bessarabia may be regarded as one of the most conservative Romanian provinces. This was reflected in the preservation of the Romanian language and the “unspoiled” maintenance of customs and traditions. In this respect, one may speak of the Bessarabians’ resistance “to remain what they had been.” Conservatism, an authentic identity marker, was also preserved in everyday life.

Incorporation into the broader Romanian space and the new social transformations obviously could not leave the entire picture of everyday life untouched.

In the case of Bessarabia, a certain reluctance towards the transformation of Romanian everyday life was observed. Thus, while the educational system was regarded as a factor offering greater openness towards integration into Romanian society, the same cannot be said of the family as the basic social unit. A perspective for studying the family in Bessarabia may be derived through the anthropological concept of the life cycle, an approach reflected particularly in the research of the Bessarabian folklorist Gheorghe Madan [6]. This interpretation inherently incorporates the evolutionary process of the biological factor, bringing together the presentation of a diachronic method: birth – baptism – marriage – death. During the fourth decade of the twentieth century, this life cycle oscillated between the past (tradition) and the extensive

modernization process through which the entire Romanian state, including the province of Bessarabia, was passing.

The life cycle in Bessarabia during the fourth decade shows that the basic institutions of private life (birth and marriage) became a space of encounter between new and old rules.

On the one hand, the interwar Romanian state sought to modernize the region by introducing civil status offices within town halls and regulating divorces through the courts.

On the other hand, the local population continued to strictly observe traditional customs and unwritten rules in the villages, which were intended to protect land ownership and the structure of the agrarian family against external changes. In urban areas, the stages of the life cycle were marked by an asymmetrical transition, in which the legal and bureaucratic standardization imposed by the new civil status offices overlapped with a strong cultural inertia of Eastern origin, visible through the persistence of bilingualism and the preference for Russian within intellectual families and mixed marriages.

During the relatively short period of the 1930s, the structure of the homes of Bessarabian Romanians underwent few changes under the impact of the modernization processes affecting society. In general terms, domestic architecture and the organization of living space retained their traditional character, displaying local features determined by environmental conditions and regional resources. Clothing, by contrast, underwent significant structural transformations. This dynamic development was received with restraint by a rural society dominated by conservative views and reluctant to accept the rapid behavioural and aesthetic changes of the interwar period.

The razes villages of Bessarabia were presented as places characterized by houses with verandas and deeply rooted traditions. It should be noted that, according to plans for the construction of small-town halls in Bessarabia during the 1930s, these buildings displayed features characteristic of traditional houses. The friendly atmosphere and the “Moldavian soul of the Bessarabian” were shaped by the image of the open house welcoming guests. The folklorist Petre Ștefănuță presented a contrast between the “large room” and urban parlours, altered with glazed tiles, replacing the traditional dowry chest, with factory-made curtains at the windows. In villages located near urban settlements, the table could be placed in the middle of the “large room” [8, p. 1], which was regarded as a direct influence of the urban environment.

The heating systems of homes were adapted to the fuel available in the geographical area concerned (firewood, dried manure, branches, dried plant stalks, reeds and cattails). The rural landscape was also marked by impoverished dwellings, unsuitable for a decent standard of living. The contemporary press circulated the “Ten Commandments of the Romanian,” which outlined the profile of the “good Romanian.” The second commandment stated: “Preserve your

speech, dress and old Romanian customs, because these are the foundations of the entire Romanian nation” [9, p. 4]. In other words, the preservation of traditional dress, as a form of internal discipline and moral value, as a bond with the people, was organically integrated into the fundamental characteristic of identity and attachment to the major transformations of the period.

Unlike the rural world, the city was affected by processes of rapid modernization. Thus, traditional clothing (also called “old-fashioned”), entirely made by women, was disappearing. Urban clothing styles were imitated. Low-quality and excessively expensive fabric purchased at the market was transformed into “clothes according to the fashion of people from the urban outskirts” [8, p. 1]. The contemporary press harshly criticized the fact that villagers purchased “all kinds of fabrics and silks made from rotten nettles, yet expensive” from merchants [10, p. 1]. It is worth noting that women were more receptive than men to adopting fashion innovations. Footwear was an indispensable element of one’s appearance. While in the 1920s girls would go to the village dance wearing slippers, traditional cloth shoes, or even barefoot, without this being considered a source of shame, by the early 1930s they were already wearing shoes.

At the same time, shoes represented a luxury item; therefore, young people went to village patron-saint festivals or monasteries carrying their “shoes in their hands because they were expensive, and they walked barefoot [...], washed their feet and put them on” [4, p. 72]. In Chişinău, footwear was sold in 24 commercial establishments, including four specialized shops for house shoes [11, p. 32].

In general terms, the development of housing and clothing in Bessarabia during the 1930s may be placed within two divergent models of everyday life: a rural-monastic culture focused on preserving the patriarchal household and producing wool clothing by hand as a strategy of economic survival, and an urban consumer culture closely connected to Western European trends and values. The state and supporting institutions (domestic-economy schools and monasteries) succeeded in stabilizing living standards in rural areas by capitalizing on traditional local resources, transforming the home and clothing into shields of national identity.

Following territorial unification and the agrarian reform (which affected the holdings of large landowners), the geography and diversity of household food supplies expanded. Thus, whereas previously, during drought years, villagers had been accustomed to using seed from large latifundia estates, the post-agrarian-reform situation changed in that peasants were no longer dependent on landowners located as far as 100 km away. The agricultural character of Bessarabia generally influenced the population’s diet [15, pp. 281-282]. In certain areas, nature provided diversified food through fishing and hunting. However, these natural resources,

cultivated and managed by farmers, unfortunately could not always ensure a decent livelihood even for those working in these economic sectors.

Agriculture was, as is well known, directly dependent on climatic factors. The food sphere was regarded as a significant dimension of public and private life in Bessarabian society. Restaurants, cafés, eating houses and taverns in the capital of Bessarabia offered food products classified into three categories: soups and borscht (meat soup, meatless soup, borscht with meat and sour cream, meatless borscht, broth with rusks); dishes with sauces (meat sauce, cabbage, leek and various vegetables, cabbage rolls with sour cream and polenta, meatballs with sauce, fasting dishes); roasts (beef, pork and veal; mici, schnitzel, pork ribs, beef meat patties, poultry pilaf); and dough-based dishes (macaroni with butter and cheese, papanasi, bread).

A particularly complex aspect identified by physicians of the period concerned the gap between traditional dietary practices and pediatric hygiene standards. Among the elite food products, delicious but also expensive, was the confectionery industry. Between 1918 and 1944, 49 confectioneries operated in Bessarabia, ten of which produced candy directly.

The invitation to the table and the journey towards the meal formed part of a ritualized performance of social convention. If the host invited the guests to the table with warmth and enthusiasm, the wedding guests were expected to walk “lazily” towards the festive table so as not to create the impression that they were attending the event merely for the food.

For urban Bessarabians, bread, meat, sugar and oil constituted the principal food consumption items. There was also a significant difference between urban and rural populations in access to vegetables, fruit and processed food products. A separate problem concerned the supply of drinking water.

In general terms, food and consumption practices in interwar Bessarabia were defined by a profound structural contradiction: a province endowed with enormous fruit-growing and viticultural potential, yet whose predominantly rural population remained confined to an austere and monotonous diet shaped at the intersection of climatic hazards, limited urban purchasing power and cultural conservatism resistant to modernization.

Nevertheless, the positive aspects of this period lay in agricultural dynamism and the spirit of urban emulation. The successful acclimatization of new Transylvanian and Banat wheat varieties, the transformation of the Dniester floodplain into an internationally outstanding fruit-growing area, and the maturation of public catering networks through professional guilds demonstrate that Bessarabia was on an irreversible path towards alignment with the standards of economic modernity, gradually capitalizing on its enormous native potential.

A pressing problem for Romanian society in the 1930s was healthcare and the state of public health, a dimension directly related to the level of hygienic culture among the population. Poor hygiene, which generated numerous diseases, negatively affected population growth and represented a primary concern for medical personnel working in the field, while hospital care remained an important component.

The Regional Sanitary Inspectorate of Bessarabia stood at the head of the province's healthcare organization, with nine county sanitary services and 238 rural and urban sanitary districts under its authority. Curative medicine in Bessarabia consisted of 62 hospitals with 2,831 beds, one child welfare institute and 152 rural and urban dispensaries. The municipality of Chişinău had 13 hospitals, 14 dispensaries, two maternity hospitals, an Antirabies Institute, a Veterinary Bacteriology Laboratory, 21 pharmacies and seven ambulances [15, p. 201; 307, pp. 127-137].

The annual healthcare allocation in the budgets of the counties of Bessarabia throughout the 1930s amounted to approximately 50 million lei, or 17.7 lei per inhabitant [15, p. 205]. Beyond the institutional organization of the Bessarabian healthcare system, several obstacles created difficulties in establishing effective organization. Poverty, as well as the lack of health education and access to healthcare, represented acute problems for the population of Bessarabia. Thus, there were cases in which patients did not seek medical assistance because of a lack of financial resources, transportation, or due to negligence regarding their own health.

The direct agents responsible for educating villagers about the need to seek medical services were local intellectuals, namely priests and teachers. For endemic and external reasons alike, outbreaks of infectious, contagious and epidemic diseases occurred in certain localities during specific periods. Throughout the interwar period, epidemic typhus constituted an endemic disease in Bessarabia.

One factor contributing to the difficult epidemiological situation among the population of most Bessarabian counties was the presence of refugees from across the Dniester, who carried various contagious diseases, including epidemic typhus. To counter these developments, on 15 March 1932, the Command of the 3rd Army Corps ordered that "all necessary assistance be provided to the chief physicians of the counties and cities, so that preventive measures required by the circumstances and the seriousness of combating epidemic typhus brought by refugees arriving from across the Dniester" could be taken in due time.

In this context, on 18 March 1932, the Sanitary Service of Lăpuşna County requested that communal and police authorities provide the addresses of Transnistrian refugees to identify sources of infection and measures for combating them.

The construction of public baths was also high on the authorities' agenda. In 1938 and 1939, following the "hygiene weeks" organized by the Ministry of Health, a significant reduction in cases of epidemic typhus was recorded. All citizens were examined and houses suspected of being affected by the disease were cleaned.

In combating the epidemic of typhus, an important contribution was made by the organization of fixed and mobile delousing facilities as a major measure for eliminating parasites. The organization of mobile steam-disinfection chambers was also advocated, as they were considered more effective than fixed delousing furnaces. The latter involved a changing area where people remained while their clothes were placed in the furnaces. In some rural localities, the facilities were poorly maintained or lacked suitable rooms. The furnaces themselves could become sources of infection. People could bring typhus with them to these special facilities and spread it through social interaction.

As a result of the measures undertaken by the authorities, the number of reported cases of epidemic typhus began to decrease significantly, although the disease did not disappear completely. During the 1930s, the Bessarabian countryside was affected by various acute gastrointestinal diseases and chronic disorders of the digestive system among the adult population. This was attributed to inadequate nutrition among villagers. Thus, while peasants overate during the winter, in spring and summer they were insufficiently nourished during agricultural work. This was compounded by excessive alcohol consumption, poor nutrition and a limited variety of food products.

Administrative personnel, teachers, priests, pre-military organizations, as well as the entire sanitary and auxiliary personnel of the counties, were involved in organizing health campaigns, with all these mobilization efforts taking place under the auspices of the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare.

The general health of the population and the effectiveness of healthcare in the Prut-Dniester area was closely linked not only to medical infrastructure but also to the extent to which physical culture had penetrated everyday life. Unfortunately, the practice of physical activities based on systematic training, adherence to rules and a certain degree of discipline – elements with a profoundly beneficial impact on maintaining public health – did not enjoy great popularity in Bessarabia [19, pp. 336-341].

To remedy these shortcomings and actively integrate Bessarabia into the Romanian sporting circuit, various promotional tournaments were organized in all cities of the province at the end of the 1930s.

Therefore, the analysis of indicators concerning healthcare and public health in Bessarabia during the 1930s demonstrates that the biological condition of the population was profoundly affected by structural infrastructural deficiencies, endemic poverty, and the inadequate dissemination of systematic hygienic and sporting culture. This dynamic was marked by a major polarization between urban and rural areas, which deepened the modernization gap within the province.

Although state authorities implemented considerable logistical measures and extensive delousing and vaccination campaigns, the Prut-Dniester area remained extremely vulnerable to the high incidence of social diseases and the recurrence of endemic epidemics. Ultimately, collective resistance to the adoption of the technical and hygienic innovations of the period, compounded by everyday negligence and chronic administrative deficiencies in the medical field, significantly limited the effectiveness of public policies aimed at maintaining and strengthening the biological capital of the Bessarabian population.

Discourses concerning morality, alcoholism and other forms of social deviance were addressed within various normative frameworks during the period under consideration. Educators, members of the clergy, publicists, and political figures articulated their views on this subject. From this perspective, the vision of the period's elite regarding morality can be reconstructed, although it did not always faithfully reflect the actual level of conduct among the population.

Through the educational system, fundamental values included the cultivation of a sense of homeland, dynasty, Christian faith and unity of the Romanian nation. The values transmitted through the family, society, and religion were moral and ethical in nature and converged in the formation of the individuals of "good Christians," positioned in opposition to atheists, including the threatening danger from the left bank of the Dniester. Moral and religious foundations constituted the basic factors of an exemplary society. At the same time, there was considerable concern that Christian values were undergoing a decline and that the voice of the clergy was no longer being heard in society.

The poverty and poor health of the peasants were attributed to the "poison of the stomach and soul," all of which was associated with economic illiteracy. Conversely, money spent in taverns could have been directed to popular banks and used to purchase "useful newspapers and books, such as cooperative and agricultural publications, from which they could learn how to save money and cultivate the land systematically" [7, p. 1].

Rural poverty was attributed to drunkenness in everyday life. Alongside the moralizing discourses of the intellectuals of the period, strategies for combating alcoholism sometimes also

appealed to historical parallels. Within this rhetoric, the distant past of the local area was invoked to demonstrate that excessive drinking endangered social stability and state security.

At the end of the fourth decade, a reduction in the number of taverns that “poisoned the people” was observed, with their place increasingly being taken by cultural centers, which were expanding throughout Bessarabian localities. It should be noted that these cultural institutions, established as centers for the enlightenment of the masses, were accepted reluctantly in certain localities.

Despite the emphasis placed on social deviance, the normative discourse of the period also incorporated elements idealizing the rural world, among which hospitality as a virtue of villagers was particularly prominent. This characteristic should not, however, be regarded as an absolute dimension of everyday morality, but rather as part of an identity construct actively promoted by cultural elites.

A distinct aspect of the social deviance landscape in Bessarabia, reflecting the structural vulnerabilities of the social order of the period, was the activity of marginal groups, including criminals. Manifestations of deviance in the social sphere were rigorously monitored through mechanisms of political, educational and ecclesiastical control, with prescriptive measures intended to limit the spread of criminal phenomena and moral degradation in the everyday life of the population.

Another major dimension of social deviance, extensively debated in the normative discourse devoted to the rural world, was the spread of cohabitation, a phenomenon perceived by clerical and administrative elites as a direct threat to the traditional family model.

In addition to alcohol abuse and other forms of behavioral deviance monitored by the authorities, a structural component of sociability and everyday consumption practices in Bessarabian society was the widespread prevalence of tobacco use. Far from being regarded simply as a harmless leisure habit, tobacco consumption oscillated in the collective mentality between acceptance as an element of modernity and stigmatization as a harmful habit.

Among those habits and vices perceived as having a negative impact on the modernization of Bessarabian Romanian society, social games—particularly card games—stand out, being widespread in both rural and urban environments. A particular vice was the excessive consumption of sunflower seeds (*răsărită*) and the loud spitting of the black seeds in public spaces. Eating sunflower seeds was regarded as both a “national food” and a “symbol of boredom and poverty.”

A distinct dimension of the normative discourse of the interwar period concerned opposition to new forms of mass entertainment, particularly contemporary literature and cinema,

which conservative elites perceived not as aesthetic products but as factors of moral degradation and social pathology. This critical campaign was undertaken especially by the clergy, a social category acting as an institution of ethical control and seeking to limit the effects of secularization and urbanization on collective mentalities.

Thus, the investigation of morality, alcoholism and other forms of social deviance in Bessarabia during the 1930s reveals a profound tension between the ideal ethical model promoted by clerical and secular elites and the pragmatic, often violent realities of everyday life.

Phenomena such as organized crime, prostitution – whether regulated or clandestine – and endemic alcohol consumption go beyond the reductionist framework of the moralizing discourse found in the sources of the period and require interpretation through the prism of economic precariousness, border vulnerabilities, and acute financial and health illiteracy.

Ultimately, the state's efforts to morally discipline public space through the secularization of civil status, police raids, prohibitive legislation and the expansion of the cultural-center network encountered the organic resistance of local practices, demonstrating the limits of the process of social disciplining in the face of traditional structures of sociability deeply rooted in the collective mentality.

The investigation of the practices and experiences of everyday life in Bessarabia during the fourth decade of the twentieth century reveals pronounced institutional dynamism and modernization, a process in which the concerted efforts of the modern state generated progress in both urban and rural environments, although their impact remained profoundly asymmetrical due to the resistance of traditional structures and economic limitations.

GENERAL CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The thorough research and analysis of everyday life in Bessarabia during the fourth decade of the twentieth century, conducted through the corroboration of specialized literature with a diverse range of historical sources and through the application of an interdisciplinary theoretical and methodological framework, makes it possible to formulate the following *general conclusions* and practical recommendations arising from the scientific inquiry.

1. The results of the historiographical analysis revealed that, although Romanian and Western scholarly literature has shown increased interest in macropolitical processes and the institutional integration of Greater Romania, the social dynamics of the Prut-Dniester province have remained largely in an analytical shadow.

2. The analytical corroboration and direct comparison of these sources made it possible to distinguish between official institutional norms, the subjective representations of contemporaries, and the actual practices of everyday life recorded in urban and rural environments.

3. Socio-economic, political and cultural-institutional factors played an essential role in shaping everyday life in Bessarabia during the fourth decade of the twentieth century, determining a structural reconfiguration of the urban and rural environment at the intersection of the state's unifying policies and the inertia of local customary order.

The implementation of new state health policies and legislative modernization stimulated overall demographic growth, a dynamic accompanied by a gradual reduction in illiteracy among the population. The penetration of these transformations was uneven, deepening the structural divides between major urban centers, which were undergoing a process of modernization and synchronization, and rural communities or small towns, which retained a strongly "ruralized" profile and remained dependent on the exploitation of the land.

The analysis of the correlation between power structures and the everyday life of the Bessarabian population during the fourth decade demonstrates a mechanism of direct determination, whereby the deterioration of the macro-political and economic context reshaped the private and public space of the province.

The incomes and expenditures of the population shaped social behavior in the everyday life of Bessarabia during the 1930s. While peasants mitigated their precariousness through the safety valve of self-consumption, urban dwellers became dependent on a volatile urban market, with the financial dynamics of the period directly determining the dynamism of the economic life of city residents.

During the 1930s, the cultural and religious life of Bessarabia underwent a process of synchronization with the other Romanian provinces, transforming education and faith into pillars of national unification and resistance in the face of external ideological aggression.

Through cultural centers, the university extensions of Iași, and a ubiquitous parish network, the state succeeded in counteracting the imperial legacy and creating a genuine “identity shield” against atheist propaganda from the left bank of the Dniester.

The everyday life of the masses remained profoundly marked by local specificities, within which ecclesiastical discourse had to coexist organically with a rural syncretism dominated by transgenerational rituals and beliefs.

The mechanism of the relationship between the Romanian Army and everyday life in Bessarabia during the 1930s manifested itself as a process of “defensive modernization,” in which cultural assimilation, literacy and infrastructure development were closely linked to institutional rigor intended to protect the state’s eastern border.

The Army structurally reshaped the everyday habitat through sanitary and epidemiological measures, the establishment of canteens for people in need, and the mobilization of military personnel for the construction of strategic infrastructure.

The dynamics and configuration of everyday life in Bessarabia during the interwar fourth decade were determined by the structural interaction between the global macroeconomic recession, normative policies of cultural and religious integration, and mechanisms of defensive modernization applied by civilian and military authorities. This systemic complex reshaped social behavior, community habitats and the daily way of life of the Bessarabian population.

4. The investigation of the practices and experiences of everyday life in Bessarabia during the 1930s reveals a complex structural dynamic in which the material conditions of housing, clothing and food, together with healthcare mechanisms and manifestations of public morality, shaped the fundamental parameters of family and community existence.

The family context and everyday life in Bessarabia during the fourth decade manifested themselves as a process of negotiation between the legal-administrative modernization of the secular state and the conservatism of community structures. The passage through the biological stages of birth, marriage and death became subject to bureaucratic control through the introduction of civil status offices in town halls, while traditional community practices continued to be rigorously observed, including the “Masa Mare” christening feast, parental arrangements concerning dowry, and the nocturnal vigil over the deceased.

The domestic environment, clothing and everyday life in Bessarabia during the 1930s manifested a dynamic polarized between a rural-monastic culture focused on preserving patriarchal structures and an urban consumer culture connected to Western European values.

Regarding everyday practices, the rural environment preserved traditional architecture, domestic overcrowding, and the pragmatic protection of clothing and luxury footwear at the expense of physical comfort, while the urban environment rapidly aligned itself with the Western European consumer economy. This dynamism was evidenced by the expansion of the commercial network through specialized shops and elite workshops that brought urban clothing into line with the stylistic standards of Paris and Vienna.

The Bessarabian food system was influenced by integration into the national market and by the agrarian reform, which generated agricultural polymorphism through the acclimatization of cereal varieties from the Romanian provinces. In everyday life, actual practices reflected a profound socio-economic divide. The rural population was dependent on maize monoculture (*mămăliga*), empirical subsistence strategies such as fishing on the Dniester and hunting, as well as access to the urban market. Urban residents benefited from diversified consumption and colonial goods, distributed through seasonal markets and networks of petty traders.

The Bessarabian healthcare recorded institutional and logistical progress through the implementation of state campaigns, measures reflected in the expansion of dispensary networks, the multiplication of fixed and mobile delousing facilities, large-scale hydrological sanitation works aimed at combating malaria, and the creation of specialized territorial structures.

Everyday practices revealed limited hygienic habits and profound infrastructural deficiencies, conditions that facilitated the endemic spread of parasites and acute diseases.

They also exposed a structural discrepancy between normative ethical models and the population's actual patterns of sociability, manifested in the misuse of state assistance, the transformation of major holidays into occasions for violence, the erosion of interpersonal trust in financial transactions, gambling, compulsive tobacco use, and the consumption and spitting of sunflower seeds (*răsărită*) in public spaces.

The integrated research of Bessarabian everyday life during the period under consideration highlights a profound asymmetry between the prescriptive discourses of modernizing elites and the empirical adaptation strategies of the population, revealing a regionally and materially fragmented society that constantly oscillated between the inertia of traditional structures and gradual alignment with the institutional and urban-development standards of interwar modernity.

As a result of the research conducted while preparing this doctoral thesis, the following **recommendations** are proposed: 1. From a scientific perspective, the research on the subject addressed in this study, namely everyday life in Bessarabia, should be continued from the perspective of other chronological periods. 2. Scientific research on the topic should be intensified by deepening and developing new lines of inquiry, including everyday life in the military and religious environments; the everyday life of specific professional groups (physicians, civil servants, teachers, etc.); the everyday life of children; and other related subjects. 3. Temporary or permanent exhibitions devoted to the history of everyday life in interwar Bessarabia should be created within museum institutions in the Republic of Moldova. 4. Episodes and representations of everyday life in Bessarabia during the period between the two world wars should be incorporated into theatrical and cinematographic productions. 5. Scholarly research should be disseminated through thematic radio and television programs, the print media, and YouTube platforms in the Republic of Moldova and Romania.

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ADNOTARE

Aurel Fondos, „Viața cotidiană în Basarabia anilor '30 ai sec. al XX-lea”, teză de doctor în istorie, specialitatea 611.02 – Istoria Românilor (pe perioade), Chișinău, 2026. 211 p.

Structura tezei: adnotări, lista figurilor (numeric sunt 27) și abrevierilor, introducere, trei capitole divizate în subcapitole, concluzii generale și recomandări, bibliografie din 448 de titluri, 147 de pagini de text de bază, 3 anexe, declarația privind asumarea răspunderii, CV-ul autorului. Rezultatele obținute sunt publicate în 27 de lucrări științifice.

Cuvinte-cheie: Unire, viață cotidiană, identitate, stat, demografie, politică, venituri, cheltuieli, familia, ciclul vieții, locuința și vestimentația, alimentația, asistența sanitară, sănătate, moralitate, vicii, istoriografie, surse istorice, modernizare, cultură, spiritualitate, Armata Română, Partidul Național Liberal, Partidul Național Țărănesc, Partidul Comunist Român, România, Basarabia, Imperiul Rus, RASSM, URSS, Occident, interbelic.

Scopul lucrării rezidă în reconstituirea și analiza vieții cotidiene în Basarabia în anii '30 ai sec. al XX-lea, în contextul evoluțiilor socio-economice, politice și cultural-religioase din România interbelică.

Obiectivele cercetării: analiza istoriografiei și a surselor documentare pentru a identifica nivelul de cercetare a vieții cotidiene în Basarabia în anii '30 ai sec. XX; identificarea principalilor factori demografici, socio-economici și politici care au influențat viața cotidiană a Basarabiei în perioada cercetată; examinarea influenței mediului cultural-spiritual și a prezenței Armatei asupra cotidianului basarabean; cercetarea condițiilor materiale ale existenței cotidiene prin analiza locuirii, vestimentației, alimentației și accesului populației la asistența sanitară; reconstituirea practicilor și experiențelor familiale, a etapelor ciclului vieții, a normelor morale și a comportamentelor caracteristice societății basarabene.

Noutatea și originalitatea științifică a lucrării rezidă în interpretări noi privind impactul factorilor politici, economici și cultural-spirituali asupra vieții cotidiene în Basarabia. Sunt reconstruite practici cotidiene ale unor categorii sociale diverse și este nuanțat raportul de forțe dintre rezistența ritualurilor strămoșești și presiunea proceselor de modernizare, oferind o imagine de ansamblu asupra mutațiilor de comportament survenite în perioada de referință.

Problema științifică soluționată: existența unei profunde contradicții și a unei asimetrii structurale între eforturile intense de integrare instituțională, legislativă și administrativă a Basarabiei în cadrul României și persistența, la nivelul maselor, a unor structuri socio-culturale, mentalități și practici cotidiene moștenite din perioada țaristă. Această tensiune conceptuală este amplificată, pe de o parte, de decalajul major dintre politicile statale de accelerare a modernizării și rezistența comportamentelor tradiționale – vizibilă în clivajul acut dintre mediul urban și cel rural –, iar pe de altă parte, de distanța critică dintre normele juridice oficiale și comportamentul cotidian efectiv adoptat de populația basarabeană în perioada de referință.

Semnificația teoretică: se realizează o cercetare a componentelor vieții cotidiene specifice unui spațiu românesc de frontieră (Basarabia anilor '30 ai sec. XX), clasificând și ierarhizând factorii care au determinat modul de viață al populației locale. Lucrarea analizează modul în care schimbările macrostructurale (reintegrările politice, administrative și legislative din cadrul statului român) au fost recepționate și asimilate la nivel microistoric de către indivizi și comunități.

Valoarea aplicativă a lucrării este determinată de baza factuală și analitică a cercetării istoriei Basarabiei în perioada vizată. Conținutul științific al tezei poate fi implementat în sistemul de învățământ prin includerea noilor unități de conținut, cursuri speciale sau module de prelegeri dedicate istoriei interbelice a românilor. Investigația poate fi valorificată în instituțiile muzeale din Republica Moldova și România pentru proiectarea, organizarea și documentarea unor expoziții permanente ori temporare axate pe evoluția vieții private și a celei cotidiene din limita cronologică de referință.

Aprobarea rezultatelor obținute: aspecte ale problemei cercetate au fost prezentate în 6 articole publicate în reviste științifice naționale acreditate (1 în revistă indexată SCOPUS; 1 categoria B+; 4 categoria B), 1 articol în revistă științifică internațională, 3 articole prezentate la conferințe științifice internaționale, 6 articole prezentate la simpozion internațional, 2 articole la conferință științifică națională cu participare internațională, 7 rezumate la manifestări științifice naționale, 4 articole în culegeri științifice naționale, conceptualizarea.

ANNOTATION

Aurel Fondos, “Daily Life in Basarabia in the 1930s”, PhD thesis in history, specialty 611.02 – History of the Romanians (by periods), Chişinău, 2026. 211 p.

Structure of the thesis: annotations, list of figures (there are 27 of them) and abbreviations, introduction, three chapters divided into subchapters, general conclusions and recommendations, bibliography of 448 titles, 147 pages of basic text, 3 appendices, declaration of responsibility, author's CV. The results obtained are published in 27 scientific papers.

Keywords: Union, daily life, identity, state, demography, politics, income, expenses, family, life cycle, housing and clothing, food, healthcare, health, morality, vices, historiography, historical sources, modernization, culture, spirituality, Romanian Army, National Liberal Party, National Peasant Party, Romanian Communist Party, Romania, Bessarabia, Russian Empire, RASSM, USSR, West, interwar period.

The purpose of this work is to reconstruct and analyze daily life in Bessarabia during the 1930s, within the context of the socio-economic, political, and cultural-religious developments of interwar Romania.

Research objectives: to analyze the historiography and documentary sources in order to identify the current level of research on daily life in Bessarabia during the 1930s; to identify the main demographic, socio-economic, and political factors that influenced daily life in Bessarabia during the period under study; to examine the influence of the cultural-spiritual environment and the presence of the Army on Bessarabian daily life; to investigate the material conditions of daily existence through the analysis of housing, clothing, nutrition, and the population's access to healthcare; to reconstruct the family practices and experiences, the stages of the life cycle, the moral norms, and the behaviors characteristic of Bessarabian society.

The scientific novelty and originality of the study reside in its new interpretations regarding the impact of political, economic, and cultural-spiritual factors on daily life in Bessarabia. It reconstructs the everyday practices of diverse social categories and nuances the balance of power between the resilience of ancestral rituals and the pressure of modernization processes, providing a comprehensive overview of the behavioral mutations that occurred during the reference period.

The scientific problem solved: the existence of a profound contradiction and a structural asymmetry between the intense efforts for the institutional, legislative, and administrative integration of Bessarabia within Romania and the persistence, at the mass level, of socio-cultural structures, mentalities, and daily practices inherited from the Tsarist period. This conceptual tension is amplified, on the one hand, by the major gap between state policies aimed at accelerating modernization and the resilience of traditional behaviors – visible in the sharp divide between urban and rural environments – and, on the other hand, by the critical distance between official legal norms and the actual daily behavior adopted by the Bessarabian population during the reference period.

The theoretical significance of the study lies in its scientific analysis of the components of daily life specific to a Romanian borderland space (Bessarabia during the 1930s), while classifying and prioritizing the factors that determined the lifestyle of the local population. The dissertation examines the manner in which macro-structural changes (the political, administrative, and legislative reintegration within the Romanian state) were perceived and assimilated at the micro-historical level by individuals and communities.

The practical value of the study is determined by the factual and analytical basis of its research into the history of Bessarabia during the targeted period. The scientific content of the dissertation can be implemented within the educational system by including new content units, specialized courses, or lecture modules dedicated to the interwar history of the Romanians. The investigation can be utilized by museum institutions in the Republic of Moldova and Romania for the design, organization, and documentation of permanent or temporary exhibitions focused on the evolution of private and daily life within the reference chronological limits.

Approval of the results obtained: aspects of the researched problem were presented in 6 articles published in accredited national scientific journals (1 in SCOPUS indexed journal; 1 category B+; 4 category B), 1 article in an international scientific journal, 3 articles presented at international scientific conferences, 6 article presented at an international symposium, 2 article at a national scientific conference with international participation, 7 abstracts at national scientific events, 4 articles in national scientific collections.

АННОТАЦИЯ

Аурел Фондос, «Повседневная жизнь в Бессарабии в 1930-е годы», докторская диссертация по истории, специальность 611.02 – История румын (по периодам), Кишинев, 2026. 211 с.

Структура диссертации: аннотации, список рисунков (всего 27) и сокращений, введение, три главы, разделенные на подразделы, общие выводы и рекомендации, библиография (448 названий), 147 страниц основного текста, 3 приложения, декларация ответственности, резюме автора. Полученные результаты опубликованы в 27 научных статьях.

Ключевые слова: Союз, повседневная жизнь, идентичность, государство, демография, политика, доход, расходы, семья, жизненный цикл, жилье и одежда, питание, здравоохранение, здоровье, мораль, пороки, историография, исторические источники, модернизация, культура, духовность, Румынская армия, Национальная либеральная партия, Национальная крестьянская партия, Румынская коммунистическая партия, Румыния, Бессарабия, Российская империя, МАССР, СССР, Запад, межвоенный период.

Цель работы заключается в реконструкции и анализе повседневной жизни в Бессарабии в 30-е годы XX века в контексте социально-экономического, политического и культурно-религиозного развития межвоенной Румынии.

Задачи исследования: анализ историографии и документальных источников для определения степени изученности повседневной жизни в Бессарабии в 30-е годы XX века; выявление основных демографических, социально-экономических и политических факторов, влиявших на повседневную жизнь Бессарабии в исследуемый период; изучение влияния культурно-духовной среды и присутствия Армии на бессарабскую повседневность; исследование материальных условий повседневного существования посредством анализа жилья, одежды, питания и доступа населения к санитарной помощи; реконструкция семейных практик и опыта, этапов жизненного цикла, моральных норм и моделей поведения, характерных для бессарабского общества.

Научная новизна и оригинальность исследования заключаются в новых интерпретациях влияния политических, экономических и культурно-духовных факторов на повседневную жизнь в Бессарабии. Реконструированы повседневные практики различных социальных категорий и детализировано соотношение сил между стойкостью ритуалов предков и давлением процессов модернизации, что дает целостное представление о поведенческих мутациях, произошедших в исследуемый период.

Решенная научная проблема: существование глубокого противоречия и структурной асимметрии между интенсивными усилиями по институциональной, законодательной и административной интеграции Бессарабии в состав Румынии и сохранением на уровне масс социокультурных структур, менталитета и повседневных практик, унаследованных от царского периода. Это концептуальное напряжение усиливается, с одной стороны, серьезным разрывом между государственными политиками ускорения модернизации и стойкостью традиционных моделей поведения – что отчетливо проявляется в остром расколе между городской и сельской средой, – а с другой стороны, критической дистанцией между официальными правовыми нормами и фактическим повседневным поведением, принятым бессарабским населением в исследуемый период.

Теоретическая значимость исследования заключается в осуществлении научного анализа компонентов повседневной жизни, характерных для приграничного румынского пространства (Бессарабия 30-х годов XX века), с классификацией и иерархизацией факторов, определявших образ жизни местного населения. В работе исследуется характер восприятия и ассимиляции макроструктурных изменений (политической, административной и законодательной реинтеграции в состав румынского государства) на микроисторическом уровне отдельными индивидами и общинами.

Практическая ценность исследования определяется фактологической и аналитической базой изучения истории Бессарабии в исследуемый период. Научное содержание диссертации может быть внедрено в систему образования посредством включения новых содержательных единиц, специальных курсов или лекционных модулей, посвященных межвоенной истории румын. Материалы исследования могут быть использованы музейными учреждениями Республики Молдова и Румынии для проектирования, организации и документального обеспечения постоянных или временных экспозиций, посвященных эволюции частной и повседневной жизни в указанных хронологических рамках.

Подтверждение полученных результатов: аспекты исследуемой проблемы были представлены в 6 статьях, опубликованных в аккредитованных национальных научных журналах (1 в журнале, индексируемом в SCOPUS; 1 категории В+; 4 категории В), 1 статья в международном научном журнале, 3 статьи, представленных на международных научных конференциях, 6 статей представленных на международном симпозиуме, 2 статьи на национальной научной конференции с международным участием, 7 тезисных докладов на национальных научных мероприятиях, 4 статьи в национальных научных сборниках.

FONDOS AUREL

**EVERYDAY LIFE IN BESSARABIA IN THE 1930s OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY
611.02. HISTORY OF ROMANIANS (BY PERIODS)**

611.02. HISTORY OF ROMANIANS (BY PERIODS)

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