

GEOGRAPHICAL LANDSCAPES AND POLITICAL GEOGRAPHY IN THE CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN VICTOR JINGA AND GHEORGHE MOROIANU (1931-1940)

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Abstract: Victor Jinga (1909-1990), originating from Satulung-Săcelele Braşovului, son of a shepherd, graduate of the Romanian Superior School of Commerce in Braşov and of the Superior Institute of Economical Sciences in Venice, PhD in Economical Sciences of the Venetian Institute, starting with 1929 he becomes a PhD reader with the Academy of High Education in Commerce and Industry in Cluj. In 1926 he becomes a member of the Peasants' National Party, climbing step by step the hierarchy of the party. In 1939 he becomes a State Secretary for Cooperation in governments of the Carolist regime. In his mail exchange with professor Gheorghe Moroianu, former Rector of the Academy of Commerce in Cluj, village co-dweller and groomsman, of which only 24 sent letters remained, written between October 17th 1931 - August 5th 1940, then a series of descriptions of geographic landscapes from Victor Jinga's travels around the country and abroad. An extremely gifted story teller, he describes roads and makes observations on: Bucureşti, Brăila, the water way up the Danube to the Black Sea, Piteşti, Lugoj and Timişoara, the Măcin Mountains, the settlements alongside the Cluj-Câmpina railroad, and landscapes from Hungary ("a poor country, without head or legs"), Austria and Switzerland. There is only one step from the descriptions of landforms to subtle observations on political geography. He is also interested in the mentality of the inhabitants of Central Europe, a real third Europe, buffer zone between West and East, multiethnic, multireligious, multicultural. Victor Jinga's writings reveal an educated intellectual, with an excellent general knowledge and sharp sense of observation, a Romanian with strong national feelings and a European by calling.

Keywords: geographic landscapes, political geography, Central Europe, description, Victor Jinga

From geographical point of view, "The seven villages of Săcele"¹ are located in the South-East of Țara Bârsei, at the eastern border of Transylvania, around Bratocea and Buzău passes, that made the link with Wallachia. From ethnical perspective, in the second half of the XIXth century – beginning of the XXth, the region is largely inhabited by Romanians and Csangos, smaller groups of Saxons of Transylvania and gypsies, while the Jews, the Slovakians, the Ruthenians, the Croatians or the Serbians are to be found just here and there, at the level of 1 to 33 persons in some villages². The Romanians were the native population. The Csangos

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¹ Baci, Cernatu, Satulung, Turcheş, Târlugeni, Purcăreni, Zizin

² See: *Studia Censualia Transilvanica*, "Babeş-Bolyai" University Cluj-Napoca, Department and Laboratory of Sociology, *Recensământul din 1857. Transilvania*, coordinator: Traian Rotariu, Staff Publishing House, 1997, p. 116-119, 136-139; Idem, *Recensământul din 1880. Transilvania*, Staff Publishing House, 1997, p. 100-101, 110-111; Idem, *Recensământul din 1900. Transilvania*, Staff Publishing House, 1999, p. 194-195, 210-211, Idem, *Recensământul din 1910. Transilvania*, Staff Publishing House, 1999, p. 184-187, 200-203

were newly-arrived in the region, as it is being testified by the inscriptions on their stone houses dating back from the second half of the XIXth century.

The Romanians used to live in that side of the villages that was towards the mountain, mainly dealing with animal breeding - sheep, horses and big cattle, domestic industry, trade and agriculture, partly. The Csangos had their households towards the side of the villages that had a tendency of grounds favourable to agriculture, dealing at the same time with the work in the forest or they had seasonal professions, as masonry and carpentry. Although they lived in the same villages, between the two ethnic groups "there was ... no racial mixture, the multiple differences... establishing borders that could not be climbed over". The clearly superior structure of the households, the distinction of the folk wear, the special attention they paid to school and modern culture in general, determined the Csangos to copy the local Romanian model, more than the one the government of Budapest was trying to instil³.

The Hungarization policy launched after 1867 by the governments of Budapest against all the non-Hungarian nations they administered from political point of view, determined many Romanians of Săcele to emigrate in Romania, Dobruja and Bessarabia. If in 1857 the Romanians made the majority in the Baci, Cernatu, Satulung and Turcheș villages, almost on a par with the Csangos in Purcăreni and Târlugeni, only in Zizin representing a third of the total of inhabitants, in the census of 1900 and 1910 the Romanians appear to be the majority only in Satulung⁴. Of course we have to consider very cautiously the data offered by the forementioned censuses, being known the fact that all kinds of questionnaires that targeted the decrease of the Romanian element in favour of the one considered Hungarian were used. On the other hand, "Csangos' work strength that was in excess in Săcele -Victor Jinga says - came out especially in Bucharest (servants, stablemen, craftsmen) and in other cities of Wallachia. They had no connection of material existence with the western Hungarians, their external relations spreading almost exclusively towards the Romanian countries"⁵. The matters being thus considered, the Romanians have always represented, until 1918, the majority of the population of Săcele.

We think we are not wrong if we consider Satulung the geographic, economic, demographic and cultural centre of "The seven villages of Săcele". The economic power of the Romanians of Satulung, wealthy shepherds, practising traditional transhumance, people who travelled in the entire Romanian area in the North and South of the Carpathians, who knew how to appreciate school, folk and modern bookish culture - were premises that formed the basis of setting up, supporting and continuous activity of the Romanian school, certified as far back as the XVIIIth century. Out of this geographic and cultural area, intellectuals of great value for the Romanian nation emerged, in an absolutely remarkable density and blade of specializations. We mention Dimitrie Pârsoiu (1800-1860) - Filaret bishop of Buzău, Nicolae Popeea (1826-1908) - bishop of Caransebeș⁶, the poet Nicolae Nicolescu (Nicolae Tomoșoiu) (1835-1871)⁷ the

³ Victor Jinga, *Reflexiuni și consemnări*, in mss., p. 21-23

⁴ See bibliography of footnote 2

⁵ Victor Jinga, *op. cit.*, p. 22

⁶ Petru Bona, *Episcopia Caransebeșului. Contribuții istorice*, Marineasa Publishing House, Timișoara, 2006, 2nd edition, p. 157-162

⁷ George Călinescu, *Istoria literaturii române de la origini până în prezent*, Fundațiilor Publishing House, Bucharest, 1941, p. 297-298

historian Alexandru I. Lapedatu (1876-1950)⁸, the physician Ilie Minea, the economists Ion I. Lapedatu (1876-1951)⁹, Gheorghe Moroianu (1870-1945)¹⁰, Gheorghe Dragoș (1898-1978)¹¹ and Victor Jinga (1901-1990)¹². The parents of other personalities of our culture had their origins in the villages of Săcele, their children being over the years spiritually connected to their predecessors' origins. It concerns the philologist Gheorghe Giuglea, the sculptor Ion Jalea, the conductor and composer Ionel Perlea¹³. Beside this pleiad of personalities belonging to the "major elite" of our nation, the region of Săcele provided a much more numerous "minor elite" of the Romanian village, made up of literate wealthy peasants, elementary teachers, priests, professors, notaries, clerks. On this solid foundation, enlivened by national feelings, balance and tolerance of European type was based the accomplishment of the Union of 1st of December and strengthening of Great Romania in the interwar period.

Victor Jinga was beginning to have again tight relations with the man living in the same village Gheorghe Moroianu in 1929 when he took up by competition a conference job at the Academy of High Commercial and Industrial Studies of Cluj¹⁴. Although they belonged to some different generations, their intellectual formation with origins in the village school of Satulung and Romanian Superior Commercial School of Brașov, accomplished by university and doctoral studies abroad, brings them together once again¹⁵. If Gheorghe Moroianu carried on an intense political and economic activity on behalf of the Kingdom of Romania even before 1918, the two economists meet again in Great Romania in order to give a helping hand at strengthening and developing the unitary national state. There were also other events that strengthened their friendship, beyond the age difference. Since 1926 they find each other again in the Peasant National Party¹⁶, they taught at Chair the same subject – Political economy¹⁷, the young academic Victor Jinga continues the editing of "The Social-Economic Observer" journal, initiated by the Rector Gheorghe Moroianu in 1931, after the latter's stepping down from position in

⁸ ***, *Fraților Alexandru și Ion I. Lapedatu la împlinirea vârstei de 60 de ani*, M.O. Imprimeria Națională Publishing House, București, 1936, p. XXV-LVI; Ioan Opreș, *Alexandru Lapedatu și contemporanii săi*, Alabastră Publishing House, Cluj-Napoca, 1997

⁹ Ion I. Lapedatu, *Memorii și amintiri*, supervised edition, foreword and notes by Ioan Opreș, Institutul European Publishing House, Iași, 1998

¹⁰ Victor Jinga, *Din publicistica economică și literară a lui George Moroianu*, in „Cumidava” (Brașov), 1970, p. 249-267

¹¹ Gheorghe Dragoș, *Restituiri*, Risoprint Publishing House, Cluj-Napoca, 2000

¹² ***, *Din viața și activitatea economistului profesor Victor Jinga. Studies collection*, coordinator Mihai D. Drecin, „Mihai Eminescu” Publishing House, Oradea, 1994; Mihai D. Drecin, *Afterword* to Victor Jinga, *Probleme fundamentale ale Transilvaniei*, County Museum of History Publishing House, Brașov, 1995, 2nd edition, p. 703-722; Dr. Augustin-Gustav Tătaru, *Contribuția profesorului Victor Jinga la progresul științei economice și a școlii românești*, in the volume *Din activitatea și opera economistului dr. Augustin-Gustav Tătaru*, Omnium Publishing House, 1995, p. 52-64

¹³ Liviu Dârjan, *Publicistica la Săcele*, Disz Tipo Publishing House Săcele, 2002, p. 39, 47-48

¹⁴ Mihai D. Drecin, *op. cit.*, p. 706

¹⁵ Gheorghe Moroianu attends advanced studies, economical and political at Anvers and Paris, and takes his doctoral degree in economics at the University of Tübingen. See Liviu Dârjan, *Foreword*, in the volume George Moroianu, *Chipuri din Săcele*, City Hall of Săcele Publishing House, 1995, p. 5; Victor Jinga graduates the Superior Institute of Economics in Venice, where he also gets his doctoral degree. See Mihai D. Drecin, *Afterword*, to the volume *Probleme.....*, p. 704

¹⁶ Mihai D. Drecin, *Afterword*, p. 708-709

¹⁷ Traian Dumitrescu, Valeriu Mircea, *Istoricul Academiei de Înalte Studii Comerciale și Industriale din Cluj-Brașov*, București, 1984, internal usage, volume 2, p. 35; Idem, *Istoricul Academiei de Înalte Studii Comerciale și Industriale din Cluj. Documentar*, Bucharest, 1984, internal usage, volume 1, p. 137

1935¹⁸, Zina and Gheorghe Moroianu are god parents of Livia Maria and Victor Jinga¹⁹.

Therefore, it was naturally that between Victor Jinga and Gheorghe Moroianu an intense private correspondence be carried, beside the family visits that the two academics paid at Cluj and Satulung. Due to the vicissitudes of the history that marked Victor Jinga family in the period 1940-1963 (the refuge from Cluj following the Vienna Dictate, the political arrests suffered by the Professor in April 1945, 1949-1954, 1959-1963; the constrained deportation of the family at Sighișoara in 1952; the frequent searchings of the Security that confiscated a series of cards, manuscripts of papers and private correspondence; deterioration of some documents by Jingas themselves in order to avoid the classical political charges of the time by “enemies of the nation”) it explains why in the Victor Jinga Archive in Bucharest few letters received by the professor in the period until 1947-1948 were kept, as well as copies of some letters sent by him.

Sometime, after professor Moroianu’s death (1945), his family donated to “Astra” Library of Brașov a collection of documents that cover the period 1829-1944. Among these, 24 letters addressed by Victor Jinga to Gheorghe Moroianu²⁰ are to be found. Subsequently, this collection ended up at the funds of National Archives –Brașov County Directorate²¹, where is kept nowadays.

Out of the 24 letters that cover the period 17th of October 1931-5th of August 1940, 23 were accessible to us, including that of 11th of July 1940. Out of these, 18 are handwritten, 3 are typed and one is postcard. They are sent from Cluj (11), Satulung and București (3 at a time), Zürich, Geneva, Straja, Corvinești, Brașov and Londra-Winsdor (1 at a time). Only two letters are addressed to Mrs. Moroianu, the rest to Gheorghe Moroianu. The way of addressing is a very polite one, but also homelike at one time (“Beloved Sir”, “Respected Sir”, “Respected and beloved Sir”, “Dear Sir”, “Respected Madam” and sometimes “Sir” and “Madam”) according with the specific of the time at the level of genuine intellectuals. The writing is elaborated, each letter has a logic, clear internal architecture, which supposes a mood of spiritual peace and strong beliefs on the subjects approached at the respective time. Only on the political themes Victor Jinga sometimes speaks poignantly. When he makes reference to certain political people he uses more euphemisms when he wants to characterize their actions and decisions.

We detach a few subjects approached almost in every letter. First of all we notice *the political considerations on the ongoing internal and international realities*, unquestionable the more numerous and interesting. Subsequently there follows *information on the progress of university life within the Commercial Academy of Cluj* (printing of “The Social-Economic Observer” journal whose editorial secretary he was; the plan of merging the Commercial Academy with the University of Cluj; the proposition of setting up a Senate of the commercial academies, made to the Academy of Bucharest; the dissensions between some colleagues, started in the struggle for administrative functions; the problem of some professors’ retirement); *news on the life of Satulung*, considered as energy

¹⁸ Mihai D. Drecin, *Afterword*, p. 707

¹⁹ The marriage takes place in 1935. Out of health reasons, the god parent – Mrs. Zina G. Moroianu – cannot take part See National Archives – Brașov County Directorate (hereinafter N.A. – Bv C.D.), *G. Moroianu Fund*, paper case 15/5, p. 1-2

²⁰ Initially inventoried under the title: The documents collection of Brașov Astra Library, Series 22, *G. Moroianu Donation. Years 1829-1944*, contains 362 archive units

²¹N.A. – Bv C.D., *Fund no. 157* (6 letters); Idem, *G. Moroianu Fund*, paper case 15 (18 letters)

spring in the struggle with life (organisation of “shepherd evenings” and “sewing bees” as forms of peasants enlightenment, information on the activities carried out by university colleagues native of Satulung: Gheorghe Dragoș, Coriolan Tătaru and Ilie Minea); *short reports regarding family life, conveyed to the god parents; steps taken for the purpose of developing the cooperation* in the student and village environment.

A special category is represented by the *description of geographical landscapes* concerning places of Romania, but also from abroad. We notice Victor Jinga’s remarkable talent of narrator, which blends with the exceptional sense of observation that allows him to grasp typologies of people, behaviours, mentalities. *From the description of some landforms up to subtle considerations of political geography is but a step.* Not only was *geopolitics* a science in fashion, but it also was in the centre of attention of the international political world. Victor Jinga, the political man, was interested in understanding and giving value to it through his steps.

In order to persuade you we are going to keep substantial quotations that we are going to comment from the point of view of the scientist and politician Victor Jinga.

In a letter sent on the 29th of September 1932 from Satulung, Victor Jinga speaks about a journey undertaken on the route “Bucharest – Brăila – up the Danube – Pitești – Lugoj – and Timișoara”²². On this occasion he observes the fact that “up the Danube I found tradition and shepherd meanings that burn up under the burden of unfavourable circumstances”²³. The acknowledgment comes from a son of a shepherd that had taken part in the phenomenon of transhumance in the area of Dobruja and South of Bessarabia even before 1914. If in the interwar period transhumance was in a favourable situation, after the agrarian reform of 1921, the small owner, newly appropriated with land, will put real difficulties to the movement of herds of sheep from Transylvania towards the marshes of the Danube. Moreover, the worldwide economic crisis of 1929-1933 put new obstacles to the transhumant sheep breeding, the shepherds being brought on the brink of bankruptcy.

In Timișoara, an important urban settlement highly pervaded by the Western European administrative spirit, Victor Jinga observes that “the admirable experience of municipalisation can be perceived with very good results, a combination of modern technique and administration with advanced principles of organisation and distribution of work and income; the activity of the city of Timișoara should be studied more thoroughly, as it is very interesting”²⁴. We believe that the geopolitics was having its say. The Western side of Romania was closer to the Austrian-German model of work and administration, which reflects in a positive manner in the economic results, the degree of literacy and the civicism of inhabitants, regardless of their ethnic group.

For the economic administrative failures in the country, Victor Jinga elegantly lashes out at Bucharest where “I could not distinguish a rhythm of facts aiming categorically at certain objectives; the events outrun the wisdom and energy of leaders; they are admirable, well-intentioned, hard working men, even among those at the top, but who get lost in details and do not dictate their will as well”²⁵.

²² N.D. – Bv C.D., G. Moroianu Donation, *Fund no. 157*, doc. no. 101/1, p. 2

²³ *Ibidem*, p. 3

²⁴ *Ibidem*

²⁵ *Ibidem*

Four years later, at the end of July 1936, Victor Jinga takes a boat trip “from Brăila up the Danube”, which gives rise to some interesting remarks captured in sentences worthy of a geographer or novelist of the magnitude of Simion Mehedinți, George Vâlsan, Ioan Conea, Vintilă Mihăilescu, and Mihail Sadoveanu and Geo Bogza respectively, etc.

“The trip from Brăila up the Danube, lasting about 5 hours, is extremely spectacular. I believe it is the most beautiful after the sector of the Cazane (Boilers). On the right bank the Măcinului Mountains; although they measure only 5-600 m, since they rise up straight from the level of the Danube, they give the impression of great barren heights out of which granite of the best quality has been dug for a very long time, partly crumbled by the grinders stuck along the water; bold meanders, willow arbours, tempting riverside coppices; reed playing the rhythm of the life scale, villages scattered on the hills, Lipovans with wary eyes and dishevelled beards, slow walk in the waters at the end of the fishing-nets and again and again.”

I found my father²⁶ wasting his old age with the hostilities of the time and of the people; there are destinies whose sense I cannot solve. I have been to a creek, on a pond channel with fat carps, oblong pike perches and 40 kg salmons. I have feasted on the typical dishes: fish soup and smoked carp. On my way back I had nothing better to do than to shoot a snow white heron, with certain feathers once used by ladies in the museum on their hats... From Saturday I'm at my sister's²⁷. Although Dobruja is famous for its arid land and the steppe vegetation, I have found here a lot of greenery, flowers, fruit trees, trees, alleys and in the full moon nights we spend a lot of time chatting on various subjects”²⁸.

In a letter sent on the 27th of August 1936 from the village of Corvinești near Cluj, where his father-in-law, the university professor Victor Onișor had bought a “mansion” for weekend and holiday getaways, we find out that the name of the location was given by professor Onișor while thinking about “the Romanian Transylvania”. We also owe him the naming of the “Valley of Flowers” station, the access point to the Cluj-Câmpia Turzii railway of the few villages surrounding Corvinești²⁹. Even if the information is brief, without any special comments, one has to remember Victor Jinga's spirit of observation that goes deep in the mind of his father-in-law, one of the P.N.R. (The Romanian National Party) members, close to Iuliu Maniu in the national political battles of 1892-1920.

In September 1934, Victor Jinga takes a strictly professional documentation trip to Switzerland, at the International Labour Office. He was interested in the organisation of the cooperation where the Swiss peasantry was concerned, form of association that he considered necessary and appropriate for the improvement of the Romanian peasantry welfare. He was studying at the International Labour Office library and at the League of Nations Secretariat in the morning and a few hours in the afternoon daily. He met professor Laur several times, who “dedicated himself to an idea that his nearly four decades effort had turned into an ideal: the uplift, through scientific organisation, of the

²⁶ Ion Jinga (1863-1937), born in Satulung, deceased in Pecineaga Dobrogei where he had transferred his flock of sheep and fortune from the South of Bessarabia in the autumn of 1918, pursuant to the shaky situations from the county between Pruth and Dniester.

²⁷ Marioara Jinga, married to the landlord Eremia Oancea. The 500 ha estate was near Constanța.

²⁸ Bv. N.D. – C.D., G. Moroianu Donation, *Fund no. 157*, doc. no. 128, pp. 1-3. Letter sent from Straja on the 2nd of August 1936.

²⁹ Idem, *G. Moroianu Fund*, paper case 15/7, p. 1

Swiss peasantry". He visits the small town Brugg, near Zürich, where he "gathers enough material" on the local co-operative organisation³⁰.

Having arrived in Zürich, Victor Jinga writes to Gheorghe Moroianu, describing the journey made with the train from Vienna to the Swiss-German city. "It took me 15 hours to get from Vienna to Zürich, and all the while I moved from one window to the other of the car; the route was completely new to me and above all impressive through the infinite beauty that the Lord has gathered here.

God built Himself from everlasting stone more glorious temples than the ones built by man on valleys and peaks, and that want to scrape the little piece of sky the people in those places are blessed with. But people believe, they believe in the one that gave them a lot of dry stone, they believe in God, maybe so that the devil does not reveal himself, as this antipode of divinity seems to be living here everywhere, in dark valley bottoms, on abyss walls, in rock holes.

Tyrol is the country of the useless mountain, meant to torment the poor man that puts a lot of effort into bringing straws on a stick in order to feed the cattle that I have hardly seen; its people are rather tall than short, rather naked than dressed and seem rather foolish than smart; I have seen them in stations, in groups, with music with "plautici", with bare knees, with feathers on their small hats, with green hems on their thighs and ankles.

The train took me for 10 hours through astonishing mountains and more than 5 hours on the course of the In, an abundant mountain river, with whirlpools, narrowings, stumbles and whiffs that along with the charming views make up a whole that my powerless pen is not able to describe. I had the feeling of walking in the air, when, climbing on viaducts and abyss rims, the train seemed to push me into the hollow beneath which the foamy waters of the restless mountain river were having a row; I made no sign of the cross for fear that the devil might try to comfort me, because God would not have a soul or a thing to make a halt for in these holes and hollows.

And the sunset hour finally arrived. There was no other time when I have found the dusk more precious and the sunset more ungracious; the cold shadow was insinuating on the valleys, the light got higher and higher making the snow and the dry stone on the peaks red. And then the light went out on the peaks as well, the night rushing to fill the corners of the valleys, darkening the more and more dashing and freakish views.

At the border line of Switzerland it was completely dark. I have realized once more that not all that is long is big as well; Austria is 13 hours long with the express train and yet small. The German world, which I could not get away from not even here, is considerably big: I have started with it from Cluj – two German women from Hermanstadt (Sibiu – A/N) – and still haven't found its end. Only German can be heard in Zürich; the old Zürich is typically medieval German; I have covered it today both on foot and by coach; I have seen its most remarkable institutions both on the outside and on the inside. A rich and absolutely civilised city that talks more with its brain than with its heart; it is – if one might say – cerebralised and if there is a spirit living somewhere in it, it is entirely German. Even as I am writing – from an island on lake Zürich – the orchestra, which is actually very good, is playing The Fantasy from Wagner's Tannhäuser³¹.

³⁰ *Ibidem*, paper case 15/4, pp. 1-2. The letter is sent from Geneva on the 16th of September 1934. Brugg is at 30-40 km away from Zürich, on the way to Basel.

³¹ *Ibidem*, paper case 15/3, pp. 1-4. The letter is dated Zürich, the 8th of September 1934

Victor Jinga's narrator quality is obvious. The description of the Tyrolese landscape is so suggestive that you feel like seeing with the mind's eye what he actually used to see. Endowed with a fine sense of observation, willing to see and know as many places and people as possible, Jinga observes elements characteristic to "the German world, considerably big", which was uniting the West with the East of Europe through "a third Europe" or the Central Europe. The beauty of the landscape, a rough one made of peaks and deep valleys dominated by "dry stone", rather inspired poverty than a space favourable for practising mountain agriculture and animal breeding like in the Romanian Carpathians. He labelled Tyrol as "the country of the useless mountain, meant to torment the poor man that puts a lot of effort into bringing straws on a stick in order to feed the cattle". He finds the people in these places resembling the geographical landscape: "...its people are rather tall than short, rather naked than dressed (direct reference to the Tyrolese folk wear – A/N) and seem rather foolish than smart; I have seen them in stations, in groups, with music, ... with bare knees, with feathers on their small hats, with green hems on their thighs and ankles"³². The German world of Zürich, rich, civilised, full of an interiorised spirit, "talks more with its brain than with its heart"³³. In other words, it lacks spontaneity, warmth, contrasts, and the Latin naturalness the Romanians were also used to.

If interwar Austria "is 13 hours long with the express train and yet small", clear consequence of the Austro-Hungarian Empire dissolution in 1918, limited to the geographical space where the Austrians were of a majority, Hungary, which he had also covered in his way to Switzerland, was in the same situation.

Victor Jinga's observations concerning our Western neighbours are more sarcastic. "It (Hungary – A/N) warns us everywhere – Jinga says – with "Nem, nem, şoha" (No, no, never – A/N) written on lawns, station walls and above all in the heart of every Hungarian who has to "awaken". A wretched country, without head or tail, a piece of Europe that believes in something that will "never" happen (the regain of Transylvania – A/N). Under their railway administration initials is always written "Hungaria"; they are looking for such comforts and the loud words give this to them"³⁴. If the Austrians were at peace with their fate, understanding that the course of history had placed them in the traditional geopolitical space, the conspicuous dissatisfaction of Hungarians could be the centre of political unrest that would blow up Central Europe. At that time Jinga did not believe in a possible turn of the wheel of history as it partly happened for the Romanians in the summer of 1940.

The following days Victor Jinga has the occasion to wander "from Zürich to Schaffhausen, being only at 48 km away, in order to see the famous Rhine cataracts. The effort – Jinga writes – was not superfluous: it was the most impressive phenomenon of nature that I have had the chance to see so far; the narrowing, rebellion and whiff of the water of a big river stumbled by a massif of rocks worn out by time, have an orchestration, colouring and sights that words cannot describe"³⁵.

As surprised as in front of the Rhine cataracts will be Jinga on the evening of the 15th of September 1934, when, walking through an old neighbourhood of Geneva, he notices that towards an old and sober church "was headed a multitude of people. It was 9 o'clock in the evening. I joined them myself and

³² *Ibidem*, p. 2

³³ *Ibidem*, p. 4

³⁴ *Ibidem*

³⁵ *Ibidem*, paper case 15/4, p. 1

went into the church. A mass of a kind that I had never seen before began in a short while; it was praising the martyrs and it was celebrated in common by the Reformed, Lutheran, Orthodox, Anglican and Catholic Churches. It began with an invocation, and then everybody sang Luther's song. ... Then Bible reading, the Orthodox Church choir, etc.; priests from various religions were succeeding, as well as songs and prayers from different services. I stayed there for almost 2 hours, drawn by something indefinite. What I appreciated most was this union of everybody through one and the same institution: the church, above the exclusivism of each religion; this Christian union in mind and heart might be a path that a more distant or nearer future will open to the civilised mankind, unanimously praising the miracle revealed"³⁶. The ecumenism practised by the priests and parishioners of the churches in Geneva impressed Victor Jinga, making him think of a real Christian union in mind and heart in the future. A return to the original Christianity before 1054 could only be the result of meditation of a tolerant and well-balanced European intellectual.

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The multitude of ideas that result from the letters under discussion allows us to better understand the thoughts, feelings and soul of the economist professor Victor Jinga, his wide literacy gathered up from all the spheres of sciences. In addition to the national inheritance, Victor Jinga also gathers up the culture and experience of the Occident where he has studied and travelled a lot, which allowed him to become and impose himself as a true European Romanian.

³⁶ *Ibidem*, pp. 2-3