

CRANIOMETRY AND RACIAL IDENTITY IN INTERWAR TRANSYLVANIA^{*}

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Introduction

The entanglement of racial anthropology with nationalism is particularly important to understand considering that there has always been ambivalence in the way in which racial anthropologists viewed their own nation. The development of a scientific worldview of race in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries contributed greatly to the emergence of a new idea of nation – one seen in organic, biological terms. Paralleling the aspirations for a great historical destiny, the nation could now claim uniqueness in terms of racial qualities. Ultimately, the story of Romanian anthropology in Transylvania during the interwar period reflects the competition of two mutually exclusive ambitions: the encroaching ambition of the state upon the body of the nation as a whole; and the less successful ambition of the ethnic communities of Transylvania to translate their common history into reality.

Accounts of interwar Romania generally neglect racial anthropology¹. An examination of racial anthropology, in fact, compels a re-examination of the theoretical contexts which shaped interwar discussions of the nation. This approach contrasts with that adopted by other scholars working on this period, such as Katherine Verdery, Keith Hitchins or László Kürti². Although these scholars have shaped the current historiographic narratives about interwar Romania, their

^{*} Research for this paper was sponsored by the Marie Curie Intra-European Fellowship. I should also like to express my thanks to Matt Feldman for his suggestions and remarks.

¹ The only reference is to the relationship between political movements, like anti-Semitism and fascism, and racism. See Radu Ioanid, *The Sword of the Archangel. Fascist Ideology in Romania*, Boulder, CO., Columbia University Press, 1990.

² See Katherine Verdery, *National Ideology and National Character in Interwar Romania*, in *National Character and National Ideology in Interwar Eastern Europe*, Ivo Banac and Katherine Verdery eds., New Haven, Yale Center for International and Area Studies, 1995, p. 103-133; Keith Hitchins, *Orthodoxism. Polemics over Ethnicity and Religion in Interwar Romania*, *ibidem*, p. 135-156; László Kürti, *The Remote Borderland: Transylvania in the Hungarian Imagination*, New York, State University of New York Press, 2001.

reluctance to explain the existence of racial tropes in what Katherine Verdery calls the 'production of the nation' in Romania, are indicative of a scholarly difficulty in addressing the complex relationship between politics and cultural production. This is partly the product of difficulties intrinsic to identifying the elusive nature of racism within Romanian nationalist discourses; more overtly, however, this is the result of an imperfect and partial assessment of texts on national identity produced in the interwar period³.

Racial Representations of the Nation

Scholars dealing with interwar Romania largely agree that the two main sources for the creation of national identity were literary texts and historical symbols. According to this view, participants in the debate about the nation appropriated themes and characters that were created by successive generations of poets, artists, and scholars. The narratives of national belonging thus functioned at a discursive level⁴. Anthropologists, on the other hand, represented and viewed objects such as crania and archaeological artefacts and conducted technical experiments such as cataloguing and classifying the blood-groups of the population in order to create what they considered to be scientific knowledge about the nation. In other words, racial anthropology aimed at creating a graphic ontology, whereas the physical characterisation of the nation was seen to provide a certain source of knowledge. These graphic representations of the nation allowed anthropologists to engage in allegedly objective incursions into the ethnic fabric of society, comparing their interpretations of national identity with those viewed as more subjective, particularly literary texts.

Therefore, it must be recognised that racial anthropologists were subject to increasing critical pressure: in the interwar period the nation as object captured the attention of specialists and lay commentators alike, from sceptical believers in the historical destiny of both nations to those obsessed with the 'genius of the nation'.

³ To her credit, nevertheless, in the introduction to *National Character and National Ideology in Interwar Eastern Europe*, Katherine Verdery touches upon the distinction between racial (based on innate characteristics) and cultural national identity (formed by social experience). In her view, "the salient distinction between the two forms is not whether they refer to *physical* versus *cultural* difference but whether they presume that difference is *immutable* vs. *mutable*. That is, a racist ideology is one that classifies a person on the bases of what are socially presumed to be *unchangeable* characteristics, like skin colour, as distinct from other ideologies that classify on the basis of criteria that are at least in theory *changeable*". See Katherine Verdery, *Introduction*, in *National Character and National Ideology in Interwar Eastern Europe*, Ivo Banac and Katherine Verdery eds., p. XVII, note 9. Unfortunately, she does not employ this distinction when discussing national character in interwar Romania.

⁴ All studies dealing with nationalism concur on this issue. I mention only two of the most quoted references: Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities. Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, London, Verso, 1983, and *Nation and Narration*, Homi Bhabha ed., New York, Routledge, 1990.

Yet as all concerned soon came to realise one could not appeal to the reputation of racial anthropology without disrupting the monopoly on the discursive production of the nation created by other institutionalised disciplines like history and literature. As anthropology was brought under nationalist scrutiny and made the basis for racial thinking, its scientific pretensions were increasingly constrained by numerous conflicts. This was the case mainly because the graphic representation of the nation envisioned by racial anthropology was bound to find itself struggling for recognition in the field of nationalist construction⁵. By entering this contested field, racial anthropologists were therefore compelled to articulate an interpretation of the nation based on previously unexplored sources. In the following, I shall devote attention to one of these sources: craniometry.

With the emergence of national schools of anthropology in the nineteenth century, the idea of racial origins hitherto cultivated by historiography and literature was given a new impetus. To be sure, speculations about the role of race in shaping the destiny and history of peoples characterised the development of every European nation⁶. Racial anthropology manoeuvred these narratives of historical experience and cultural tradition towards the idea of an essential racial core of the nation. The nation thus came to embody great physical qualities, symbols of innate virtues transmitted from generation to generation. Once endowed with a noble genealogy, the nation was then assigned particular physical characteristics. The nation consequently became a visible, quantifiable entity: testable characteristics of the human body, such as the cranium or the composition of blood, were transformed into speculative ideas about the nation. Henceforth, illumination about its descriptions had to come from an understanding of its physical structure and functions.

The new idea of the nation was also inseparable from racial anatomy. However, the racial terminology employed was rather fluid and was further undermined by divergent interpretations. Indeed, during the interwar period, race was severely criticised for its conceptual laxity. Accordingly, Romanian racial anthropologists struggled to formulate a definition of 'race' able to encompass both the latest developments in racial science and salient local, nationalist tradition. Race was thus both a physical entity – described by French naturalist and anthropologist, Joseph Deniker (1852-1918) as being the "sum-total of somatological characteristics once met with in a real union of individuals, now scattered in fragments of varying proportions among several 'ethnic groups', from

⁵ Improvements in anthropology's social and scientific status were not accompanied by major attempts to institutionalise the discipline. The Romanian Institute of Anthropology was established only in 1940. See Gh. Pavelescu, *Etnografia românească din Ardeal în ultimii douăzeci de ani (1919-1939)*, in "Gând românesc", 7, 1939, p. 462-470 and Ion Chelcea, *Le mouvement ethnographique et folklorique en ces dernières années*, in "Archives pour la Science et la Réforme Sociale", 16 (1943), p. 363-369.

⁶ Paul Conlivaux, *The Fates of Nations. A Biological Theory of History*, New York, Simon & Schuster, 1980.

which it can no longer be differentiated except by a process of delicate analysis”⁷ – and a historical symbiosis, both physical and spiritual; the result of specific geographical conditions⁸.

Craniometry and Racial Cartography: The ‘Dacian Type’

As many anthropologists of the period recognised, there was no consensus about what constituted race, let alone how many races populated Europe. Attempts to work through this problem are detectable in the effort to standardise racial cartography. Here, three models of racial mapping competed for prominence. The first was proposed by Joseph Deniker, who identified six primary races: Northern, Eastern, Ibero-Insular, Western or Cenevole, Littoral or Atlanto-Mediterranean, and Adriatic or Dinaric; along with four sub-races: sub-Northern, Vistulian, North-Western, and sub-Adriatic⁹. Another model was outlined by the American racial cartographer William Z. Ripley (1867-1941), who insisted that there were only three European races Teutonic, Alpine (Celtic) and Mediterranean¹⁰. In turn, the German racial anthropologist Hans F. K. Günther (1891-1968), suggested that there were five European races: Nordic, Western, Dinaric, Eastern and Baltic¹¹. Importantly, all three authors considered the cephalic index to be a reliable instrument for classification, meaning that what differentiated races was ultimately cranial capacity: some were dolichocephalic (mainly the Northern and Ibero-Insular); others were brachycephalic (the Eastern, Western and Dinaric); and, finally, some were mesocephalic¹².

Craniology was extremely popular in the nineteenth century. In 1842, the Swedish anatomist Anders Retzius (1796-1860) first used the ratio of width to length in order to distinguish between dolichocephalic and brachycephalic crania, thus establishing a craniological comparative study of racial groups (see figure 1).

⁷ J. Deniker, *The Races of Man. An Outline of Anthropology and Ethnography*, London, Walter Scott Ltd., 1900, p. 8.

⁸ During the interwar period the most enticing definition of race as a spiritual category was offered by the poet and philosopher Lucian Blaga (1895-1961). See for example Lucian Blaga, *Despre rasă ca stil*, in “Gândirea”, XIV, 2 (1935), p. 69-84.

⁹ J. Deniker, *The Races of Man. An Outline of Anthropology and Ethnography*, London, Walter Scott Ltd., 1900.

¹⁰ William Z. Ripley, *The Races of Europe. A Sociological Study*, New York, D. Appleton and Company, 1899.

¹¹ Hans F. K. Günther, *Rassenkunde Europas*, 2nd ed., München, J. F. Lehmanns, 1926.

¹² The respected Hungarian anatomist, Mihály Lenhossék (1863-1937), extensively reviewed Deniker’s and Ripley’s theories in two articles he devoted to the development of Hungarian anthropology. See Mihály Lenhossék, *A magyarság anthropológiai vizsgálata*, in “Természettudományi Közlöny” 47, 1915, p.639-640, 757-783; and *Európa lakosságának eredete és fajbeli összetétele*, in “Természettudományi Közlöny”, 50, 697-698 (1918): 269-293. For the Romanian evaluation, see Iordache Făcăoaru, *Socialanthropologia ca știință pragmatică*, in “Buletin eugenic și biopolitic”, 9, 9-10 (1938), p. 352-365.

It was thereafter assumed that craniology could provide a basis for claims that original, pure races had their corresponding, homogeneous cranial features, either dolichocephalic or brachycephalic. Racial purity could also be documented through craniometrical analysis: arithmetic average could reveal whether the racial type was 'pure' or 'cross-bred'. Craniologists assumed that the more measurements and indexes of racial type to near the arithmetic average value, the more a given racial type could be understood as pure; conversely, the more a racial type diverged from this ideal average, the more 'cross-bred' it was¹³.

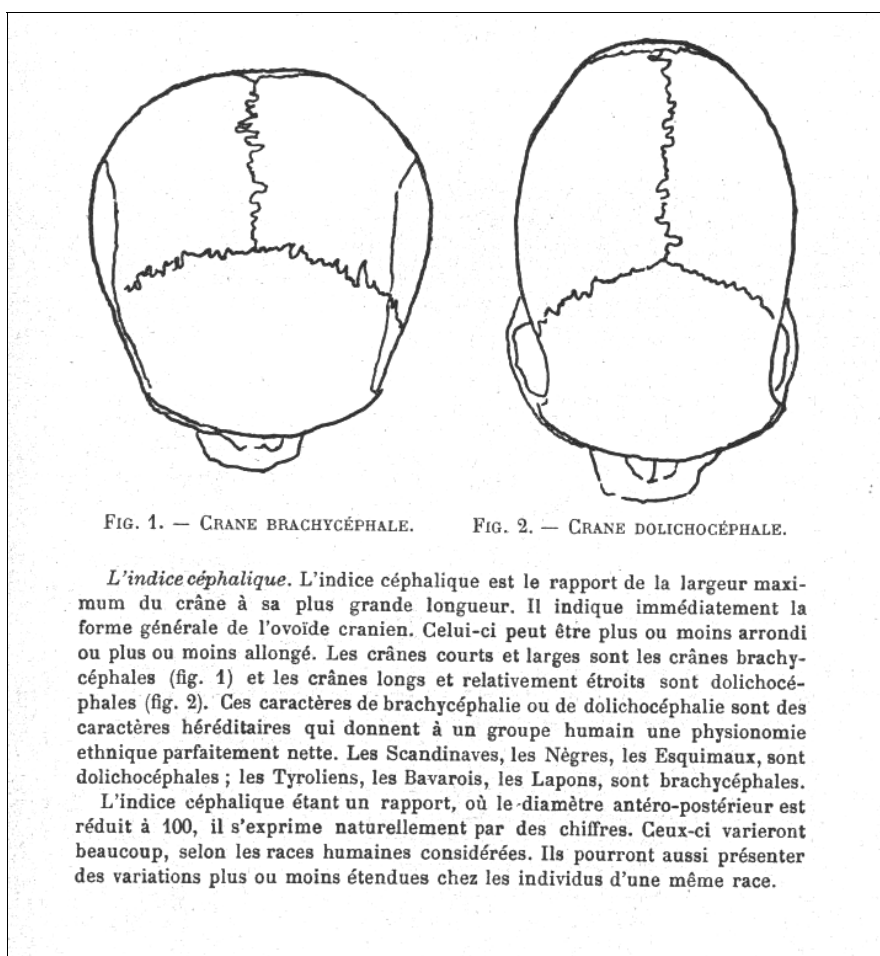


Fig. 1. Eugène Pittard: The Brachycephalic and Dolicocephalic Crania
From *Les Peuples des Balkans. Esquisses Anthropologique* (1916).

¹³ See the critique provided by G. M. Morant, *A Preliminary Classification of European Races Based on Cranial Measurements*, in "Biometrika", 20, 3-4 (1928), p. 301-375.

Retzius' system suffered successive transformations, including new index categories, as well as various combinations between the cephalic index and the facial index. Towards the end of the nineteenth century, craniometry could claim the support of such diverse scholars as the German pathologist, Rudolf Virchow (1821-1902), and the English statistician, Karl Pearson (1857-1936). It was also during this period that growing scepticism with respect to the utility of cranial research for racial purposes led many leading anthropologists to question its scientific credentials¹⁴.

Craniology, like any other form of racial research during the interwar period, had strong ideological connotations. For example, an oft-voiced motive underpinning Romanian racial anthropology was the notion that the territories constituting Greater Romania had been frequently invaded (from the Romans of the Antiquity to the Magyars of the Middle Ages and the Jews of modern times). This idea was neither new nor specifically Romanian: the countries of Central and Southeast Europe (especially the Balkans) have been repeatedly singled out as extremely heterogeneous ethnic regions. But Romanians were rather late in producing a common racial narrative for their territories, which had been the focus of other competing racial anthropologies before 1918 (Hungarian, German, Serbian, Bulgarian or Russian)¹⁵. Not surprisingly, it was a French anthropologist, Eugène Pittard (1867-1962), who produced one of the first racial researches in Transylvania after 1918¹⁶. In *Recherches anthropologiques sur les Roumains de Transylvanie*, Pittard endeavoured to verify the claim that Romanians from the Old Kingdom were dolichocephalic, whilst those from Bukovina and Transylvania were brachycephalic¹⁷.

In parallel, racial research focused on the differences between the cranial characteristics of Romanians and Hungarians in Transylvania. Thus, the Hungarian anatomist, Jenő Davida (1884-1929), contributed to the discussion with an article entitled "Beiträge zur Kraniologie der Magyaren und der siebenbürgischen Walachen". Davida used the cranial collection, already existing at the Hungarian University of Cluj (Kolozsvár) prior to 1919, within which he thought that he had

¹⁴ In 1890, the Hungarian anthropologist, Aurel Török (1842-1912), produced one of the most substantial critiques of craniometry, *Grundzüge einer systematischen Kraniometrie* - arguably the most detailed craniological analysis of a single skull: 5371 measurements. See Aurel V. Török, *Grundzüge einer Systematischen Kraniometrie*, Stuttgart, Verlag von Ferdinand Enke, 1890.

¹⁵ See for example Jovan Cvijić, *La Péninsule Balkanique. Géographie humaine*, Paris, Librairie Armand Colin, 1918.

¹⁶ Already in 1916 Pittard produced a survey of the peoples in the Balkans, which he analysed from the perspectives of racial anthropology. See Eugène Pittard, *Les Peuples des Balkans. Esquisses Anthropologique*, Paris, Neuchatel, 1916.

¹⁷ Eugène Pittard, *Recherches anthropologiques sur les Roumains de Transylvanie*, in "Revue anthropologique", 29, 3-4 (1919), p. 57-76. He presented the same arguments in his *La Roumanie*, Paris, Éditions Bossard, 1917.

found “pure” Hungarian and Romanian crania. Those Hungarian came from largely Protestant communities, whilst the Romanian crania were collected from Greek-Orthodox and Greek-Catholic communities¹⁸. A similar argument was advanced by the Romanian physician and anatomist, Victor Papilian (1888-1956), in one of his articles, *Nouvelles recherches anthropologiques sur la tête des Roumains de Transylvanie*. Papilian hoped to demonstrate the existence of “special cephalometric characteristics” amongst Romanians in Transylvania. He reached the following conclusions: the cranial characteristics of Romanians from Transylvania differed from both those of Romanians in the Old Kingdom and Hungarians in Transylvania; compared with to the latter groups, the former were “hyperbrachcephalic” and “mesocephalic”¹⁹.

Given the use of the tandem dolichocephalic-brachycephalic in most of the analytical discourses on anthropological writings dealing with ethnic groups in Transylvania – particularly the alleged racial divide between Romanians from the Old Kingdom and those from the newly united provinces, as well as between Romanians and Hungarians – the conclusions reached by craniometry were politically contested. One radical interpretation was produced by the sociologist and anthropologist, Ion Chelcea (1902-1991), in his study, “Tipuri de cranii românești din Ardeal (Cercetare antropologică)”²⁰. Chelcea based his analysis on the crania collection existing in the Museum of Natural History in Vienna, assembled by the Austrian anthropologist, Augustin Weisbach (1836-1914) in the second half of the nineteenth century. Chelcea pushed his craniological research to a more unorthodox level than Pittard, Davida or Papilian. Methodologically, he followed the craniological principles outlined by the German anthropologist, Rudolf Martin (1864-1925) in his 1914 *Lehrbuch der Anthropologie*, namely individual measurements of cranium (length, breadth, diameter, and so on)²¹. Based on these principles, Chelcea grouped Romanian crania into five racial types: Roman-Mediterranean (or Ibero-Mediterranean); Nordic, Kurgan, Dinaric, Dacian, and Avar-Turanic (see Figure 2)²². Practically, however, he followed the Romanian nationalist tradition, and thus suggested the existence of a “Dacian racial type”, which was to be found especially amongst the inhabitants of the Apuseni (Western) Mountains in Transylvania. (See Figures 3 and 4)

¹⁸ Jenő Davida, *Beiträge zur Kraniologie der Magyaren und der siebenbürgischen Walachen*, in “Anatomischer Anzeiger”, 66, 1-3 (1928), p. 30-42.

¹⁹ Victor Papilian, *Nouvelles recherches anthropologiques sur la tête des Roumains de Transylvanie*, in “Revue anthropologique”, 33, 9-10 (1923), p. 337-341.

²⁰ Ion Chelcea, *Tipuri de cranii românești din Ardeal (Cercetare antropologică)*, in “Memoriile Secțiunii Științifice”, seria 3, vol. 10 (1934/35), p. 341-368.

²¹ Rudolf Martin, *Lehrbuch der Anthropologie in systematischer Darstellung mit besonderer Berücksichtigung der anthropologischen Methoden*, Jena, Gustav Fischer, 1914.

²² I. Chelcea, *Tipuri de cranii românești din Ardeal (Cercetare antropologică)*, p. 360-362.

REZUMAT

In tabloul de față se dă indicele mediu pentru fiecare tip rasial în parte — astfel: I dacic, II romano-mediteranean, III dinaric, IV nordic, V turanic, VI avaric, VII curgan.

	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII
Indicele lungime - lărgime . .	87,33	78,85	87,83	78,34	86,74	76,74	78,93
* lungime - înălțime . .	81,32	73,09	77,68	73,89	77,28	70,35	73,40
* auriculo-vertical . .	67,90	65,59	68,60	66,38	65,53	61,63	64,17
* transverso-vertical . .	92,74	92,75	90,58	95,17	87,87	91,67	92,70
Indicele auriculo-bregmatico-longitudinal	79,70	79,94	78,11	80,90	77,36	80,30	81,33
Indicele fronto-parietalo-transversal	65,59	68,80	65,97	70,94	65,98	69,70	67,90
Indicele frontal transversal . .	79,40	80,29	79,45	81,11	78,09	83,64	80,64
Indicele parieto-occipital transversal	72,79	78,69	75,26	76,94	76,26	75,76	73,35
Indicele facial	86,63	85,20	90,36	92,94	81,04	78,91	81,03
* superior al feții . .	50,99	54,30	54,81	53,81	49,14	46,88	48,40
* orbital	85,93	84,88	92,05	81,69	84,00	80,56	75,56
* nasal	47,76	46,69	46,06	45,01	50,38	61,70	52,02
* palatal	80,08	75,88	78,03	75,06	78,21	80,43	75,73
* maxilo-alveolar . .	118,46	121,45	121,50	116,58	123,18	127,66	113,94
Capacitatea	1465	1440	1516	1430	1436	1350	1465

Fig. 2. Ion Chelcea: Racial Indexes for Different Races from *Tipuri de cranii românești din Ardeal* (Cercetare antropologică) (1934/1935).

INDICELE DIFRITELOR TIPURI DE CRANII:

TIPUL DACIC	579	3462	9127	9135	1902	3465	580	545	3461	Indic. medie.
Indicele cran. lungime — lărgime.	91,02	86,31	88,69	91,36	88,13	88,34	82,08	82,56	87,50	87,33
Indicele cran. lungime — înălțime	84,43	77,98	82,74	81,40	83,65	82,21	73,99	74,42	91,07	81,32
Indicele cran. auriculo-vertical . .	72,46	69,05	66,67	68,02	72,96	70,55	64,74	65,12	73,21	67,90
Indicele cran. transverso-vertical .	92,76	90,34	93,29	94,59	94,33	93,06	90,14	90,14	96,08	92,74
Indicele cran. auriculo-bregmatico-longitudinal . .	79,61	80,—	75,17	79,05	82,27	79,86	78,87	78,87	83,67	79,70
Indicele cran. fronto-parietal-transversal	65,13	71,72	61,74	68,92	69,50	66,67	68,31	68,31	70,07	65,59
Indicele cran. frontal transversal .	78,57	79,39	77,31	80,31	81,67	78,05	79,51	80,83	78,03	79,40
Indicele cran. parieto-occipital-transversal . . .	73,03	69,63	69,80	75,68	68,87	70,83	76,97	73,94	76,43	72,79
Indicele cran. facial	82,61	82,58	90,84	87,02	89,68	86,03	87,79	89,23	83,94	86,63
Indicele cran. superior al feței . .	50,—	49,24	52,67	47,33	53,97	49,27	56,49	50,—	50,37	50,99
Indicele cran. orbital	78,05	88,89	91,67	86,84	82,50	85,58	97,44	80,—	82,50	85,93
» » nasal	47,92	44,90	44,90	45,61	48,08	52,17	47,27	50,—	49,06	47,76
» » palatal	81,25	85,11	76,—	78,43	72,55	78,72	78,72	88,89	81,13	80,08
Indicele cran. maxilo-alveolar . . .	122,—	119,61	123,53	118,18	111,76	118,—	118,—	122,—	123,08	118,46
Capacitatea cran. .	1660	1380	1480	1440	1350	1490	1350	1460	1580	1465

Fig. 3. Ion Chelcea: The Racial Indexes of the 'Dacian Type'
From "Tipuri de cranii românești din Ardeal (Cercetare antropologică)" (1934/1935).

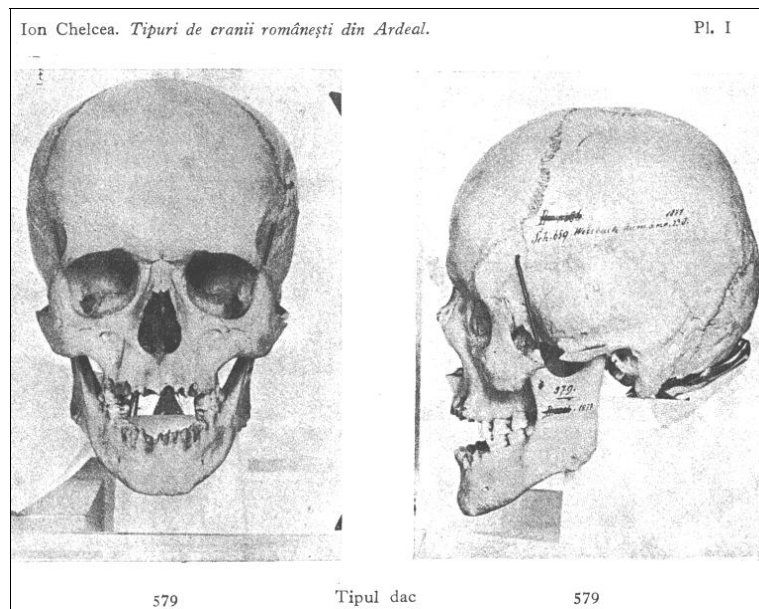


Fig. 4. Ion Chelcea: The 'Dacian Type'
From "Tipuri de cranii românești din Ardeal (Cercetare antropologică)" (1934/1935).

This obsession with craniology was disseminated so as to make the racist logic of anthropology seem natural. As played out in the conceptions about racial belonging outlined in his article, the anthropological permutations in Chelcea's reasoning suggest that he was following a specific anthropological tradition, for he found it perfectly possible to differentiate between Romanian crania from Transylvania and the rest of Romania. However, as Figure 4 shows, Chelcea's description of "Dacian" cranial characteristics bears more than a passing resemblance to other anthropological writings. The graphic illustration of this resemblance does not only bespeak a direct influence, but also is testimony to the way that racial anthropology turned nationalist, and became obsessed with racial origins.

Yet to recognise the disturbing insistence with racial attributes, one must investigate racial studies not only in their most technical formulations (charts, diagrams, mathematical equations and so on) but also in the popularly reiterated images that traversed interwar philosophy, literature, and medicine, amongst other fields of study²³. In other contemporary responses to this problem, writers, philosophers and sociologists often imagined national metamorphoses based on real or imaginary racial content²⁴. More generally, discussions on national essence in the interwar period frequently returned to an emphasis on national metamorphosis, as this was an image through which the assumptions of racial individuality could be correlated with the recognition of ethnic diversity. The problem of national essence was especially exacerbated at the juncture of racial individuality and ethnic diversity, for it was here that fundamental relation between majority and minority was articulated; and during this period, racial anthropology was the mechanism called upon to perform this articulation.

Eugenics and Racial Identity in Transylvania

Within the general racial representations of the Romanians, the racial eugenicist Iordache Făcăoaru helped to construct a second tradition, complementary to yet distinct from that set out by other scholars. He criticised the racial typologies proposed by foreign researches, like the Austrian ethnologist Viktor Lebzelter (1889-1936) for example²⁵, and proposed a more rigorous analysis of Romanian racial characteristics. Furthermore, whereas Chelcea or Davida expressed restrained interest in connecting racial anthropology with territorial claims, Făcăoaru responded by constructing a Romanian racial ontology, including

²³ For the relationship between racial anthropology and eugenics in interwar Romania see Maria Bucur, *Eugenics and Modernization in Interwar Romania*, Pittsburgh, University of Pittsburgh Press, 2002.

²⁴ See for example Ion Foti, *Concepția eroică a rasei*, București, Biblioteca Eroică Generația nouă, 1936; and Alexandru Randa, *Rasism românesc*, București, I.E. Torouțiu, 1941.

²⁵ See Viktor Lebzelter, "La Répartition des Types Raciaux Romano-Méditerranéens en Roumanie", in "L'Anthropologie", 45, 1-2 (1935), p. 65-69.

all territories where Romanians could be found²⁶. The racial history of Romanians became for him an occasion for an investigation into the relationship between heredity and nationalist reflection. A new national politics required a committed racial anthropology. As Făcăoaru openly stated: “In our national politics, anthropology has the role to clarify some of the most important issues concerning our political rights over the territory we possess and over territories we do not possess”²⁷. In proffering this assumption, Făcăoaru made clear reference to the new direction in Romanian national politics, which had done so much to lead intellectuals and scientists of this period to re-evaluate their importance as participants to the nationalist scene²⁸. Furthermore, despite his critical attitude towards foreign anthropological studies of Romanians, when it came to explaining racial variety and composition, Făcăoaru had to rely on the racial taxonomies produced by Deniker, Ripley and others. Such methodological strategy is most visible in Făcăoaru’s most elaborated racial study, *Criteriile pentru diagnoză rasială* (1935)²⁹. He accepted six criteria for racial classification: height, the cephalic index, the facial index, the nasal index, eye colour, and hair colour (see Figure 5). Based on these criteria, Făcăoaru then identified four principal races: Alpine, Dinaric, Mediterranean and Nordic; and five secondary races: Dalic, East-European, Oriental, West-Asian and Indian³⁰.

By the late 1930s, Făcăoaru became not only a noted eugenicist but also a highly-praised racial anthropologist. In 1939, he published an article in *Zeitschrift für Rassenkunde*, the journal edited by the German racial anthropologist and Nazi supporter, Freiherr von Eickstedt (1892-1965), in which he assessed the importance of economic and social contexts in the preservation of racial characteristics³¹. He further developed these arguments in the study of the racial

²⁶ See Iordache Făcăoaru, *Cercetări antropologice în patru sate din Transnistria*. Unpublished manuscript (1943). Microfilm, Fond 2242, Opis no. 1, RG-31.004, Reel 4. Holocaust Memorial Museum Institute (I should like to thank Radu Ioanid and Carl Modig for their help in obtaining this manuscript). A similar perspective was advocated by another prominent Romanian eugenicist, Petru Râmneanțu, *Românii dintre Morava și Timoc și continuitatea spațiului lor etnic cu al Românilor din Banat și din Timocul bulgar*, in “Buletin eugenic și biopolitic”, 12, 1-4 (1941), p. 40-62.

²⁷ Iordache Făcăoaru, *Socialantropologia ca știință pragmatistă*, in “Buletin eugenic și biopolitic”, 9, 9-10 (1938), p. 358.

²⁸ For a discussion of the nationalist politics of interwar Romania see Irina Livezeanu, *Cultural Politics in Greater Romania: Regionalism, Nation Building and Ethnic Strife, 1918-1930*, Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 1995.

²⁹ The study was first published as *Criteriile pentru diagnoză rasială*, in “Buletin eugenic și biopolitic” 6, 10-11-12 (1935): 341-368; and then as a brochure in the collection edited by the Institute of Hygiene and Social Hygiene from Cluj. See I. Făcăoaru, *Criteriile pentru diagnoză rasială*, Cluj, Tip. Universală, 1936.

³⁰ I. Făcăoaru, *Criteriile pentru diagnoză rasială*, p. 11-21.

³¹ I. Făcăoaru, *Beitrag zum Studium der wirtschaftlichen und sozialen Bewährung der Rassen*, “Zeitschrift für Rassenkunde”, 9, 1 (1939), p. 26-39.

structure of the rural population in Romania³². Făcăoaru was devoted to developing a bio-political programme, and one should locate his racial arguments within this ambition. The fact that racial differentiation and classification were explicitly contextualised within the purpose of an ethno-pedagogy should alert us when it comes to the use of categories such as science and politics in referring to interwar racial anthropology. Făcăoaru made it clear that the final goal of racial anthropology was to determine the “*right to leadership of those superior*”, namely those belonging to races deemed superior³³. Făcăoaru further developed his racial theories into a synopsis of “ethnic hierarchy” in one of his most controversial articles, “*Valoarea biorasială a națiunilor europene și a provinciilor românești*”. There are three main ideas concerning Făcăoaru in this article: racial composition, racial hierarchy and Romania’s racial diversity. All three ideas were based on the relationship between race, blood and spiritual achievements³⁴.

In order to determine the racial composition of the main European nations, Făcăoaru claimed to have synthesised the main racial theories of his time, and indeed he utilised no less than 25 racial terms in his study. Thus, for example, Bulgarians were composed of the following racial components: M41%; D-A24%; A15%; Pas-Mo12% and N8% (M=Mediterranean; D-A=Dinaric-Alpine; A=Alpine; Pas-Mo= Paleoasiatic-Mongoloid; and, finally, N=Nordic); Germans were composed of N50%; A20%; D15%; E6%; O5%; M2%; L1%, Mo1% (E=East-European; O=Oriental; L=Lapoid); Romanians were composed of A29%; M19%; N14%; E12%; D11%; X10%; O3%; Da2% (Da=Dalic; X=Atlantid); whilst Hungarians were composed of E35%; D20%; C-Mo20%; A15%, N5%, Mo4% and M1% (C-Mo=Caucasian-Mongoloid) (See Figure 5)³⁵.

Next, Făcăoaru surveyed the “biological value” of European races, namely their biological and spiritual value. He divided them into “over-endowed races” (+), “medium-endowed race” (±); and “under-medium races” (-). According to this diagram, Swedes were placed on the top of the chart with (+) 80%; (±) 0% and (-) 20%; Romanians were sixth, based on the following data (+) 26%; (±) 33%; and (-) 41%; whilst Hungarians occupied one of the last places, considering that they were just (+) 5%; (±) 21%; and (-) 74% (See Figures 7 and 8)³⁶.

Finally, Făcăoaru focused on the “biological value of the Romanian population” from the geographical/historical regions constituting Romania, namely

³² I. Făcăoaru, *Structura rasială a populației rurale din România*, București, Tip. Curții Regale F. Göbl, 1940.

³³ I. Făcăoaru, *Structura rasială a populației rurale din România*, p. 16 (italics in original).

³⁴ I. Făcăoaru, *Valoarea biorasială a națiunilor europene și a provinciilor românești*, in “Buletin eugenic și biopolitic”, 14, 9-10 (1943), p. 278-310.

³⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 280-281. The less known “Dalic” and “Atlantid” races are sub-divisions of the Nordic race.

³⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 283.

Bukovina, the Banat, Transylvania, Crișana-Maramureș (termed the “Western provinces”); Moldavia, Bessarabia, Transnistria (the so-called “Eastern provinces”); and Oltenia, Muntenia and Dobruja (or the “Southern provinces”). Both rural and urban populations (male and female) were examined, and Făcăoaru employed four criteria upon which the “bio-racial level” of these samples of the population was established: economic efficiency, social mobility, military propensity, and spiritual development³⁷. The conclusions are, as expected, the reflection of Făcăoaru’s own nationalist commitment. Thus, the “Western provinces (Bukovina, Transylvania and the Banat) are at the highest biological level; the Eastern provinces (Moldavia, Bessarabia and Transnistria) occupy an intermediary place, while the Southern provinces (Oltenia, Muntenia and Dobruja) are last”. The rest of his conclusions suggest the same stereotypical and simplistic vision: superior racial qualities are to be found amongst urban, educated and wealthy social classes³⁸.

Tab. 1. — *Diagnoza rasială.*

Rasa	Statura	Capul	Fața	Nasul	Ochii	Părul
<i>Alpină</i>	x—165 cm. corp îndesat	i. cef.: mediu=90 rotund	i. fac. mediu=80 rotundă	i. naz.: 66—x scurt, concav	bruni	brun
<i>Dinarică</i>	168—172 cm. înaltă	i. cef.: 86—x scurt	i. fac.: 85—x ascuțită	i. naz.: x—60 acvilin s. drept	bruni	brun
<i>Mediterană</i>	160 cm. scundă-mijlocie	i. cef.: mediu=74 lung	i. fac.: 86—x ovală	i. naz.: x—60 drept	bruni	brun
<i>Nordică</i>	170—x înaltă	i. cef.: x—79 lung	i. fac.: 85—x înaltă	i. naz.: x—60 drept	albaștri	blond
<i>Dalică</i>	170—x înaltă	i. cef.: 80—x rotund	i. fac.: x—85 largă	i. naz.: x—60 drept	depigmentare	depigmentare
<i>Est europeană</i>	163 cm. corp îndesat	i. cef.: 80—x rotund	scundă, largă pomeții proeminenți	i. naz.: 60—x turfit, concav	depigmentare	depigmentare
<i>Orientală</i>	scundă-mijlocie	lung	îngustă, ovală	convex	bruni	brun s. negru-brun
<i>Vestasiatică</i>	mijlocie	scurt	mijlocie	proeminent convex	bruni	brun s. negru-brun
<i>Evreii</i>	161—163 cm. scundă-mijlocie	scurt	mijlocie	coroiat	bruni	brun
<i>Indică</i>	158—164 cm. scundă	i. cef.: x—81 scurt	i. fac. mediu=88	i. naz.: mediu=67	bruni s. negri	brun s. negru

Fig. 5. Iordache Făcăoaru: Racial Diagnosis From *Criteriile pentru diagnoză rasială* (1935).

³⁷ I. Făcăoaru, *Valoarea biorasială a națiunilor europene și a provinciilor românești*, p. 292.

³⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 306-307.

Tab. 2. — Compoziția rasială în câteva țări europene dată în %.

		Alpină	Dinarică	Mediterană	Nordică	Subnordică	Est-europeană	Dalică	Mongoloidă (Laponoidă)	Orientală	Armenoidă	Caucaziană ^{*)}	Autorul
Cehi		33	20	0.5 – 1	5 – 10	—	20		0.5				Matiegka
Polonezi	bărbați	15.0	—	0.5	31.9	21.3	27.5		3.8				Rosinski
	femei	16.3	0.2	0.4	23.2	24.4	26.1		9.5				
Germani		20 (15–25)	15 (15–25)	2 (?–5)	50 (60–40)	—	8 (10–2)	—	2	5			Günther
Unguri		15.0	20.0	1.0	4.5		35.0	—	5.0	—		15–20	Bartucz
Evrei (din Lemberg)		14.7	2.7	12.0	4.0	12.7	2.7	—	12.0	—	9.3		Lempert

*) Sub rasă caucaziană L. Bartucz înțelege oamenii cu anumite trăsături întâlnite la avarii caucazieni și la mai multe neamuri turco-tătare, pe cari el le recunoaște într-o apreciabilă proporție la maghiarii de azi.

Fig. 6. Iordache Făcăoaru: Racial Composition of European Nations
From “Valoarea biorasială a națiunilor europene și a provinciilor românești” (1943).

Neamul	A			Neamul	B
	+	±	—		
1. Suedezi	80	—	20	1. Englezi	10
2. Danezi	68	—	32	(Wales)	13
3. Englezi	60	30	10	2. Muntenegreni	20
(Wales)	46	41	13	3. Suedezi	20
4. Germani	50	23	27	4. Macedoneni	23
(Suabi)	50	25	25	5. Jugoslavi	24
5. Polonezi	32	24	44	(Sârbi)	18
6. Români	26	33	41	(Sloveni)	20
7. Francezi	25	20	55	6. Evrei polonezi	24
8. Italieni	20	45	35	7. Bulgari	27
9. Jugoslavi	19	55	24	8. Germani	27
(Sârbi)	15	67	18	(Suabi)	25
(Sloveni)	25	49	20	9. Danezi	32
10. Turci	15	27	58	10. Italieni	35
11. Macedoneni	9	68	23	11. Români	41
12. Bulgari	8	65	27	12. Polonezi	44
13. Cehi	7	22	54	13. Casari	52
14. Muntenegreni	5	75	20	14. Cehi	54
15. Unguri	5	21	74	15. Francezi	55
16. Evrei polonezi	4	43	24	16. Turci	58
17. Casari	3	45	52	17. Unguri	74
18. Țigani	0	10	90	18. Țigani	90

Fig. 7. Iordache Făcăoaru: Biological Value of European Nations
From “Valoarea biorasială a națiunilor europene și a provinciilor românești” (1943).

Tabela sintetică nr. 1.
Ierarhia biologică a etniilor europene sau de origine europeană.

		2		4		3		1
		Criteriul rasial		Criteriul mintal		Criteriul serol.		Media
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
***	1. Englezi	+50	75,0	+11,0	55,5	4,50	81,8	70,7
**	2. Suabi	+25	62,5	—	—	3,40	77,2	69,8
***	3. Suedezi	+60	80,0	—15,1	42,5	4,70	82,5	68,8
**	4. Olandezi	—	—	+ 1,5	50,8	3,50	77,8	64,3
**	5. Nordamericani	—	—	— 3,2	48,4	3,90	79,6	64,0
***	6. Danezi	+36	68,0	— 8,0	46,0	3,04	75,2	63,0
***	7. Germani	+23	61,5	— 6,7	46,7	2,90	74,3	60,8
**	8. Belgieni	—	—	—23,2	38,4	4,40	81,5	59,9
**	9. Sârbi	— 3	48,5	—	—	2,30	69,7	59,1
**	10. Norvegieni	—	—	—21,5	39,2	3,70	78,7	58,9
**	11. Scoțieni	—	—	— 0,6	49,7	1,80	64,3	57,0
**	12. Jugoslavi	— 5	47,5	—	—	1,90	65,5	56,5
**	13. Francezi	—30	35,0	—	—	3,20	76,2	55,6
**	14. Români	—15	42,5	—	—	2,10	67,8	55,1
**	15. Bulgari	—19	40,5	—	—	2,29	69,6	55,0
**	16. Evrei polonezi	—20	40,0	—	—	1,90	65,5	52,7
**	17. Austriaci	—	—	—34,1	32,9	2,60	72,2	52,5
**	18. Greci	—	—	—41,5	29,2	2,30	69,7	49,4
**	19. Cehi	—47	26,5	—	—	2,40	70,6	48,5
***	20. Italieni	—15	42,5	—62,6	18,7	3,00	75,0	45,4
***	21. Turci	—43	28,5	—38,6	30,7	1,77	63,9	41,0
***	22. Polonezi	—12	44,0	—69,4	15,3	1,50	60,0	39,8
**	23. Ruși	—	—	—57,7	21,1	1,40	58,4	39,7
**	24. Unguri	—69	15,5	—	—	1,60	61,6	38,5
**	25. Țigani ¹⁾	—90	5,0	—	—	0,60	37,5	21,2

¹⁾ Nivelul mintal al Țiganilor dela noi atinge, potrivit datelor proprii, numai 70—85% din nivelul mintal al sătenilor români. C. de i. mediu cu 80 cade pentru Țigani în categoria inapoișilor mintali. (1 și 2).

Fig. 8. Iordache Făcăoaru: Biological Hierarchy of European Nations
From “Valoarea biorasială a națiunilor europene și a provinciilor românești” (1943).

Romania's racial diversity was a problem that fascinated protagonists of the debate about the nation in interwar Romania. Not many followed Făcăoaru's radical version of national identity, but he communicated in racial terms what others struggled to express in poetic or philosophic terms³⁹. Ultimately, what transpired from Făcăoaru's racial analysis is the complete veneration for bi-polar and stereotypical interpretations of the nation. It was taken for granted that, as there were superior and inferior races, there must be a racial engine of superior origin within the nation, and Făcăoaru located it amongst the Romanians of Transylvania⁴⁰.

³⁹ The classical example can be found in the work of the Romanian poet and philosopher of culture, Lucian Blaga (1895-1961), especially in his *Trilogia Culturii* (1944).

⁴⁰ See also Iordache Făcăoaru, *Amestecul rasial și etnic în România*, in “Buletin eugenic și biopolitic”, 9, 9-10 (1938), p. 276-287.

Related to Făcăoaru's theory of racial difference was another significant aspect characterising racial anthropology in interwar Romania: the existence of a specific racial type. In fact, precisely the extent to which it was repeatedly reiterated, this emphasis on racial singularity served continually to reproduce an ideological distinction between social and somatic, political and biological aspects of the nation. The racial type in its singularity posed the question of national metamorphosis; that is, the process of viewing national belonging through a two-pronged process: one internal (classification and differentiation); the other external (delineating relations to other racial groups). The particularity of the nation was then embodied in an ideal racial type, a hypostasis in which national metamorphosis found its quintessential form in nature, culture and spirit.

Conclusion

In interwar Romania, an impressive emphasis was placed upon racial characteristics and their connection to physical mechanisms of identification and classification. They were also associated with all the other processes intrinsic to the discussion on national identity, such as national particularity, historical destiny, ethnic assimilation and racial supremacy. Moreover, to engage in discussions about national essence and racial character during the interwar period was also to focus on physical descriptions, and thus on the nation as a physical entity existing in and through its exchanges with other nations and races. By association with traditional nationalist values, but also in terms with the political climate of the period, racial anthropology opened onto racist and anti-Semitic questions. It is for this reason that, towards the end of the 1930s, Romanian national anthropology more closely resembled a political programme than scientific research. In the dialogue between science and politics, the same motivations that universalised racial anthropology also nationalised it; the same developments that made craniometry fundamental to anthropology also gave rise to their championing within the contested field of national identification.