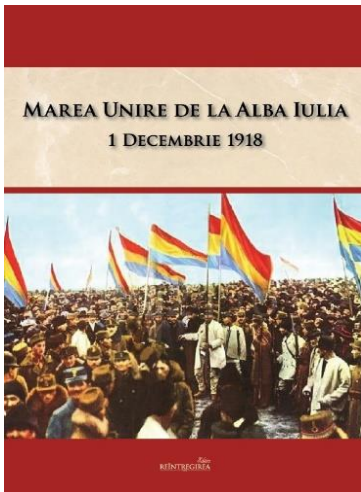


Reviews

*The Unification Day in Alba Iulia. December 1, 1918
(Marea Unire de la Alba Iulia. 1 Decembrie 1918), Alba
Iulia, Reintregirea Publishing House, 2018, 248 p.*

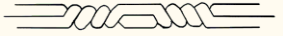
Andrei MOTORA*

2018 is the year of a great importance for the Romanian people. A century ago, the Romanian lands,



prior divided but holding a mutual feeling of patriotism and embracing the same urge to become a single territory, hung altogether the flag, sang the same anthem and eventually formed the Romanian Kingdom. December 1 had become, ever since, the symbol, a great day, when the Romanian spirit is overflowing with patriotic emotion and glorious feeling of unification. Regarding the importance of December 1, the priest Ioan Lupas declared that the

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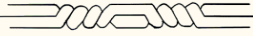


entire nation and Romanian population had perceived that day as “an important confines in the evolution of the Romanian people and State, something as alpha and omega of contemporary history, as a day when the threefold law of our existence: *the law of the land, the law of blood and the law of the Romanian spirit*, had reached its total achievement” (p. 241)

Coupled with this great day, another symbol of the people is the city of Alba Iulia. There was the place where Mihai Viteazul not only unified the Romanian lands back in 1600, but also established the first Orthodox Metropolitan Church in Transylvania. Later on, in 1918, in Alba Iulia more than 100.000 Romanians listened being read the Resolution of the National Assembly, supporting the enthusiasm for unification which rhymed in their hearts for more than three centuries. Hereby, Alba Iulia, “the holy stronghold of pain and glory of the Romanian people”, symbolises an *axis mundi* for the entire population. The press of those times marked out that it could not have been other better place for the proclamation of the Unified Romania than the city of Alba Iulia, “this mecca of the Romanian people...land doused with the holy blood of Horia, Closca and Crisan.

On February 2018, when the Centenary of the Great Union was celebrated, the Reintregirea Publishing House has published the book entitled: *The Unification Day in Alba Iulia, December 1, 1918*. It should be clarified from the start that this paper is not meant to capture all the details regarding this great event of the history of the Romanian people, but to bring up for the readers some studies and articles written during the last century in journals and publications , which describe certain sequences and personalities who had a certain liaison with the Unification Day in 1918, both from the profane field and the ecclesiastical one.

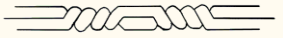
The Prologue of the book, entitled “The pearl of Transylvania on the crown of the Great Union”, was written by



His Grace Archpriest Irineu, Archbishop of Alba Iulia, the one who gave his blessing and support for the book to get published. In this introductory section, the Archbishop of the Balgrad Citadel emphasised not only the importance of the city of Alba Iulia but also the spiritual greatness of the event set on December 1, 1918.

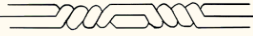
The first unit, entitled *Alba Iulia – The glorious citadel of the Unification of the Romanian people*, comprised of four studies and articles which speak about Alba Iulia as a sacred citadel of suffering and greatness of our people. Thus, starting with the importance of the Unification back in 1600 marked out in professor's Gheorghe Anghel study: "Michael the Brave and the Romanians in Transylvania", it is ended up around December 1, 1918. The last three months prior to the Great Union from Alba Iulia were described in detail by professor Eugen Hulea in his study entitled: "Alba Iulia during the Great Union in 1918". In this paper the historian spoke about all the action and events that had preceded the Great Union in Alba Iulia and around it. The third article of the unit was rather a testimony of a witness who took part physically to the event and is entitled: "I have also been to Alba Iulia". It was about the lawyer Viorel Nerva Stoica, who described in detail the evening of November 31, 1918 when several personalities took dinner with him and his family. The unit ended up with the description of "the Great Union in Alba Iulia" written by the priest Stefan Alexe.s

The second unit, entitled *Leading personalities of the Great Union from 1918*, portrays the biography and the involvement of four glorious personalities in the Great Union. The first one was Archbishop Miron Cristea, who would eventually become Metropolitan and then the primum Patriarch of the Romanian Orthodox Church. He was the one who involved greatly in the proclamation of Unification, and he also had the privilege to hand the certificate of unification to King Ferdinand I. The second



study is dedicated to “Iuliu Hossu: The herald of the Unification”, and was written by the historian Viorica Lascu. Greek Catholic Bishop, he was charged by the members of the National Assembly to read for the crowd gathered in Alba Iulia, the proclamation of unification between Transylvania and the Kingdom of Romania. Likewise, he accompanied the orthodox Archbishop Miron Cristea to Bucharest in order to apprise the royal family of Transylvanian’s willingness for unification. The last two studies: “The position and role of the politic man Vasile Goldiș, in the struggle for achieving the Great Unification”, written by the historian Eugen Gagea, and “Iulia Maniu, orator of the National Assembly in Alba Iulia on December 1, 1918”, written by professor Nicolae Josan; these were dedicated to those who had an important role in the attainment and support of the Great Unification in Alba Iulia on December 1, 1918.

The third and last part of this book comprises four studies which speak about *The involvement of the Church in achieving the national unification*. The first study, whose author was the priest Ioan Toancă, is meant to emphasize “the contribution of the clergy of the Romanian Orthodox Church in their fight against the national regime, with the purpose of liberating the ancient land (1916-1918). The further two articles, written by the priests Petru Pinca and Adrian Ignat, emphasize “the contribution of the clergy for the Unification on December 1, 1918”, but also the intervention of “The Orthodox Church from Transylvania in the benefit of the political unity of the Romanian country”. The Unification, on December 1, 1918, was supported and promoted by the Church which proved the necessity of the national and religious feeling in order to fulfil the national unity. The last article of this part, written by the Archdeacon Petru I. David illustrated the manner the clerical press came to support the Romanian’s national unification.



The epilogue of the volume brought up Priest's Ioan Lupas speech, held on December 1, 1943 in the Union Hall in Alba Iulia. Particularly named "The historical importance of December 1, 1918", this speech showed that all the main historical events and personalities of the Romanian people have had an important role in the achievement of the national unification. Similarly, the preachers proved the fact that the Great Unification from December 1 in Alba Iulia symbolize the wreath of perfection on the suffering forehead of the Romanian people.

All things considered, we could affirm that this volume presented an anamnesis of most important details regarding the Unification on December 1, 1918, providential event for the Romanian nation, through which the modern reader would experience, not just ideologically, all the actions happened around 1918. Even though the political turmoil of the country from the last decade had brought a prejudice to the people, and somehow had paralysed the wealth and financial evolution that should have had higher standards, the country has remained territorial unified and we believe also spiritual. We can not say more than enunciating the words graved on rock on the upper facade arcade of the main entrance of the Unification Hall in Alba Iulia:

"In 1918, anno domini, on December 1, in this place has been proclaimed for eternity and irrevocably the unification of Transylvania to the rest of Daco-Romania through the solemn and unanimous vote of the people. Eternal should remain the remembrance of this great action."