

ABSTRACT

MYTH AND HISTORY IN THE SEKLER PEOPLES' CONSCIENCE

The book is a presentation and analysis of the Hunnic origin myth in the Seklers' conscience throughout history. After clarifying the notion of myth in general, and, in particular, of the myth related to the origin of different nations with its role in forming the pre-national and national conscience, the study offers a chronological presentation of the appearance and survival of the Seklers' myth regarding their Hunnic origin. It all starts with the Hungarian medieval chroniclers, whose writings have been a benchmark for historians, writers and politicians in the following centuries. Then the work presents the persistence of the myth in Renaissance writings, textbooks, educational writings of different scholars from the 17-18th century. A significant part of the volume deals with The Sekler Chronicle of Ciuc, a fake document that generated vivid debates until the 20th century. The book follows the journey of the myth in the literature of the 18-20th centuries, in the textbooks, political discourses (both in local and central administration) and press of the period. An interesting evidence is presented by the comparison of the myth's survival between the Seklers of Romania and those who migrated to Hungary after World War I: a kind of underground stream linking Sekler minorities and the powerful comeback of the myth in the repatriated Seklers' conscience. This argument is followed by an analysis of the continuity and discontinuity of the myth's presence during the communist period. The book ends with a survey of the present, through a questionnaire (more than 1000 responders) that reveals the important role mythical history plays in Seklers' group identity even today.