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TEODOR NEȘ "PEOPLE FROM BIHOR COUNTY"

Abstract:

The literary and cultural history of the Crișana Province discreetly preserves, in just a few autobiographical sources and a range of documents which have been passed down to us as an important part of our (Romanian) cultural heritage, the outstanding personality of a pioneer of Romanian journalism and of a great visionary of universal pedagogy, the writer, scholar and teacher Teodor Neș (1891-1975). The first monograph of Crișana Province "People from Bihor County, 1848-1918" (published in 1937) bears the signature of Bihor County teacher, Teodor Neș.

Teodor Neș was a son of Bihor County by birth. He was an intellectual, an educator and a scholar who, starting from very humble social origins but achieving a much higher social position, made his presence felt in the tumultuous years between World War I and World War II in Transylvania and Romania.

Through his efforts, he wanted to bring together in the pages of a book (as a kind of record or witness), important figures and inspirational personalities from a key historical period of Bihor County: writers, freedom fighters, founders of national publications, priests and bishops, teachers, and pedagogues, and so on. He wrote about their lives, achievements, struggles and battles. These people had to work hard and to survive the turmoil of political and socio-cultural events endangering their lives by accepting ostracism or even paying with their lives because of patriotic ideals that they sustained, promoted and disseminated.

Keywords:

intellectual, scholar, educator, freedom fighter.

JEL Classification: I29

TEODOR NEȘ
"PEOPLE FROM BIHOR COUNTY"



Teodor Neș (1891-1975)

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The literary and cultural history of the Crișana Province discreetly preserves, in just a few autobiographical sources and a range of documents which have been passed down to us as an important part of our (Romanian) cultural heritage, the outstanding personality of a pioneer of Romanian journalism and of a great visionary of universal pedagogy, the writer, scholar and teacher Teodor Neș (1891-1975).

The first monograph of Crișana Province *"People from Bihor County, 1848-1918"* (published in 1937) bears the signature of Bihor County teacher, Teodor Neș. The monograph was published in 1971 on the Jubilee Anniversary of the "Emanuil Gojdu" High School in Oradea. The Salonta City Library, named after Teodor Neș, and the National College in Salonta, Bihor County, known today under the name "Teodor Neș" National College represent just two of the cultural and pedagogical reminders of how Professor Teodor Neș shaped literary and cultural talents within Crișana Province. These varied and lasting signs of professional recognition and of his cultural values are on ongoing proof of his contribution.

This demonstration of Teodor Neș's wide range of skills strengthens and amplifies the patriotic spirit and national pride of the Romanians who live in the small town of Salonta on the western border of Romania. Here, there is a monument to the teacher which, together with the bust of Avram Iancu¹, represent the only landmarks and historical recognition of the national and cultural existence of all Romanians from the second largest city of Bihor County. Filling out further this picture of the scholar, professor Teodor Neș, we wish to underline the scientific motivation of this paper represented by his contribution to the development of modern Romanian literature and culture in this region of Romania, through his production of the first authentic monograph of Crișana Province *"People from*

¹ Avram Iancu - b. 1824, Vidra de Sus, Alba County – d. 10 septembrie 1872, Baia de Criș, Hunedoara County. Lawyer and The Greatest Romanian National hero from Ardeal. One of the Leaders of 1848 Revolution from Transilvania. http://enciclopediaromaniei.ro/wiki/Avram_Iancu.

Bihor County, 1848-1918" published in 1937 and his research studies on Romanian pedagogy. The teacher's personal archive kept by the family today in Mădăras in Bihor County proves the pioneering ideas and pedagogical innovation used by the Principal of "Emanuil Gojdu" High School in Oradea (1923-1938) who – for the first time in Romania – implemented, adapted and developed the basic theory of scientific examination and grading students - Docimology². According to Teodor Neș's nephew³, "The great scholar and teacher set out and applied the principles of Docimology for the first time in Romania as the discipline which investigates the problems of examining and grading students, candidates for exams and competitions right at the beginning of his teaching career." The living proof of this is the work "Tîlcul notelor în liceu" ("The significance of grades in High School") - the first elaborated Docimology study written in Romanian and published in 1933.⁴ Defined as "the discipline which deals with the systematic study of examinations and competitions in order to improve their conditions and structure"⁵, Docimology is recognized as a pedagogical tool and is the scientific creation of the Swiss psychologist and philosopher Jean Piaget (1896-1980).

By documenting, elaborating and presenting the research we are able to support the family's point of view, reinforced by analysis of the historical documents from the teacher's personal archives, found in the autobiographical files kept with the original handwritten text at "Teodor Neș" National College Library in Salonta.

Teodor Neș was prompted to put particular emphasis on developing the competitive spirit of students in creative writing, both as teacher of Romanian Language and Literature, as well as the Principal of the "Emanuil Gojdu" High School in Oradea (1923-1938). The results were soon visible. Among a host of notable graduates of the famous High School from Oradea, during Teodor Neș's directorship, the following stand out: Mircea Malița⁶, Traian Blajovici, Ladislau Blum or Radu Teodor.

The nineteenth century was marked by social movements of national awakening throughout Europe. The 1848 Revolution, which began in February in France, would reverberate all over the old continent, awakening the desire for freedom and defining the national identity of the people who lived hitherto subject to, and oppressed by, the great empires and monarchies. Provinces like Transylvania and Crișana were not exempt from

² According to The Explanatory Dictionary of the Romanian language DOCIMOLGY is the discipline which investigates the problems of examining and grading students, candidates for exams and competitions. <http://dexonline.ro/definitie/docimologie/paradigma>; <https://ro.wikipedia.org/wiki/Docimologie>.

³ His name is Teodor Neș, too. Born in 1947, currently residing in the parental home at number 266 in Mădăras. Renowned teacher and Principal form Salonta.

⁴ According to – „Emanuil Gojdu” High School Yearbooks (1923-1937) p. 114.

⁵ <https://ro.wikipedia.org/wiki/Docimologie>.

⁶ Mircea Malița (b. 20th februarie 1927, Oradea -) Univeristy professor, a mathematician, essayist, historian, politician, author, diplomat, Romanian ambassador to the US and director of the Romanian Library in New York. https://ro.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mircea_Malita.

such social movements. The mainly xenophobic atmosphere can be felt here, too, especially in the second half of the nineteenth century, when the German language was excluded from the state administration, from schools and other social organizations, being replaced by Hungarian⁷. The last decade of the nineteenth century marked a flare-up of nationalism and intolerance in relation to the ethnic minorities in the region⁸, even if they were in the majority in some areas, as in the case of Romanians in Transylvania, which, at that time, was part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire.

As Gabriel Hădărean says in his book *Torțe arzânde în Țara Beiușului (Burning torches in Beiuș County)* "A poor nation is and remains forever a slave to others."⁹ Coming from an underprivileged background, Teodor Neș fought for the cultural development of his people through teaching and education. The administration represented by the Hungarian-speaking minority, blocked the Romanians, who represented the majority of the population in Bihor County, in Transylvania, from having access to better-paid jobs or better education in their own language. Thus, the Romanians were generally forced to practice agriculture and live in villages or suburban areas. City life was inaccessible to them.¹⁰

Into this agitated socio-political and cultural reality, Teodor Neș was born on 26 March 1891 in Mădăras, Bihor County, from simple, hard-working but illiterate parents. He attended grades 1–3 of Primary School in his native village, Mădăras, and he continued into the 4th grade at the insistence of his teacher, Iosif Silaghi, at the Primary Reformed School in Salonta.¹¹ He then went on to the famous "Iosif Vulcan" High School in Beiuș. Here, in 1910, he graduated as the highest achieving student receiving 20 golden coroane¹² (crowns) as a prize. He continued on to higher education thanks to a scholarship from the "Emanuil Gojdu" Foundation at Budapest University as a member of „Eötvös Lorant” College. He took his final exam on the 25th of April 1912 majoring in Maths and Physics, and in French and Hungarian languages. After graduation, despite his humble family background and social context (his parents were simple peasants) he was asked to join the geomagnetic research team under the leadership of Baron Eötvös Lorant, Prof. Dr. at the University of Budapest.¹³ Because of World War I he had to abandon his promising University career. He participated as an active officer in the Austro-Hungarian army in World War I from July 1914 to October 31 1918 in the war of

⁷ Borcea and Gorun - *Istoria orașului Oradea*, 3rd edition, p. 258. (*The History of The City of Oradea*).

⁸ Ibidem, p. 260.

⁹ Hădăreanu (1995) *Torțe arzânde în Țara Beiușului*, Beiuș: Buna Vestire, p. 497.

¹⁰ Liviu Borcea and Gheorghe Gorun, *op.cit.*, pag 258.

¹¹ Neș, Sălăgean and Roșescu (1971) *Liceul "Emanuil Gojdu" la 50 de ani – Monografie*, p. 117.

¹² coroana – it was the official currency in the Austro-Hungarian Empire from 1892.

¹³ Neș (1979) *A doua carte despre Oameni din Bihor*, Comitetul pentru Cultură și Educație Socialistă al Județului Bihor, p. 7.

the trenches, on the Isonzo front. During this period, he studied, taught himself and acquired different languages: English, Italian and Turkish.¹⁴

On 3 November 1918, after the outbreak of the Hungarian Revolution, Teodor Neș was appointed as the Romanian Military National Guard Commander in Tinca. Influenced by the historical events of the time, the young Teodor Neș was present at Alba Iulia on the 1st December 1918 where he took part in the Great National Assembly. Because of his participation in the Great National Assembly in Alba Iulia and because he was a military officer carrying propaganda in favour of the union of Transylvania with Romania, when he returned home to Oradea the authorities arrested and imprisoned him. He was subsequently released from prison because of the pressure from the peasants from his village Mădăras, led by his mother, who came in large numbers to Oradea to support him.¹⁵

On October 1st 1919, when he was 28, he started his career as a teacher at the Romanian Real High School in Oradea. On 1 December 1925, the board of trustees of “Emanuil Gojdu” High School from Oradea appointed him Principal of the school. He remained Principal of the High School until July 12 1938. From this position, even though he didn't envisage going further, he was promoted to the post of General Inspector of Secondary School Level Education in Someș County, with his headquarters in Cluj-Napoca and later on to the position of General Inspector in Bucegi District (18 October 1940). From 1942 to 1948, he was Chief General Inspector in Bucharest from where he went to the Ministry of Education Visual Aids Department in the Capital.¹⁶ In 1951 he retired but until July 1958 remained active in The Ministry of Education. In 1964 he received the title of Emeritus Professor. After his retirement, he collaborated for a short period with The Romanian Academy in the Documentation Department. As a man of culture, he held quite a few key positions: President and Founding Member of *Universitatea Liberă „Emanuil Gojdu” Oradea* – 1925-1932 (The “Emanuil Gojdu” Oradea Free University), President, Vice-President and active member of *Societatea „Astra” din Bihor* 1930-1937 (“Astra” Society in Bihor County), President and Vice-President of *Casa Națională* of Bihor County 1934-1937 and Founding Father of the “Rural Schools” in Transylvania's countryside. Throughout all this time, he was the initiator, participant, and collaborator in developing, producing and organizing many cultural



¹⁴ Neș, Sălăgean and Roșescu, *op.cit.*, p. 118.

¹⁵ Neș, Sălăgean and Roșescu, *op.cit.*, p. 118.

¹⁶ Ibidem, p. 119.

events, including his famous school matinées, the social soirées of "Astra", and conferences at the "Emanuil Gojdu" Oradea Free University.¹⁷

Besides the teaching posts which he held for many years, Teodor Neş was tireless in his work as a writer, journalist and essayist. He wrote and published hundreds of articles and essays containing national, social, educational and cultural subjects in the local newspapers in the cities where he was working as a teacher. We mention the following publications: "Gazeta Transilvaniei" in Braşov; „Sentinela de Vest" in Oradea; „Cele Trei Crişuri pentru Popor din Oradea" magazine (no. 4-10/1923); „Familia" Literary Magazine Series II (no. 1,2,3,5,8,9,10/1926 and 1-4/1927); „Familia" Literary Magazine Series III (no. 1-6/1934, 2-3/1936); „Figuri Bihorene" in the first editions of „Societatea de Măine", etc..¹⁸ He also contributed substantially to, and personally supervised, the preparation work on *The Monograph - Bihor County Almanac* from 1934.¹⁹

Teodor Neş's Publications:

- *The High School for boys in Oradea* - Oradea, 1929.
- *The Yearbook of „Emanuil Gojdu" High School in Oradea, 1926-'27 and 1927-'28.*
- *Tâlcul notelor în liceu*²⁰, Oradea, 1933. (*"The significance of grades in High School"*).
- *In Memoriam Prof. Constantin Pavel* – "Gazeta de Vest", 20 March 1935.
- *"People from Bihor County, 1848-1918"* - Oradea, 1937.
- *1 December 1918* - in "Legea Românească" magazine from Beiuş, 1943.
- *The Usage and maintenance of visual aids*, Bucharest, 1963.
- *„Emanuil Gojdu" High School Monograph* - Oradea, 1971.
- The second book *"People from Bihor County"* - Edited, prefaced and timeline by Stelian Vasilescu, foreword by Prof. Ioan Chira. A doua carte, Oradea, 1979.
- Physical Science Handbook by Tit Liviu Blaga for the 3rd grade (handbook written at the behest of Lucian Blaga), Cluj-Napoca, 1922-1923.
- *The Cosmic Concept from Thales to Albert Einstein*, published in "Transilvania" Magazine no. 2/1922.
- *Albert Einstein's General Relativity*, published in "Transilvania" magazine, no. 10/1922.
- *Popular science: matter, energy, light, quanta* in „Cele Trei Crişuri pentru popor", no. 4-10/1923.
- *The mysteries of heaven. Astronomy for the common people*, „Cele Trei Crişuri pentru popor" magazine, no. 1-3 and 11/1925 and no. 4-5/1926.

¹⁷ Neş, Sălăgean and Roşescu, *op.cit.*, p. 119.

¹⁸ Neş, Sălăgean and Roşescu, *op.cit.*, p. 119-120.

¹⁹ Ibidem, p. 120.

²⁰ In order to write this book Teodor Neş learns Swedish and Russian. Teodor Neş, Ioşif Sălăgean and Emil I. Roşescu, *op. cit.*, p. 120.

- *Cinema Color*, published in "Transilvania" magazine, no. 11-12/1926.
- „*Emanuil Gojdu*" High School Yearbooks, 1923-1937, contains 1300 pages.
- He contributed to the editing of „*Bihorul – strajă la hotare*" (*Bihor guarding the borders*), published in 1937.

Journalism:

He published many articles and essays containing national, social, educational and cultural subjects in local newspapers: „Gazeta Transilvaniei" in Braşov, „Sentinela de Vest" in Oradea, „Legea Românească" in Oradea, „Cele trei Crişuri" magazine in Oradea, „Familia" Literary Magazine Series II, III, „Figuri bihorene"²¹ in the first numbers of „Societatea de mîine" magazine, „Transilvania" magazine, etc.²²

Co-author:

- The Anniversary volume dedicated to Bishop Roman Ciorogariu.
- *Bihor guarding the borders*, with Ştefan Mărcuş-1937.
- *Monograph - Crisana Almanac*, by Aurel Tripon.
- „*Emanuil Gojdu*" High School Monograph at 50 years of existence, 1971 - in partnership with cu Emil I. Roşescu and Iosif Sălăgean.
- *The Usage and maintenance of visual aids*, Bucharest, 1958, etc.

Manuscripts:

- *Individualitatea copilului, (The child's individuality)* aprox. 110 pages typewritten.
- *Physics and technique in school*, aprox. 1000 pages handwritten on notebooks.
- *The History of "Emanuil Gojdu" High School*, aprox. 220 pages typewritten.
- *Bihor's Journey from 1848 to Alba Iulia*, aprox. 110 pages typewritten.
- *The National Guards from Bihor County in 1918-1919*, aprox. 120 pages typewritten.²³

The first genuine monograph of Crişana Region The Monograph "People from Bihor County"

Teodor Neş was a literary, cultural, and artistic figure of the national and social movement in Bihor County who triggered great educational benefits for Romanians in Transylvania. In order to exemplify the struggle for the social and cultural emancipation of the Romanians in Biharia²⁴ the academic Camil Mureşanu explains the social and cultural

²¹ In 1937 „Familia" Literary Magazine the board of trustees consisted of: Agârbiceanu I., Baciu Şt., Beneş V., Capidan T., Dianu R., Dima Al., Eftimiu V., Isac E., Minulescu I., C. Miu-Ierca, Nicoară V., Papadima O., Petrescu C., etc. and local collaborators: Bota G, Moşoiu T., Neş T., Petrescu G. A., Roşu T. L., Samarineanu I., Şuluţiu O., Tulbure G.

²² Neş, Sălăgean and Roşescu, *op.cit.*, p. 119.

²³ Neş, Sălăgean and Roşescu, *op.cit.*, p. 119-121.

²⁴ It is another name of Bihor County from the North West side of Romania. The name comes from an old Roman castrum found 14 km North from Oradea. https://ro.wikipedia.org/wiki/Biharia,_Bihor.

context. In a few words, he depicts how the Romanians from the old Austro-Hungarian empire emerged as local personalities and developed both as socio-political or cultural representatives rather quickly, on the one hand, under the patronage of teachers and schooling and on the other hand, informed and enlightened by the press of the time.²⁵

The Romanian-speaking population in Transylvania, Banat, Crişana, Satu Mare, Maramureş, whether common folks or – in particular – people of culture (such as professors, pedagogues, and priests), were all considered destabilizing elements of the state²⁶, and they were therefore directly targeted and persecuted for disseminating ideas of national identity, national culture and affiliation to other Latin-speaking people. Besides the oppressive system of state, Romanian teachers and school representatives had to cope with a massive lack of funding, a shortage of educational facilities and restrictive laws which prohibited speaking about the Revolutionary Movements and World War I and II. Quite a lot of the Romanian people of culture had a good qualification in law²⁷ besides their philosophical, theological or historical areas of expertise. The fight for the National Identity in Transylvania required a good knowledge of the laws of the land, the laws of the time and the opportunity for legal defence against the oppressors.²⁸

Each generation has its individuals who are concerned to synthesize the information available in their time into something concrete, into tangible forms, such as a book or almanac. Many creative personalities marked their presence in the land of Transylvania of the end of the 19th century and early 20th century with their creative work. Through their literary work, they produced cultural or social benchmarks offering wide amounts of disparate data, but this does not have the same social impact as when put together between the covers of a well-documented monograph. Most of these aforementioned literary, cultural and social personalities have found their place in the monograph *People from Bihor County*, by Teodor Neş.

The author started writing his book, first of all thinking that, as he himself says ““We decided to write exclusively about what Bihor County offered; the figures emerged from here”²⁹. The book presents those people who, through their life, activity and work brought important contributions to the enlightenment of the Romanians in Transylvania. In the monograph *"Emanuil Gojdu" 50 years of existence by Teodor Neş* (co-written with Iosif Sălăgean and Emil I. Roşescu) you can read an admiring and comprehensive description

²⁵ Foreword by the Academician Camil Mureşanu to Daciana Marinescu's volume, *Gura satului (1868-1871) O „foaie” din Austro-Ungaria* (2014) Bucharest: Pro Universitaria, p.11.

²⁶ The "State" took different oppressive forms for Romanians - whether it was the Habsburgs and Austria-Hungary, or Bela Kun's Communists.

²⁷ Important figures from Bihor County social-political and cultural life of the 19th and 20th century like Alexandru Roman, p. 104, Iosif Vulcan, p. 225, Partenie Cosma, p. 128, Lucian Bolcaş, p. 185, Ioan Ciordaş, p. 508, Aurel Lazăr, p. 530, etc. have the same qualification in law and are presented by Neş in his book *People from Bihor County*.

²⁸ Neş, *Oameni din Bihor* (1938) p. 111. (*People from Bihor County*).

²⁹ Neş, *Oameni din Bihor* (1938) p. 2.

written by Teodor Neș about the generous philanthropist Emanuil Gojdu, a providential, protective and brilliant figure, whom he first met in his childhood, when he came upon the "portrait (of Gojdu) framed in birch wood, blistered by the weather".³⁰ The reader will discover in the monograph "*People from Bihor County*" the clear outline of Iosif Vulcan, the life and work of the one who "for 40 years has mastered and guided the cultural movement in Bihor County with the help of 'Familia', the literary magazine, and through his comedies of manners and monologues".³¹ Although Iosif Vulcan was a "writer with modest literary skills but with a loud and active national creed, with real qualities of a Promoter... it secured his place among the great precursors of The Great National Assembly"³²³³ and he made the "Familia" literary magazine from Oradea "a thrilling monitor of national ideas that brings the wave of salvation"³⁴ to the souls of Romanians in Transylvania. One can also read the description of Alexandru Roman the patriot, politician, professor, and academic whose literary, political and cultural activity was all offered in the service of his people.³⁵ Teodor Neș speaks about Lucreția Suci, one of the few female figures from Bihor County who worked as a writer creating "a literary work of undeniable value with remarkable regional and cultural resonance".³⁶ We can discover between the covers of the book the description of Nicolae Zigre a "lawyer and a defender of politically oppressed people".³⁷ Teodor Neș considers Dr. Aurel Lazăr "the last great figure of Bihor County in the period before World War I".³⁸

Public figures and luminaries from all over Biharia are detailed in the pages of "*People from Bihor County*" Teodor Neș's monograph, together with their lives and political and socio-cultural activities that influenced, directed, inspired and guided the Romanians in Transylvania. People like Emanuil Gojdu, Iosif Vulcan, Aurel Lazăr, Nicolae Jiga, Partenie Cosma, Alexandru Roman, Lucreția Suci, Nicolae Bolcaș, Nicolae Zigre, etc. come to life. He paints with enthusiasm and liveliness the social struggles, trends and emerging political parties, the cultural and artistic activities of choirs like "*Hilaria*" in Oradea (led by Nicolae Firu) and "*Lyra*" in Beiuș (led by prof. Ioan Bușiță - a close friend of Bela Bartok).

³⁰ Neș, Sălăgean and Roșescu, *op.cit.*, p. 13.

³¹ Neș, *Oameni din Bihor*, p. 225.

³² The Great National Assembly of all Romanians in Transylvania, Banat and the Hungarian Country, gathered by its rightful representatives at Alba Iulia on the 1st December 1918 decrees the unification of those Romanian and all territories inhabited by them with Romania. The National Assembly proclaims above all the inalienable right of the Romanian nation between the rivers Mureș, Tisza and Danube. The Assembly in Alba Iulia was held in a festive atmosphere. There were 1,228 official delegates representing all 130 electoral circles of the 27 Romanian counties, then bishops, delegates councilors of Romanian cultural societies, middle schools and pedagogical institute representatives, craftsmen, The Romanian Social Democratic Party, military organizations and the youth of the university. All social layers, all interests and all Romanian industries were represented. There were over 100,000. <http://ziarulunirea.ro/adunarea-din-1-decembrie-1918>. https://ro.wikipedia.org/Unirea_Transilvaniei_cu_Romania.

³³ Neș, *Oameni din Bihor* (1938) p. 248-249.

³⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 248.

³⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 105.

³⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 268.

³⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 367-368.

³⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 529.

Teodor Neș depicts in detail how the itinerant theatrical representations led by Aurel P. Bănuț, Ștefan Mărcuș and V. Antonescu are sources of inspiration and information for the Romanian intellectuals in Transylvania, especially for those Romanians living in the countryside. These inspiring individuals introduced with their enthusiastic activism real "examples of the spiritual life of their free brothers, or through the magic of the songs and music ...they opened for a second the locked gates of a kingdom based on justice between people"³⁹ everywhere they went in the Transylvanian villages. Their performances generated enthusiastic meetings and exuberance amongst Transylvanian Romanians, whether educated or common folk. Through their performances, poems, plays and songs they encouraged Romanians to stand up for their rights. Tragically, the movements amongst the peasants who rose up against forced Magyarization policy, which had been imposed amongst Romanians living in these lands, were brutally repressed by the Hungarian authorities of the time.

Among the documentary sources that led and helped Teodor Neș in writing this book we would like to recall the three most important ones. The first important documentary source, essential to the writing of the book was Teodor V. Păcățianu's work "*Cartea de aur sau Luptele politice naționale ale românilor de sub coroana ungară*" published in 1905, 1913, 1915 in Sibiu.⁴⁰ (*The golden book or The Romanian national political battles under the Hungarian crown*). The second documentary source was constituted by the local newspapers in Oradea from that time⁴¹. The third documentary source mentioned by the author is Márki Sándor's book, *Bihari roman irók, (Romanian writers from Bihor/Scriitori români din Bihor)* published in 1880.⁴²

Teodor Neș was a son of Bihor County by birth. He was an intellectual, an educator and a scholar who, starting from very humble social origins but achieving a much higher social position, made his presence felt in the tumultuous years between World War I and World War II in Transylvania and Romania.

Through his efforts, he wanted to bring together in the pages of a book (as a kind of record or witness), important figures and inspirational personalities from a key historical period of Bihor County: writers, freedom fighters, founders of national publications, priests and bishops, teachers, and pedagogues, and so on. He wrote about their lives, achievements, struggles and battles. These people had to work hard and to survive the turmoil of political and socio-cultural events endangering their lives by accepting ostracism or even paying with their lives because of patriotic ideals that they sustained, promoted and disseminated.

³⁹ Neș, *op. cit.*, p. 577.

⁴⁰ Neș, *op.cit.*, p. 3.

⁴¹ The Hungarian newspapers despicably and superficially recorded Romanian social and cultural phenomena.

⁴² Neș, *Oameni din Bihor, 1848-1918* (2nd ed.) (2006), Oradea:"Familia" Literary Magazine Library, p. 3.

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