Public Education in Romania and Moldova, 19-20th Centuries: Modernization, Political Mobilization, and Nation-Building. An Introduction

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Since the second half of the 19th century, Romania has asserted itself, along with other European states, as a "modern mobilizational state"[1] which aimed to profoundly transform its population and the mass of its citizens through extensive mobilizing and social engineering projects. Public education has played a central role in this ambitious process of social transformation, being an essential tool of state formation and nation-building[2].

Shortly after the emergence of the modern Romanian state (1859/61), mass public education was decreed to be universal and compulsory (1865). A modern generalized, secular and centralized primary education system, with a standardized school curriculum and an "army" of professional teachers, was to replace, in a relatively short period, the rudimentary and incomplete, almost non-existent, educational model of the "ancien régime," despite some notable attempts to create a stable institutionalized education during previous decades. Modern education was meant to transform peasants into "good Romanians" and loyal citizens of the state[3]. This project, which looked ambitious and well-designed on paper, was difficult to implement in practice. The state's enlightening ambitions were met with a series of underlying obstacles: a quasi-absent school infrastructure, a chronic shortage of professionally trained teachers, especially in rural areas, and a silent resistance to schooling coming from rural communities that had become the target of these large-scale educational projects. However, enormous efforts and resources were invested in this undertaking. Visionary officials and ministers, such as Spiru

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[1] Adeeb Khalid, "Backwardness and the Quest for Civilization: Early Soviet Central Asia in Comparative Perspective," *Slavic Review* 65, no. 2 (2006): 231–51, https://doi.org/10.2307/4148591.

[2] Ernest Gellner, *Thought and Change* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1964); Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (Ithaca/New York: Cornell University Press, 1983); Eugen Weber, *Peasants into Frenchmen. The Modernization of Rural France, 1870-1914* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1976); Andy Green, *Education and State Formation. Europe, East Asia and the USA* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013).

[3] Weber, *Peasants into Frenchmen. The Modernization of Rural France, 1870-1914*; Luminița Murgescu, *Între "bunul creștin" și "bravul român". Rolul școlii primare în construirea identității naționale românești* (Iași: Editura A '92, 1999).

Haret (who spent three terms at the head of the Ministry of Public Instruction between 1897 and 1910), were passionately dedicated and worked tirelessly towards building a genuine "people's school"[4].

Although primary public education attracted the most significant attention and resources from the state, it was but one step, albeit perhaps the most important, in a multi-level educational system, which targeted and included ever-larger masses of the population. The modern state needed a large and competent bureaucracy, while the growing industry required an increasingly skilled workforce[5]. In just a few decades, the Romanian education system transformed from an elite-based model, intended exclusively for a small group of privileged people, into an oversized pyramid-like institution. It relied upon an extensive and robust base of elementary education, continuing with the upper levels of high school, vocational institutions and, at the top of the pyramid, with higher education. All these stages of public education went through an intensive process of massification and democratization. Despite these intentions, most Romanians still only attended, at best, primary school, which resulted in minimal chances for wide-ranging social mobility[6]. However, high schools, as well as vocational and higher education institutions, continued to expand their recruitment base, to include a growing number of students with a lower-class and peasant background. Many of these students became themselves teachers, being imbued with the mission of enlightening the 'popular classes.' The massification of university studies also led to certain "perverse effects,"[7] which gradually increased as higher education expanded during the interwar period. One of the main such effects was the rising unemployment among the graduates of higher education institutions[8]. This tendency only compounded the earlier issue of a fundamental imbalance in the Romanian education system, with most graduates aspiring to enter state service and the overblown bureaucracy, which were still regarded as the most promising and lucrative vehicles for social mobility. Frustrated by the economic difficulties, which were made much worse by the Great Depression hitting Romania in the late 1920s and early 1930s, but also by the shortage of available jobs in the

[4] Constantin Schifirneț, "Spiru Haret, Education and School Legislation Reform," *Revista Română de Sociologie* XXV, no. 3–4 (2014): 311–26.

[5] Green, *Education and State Formation. Europe, East Asia and the USA*.

[6] Dimitrie Gusti, ed., *Un an de activitate la Ministerul Instrucției, Culturii și Artelor. 1932-1933* (Bucharest: Tipografia Bucovina, 1934).

[7] Raymond Boudon, *Effets pervers et ordre social* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 2009).

[8] Dragoș Sdrobiș, *Limitele meritocratiei într-o societate agrară* (Iași: Polirom, n.d.).

field of intellectual professions and the state apparatus, some of these graduates were attracted by extremist and xenophobic currents of political thought and action, following the pan-European trend of the 1930s[9].

The creation of Greater Romania in 1918 produced another series of challenges and difficulties in the process of expanding and consolidating the educational system. The newly integrated regions had a widely differing level of general schooling and literacy rates. The population of Transylvania had, in general, a higher educational level than their counterparts in the Old Kingdom (Moldavia and Wallachia), although it was still lower than the corresponding rates in the western areas of the former Habsburg Monarchy[10]. Bessarabia, on the other hand, displayed the lowest level of schooling and literacy, compared to other provinces of Greater Romania, despite the belated efforts of the tsarist administration to create and expand an elementary public school system at the end of the 19th century.[11] Another significant challenge was the schooling of ethnic minorities, who accounted for more than one quarter of the general population. A number of international agreements, especially the treaties signed in Versailles/Paris (1919-1921), required Romania to respect the rights of its ethnic minorities to receiving an adequate education in their mother tongue. At the same time, the Romanian authorities did not abide by these agreements, or did so only partially and reluctantly, since they were concerned about the ethnic heterogeneity of Romanian society. Moreover, they often suspected the members of ethnic minority communities of subversion and disloyalty. The impact of this growing suspicion on state policy resulted in a constant tendency towards the Romanianization of education at all levels, even in the case of primary schools and private educational institutions[12].

Public education continued to be a powerful tool of state formation and political mobilization following the establishment of communist regimes[13].

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[9] Irina Livezeanu, *Cultural Politics in Greater Romania: Regionalism, Nation Building & Ethnic Struggle, 1918-1930* (Ithaca/New York: Cornell University Press, 1995).

[10] Livezeanu, *Cultural Politics in Greater Romania*.

[11] Ludmila Coadă, *Zemstva Basarabiei. Aspecte istorico-juridice* (Chișinău: Pontos, 2009).

[12] Livezeanu, *Cultural Politics in Greater Romania*; Petru Negura, "Nation-Building and Mass Schooling of Ethnic Minorities on the Romanian and Soviet Peripheries (1918 – 1940): A Comparative Study of Bessarabia and Transnistria," *National Identities* 23, no. 5 (2021): 1–22, https://doi.org/10.1080/14608944.2021.1873931. See also Philippe Blasen's article in this issue.

[13] John Connelly, *Captive University. The Sovietization of East German, Czech, and Polish Higher Education, 1945-1956* (Chapel Hill and London: The University of North Carolina Press, 2000).

Paradoxically, after the fall of the communist governments in Eastern Europe, the educational system has regained its essential function of nation-building, which the Western states seemed to have abandoned in the second half of the 20th century. Moreover, unrecognized *de facto* states in Transnistria, the Caucasus and the Donbass regions developed similar strategies of state-building and national construction. They have even engaged into a symbolic and political competition with the countries they have chosen to emancipate themselves from[14].

The social history of education has a rich tradition in Western academia[15]. Several works tackled the mass public education in disputed regions within various Western and Central European countries, in the context of nation-building processes underway during the late 19th and early 20th centuries[16]. The history of education and culture in the East European countries and the USSR became the object of a renewed interest after the fall of the communist regimes and the subsequent opening of the Party and government archives[17]. A number of Western, Romanian and Moldovan historians produced notable works in the field

[14] Vladimir Solonari, "Creating a 'People': A Case Study in Post-Soviet History-Writing," *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History* 4, no. 2 (2003): 411–38, https://doi.org/10.1353/kri.2003.0027; Alexandr Voronovici, "Internationalist Separatism and the Political Use of 'Historical Statehood' in the Unrecognized Republics of Transnistria and Donbass," *Problems of Post-Communism* 67, no. 3 (May 3, 2020): 288–302, https://doi.org/10.1080/10758216.2019.1594918.

[15] Roberto Sani, "History of Education in Modern and Contemporary Europe: New Sources and Lines of Research," *History of Education Quarterly* 53, no. 2 (2013): 184–95, https://doi.org/10.1111/hoeq.12018; Joyce Goodman and Ian Grosvenor, "Educational Research-History of Education a Curious Case?," *Oxford Review of Education* 35, no. 5 (2009): 601–16, https://doi.org/10.1080/03054980903216325.

[16] Stephen L. Harp, *Learning to Be Loyal: Primary Schooling as Nation Building in Alsace and Lorraine, 1850–1940* (DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 1998); Ágoston Berecz, *The Politics of Early Language Teaching: Hungarian in the Primary Schools of the Late Dual Monarchy* (Budapest: Pasts, Inc., CEU Press, 2013); Joachim von Puttkamer, *Schulalltag und nationale Integration in Ungarn. Slowaken, Rumänen und Siebenbürger Sachsen in der Auseinandersetzung mit der Ungarischen Staatsidee 1867–1914* (München: Oldenbourg, 2003); Machteld Venken, *Peripheries at the Centre. Borderland Schooling in Interwar Europe* (New York/Oxford: Berghann, 2021).

[17] To cite a few of them: Sheila Fitzpatrick, *Education and Social Mobility in the Soviet Union, 1921-1934* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979); Wladimir Bérélowitch, *La soviétisation de l'École russe, 1917-1931* (Lausanne: L'Age d'or, 1990); Thomas Ewing, *The Teachers of Stalinism: Policy, Practice, and Power in Soviet Schools of the 1930s* (New York: Peter Lang, 2002); Larry E. Holmes *The Kremlin and the Schoolhouse. Reforming Education in Soviet Russia, 1917-1931* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1991); Catriona Kelly, *Children's World: Growing Up in Russia, 1890-1991* (Lancaster: Yale University Press, 2007).

of the history of education, using newly discovered or previously unavailable archival documents[18].

This special issue of the *Plural* journal brings together a collection of articles whose authors are currently among the most important researchers working on the history of education in Romania. The studies included in this issue cover a fairly wide-ranging period, from the middle of the 19th century to the end of the 20th century. They focus on a geographical area that includes several regions currently belonging to present-day Romania and the Republic of Moldova. The articles approach their subject matter from different angles, analyzing and discussing multiple levels of the educational system, from preschool to higher education and even postgraduate studies. The articles deal with various aspects relating to the modernization of public education. Thus, Cătălina Mihalache examines some facets of the cultural history of the use of toys for pedagogical purposes within school and family settings in Romania, in the context of the standardization and industrialization of the toy production process. Ramona Caramelea discusses the process of rationalization and institutionalization of the examination system within Romanian secondary education, from the end of the 19th century until World War I. Philippe H. Blasen analyzes various dimensions of German language education in southern Bessarabia in the late 1930s, including the attempts to Romanianize the German schools, in the context of the conflicting interests of a number of national and local actors. Anca Filipovici addresses the role of the *Straja Țării* organization, created under the patronage of King Carol II, in promoting health policies among the young people in the late 1930s, while emphasizing the link with the state's increasingly radical nationalizing tendencies. Dragoș Sdrobiș analyzes certain important aspects of the development of technical studies in interwar Romania, focusing on the case of the Polytechnic School in Bucharest, in the context of the institutionalization of the engineering profession. Ana-Maria Stan reconstructs the process of preparing the drafts of the Law on University Education in Romania, adopted in 1932, through the analysis of the draft projects elaborated in the 1920s by

[18] Livezeanu, *Cultural Politics in Greater Romania*; Cătălina Michalache, *Copilărie, familie, şcoală: politici educaționale și receptări sociale* (Iași: Ed. Universității „Al. I. Cuza", 2016); Nicolae Adăniloaie, *Istoria învățământului primar (1859-1918)* (Bucharest: Cris Book Universal, 1998); Murgescu, *Între bunul creștin și bravul român*; Sdrobiș, *Limitele meritocratiei într-o societate agrară*; Ioana-Aurelia Axentii, *Gândirea pedagogică în Basarabia (1918-1940). Studiu istorico-pedagogic* (Chișinău: Civitas, 2006); Sergiu Musteață and Petru Negură, "Îndoctrinare, sovietizare și rusificare prin învățământ în RSSM", in Sergiu Musteață and Igor Cașu, eds., *Fără termen de prescripție. Aspecte ale investigării crimelor comunismului în Europa* (Chișinău: Cartier, 2011); Elena Negru, *Politica etnoculturală în RASS Moldovenească* (Chișinău: Prut Internațional, 2003).

two professors from the University of Cluj. Dragoș Jipa looks at the transfer of the Marxist ideological model, imported from the USSR, to the teaching of French literature at the University of Bucharest. His study is based on the analytical programs introduced in the curriculum during the first two years of the communist regime's definitive consolidation in Romania (1948-1949). Finally, using a wide array of quantitative data and narrative documents, Irina Nastasă examines the evolution of the number and the profiles of Eastern European scholars who had benefited from the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation's scholarships during the Cold War. She places her analysis in the context of the Federal Republic of Germany's policy towards the communist states of Eastern Europe (*Ostpolitik*).

The studies included in this issue follow a socially and culturally informed approach to the history of education in Romania. The ambitious goal of this volume is therefore not only to contribute to the discovery and analysis of certain important aspects of the history of modern education in Romania. It also specifically aims at enriching our understanding of how public education has contributed to the broader processes of social development and state-building in the case of modern Romania. Therefore, these articles will surely be of interest not only to the researchers specializing in the history of education, but also to all the scholars and students interested in the history of society and the state, in general, both in Romania and in Central and Eastern Europe as a whole.

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Toys between the Ludic and the Pedagogical Perspective in Late 19th Century Romania[1]

Cătălina MIHALACHE

Abstract

The paper proposes to identify what the 19th century brought as novelties in the "life" of toys, seen as items dedicated explicitly to children; I have focused, naturally, on the Romanian case. By correlating the accounts to which I had access, I was able to outline certain evolutions in the manufacture, use, purchase, and characteristics ascribed to toys in that period. I have noted, first of all, the *social differentiation* in terms of toy consumption. The lower classes – defined by their views of childhood, material resources and well-delimited systems of gratification/rewarding – used more or less the same games and toys. Wealthier classes recorded a more diversified consumption, with urban influences, while the children of the elites became increasingly familiar with the offers of the Western world, brought directly from the source or just copied here. Another highlighted aspect is the increase in *standardisation* and even the *industrialisation* of toy production. The "merchandise-toy" no longer followed the logic of uniqueness, of perishable character, and functionalities predicted by children, for their personal use. Indeed, such toys had to play by the market rules set by adults, thus leading to imitation and to a more rigid toy than the "authentic" one, which was spontaneous and personalised. Such toys have messages, restrictions, and deformations that are highly relevant for the evolution of the relationships between adults and children. A third observation is that *the school establishments and the pedagogical ethos* of the time left their mark. "Educational" toys were not innocent, because they aimed to speed up the maturation of children, to enable them to develop academic and professional skills, limiting a child's freedom concerning the use of toys. The ideas of pre- and para-school education that used such items were adopted mainly by the "upper class" families, but they also acquired the direct support of the state, through the teaching institutions that the state controlled.

Keywords: childhood material culture, educational practices, social consuming, industrialisation, nationalism, traditionalism.

What does the second half of the 19th century bring as a novelty in the "life" of toys as items dedicated explicitly to children within the Romanian Principalities? Upon correlating the accounts that I was able to access, interesting

[1] This article elaborates on the paper presented at the international workshop *At the Crossroads of Empires. Children and Consumption in 19th Century Central and Eastern Europe*, July 11-12, 2019, New Europe College-Institute for Advanced Study, Bucharest. The paper was translated by Alina Veronica Piftor.

evolutions may be highlighted regarding the production, usage, purchase, and features ascribed to toys during that period. Novelties may be proven, in variable proportions, but they do not exclude very long-term continuities, namely at least a century before and after the interval I will focus on (the last decades of the 19th century and the first years after 1900).

The historical sources that I have used have focused on memories of children doubled by incursions into pedagogical publications and into the periodicals of the time.

From the beginning, it is worth showing the distribution of biographic information, quasi-non-existing for the early 19th century and rather frequent (but not necessarily consistent) towards the end of the century. The authors of these accounts were mostly men, insisting upon showing their public merits, not their personal experiences, often failing to mention their first years of life. The typical construction of such an account passes from the ancestors directly to the first years of systematic education, opposed on principle to the idea of childhood and freedom (and play). As very early examples, I note the works of Prince Nicolae Suțu or the boyar Theodor Vârnav.

Fiction literature (see the short stories in "Amicul Copiilor"; for instance, *Fetița nedreptățită*, published in issue 4 of July 1893, focusing on the fate of a doll) or the memoirs considered genuine literary works have much more consistent references to the life of children in those times. There are precedents set in the classical literary works, which depict the exemplary world of toys in the Western and the Central-European world – such as *The Nutcracker* (a fairy tale published by E.T.A. Hoffman in 1816, which was a source of inspiration for the ballet of Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky in 1892), *The Steadfast Tin Soldier* (published by Hans Christian Andersen in 1838), *Pinocchio* (published by Carlo Goldoni in 1883), *Peter Pan* (published by the Scottish writer J.M. Barrie in 1904).

It is no wonder that the pages signed by memorialists with real literary talent, such as Vasile Alecsandri, George Sion, Ion Creangă, Radu Rosetti are more careful concerning such details. There is a visible gender differentiation, explicable through the very structures of activity and education, different from one case to another. Clearly, women remember more often something about their toys or those of others than men do (their memories focus on expansive, physical and competitive games). Another peculiarity of the memoirists' sample refers to the social status of the authors (most likely similar to that of the readers for whom the texts were intended). The authors were educated people, who belonged to the upper classes or were, at least, materially well-endowed by the standards of that time. Their works do not lack references to "ordinary people," peasants, servants, or even the descendants of former gipsy slaves, but

the distribution of "voices" is dominated by representatives of social elites and their perspective on the world.

Even the portraits of the time could suggest the same reluctant attitude in depicting children together with their toys. For example, in the first half of the 19th-century collection of such pieces, only one in 14 portraits are explicitly showing the two children of a family holding toys in their arms[2]. As a conclusion regarding the main historical sources from our collection, it a fact that may seem surprising (at least for a 20th-century or 21st-century reader) is worth noting: the scarcity of toy mentions in the memoirs available. Interesting parallelism with the situation in Germany can suggest a credible explanation: in 1900, only 20-25 % of the children are estimated to have received toys "purchased", while memoirs only mention them vaguely, when they do at all[3].

Regarding the second category of sources invoked, the texts with a pedagogical purpose that make direct references to games and toys, we can identify, first of all, a time gap of several decades compared to their western counterparts, but also a delay regarding the formulation of some opinions that tried to adapt the proposed theories to the local realities. The educational stakes of the toys are discussed late in the Romanian space, following the logic of a gap of several decades concerning the development of kindergartens and the corresponding pedagogy, proposed by Friederich Fröbel. Practically, the last two decades of the 19th century also bring in Romania conscious visibility of the topic.

The third document category used refers to the press of the time, which in turn has a serious gap compared to most of Romania's neighbouring regions, not only chronologically, but also in terms of consistency, dissemination, professionalism of the journalists, etc. The periodical press of the time often features advertisements for new products and nominated those who assumed their distribution. Toy advertisements are not explicit (which, as I will show later, is caused by the structure of distributions networks), and they are difficult to identify until the 1880s and 1890s.

In the *Bucharest Yearbook for [the year] 1885*, for example, we find a special mention for „Jucărieri" [Eng., "Toys Merchants"], translated into French as

[2] Mariana Vida, Elena Olariu, Marina Vazaca, Victoria Gheorghiță, eds., *Epoca Biedermeier în Țările Române, 1815-1859* (Bucharest: Editura Muzeului Național de Artă a României, 2014), 139, figure 151.

[3] David D. Hamlin, *Work and Play. The Production and Consumption of Toys in Germany, 1870-1914* (Michigan: The University of Michigan Press, 2007), 57. This is a complex reality, which means we should pay more attention to the numerical/quantitative equivalents of real processes, with the transformations associated to modernisation, to "mass" consumption and culture, etc.

Marchands de Jouets[4]. Three names of merchants are given: Kornstein, Santa Maria, and Ventzel. In a few years, we find three more mentions, but with some modifications. Probably the first person is the same, but the name is written a little differently (Hornstein), and an initial is specified (A.). Santa Maria is still present, but at a different address (from Episcopiei Street, the store moves to [Calea] Victoriei, in the heart of the Bucharest promenade. However, the next year we find the old address, from Episcopiei Street. Instead of Ventzel we find the merchant Steinberg, on the same Carol I central boulevard, but No. 3 is changed to No. 6. Hornstein was also residing on the same Carol I boulevard, at almost the same number (he appears first at 36, then at 37). In a few years, we find their names in roughly the same locations, which suggests that we are dealing with luxury goods and their professional salesmen. However, it was a problematic trade. The yearbooks from 1904 or 1910 no longer make any explicit references to toy sellers.

By way of comparison, we should emphasize that in Germany, for instance, soon after 1900, periodicals were featured that were dedicated to toy manufacturers[5].

The "worlds" of childhood, in the life of adults

It is well known that childhood memoirs, in the Romanian case, have a classical reference in the pages written by the popular narrator Ion Creangă (born in 1837, deceased in 1889). These pages have long been included in the national literary and artistic canon, but they have not been much assessed in terms of valid historical documents, though the author's intention was precisely to reconstruct significant autobiographic episodes. Published in the years 1881-1882, they remained for posterity as an exemplary description of the typical/ ideal/ happy childhood – still invoked as an immutable reference, over a century and a half later[6].

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[4] See *Bucharest Yearbook for [the year] 1885*, 162, http://digitool.bibmet.ro:1801/view/action/singleViewer.do?dvs=1610521686745~347&locale=ro_RO&VIEWER_URL=/view/action/singleViewer.do?&DELIVERY_RULE_ID=10&search_terms=anuarul%20bucure%C5%9Ftilor&adjacency=N&application=DIGITOOL-3&frameId=1&usePid1=true&usePid2=true, accessed on 13.01, 2021.

[5] Hamlin, *Work and Play*, 2-3.

[6] There is a *topos* of representations of childhood (though the language was dialectal and archaising, and the realities described are less and less intelligible for the future generations), which has started losing consistency in the past few decades, given the technological revolution and the demographic movements that modified dramatically the profile of the "traditional" Romanian village (more than the political changes of the last century). Even given the lack of references to Creangă's works, one can find accounts of happy childhoods, in the

However, Creangă's childhood does not mention toys in their modern meaning: specially designed items made by adults or under their supervision (and even sold) for children's entertainment[7]. This prompts me to agree that such toys could have very well not existed[8], for it is well known that children can play under almost any circumstances, using any resources, being mainly interested in imitating or parodying the life of adults.

However, in the framework of that mostly rural, premodern, traditional life, at any fair, children found sweet snacks, many times under attractive shapes, such as animals, small houses, hearts, etc. (made of sugar or sweet dough) – which made them somewhat similar to toys – along with other basic entertainment means (such as swings /wheels/ "cabinets"). We can glean this not only from Creangă's *Memoirs,* but also from other testimonies. We can refer to Zoe Cămărăşescu's work, for a picturesque and detailed description of the traditional "fairgrounds of Moşi" [Rom., „bâlci de Moşi"] in Bucharest,[9] or we can use a report with autobiographical inflexions from the middle of the twentieth century, but with references going back to the First World War, signed by Miron Radu Paraschivescu (born 1911).[10] There were, however, items that were specially designed for delighting children and for play. I refer here to small coloured clay or wooden figurines, usually depicting animals or decorated with all sorts of ornaments, capable (or not) to issue all kinds of notable sounds or to produce other effects, such as motion effects, albeit rather rudimentary.

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countryside, without any "bought" toys, even in the mid-20th century; children made their own toys, using anything they could find. Mariana Codruț, "Portret de copilărie," in Dan Lungu, Amelia Gheorghiță, eds., *Cartea copilăriilor* (Iași: Polirom, 2016), 52-56. It does not mean children did not know of their existence or that they did not want them.

7 Moreover, in a famous introductory paragraph, where he talks about "games and delights full of childlike fun and charm", the witty commenter states that the meaning ascribed here to the word *jucării* is pranks (antics); see Ion Creangă, *Amintiri din copilărie*, preface and notes by G.I. Tohăneanu and I. Funeriu (Bucharest: Editura Minerva, 1970), 36, note 1.

8 Hamlin, *Work and Play*, 16. More precisely, the author starts from the idea that toys do not satisfy a "natural human need". They do not meet any imperative need, for play – which is such a necessity, not only for children, but also for adults – can very well be conducted independently of the existence of specialised artefacts.

9 Zoe Cămărășescu, *Amintiri*, preface by Dan C. Mihăilescu (București: Casa Editorială Ponte, 2011), 162-164.

10 He describes the attractions for children at the fairs in Râureni, as he found them in 1954, comparing them with the memories of his own childhood and with the stories of the elders about how it was at the beginning of the 20th century, and even earlier. See Miron Radu Paraschivescu, *Bâlci la Râureni* (Bucharest: Tineretului Press, 1964),.39-40, 52-53. For a broader history of the phenomenon, see: Ion Faiter, *Trecător prin târguri și iarmaroace* (Bucharest: Sport-Turism Publishing House, 1982).

They are still present at traditional artisans, such as the famous whistling birds. They were accompanied by real miniature musical instruments, to be used by children and adults alike. For example, a well-known opera singer (born in 1881, in Ploieşti, to a family of clerks) discovered her musical talent during her childhood, when her grandfather brought her from a fair a modest clay instrument (*ocarină*). It was not meant for the high-end music or the educated population; it was trivial, cheap and probably perishable, with limited possibilities of expression, but it was considered a proper gift for a child who was already interested in music. A "real violin" followed shortly, because the grandfather, who was the caregiver, believed in her musical skills. She passed from the *ocarină* to the violin directly, without any teacher and before starting school, which bestowed upon the item a special quality, related to passion and freedom, and less to study or adult-supervised regulations[11].

Such fair toys have been manufactured and sold throughout large areas within the East-European space, in the former Ottoman and Russian empires, with rather the same mechanisms, materials and outlets. The toy collections in Russia[12] and Turkey[13] feature impressive arrays, with regional specifics, endowed with amazing inventiveness, colours, simplicity of mechanisms and longevity of the products. It may thus be assumed that they had a common, premodern, mostly rural and artisanal background, specific to the civilisations that have intertwined in the Balkan area (without being borrowed or copied integrally and in an undifferentiated manner). They have been considered *fair toys*.

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[11] Elena Drăgulinescu-Stinghe, *Amintiri* (Bucharest: Editura Muzicală a Uniunii Compozitorilor din Republica Socialistă România, 1965), 22.

[12] Short descriptions of such toys are accessible and consistent enough; see, for instance Ecaterina Makarova, *Traditional Wooden Toys*, published on https://www.kubidubi.com/article_03.html, accessed on January 12, 2021. It seems that what we call today the traditional Russian doll, the "Matryoshka," was inspired by Japanese items (which would have imitated a model from China), and then it reached Russia in the 1890s. See, for example, Solenn Cordroc'h, *Russian Dolls: Originally from Japan*, published on 19.04.2020, https://pen-online.com/culture/russian-dolls-originally-from-japan/, accessed on 12.01.2021.

[13] Concerning Turkey, the idea of traditional toys seems to be partially defined in direct opposition to imported or Western-like toys. The chronological references are less clear, but the inventory of the items that are part of the "traditional" heritage (in the sense of authentic, national, representative for the "genius loci") is more comprehensive. In terms of frequency, the toys (even with the mention "folklore dolls"), the wheeled items and the strategy games seem to dominate. See, for instance, the collection of over 800 items gathered from Anatolia, described at http://www.turkishculture.org/lifestyles/turkish-culture-portal/anatolian-children/traditional-anatolian-697.htm, accessed on 24.06.2019

The fair is by definition a space destined for exchanges and mixing, even from a social and cultural perspective. Situated at the limit between the urban and the rural, these spaces were dominated by villagers and by the "lower classes", but they did not rule out the occasional attendance of representatives of local/national elites. In certain cases, the "opening" of the event was attended by the royal family itself, who admired wholeheartedly the supply of the small rural and artisanal producers. In the late 19th century, they constantly attended the famous "Târgul de Moşi" in Bucharest, where the children of the Crown Prince and his wife (Ferdinand and Maria) were rather amused[14].

The public usually came for the show of products and services. This was no regular market where merchandises were exhibited. It was a leisure event associated with material benefits, (often correlated with public holidays featured in the religious calendar). Success was ensured by the capacity to attract, charm, persuade, to convince the customer to spend with pleasure, mostly given that the amounts to spend were not tremendous. On the contrary, such fairs were defined by their accessibility. In this context, the purchase of merchandise toys is also justified, regardless of how perishable or "primitive" they may have been.

But the precious artefacts of Western origin and appearance could not find their place there. Furthermore, the very idea of buying children's toys "from the fair" (in the sense of occasional market or small town nearby) was not commonplace among lower classes (i.e., most families). Exceptions thereof are late, rare and notable. I mention, as an example, the account of a graduate of the Theological Seminary in Chişinău, born in 1881 in the village of Trebujeni, the district of Orhei (part of the Russian Empire at that time). He was born to a family of wealthy and intelligent villagers. But, beyond the habits of the neighbours, the author highlighted with visible admiration that his father had promised him a violin early on – when he was old enough to understand their utility – "real toys from the fair". Actually, "no journey to Chişinău or Orhei ended without him bringing me a toy or a gift", even books [15]. I underline here the use of the word *gift* – unfamiliar to the rural traditional lexicon – which is a retroactive projection of the author, as well as the distinct use of the word *toys*. Gifts could mean something else, too.

Buying and offering toys could not be taken for granted, mostly in a world that has preserved for centuries certain restrictive (and coercive) representations of children and of childhood, in general. The "discovery" of childhood

[14] Cămărăşescu, *Amintiri*, 163.

[15] Ştefan Gh. Usinievici, *Nostalgii basarabene. Mărturii autobiografice* (Cluj-Napoca: Casa Cărţii de Ştiinţă, 1996), 9.

as a significant and complex emotional, cultural and formative reality not only (or mainly) biological was a long-term process, which differentiated the social groups and the pre-modern and early modern lifestyles[16].

Only in the mid-19th century, we can trace approaches that we may call normal today: a child seen as a valuable (material and affective) investment for the entire family; childhood perceived as a "privileged moment of existence"; a child seen as "a person"[17]. Such perceptions led to an entire array of representations, institutions and industries of childhood. However, they have occupied in a gradual and differentiated manner various geographical and socio-cultural spaces, thus leaving enough space for reminiscences and inertias.

It is interesting to note that the more conservative approaches to childhood were not present only among the lower social classes, but also at the very peak of the premodern social hierarchy, the members of which had their peculiar practices and values for centuries. Here, the miniature copy of the adults was followed literally, and children were endowed with all accessories of respectability: jewellery, weapons, pets/prestige pets, expensive attires, amazing personal items or souvenirs (such as trinkets or musical boxes), portraits, books, servants, available not only as playing companions but also as human toys.

A famous Romanian autobiographical short story of the 19th century enthusiastically depicts such a socially inferior play companion (a servant at the boyar's court) but regarded with admiration, affection and respect by the child who was his master. I am talking here about the Romantic character Vasile Porojan, invoked in the memoirs of the writer Vasile Alecsandri, precisely for having witnessed long-gone times and customs, within the first decades of the 19th century[18]. As for the "living toys," they were mostly Gipsy servants (slaves or recently freed from captivity), who were completely at the disposal of their masters, including children. George Sion (born in 1822), while remembering his first years of childhood, when he could not move or speak, talked about four little servants (aged 10-12, "some of our Gypsy boys") who took him everywhere, even playing the role of draft animals, because he thought he was entitled to treat them as such[19].

These are not the areas that fuelled the change in perception and practices associated with childhood. Instead, the modernity promoted by the educated

[16] Philippe Ariès, *L'enfant et la vie familiale sous l'Ancien Régime* (Paris: Plon, 1960).

[17] Philippe Ariès, Georges Duby, eds., *Istoria vieții private de la Revoluția Franceză la Primul Război mondial*, vol. VII (Bucharest: Meridiane, 1997), 139-141.

[18] Vasile Alecsandri, *Proză. Amintiri. Povestiri romantice* (Craiova: Scrisul românesc, 1939), 87-93.

[19] George Sion, *Suvenire contimpurane* (Iași: Polirom, 2016), 349-352.

and wealthy urban inhabitants within the Western world played that role. Retrospectively simplifying the history of the studied phenomena, we can say that, in the Romanian case, the Central-European middle class/bourgeois ideology was borrowed as a discursive and educational model mostly by the aristocracy and by those willing to improve their social status by investing in their children, and less through its direct adoption by the "regular" urban inhabitants. More precisely, it was the less wealthy strata of the aristocracy who took over the bourgeois model of education, not necessarily the townspeople themselves. This model included much more rigorous and stringent moral, professional and cultural training requirements than in the case of the noble lifestyle. Since the young offspring had to secure a future career, they could not rely (only) on family resources.

This new discourse of family values, of the need to demonstrate at the same time affection and respect for the individuality and the wishes of children – correlated with the expectations projected on them by adults – was materialised in a new world of toys[20].

From fair toys to the toy market

The non-temporal, ignored and perishable world of toys manufactured spontaneously by the children themselves or at their express request, anyway, was accompanied – at least in the period studied here – by a certain artisanal supply. It was rather specialised, stable in terms of form and content, accessible concerning the materials and costs, definitely attractive for most of the population, but accessed only occasionally.

However, in the last decades of the 19th century, the progress of technology and industrialisation penetrated massively the world of toys, too. It seems that the German space recorded the most comprehensive expansion of the toy industry, in terms of quantity and concerning the variety of products, of the most popular types and technology innovation[21]. Both the German and the Austrian

[20] This is the main research hypothesis in the work of David D. Hamlin.

[21] The few exclusive areas for the toy industry (Nuremberg, specialised in mechanical toys; Sonnenberg, mainly manufacturing dolls; Erzgebirge, considered the region of traditional wooden toys for the German culture) developed in various ways, but at an incredible pace. The exports of German toys to the world grew considerably, too, though several other Western countries had remarkable production rates in this field. The figures seem unlikely but they certainly do not include all realities of the time. For instance, between the decades 1860-1880, the toy exports to America grew by over 600%, only for the Sonnenberg region (Hamlin, *Work and Play*, 87). And this area was an artisanal manufacturing area, not industrialised like the one of Nuremberg. Here, the production of toy models featuring steam-powered engines grew from 495 models in 1875, to 575,554 in 1888, while the production of "magical

(Austro-Hungarian) Empires[22] were major reference points of the toy markets in the Central- and East-European area, as they were concomitantly highly powerful and skilful cultural models, manufacturers and distributors.

Confirmation of this fact can be found, surprisingly, in many literary works. A character in the short stories of the memorialist Radu Rosetti (born in 1853) is capable of manufacturing amazing wooden toys, using just a pocket knife, skilfully; the miniatures were so great, that the child was amazed they were not coming to life. The reaction of the German master at the noble court sends us to the reference of the time: if he had been equally skilful, he could have founded a great toy factory in Vienna and he would have become rich[23].

Naturally, the French experience in the delicate arts of trinkets, decorative items, fashion, intelligent and sophisticated artwork, led to remarkable outcomes in this field, too. In 1873, France obtained over 6 million francs, by exporting over 875 tons of toys[24]. But the big stores (such as *Bon Marché* or *Galeries Lafayette*), with renowned international subsidiaries, did not rule out imports, because in 1844, for instance, they imported over 600,000 German dolls[25]. French nationalism intervened ever more acutely in this field, too, while the ban on imports during the First World War was preceded by genuine tirades denigrating the German dolls and exulting the beauty and qualities of local ones[26].

How did these marvellous toys – still almost too good to be true and anyway very expensive for the vast majority of the Romanian families – end up in the hands of the lucky recipients? In 1867, Vasile Alecsandri sent from Paris to his 10-year-old daughter a wonderful doll that had charmed even him: her attire was high-end; she held a monkey; she could bend her knees, move her head and she was so convincing, that all she could not do was talk[27].

The wealthy families received the catalogues of the most respectable distribution companies in Paris. Since November, children could pick exactly what they

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flashlights" grew from 325,000 in 1891, to 400,000, in 1895 (*Ibidem*, p. 80). An equivalent of the Nuremberg area seems to have been Black Country in England, which produced large amounts of relatively cheap toys (Colin Heywood, *O istorie a copilăriei. Copii în Occident, din Evul Mediu până în epoca modern* (Bucharest: Editura Trei, 2017), 159.

[22] The Universal Exhibition in Vienna, in 1890, provided an ample overview of the international toy market, with the specificity of each important manufacturing country. Heywood, *History of Childhood*, 159.

[23] Radu Rosetti, *Părintele Zosim și alte povestiri*, edited by Radu Gârmacea (Bucharest: Humanitas, 2014), 7-8.

[24] Michel Manson, *Jouets de toujours de l'Antiquité à la Révolution* (Paris: Fayard, 2001), 323.

[25] Manson, *Jouets de toujours*, 324.

[26] Manson, *Jouets de toujours*, 324.

[27] Ioana Părvulescu, *În intimitatea secolului 19* (Bucharest: Humanitas, 2005), 127.

wanted for Christmas, while the cases labelled *Grand Magasin du Printemps, Louvre* or *Bon Marché* reached their destinations with all necessary precautions[28].

Regarding the toys brought from France, it is perhaps useful to briefly present a short history of their sales in their country of origin. There is a careful description of the beginnings and evolution of toy selling in France, which shows that the first phase was one of mixing with other items, products made of similar materials, by artisans capable of providing them with a shape. Therefore, toys were first of all associated with the manufacturers of trinkets or with the artisans who worked with wood, glass, paper, cardboard, fabrics, metals (common or precious), etc. Their sale followed the same principle: distributors bought them from the artisans along with the other items produced in their workshops and they transported them on routes and towards outlets of which they were sure (such as seasonal fairs or pilgrimage itineraries). Like in any other business, the important aspects were individual skills, the capital of personal relations and the capacity of mobilising people, materials, deposits, forms of payment. The existence of guilds delayed significantly the specialisation of toy manufacturers who worked with composite materials and techniques. Their dissolution after the Revolution of 1789 gave a considerable impulse to toy production and distribution. Entrepreneurs emerged who were mainly interested in this field, followed by the great "houses" with a national and even international impact, in full expansion during the 19th century. They took advantage of the technological evolution, of transportation getting cheaper, of advertising campaigns and of the new forms of promoting toys[29]. It may be assumed that, at least partially and with a delay of a few decades, this evolution may also be attested in the Central- and East-European space, the Romanian one included.

With or without access to toys, the children primarily enjoyed the affordable sweets. At least in urban areas, the ideal sweets of the exotic fruits – indispensable for children during the holidays, to make their joy complete – remained the undisputed monopole of Oriental traditions; they always came from certain areas of the Ottoman Empire.

Children back then were amazed by toys such as these: "real-size newborn twins, dressed in pink or blue satin, rocking horse, trains on rails, cooking set or complete tableware set for dolls, brightly coloured tin soldiers"[30].

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[28] Maria Cantacuzino-Enescu, *Umbre și lumini. Amintirile unei prințese valahe* (Oneşti: Aristarc, 2005), 60. The author was born in 1878, in the Rosetti-Tețcanu family, and she grew up at her family's estate in Moldavia. She also had a brother, so the presents had to satisfy both the girl and the boy's needs.

[29] See Manson, *Jouets de toujours,* 83-96; 179-194; 293-328.

[30] Manson, *Jouets de toujours*, p. 72.

There were toy merchants and stores in the country, too, mostly in the big cities, selling them among other merchandises, more rarely in exclusivity. Such offers were not necessarily very impressive[31] for everyone. Nonetheless, not all middlemen were bound to be successful in this market. Only the subsidiaries or collaborators of the great stores within the European capitals were able to persuade the public. This may also be deduced from an advertisement inviting the people in Bucharest to the reopening of the well-known *Magasin Général de Paris*, extended and renovated on Calea Victoriei, with a special department for toys, where they prepared "a highly varied array of novelties for children"[32]. These branches probably reduced the presence of the "toys merchants" mentioned in the years 1880-1890 (Hornstein, Steinberg, Santa Maria).

Romania may have also been a transit country for Western products towards other countries, located more or less far away. A Regulation for taxes concerning the merchandises that could enter Germany from Romania described highly accurately a great variety of toys; their complexity and the aforementioned materials mean they most likely came from other countries – renowned in the field – rather than Romania[33].

Thus, there were multiple distribution routes. But why would the families buy such expensive items of prestige, on what occasions and to what use?

The engine of the modern toy market was the emblematic event of the new urban ideology of the family: *Christmas*[34]; not in its usual sense, as an (Orthodox) religious holiday, but as the exaltation of harmony, affection and constructive family ties. Santa Claus was not in the picture yet, but only its seemingly overwhelming symbol, the (Christmas) *Tree***.** As it was like a giant toy[35], decorated

[31] While trying to remember the merchandise of Madame Santa (most probably the already mentioned Santa Maria), the "toy merchant" with a store near Capşa (the most famous restaurant in Bucharest), Eliza Brătianu (born Ştirbey, in 1870) failed to identify something remarkable. She either went there rarely, or she would not buy toys for her, but for other children, or – as she noted angrily – "they must have been very ugly or unusable". Elisa Brătianu, *Memorii* (Bucharest: Editura Istoria Artei, 2015), 30-31.

[32] "Epoca" (Bucharest), second series, year IV, nr. 934, of December 1st, 1898, p.3. .

[33] See "Buletinul Camerei de Comerciu şi Industrie din Bucureşti", nr. 5, January-March 1894, p. 313-314. One of the first local toy factories that I found out about (*Teddy*), of Botoşani, dates from rather late, namely from 1928.

[34] About the evolution of this phenomenon in the Germanic world and its influence on the toy market, see Hamlin, *Work and Play*, 28-37, 103-126. This new way of celebrating Christmas, different from the local traditions, gradually became the norm, starting from the educated elites who were receptive to the Western influences, and mostly from the Royal House of Romania, of Germanic origin, which gave a certain impulse to this phenomenon.

[35] In a moralising story of the time, there is a description of getting toys and ornaments from the Christmas tree, at the children's request. This was not the classical distribution of gifts

with the shiniest ornaments, it was accompanied by certain rituals performed by adults or children, culminating with the show of gifts for the little ones. For many of the children of those times, it was the only occasion when they received gifts.

Eliza Brătianu stated clearly that "we only received toys on Christmas"[36]. Other authors are less categorical, but they undoubtedly associate the two notions: Matila Ghyka, born in 1881[37]; Sabina Cantacuzino (born in 1863), who mentions a certain distribution of gifts on Christmas and New Year's Eve[38]; Zoe Cămărăşescu (born in 1895), for whom Christmas meant, besides the tree and the household gifts, the direct participation in the shiny ceremonies of the Royal House and the multitude of spectacular gifts sent personally by Queen Elisabeta – for her mother, Zoe Bengescu, was the Queen's "lady-in-waiting"[39], etc. She also mentions a wonderful doll received from the Queen on the day of Saint Zoe (December 18), thus on her name day[40], but which happened to be around the winter holidays. The day indeed coincided with a family tragedy, and maybe the good Queen wanted to give the little girls further consolation (and she managed to do so).

There are also accounts of a different nature, about the forced festive character of Christmas, which may have become overwhelming for the children. Ana-Maria Callimachi (born in 1892), a representative of several branches of old and rich noble families, noted explicitly that (despite the gifts received) so many formal ceremonies ruined the joy of the moment and that since childhood she had "a strong sense of disgust for all Christmas nonsense"[41]. Other memoirs are even more precise in this respect. Maria (Maruca) Cantacuzino and her brother knew that they had to mimic as extravagantly as possible the surprise and joy of receiving gifts, "to struggle to shout their joy and to dance around the tree", to "exclaim loudly" – but still in a forced manner – "to throw

following the games and songs performed by children in front of the tree, the family and the potential guests. Each claimant got the favoured item on the spot, directly from the branches of the symbol-tree; hence, "they got one toy after another", including the golden star on the top. The modest child who asked for the simplest box was surprised to see, upon opening it, "a fairy jumping from it, on the back of a butterfly, even more beautiful [than her]". "Pomul de Crăciun", *Amicul Copiilor*, no. 9 (December 1894), 263.

[36] Elisa Brătianu, *Amintiri*, 31.

[37] Matila Ghyka, *Curcubeie*, translated by Georgeta Filitti (Iaşi: Polirom, 2014), 34.

[38] Sabina Cantacuzino, *Din viaţa familiei Ion C. Brătianu, 1821-1891,* third edition, edited by Elisabeta Simion (Bucharest: Humanitas, 2013), 110-111.

[39] Cămărăşescu, *Amintiri*, 36-37; 80-85.

[40] Cămărăşescu, *Amintiri*, 26.

[41] Ana-Maria Callimachi, *Lumea toată era a mea. Amintirile unei prinţese*, translated by Lidia Grădinaru, notes by Filip-Lucian Iorga (Bucharest: Editura Corint, 2015), 92.

themselves in the arms of their parents" and other such things; "to persuade everyone of our great happiness, we hurried to open various packages, tied with red or purple ribbons, discovering what they contained with great enthusiasm". They were genuinely happy only when adults left the room and the children were finally alone, in silence, in front of the tree, even "with the candles blown off"[42].

The precious gifts demonstrated the affection of adults for children, the virtues of the little ones, who deserved such gifts, the significant financial resources of the family, and not least, their capacity of keeping up with the habits of the time, of being up to date, regardless of the pretentious character of the actuality.

The "merchandise-toy" does not fit the logic of uniqueness, of perishability and of the functionalities preferred by the children, who play following their own needs and skills. Such toys must follow the rules of adult markets. The manufacturers, the sellers and the buyers impose to children their views on toys, thus imitating and "stiffening" spontaneous and personalised items.

These were toys with a message, with restrictions and alterations that are highly relevant for the ever more complex evolution of the relationships between adults and children.

The formative missions ascribed by adults to toys

Philosophers and pedagogues have ascribed, from time to time, educational virtues to toys, arguing that they can contribute to a better understanding of the world by the children, thus to their more rapid development and growing up. Comenius and mostly John Locke have insisted upon this topic[43]. Rousseau was more measured, as he gave priority to nature and to non-manufactured items[44], which could target the undeveloped senses of children more effectively. From various directions (Empiricism, Enlightenment, Romanticism), impulses emerged gradually that argued for the utility of toys from the perspective of proper child-rearing. They were not coherent. For some, toys could have immediate practical applications[45] (such as learning to read, to count or to memorize notions of geography or history). For others, they were valuable precisely because they suggested fantasies and very personal creations by children[46], far

[42] Cantacuzino-Enescu, *Umbre și lumini,* 69-72.
[43] Manson, *Jouets de toujours*, p.137-154.
[44] Manson, *Jouets de toujours,* 212-215.
[45] Hamlin, *Work and Play,* 129. Locke, for instance, proposed to have letters printed on wooden surfaces, as an elementary assisting tool for learning to read.
[46] Hamlin, *Work and Play,* 134.

from the immediate constraints of regular items and norms. Abstract ideas had a hard time reaching the concrete world of manufacturers, sellers or buyers of toys, however.

The one who coined the idea of the educational utility of toys was Friedrich Fröbel (1782-1852), the founder of "kindergartens", who started from the ideas of Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi (1746-1827), whose disciple he was. Maybe he would not have been so persuasive in his writings or activities, without the persistent intervention of the supporters and continuators of his ideas, led by the baroness Bertha von Marenholtz-Bülow[47].

His views may seem contradictory. To him, the games/ play of children comprised extremely important activities, helping a child discover himself and the world. On the other hand, the most serious forms of learning should have assisted such efforts, under a likeable form and, at least apparently, without constraints, in an easy-going manner. None of the ideas was completely new, but the constant association of learning and the ludic was a revolution of pedagogical thought and practice. This idea was, maybe, too revolutionary to succeed (criticism was immediate and it continued long afterwards). Success was due to the targeting of young ages, especially pre-school children (another remarkable innovation) and mostly to the careful delimitation of innovations from the area of "classical" pupils (subjected from the start to the social rigours of adults) and of the conservative-elitist settings.

But what were the toys envisaged by Fröbel? They were not those cohorts of dolls, tin soldiers and likeable animals, regardless of their realistic appearance. He imagined a few sets of rather abstract items (that he called "gifts", not toys), to exemplify to children the main geometrical shapes existing around them (flat or volumetric). He proposed cognitive activities based on manipulating spheres, cylinders, and mostly cubes and wooden sticks, which could make up a multitude of buildings inspired by reality (houses, bridges, castles, etc.)[48].

He did not avoid completely the classical toys (the sphere could be a mere ball), as he relied on familiarity and attractiveness. Thus, people could end up in the same area of classical toys, but only if they were manipulated correctly, such manipulation being supervised by an adult, to produce the expected results. But the long-term effects proved to be divergent and unpredictable, exceeding Fröbel's calculations.

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[47] Hamlin, *Work and Play*, 136-137.

[48] J.F. Jacobs, *Manuel pratique des Jardins d'enfants de Frédéric Froebel, à l'usage des institutrices et des mères de famille, composé sur les documents allemands par J-F Jacobs. Avec une introduction de Madame la Baronne de Marrenholtz*, fourth edition (Bruxelles: F. Classeu, Libraire-Éditeur, 1880), 45-100.

On the one hand, these new educational objects encouraged a boom in the manufacturing of didactic materials for small children; the dominant ones were not abstract, as Fröbel had envisaged them, but rather reproduced important items and tools, plants, animals, landscapes, historical characters, etc. Though they were not included in the traditional sphere of toys, they sought to preserve something of the initial idea of turning learning into something more likeable. Moreover, children often found opportunities to alter and distort their sober, instructive goals, even by destroying them.

On the other hand, toy manufacturers developed in their own way the idea of the educational purpose of toys, thus proposing constructive-formative sets that had to develop qualities that children often lacked: patience, perseverance, desire to work, less agitation and annoying sounds for adults, a better understanding of the items surrounding them, etc. This led to the fashionable trend – at least in the "high-end" society – of the cubes with or without images printed on them[49], puzzles, stickers[50], colouring or cutting sheets, sets of modelling/ copping saw, "panoramas", the idea of collecting and studying stamps, plants, minerals, etc (until then reserved mainly to adults). Or, more simply, the manufacturers and sellers came up with new promoting discourses for traditional

[49] Starting from the didactical idea of wooden cubes/ bricks to be put together temporarily and demonstratively in various ways, a toy manufacturer made a fortune and developed an entire industry, still functional today. I am referring here to Richter's Anker Steinbaukasten, which transformed the neutral pieces proposed by Fröbel, into a series of shapes and utilities with precisely and attractively finishing touches, with the building schedule included (to make a house, a castle, a bridge, a cathedral, etc.). See Hamlin, *Work and Play*, 55. They were a kind of a 19th-century Lego, and the idea started from Friederich Adolf Richter, a chemist and pharmacist (*Ibidem*, p. 106); they proved once again the importance of the impulse given by toy manufacturers, because the production of the pieces was a complex mixture of "quartz, chalk and flax seed oil", making their debut in 1882, in the German town of Rudolstadt. They reached their peak popularity in 1900. See Walter Benjamin, *Copilărie berlineză la 1900. Ultima versiune şi fragmente din versiunile ulterioare* , translated by Andrei Anastasescu (Bucharest, Humanitas, 2010, 150, note 6). Walter Benjamin was born in 1892, to a family of culturally assimilated Jews, part of the great German middle class. This does not necessarily mean that all children obediently followed the models proposed. On the contrary, some ignored deliberately "the instructions on the boxes" to make a certain image and they made "nonsensical" things using those pieces, as mentioned by an author born in 1892. Paul Vaillant-Couturiers, *Copilărie. Amintiri din copilărie şi din tinereţe*, translated by Aurel Tita (Bucharest: Editura Tineretului, 1964), 17.

[50] The term is German (*Anziehbild*) and it is related to the technique of printing decorations on ceramic items (dating to around 1780). It involved the transfer of an image from one material to another, by taking it off and printing it using heat, water, adhesive substances, etc. It became popular mostly in the 19th century, for a mainly industrial purpose, before being directed towards children (https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Abziehbild, accessed on 7.07.2019).

products, ascribing qualities that did not require any more proofs. The parents/ buyers were seduced by the idea of utility for education, and the toy industry extended massively in this direction[51].

There had already been more or less explicit utilitarian presuppositions about toys, an equivalent of a pre-existing *hidden curriculum*. Parents offered to their children edifying toys, to help them acquire the social roles and values and the desirable models, in a seemingly non-restrictive but coercive manner, achieved by repetition, omissions, delimitations, practices that were more or less recommended[52]. The most obvious example is that of the dolls, closely followed by tin soldiers. But many professional exemplifications, models of household/ home, entire episodes of real life were endlessly reproduced, always repeating what families expected from their children. And their force of seduction was undeniable, thus being able to even determine the course of a life.

Zoe Cămărăşescu is one of the memoir authors who describes the most frequently and in most details the toys of her childhood. An honourable place is held by the "wonderful things" sent by the Queen herself, which were complex miniatures: reproductions of stalls with market merchandises, a stable, and a castle with its park (including a lake with "real" water gush), trousseaus and complex accessories for dolls, etc. But, as it would be expected, the most precious items were carefully guarded by the nanny, to prevent the children from destroying them! Anyway, the girls (they were four sisters) still believed their toys were diverse ("all kinds of toys") and highly complex, "things we could not even have dreamed of"[53]. This was part of the Christmas recipe: the surprise, the overwhelming effect of the beautiful and unique items received.

Going beyond the strictly defined boundaries of the Romanian cases, here is another relevant example. Upon narrating his childhood as a shy boy, far from the ideals of his famous family, Sir Winston Churchill (born in 1874) described how his comprehensive and elaborate collection of tin soldiers (he had 1,500 items!) persuaded his father to guide him towards a military career. The child was not a mere collector of nice things; he tried to copy and collect reliable information concerning the functioning of armies or the unfolding of military events[54]. The choice proved to be inspired, Winston had notable successes as a military strategist, which were useful in his future political career, for which he is honoured in the gallery of the most important British political leaders.

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[51] Hamlin, *Work and Play*, 143-146.

[52] Hamlin, *Work and Play*, 21-28.

[53] Zoe Cămărăşescu, *op.cit.*, p. 84.

[54] Winston Churchill, *Anii tinereții mele*, translated by Ana Irina Ionescu (Bucureşti: Editura Herlad, 2017), 35-36.

However, it must also be noted that there has always been a certain distrust concerning toys from the part of the adults. The parents, specialised pedagogues, philosophers, artists or authorities of the time regularly issued warnings against offering toys *per se*, against the quantitative excess or against the children being left unattended for a long time, in the company of childish games. For this reason, parents were even more sensitive to the argument of "useful toys"[55].

Sceptical philosophers and pedagogues were especially reluctant to use toys for educational purposes, since they seemed the exact opposite of what was required from children: disciplining, becoming mature quickly, being reasonable, accepting restrictions and prohibitions, reducing the forms of escapism, of fantasising, of a childish yet endangering consumerism, etc.[56]

Such objections may be found in the Romanian society, too, even in the recommendations for applying the educational method proposed by Fröbel. He founded the first kindergarten in 1837, but in the Romanian space, they emerged (sporadically) over two decades later. Their number and importance grew quite slowly in the subsequent years; only as late as 1880-1890, they became a significant phenomenon[57]. State intervention acknowledged their existence definitively[58], but also delimited their functioning, within the limits of clear public missions. According to the spirit of the times, it is worth pointing out, in the speech devoted to their inauguration, the civic-patriotic and nationalist, civilising, rationalising and disciplinarian drives that marked the entire educational system, under the patronage or supervision of the Romanian state.

Furthermore, one of the first works dedicated to the effective application of the "Froebelian" method in the country was published at the request of the minister of Public Education, Spiru Haret[59]. The work was published in 1900 and printed as late as in 1904, but it was based on the direct experience of the authors (the Neamțu spouses, both with degrees in pedagogical studies), who had opened their kindergarten as early as in 1890.

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[55] Sabina Cantacuzino, the oldest daughter in the family of Ion C. Brătianu (who had eight children), authoritarian and extremely responsible by nature, highlighted in her memoirs that on holidays they received "beautiful and useful toys", for the purchase of which "parents made sacrifices" (an obviously retroactive and moralist appraisal); see Sabina Cantacuzino, *Din viața familiei Ion C. Brătianu,* 111.

[56] Hamlin, *Work and Play*, 165, 172-175.

[57] See, for a short history of kindergartens in Romania, Cătălina Mihalache, *Copilărie, familie, şcoală: politici educaționale şi receptări sociale* (Iaşi: Editura Universității "Al. I. Cuza"), 85-95.

[58] In 1896, a first Regulation for the functioning of kindergartens in Romania was finally issued.

[59] The most praised minister of Romanian public education, with a great influence in the evolution of the national system of schooling, mainly from the 1890s to the interwar period.

All the well-known advice present within Western literature was carefully reproduced in their book. The authors added their wish to prove the necessity of the recommended practices in order to provide a more national, Romanian orientation to the education offered to kindergarten children. They referred mainly to the games, songs, poems and history or geography notions, but in their view, even didactic materials/educational toys could be made more Romanian. How? By replacing the abstract wooden geometrical shapes with local materials, familiar to the little ones, such as the *pumpkin shell and seeds, the willow branches, "the corn stalks and stems"*[60]. Such advice confirmed the general tendency to associate the *nation* with the *rural* virtues, to reinforce the local handicrafts and to rediscover the „authentic" esthetical traditions of the Romanian land, also apparent in other fields[61].

Nationalism could also be associated with other political and cultural trends of the period. Ever since 1887, the opening of a kindergarten in Iaşi fuelled a storm in the pages of the socialist publication "Contemporanul", when powerful criticism was advanced concerning its non-Romanian profile and the fact that it was not accessible to lower classes[62].

In those times, the toys and games of children were subjected to many influences: exalting progress through science, technology, industrialisation; militarism, imperialism, Eurocentrism, the offensive of the press and the proliferation of mass culture establishments, etc.[63] They penetrated later and selectively the Romanian space, depending on the culturally dominant trends of the era[64], but they were almost untraceable before 1900.

Thus, it appears that toys were the favourite item of ... play for the adults, who insisted more or less imperatively on their options, which they viewed as belonging to their children. Children have always had, however, the freedom of deviating from the instructions of the adults, who were not able to supervise permanently the effective or only imaginary use of these

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[60] Luisa I. Neamțu, Ion G. Neamțu, *Metodul de educațiune a copiilor mici după sistemul lui Fröbel. Manual portativ pentru educatoarele de copii din școală și familie* (Bucharest: F. Göebl, 1904), 50.

[61] We dealt more extensively with this subject in Cătălina Mihalache, *Școala și artizanatul* (Cluj-Napoca: Editura Limes, 2007).

[62] Cătălina Mihalache, *Copilărie, familie, școală...*, 87-89.

[63] As proven by David D. Hamlin in almost his entire work.

[64] On the militarization of children's material culture around the period of World War I, see also Ramona Caramelea, „Imaginile războiului în „Revista copiilor și a tinerimei", in *Copilării trecute prin război. Povești de viață, politici sociale și reprezentări culturale în România anilor 1913-1923*, eds. Cătălina Mihalache, Nicoleta Roman (Iași: Editura Universității „Alexandru Ioan Cuza", 2020), 53-54.

items[65]. Fortunately, the adults used to think their mission was completed once they purchased and delivered the toys to their direct "beneficiaries".

Rezumat

Articolul își propune să identifice ceea ce aduce nou secolul al XIX-lea în „viața" jucăriilor ca obiecte dedicate explicit copiilor insistând, fireşte, asupra cazului românesc. Corelând mărturiile la care am avut acces, putem contura anumite evoluții în producția, folosirea, achiziția, însuşirile atribuite jucăriilor vremii. Observăm, în primul rând, că se amplifică *diferențerile sociale* ale consumului de jucării. Clasele populare, definite prin concepții proprii asupra copilăriei, resurse materiale şi oportunități de gratificare/recompensare bine delimitate, vehiculează cam aceleaşi jocuri şi jucării, aparent atemporale (le putem regăsi şi în secolul următor). Clasele mai înstărite îşi contureză un consum mai diversificat, de influență urbană, pe când copiii elitelor cunosc tot mai amănunțit ofertele lumii occidentale, aduse direct de la sursă sau doar copiate aici. Un alt aspect, care iese în evidență, este cel al creşterii *standardizării* şi chiar al *industrializării* producției de jucării. „Jucăria-marfă" iese din logica unicității, a perisabilității şi a funcționalităților preconizate de copii, pentru uzul lor personal, intrând în regulile de piață ale adulților, care mimează şi ridigizează jucăria „autentică", spontană şi personalizată. Sunt jucării cu mesaj, cu restricționări şi cu deformări foarte relevante pentru evoluția relațiilor între adulți şi copii. O a treia observație este aceea că *instituțiile şcolare şi ethosul pedagogic* al vremii şi-au imprimat, la rândul lor, propria amprentă. Jucăriile „educative" nu erau inocente, căci trebuiau să grăbească maturizarea copiilor, să le dezvolte abilități de uz şcolar şi profesional. Din start, ele porneau de la o concepție opusă libertății copilului în ceea ce priveşte folosirea jucăriilor. Ideile de educație pre- şi paraşcolară care apelau la astfel de obiecte au fost interiorizate, cu precădere, de familiile „burgheze", dar au dobândit şi suportul direct al statului, prin instituțiile didactice pe care le controla.

Cuvinte-cheie: istoria copilăriei, ideal pedagogic, grădiniță, consum social, industrializare.

Cătălina Mihalache, "A.D. Xenopol" Institute of History of the Romanian Academy, Iaşi (Romania), Email: catalinamihalache@yahoo.com

[65] „Ca orice pasiune, jocul consta în a da în chip arbitrar un sens sau o valoare imaginare oricărui obiect […] și a face apoi ca și cum acel sens ar fi atât de inerent obiectului, încât nu putem să i ne sustragem" ["Like any passion, the game consists in arbitrarily giving an imaginary meaning or value to any object […] and then pretending that this meaning is so inherent in the object that we cannot evade it."]. Nicholas Grimaldi, *Tratat despre banalitate*, translated by Dan Petrescu (Bucharest: Editura Nemira, 2006), 123.

Public Examinations in Romanian Secondary Schools at the End of the 19th Century and the Beginning of the 20th Century*

Ramona CARAMELEA

Abstract

The article offers an historical perspective on examination in public secondary schools at the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century – a period of maximum expansion of secondary education. The first part of the article focuses on the institutionalization and formalization of examination practices, while the second one discusses the shaping of the examination as a topic, following the discourses produced by different social actors. In the second half of the 19th century, school was perceived as an instrument for social mobility based on the meritocratic ideal and as an element of national and state building, being given the role of inoculating a national identity. Within this socio-educational context, secondary schools represent the recruitment pool of the administrative elite and ensure the acquisition of cultural capital necessary for accessing various positions, all these aspects shaping the social functions of exams. The documentary analysis based on archival sources revealed a nuanced social perspective, in which the teaching staff and the parents give new meanings to the concept of examination and design new functions for exams.

Keywords: secondary schools, examinations, formalization of examination practices, social mobility, meritocracy.

Introduction

The centralisation and bureaucratic regulation operated by the state after the Union of 1859 left their mark on the public education system, determining its homogenisation through legislation and a common curriculum. After a period of time in which the secondary school network was financially supported by the state and the cities, at the end of the 19th century, the state took over this task in full, which brought a tighter control over secondary schools. Despite the centralization, local variations in educational provisions were not infrequent, and a potential research in this direction might reveal a diverse social milieu.

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Secondary education continued the primary course and made the transition to higher education. Graduating from high school opened the way to university, but the percentage of students who completed high school and attended university remained low until the First World War. The lack of a career goal, in a similar way to the normal or technical schools, did not diminish the interest of people for this form of schooling. Gymnasiums and high schools were an outlet for recruiting civil servants, a few secondary courses being for a long time sufficient for getting a job in public administration. This overreliance on state employment overlapped with a political discourse that brought to the fore the interest of people in official positions, and the perceived social and political dangers coming from this situation generated a critique of the educational system from some public figures. The criticism centred on the fact that secondary schools offered a singular professional route of preparing civil servants and encouraging the attraction for state jobs, which would oversize the administrative apparatus[1]. The critics emphasised the economic burden generated by the oversized administrative apparatus and the exposure of civil servants to political pressure and control. The overreliance on state jobs was also made responsible for the absence of a national bourgeoisie[2].

In Romania, a largely agrarian nation, very few children had access to secondary schools, although this form of education grew in popularity at the end of the 19th century.

Most high school and gymnasium students came from the middle class: merchants, small businessmen, state employees, various professionals, and a few prosperous workers and peasants. Despite the economic and social diversity of these categories, all parents, with some exceptions[3], were generally able to pay tuition fees and maintenance costs for the students in cases when they did not live in cities with secondary schools.

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[1] The dynamics of the relationship between the huge number of aspirants to public positions within the administrative apparatus, intellectual unemployment and political radicalization in interwar Romania was analysed by Dragoș Sdrobiș, *Limitele meritocrației într-o societate agrară. Șomaj intellectual și radicalizare politică a tineretului în România interbelică* (Iași: Polirom, 2015).

[2] Titu Maiorescu, *Discursuri parlamentare cu priviri asupra dezvoltării politice a României sub domnia lui Carol I,* vol. I, (1866-1876) (Bucharest: Albatros, 2001), 245-246 (Speeches 28 and 29. Asupra reformei legii pentru instrucțiunea publică). See: Sdrobiș, *Limitele meritocrației*, 65-76; Andrei Sorescu, *Visions of Agency: Imagining Individual and Collective Action in Nineteenth-Century Romania*, PhD, University College London, 2019, 184-188.

[3] It is the case of students who received scholarships due to scholastic achievements.

The number of high schools, gymnasiums and girls' secondary schools at the end of the 19th century[4]

	1876-77	1882-83	1893-94	1899-99
High schools	7	7	11	17
Gymnasiums	19	18	30	27
Secondary schools for girls*	7	10	12	12
Total	**33**	**35**	**53**	**56**

*** The category includes externate (public secondary schools without a boarding school attached) and normal schools, without technical schools, therefore it does not overlap with the figures in the statistics of the Ministry of Education which also record technical schools.**

The number of secondary school students[5]

Year	No. of students		
	Not specified	Enrolled	Graduated
1876-77	4585		
1893-94		13938	8252
1898-99		18457	12354

In recent years, studies in the history of education have highlighted the multi-functional role and standardisation of secondary schools in different countries. If the role of popular education in building modern national identity is well known, recent studies have uncovered the contribution of secondary education to creating homogeneous national feelings and civic loyalties. Training the national elites, which brought together intellectuals, officials, technicians – professions linked with high school education– became a general preoccupation in the 19th century, in connection with the context marked by internal political developments and nation-building[6]. Other studies interested in the social history of education have focused on secondary education as an instrument of social

[4] *Statistica din Romania. Statistica inveţiamentului pe anul şcolar 1876-1877* (Bucharest: Tipografia Statului, 1878), 10, 11, 16; *Statistica din Romania. Învețemntul pe anul şcolar 1882-83* (Bucharest: Tipografia Statului, 1884), 18, 21, 29, 32; *Statistica învăţământului secundar public pe anii şcolari 1893-94 şi 1894-95 publicată din ordinul D-lui Spiru C. Haret Ministrul Cultelor şi al Instrucţiunii Publice* (Bucharest: Institutul de Arte Grafice Carol Göbl, 1898), 56-61; *Statistica învăţământului secundar, profesional şi special pe anul şcolar 1898-1899* (Bucharest: Tipografia G. A. Lazareanu, 1899), 76, 78, 82-83.

[5] *Statistica inveţiamentului pe anul şcolar 1876-1877,* 10, 12, 16. *Statistica învăţământului secundar public pe anii şcolari 1893-94,* 56-61*; Statistica învăţământului secundar, profesional şi special pe anul şcolar 1898-1899,* 76-79, 82-83.

[6] Robert Anderson, „The idea of the secondary school in nineteenth-century Europe", in *Paedagogica Historica,* (Vol. 40, 1-2/2004), 94-106.

mobility and reproduction, paying a special attention to enrolments, the social origins of students, and elite education[7]. This perspective provides an image of schooling from below, allowing one to uncover and to understand the families' and parents' strategies of educational dynamics and social mobility.

The article offers a historical perspective on the institutionalization of examinations in public secondary schools at the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century. The chosen timespan overlaps with the period of maximum development of secondary schools' network. The first part of the article focuses on the formalization of examination practices, while the second part investigates the assigned social role of examinations, analysing the ways in which this topic has been constructed and produced by different actors.

A historical perspective on exams

Between 1864 and 1914 there is a diverse typology of secondary schools' exams: at the end of term and of the school year (introduced by the law of 1864, abolished in 1904)[8], at the end of a school course – gymnasium, girls' secondary school or high school (introduced by the law of education in 1864, abolished at an unknown date and reintroduced in 1898)[9] and the baccalaureate exam[10]. In those cases when the number of students enrolled was higher than the number of places available in secondary schools, admission was possible after passing an entrance exam (established by the education law of 1864[11]). The transfer from a school with a certain profile (e.g., technical school) to a school with a different profile (high school) also required a special examination[12]. Students of private schools were subject to public examinations in order to have their

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[7] Anderson, „The idea of the secondary school," 106; Detlef K. Müller, Fritz Ringer, Brian Simon, *The Rise of the Modern Educational System: Structural Change and Social Reproduction, 1879-1920* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989).

[8] *Lege asupra instrucțiunii a Principatelor-Unite-Române* (Bucharest: Imprimeria Statului, 1865), 24-26; „Regulament pentru școalele secundare (gimnasii, licee și școli secundare de fete), din 1901, modificat în 1904," in: C. Lascăr, I. Bibiri, *Colecțiunea legilor, regulamentelor, programelor și diferitelor decisiuni și dispositiuni generale ale acestui department de la ianuarie 1901-iulie 1904* (Bucharest: Imprimeria Statului, 1904). See chapters VII-X, regarding examinations, 901-908.

[9] *Lege asupra instrucțiunii a Principatelor-Unite-Române,* 25-27; „Lege asupra învățământului secundar și superior" (1898), in: C. Lascăr and I. Bibiri, *Colecțiunea legilor, regulamentelor, programelor și diferitelor decisiuni și dispozițiuni generale ale acestui minister de la 1864-1901* (Bucharest: Imprimeria Statului, 1901), 80.

[10] „Regulament pentru bacalaureat în litere și științe" (1882), in *Colecțiunea legilor 1864-1901*, 380.

[11] *Lege asupra instrucțiunii a Principatelor-Unite-Române,* 22.

[12] „Regulament pentru școalele secundare" (1896), in *Colecțiunea legilor 1864-1901*, 594.

studies recognised[13]. Apart from state or private educational options, there was also the possibility of home schooling, with teachers recruited according to the preferences of the parents, from state or private institutions. This was a legacy of an earlier system practiced during the first half of the 19th century. In order to advance to a higher grade, the home-schooled pupils were examined at the end of the school year along with state schools' students (according to the 1889 regulation)[14]. Some forms of examination coexisted throughout the period; others were abandoned after a time or were replaced by new formats. Beyond the formal variations, one can note a general interest in an examination focused on the information acquired during schooling (knowledge) and on the student's behaviour (honesty, discipline during the examination, transgression of rules).

A bureaucratic apparatus composed of inspectors, professors and teachers was enlisted to attend and supervise the examinations. As part of the examination committees, these delegates of the Ministry of Education applied the practical procedures: they formulated the exam items, asked questions, evaluated the written papers, marked them, and "classified" the students. Their mission was not limited to the exam, but they also drafted reports for the ministry with "the results and their observations on both the morale and the methods of study applied"[15], and suggested improvements regarding the school's activity[16]. The structure of these committees varied over time. Between the 1860s and the 1880s, the Ministry of Education personnel (inspectors, professors, teachers) were joined by public figures (doctors, military officers, engineers, lawyers) who held political or administrative positions at the time. These officials, viewed as competent for such a task, enjoyed the social prestige necessary to credit and legitimise the examinations. Since the twentieth century, the committees have undergone a certain specialisation, their membership being reduced to secondary teachers or university professors (chairmen of the committees), inspectors, and representatives of the Ministry of Education. The change signalled a new vision on the professionalization of the teaching staff, in the sense of monopolising the issue of public education (schooling) and excluding non-specialists.

In 1881, the Minister of Education V. A. Urechia involved the members of examination committees in a reform project, announcing that the Ministry will use the examinations to undertake a prospective "investigation," likely to revise and

[13] *Regulament pentru esamenele de promoțiune ale școlarilor cari nu au urmat în școalele publice* (Bucharest: Tipografia Carol Göbl, 1886).

[14] „Regulament penru examenele școlarilor cari nu au urmat în școalele publice" (1888), in *Colecțiunea legilor 1864-1901*, 434.

[15] National Archives of Romania (NAR), fond Ministerul Cultelor și Instrucțiunii Publice (MCIP), file 89, year 1864, page 2. (henceforth NAR, MCIP, 89/1864/2).

[16] NAR, MCIP, 41/1865/65.

reconstruct the image of secondary education. The reports of these committees were published the same year in a volume that was to aid the minister as a starting point for a series of reforms[17]. Probably due to the need for observations that went beyond the general assessments that dominated many reports, specialised committees for letters, mathematics and the sciences were created. Two decades later, the Ministry of Education, Spiru Haret, also appealed to the examination committees to assess the reception and operation of a new type of recently introduced examination; the reflections and opinions on the new form of evaluation became the subject of a volume[18]. It is worth mentioning that Spiru Haret participated in 1881 in the investigation of his predecessor, V. A. Urechia, as a member of one of the examination committees. That experience probably convinced Spiru Haret of the usefulness of a synthetic work that recorded the impressions and proposals of the teachers, paving the way for their integration into school reform projects.

At the risk of oversimplifying my argument, it must be said that the articulation of the public education system involved, *inter alia*, the standardization of the examination system. The uniform regulations reflected in the legislation, the codification introduced under the guise of various rules or bureaucratic control, the mandatory and regular character of examinations were some of the characteristics of the standardization process. In practice, there was certain flexibility on the part of the Ministry of Education, which allowed for waivers and exceptions from the normative provisions and sometimes approved the postponement of exams. Examples of a flexible attitude towards the legislative framework were documented during the years 1864-65. In February 1865, the principal of the Commercial School from Galați asked the Ministry of Education to cancel the winter exam, on the grounds that the school had started late, "only two months ago", that there were few courses taught at the time, and that the students would have an advantage if they were to be examined on the basis of the syllabus of the entire year[19]. He presented his request under the label of patriotism, so that everyone would win: "wishing for this school to respond with dignity to the expectations of the country and the government, which, I think, will be better safeguarded by organising an annual exam"[20]. A postponement of the exam due to illness was obtained by a certain "Mrs. Sachetti", a teacher at an unidentified school[21].

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[17] *Starea invețiamentului public secundar la finele anului școlar 1880-81 după rapoartele comisiunilor cari au asistat la esamene* (Bucharest: Imprimeria Statului, 1881), 3-4.

[18] *Examenul pentru absolvirea cursului secundar la finele anului școlar 1902-1903* (Bucharest: Tipografia ziarului „Cronica", Toma Basilescu, 1904).

[19] NAR, MCIP, 7/1864/23.

[20] NAR, MCIP, 7/1864/23.

[21] NAR, MCIP, 7/1864/55.

Formalising examination practices and establishing a standard procedure

The institutionalization of examinations and the formalisation of the examination practices became essential objectives of the school policy after the Union of the two Principalities in 1859. "In order to introduce a certain uniformity in the school examinations across Romania", the Minister [of Education], following the measures proposed by the High Council of Education (Consiliul Superior al Instrucțiunii Publice), published, "for the general knowledge", a series of provisions regarding the end-of-semester exams[22]. The standard examination procedure, established by the High Council[23], was formalized through legislation, circulars and school regulations detailing how the examinations should be conducted. These rules specified the days and times when the tests were to be taken, the duration and place of the examinations, the types of assessment (written and oral). They regulated the distribution of school awards, their number for each school and grade, sometimes even the books and educational aids that accompanied them, and also the organisation of the exams and of the award ceremonies[24]. Official instructions focusing on rituals, hymns, speeches, medals and the granting of awards were sent to schools before the exams. In practice, this standardised procedure was subject to modifications, but individual interventions and actions were allowed as long as they did not interfere with the examinations. Donations from philanthropists (for awards) and small adjustments to the organization of the events were frequently accepted.

State schools' examinations produced a significant number of documents. The Ministry of Education archival fond contains a whole array of documents, detailed reports, catalogues, transcripts that recorded the examination procedures in a bureaucratic manner. The information reached the ministry where it was centralized and integrated into "cumulative systems" to recreate a general image[25], an overview that would generate normative or other types of endeavours, which would contribute to measuring and characterising the main edu-

[22] NAR, MCIP, 89/1864/2.

[23] NAR, MCIP, 169/1864/36-38.

[24] *Lege asupra instrucțiunii a Principatelor-Unite-Române,* 24. 26-27; „Regulament pentru școalele secundare" (1896), in *Colecțiunea legilor 1864-1901*, 603. For other laws, circulars and school regulations on this topic, see *Colecțiunea legilor 1864-1901*, *Colecțiunea legilor 1901-1904, 1904-1906.*

[25] Michel Foucault, *A supraveghea și a pedepsi. Nașterea închisorii*, 2nd ed. (Pitești: Paralela 45, 2005), 241-242.

cational phenomena, processes and the overall school population[26]. Moreover, this "apparatus of writing", as Foucault called it, would turn the student into a "case", a descriptive and analysable object[27]. The documents recorded individual achievements, but also the development and evolution of students during the school years. The results of the examinations, recorded in transcripts and statistics, functioned as "databases" for the ministry, which, if necessary, were used to issue certificates allowing for benefits (such as access to upper grades or jobs). The reasoning behind such a system, never explicit, has a double stake. The first one brings to the fore the establishment of a uniform, supervised system of public education, governed by the state. Bureaucratic practices and the systematisation of the public educational system made it possible for the state to administer the educational policy and the increasingly extensive school network towards the end of the 19th century. The formalisation of the examination practices and setting down the examination procedures are features of the manifold process of the public education's bureaucratization. Furthermore, this effort of carefully recording the exams that verifies the assimilation of knowledge, controls the teaching process, and prevents school fraud, aims to establish a rationalised control mechanism of the effectiveness of public education.

At the end of the 19th century, the examination procedure became the subject of detailed reports that borrowed writing techniques from the administrative practice. Drafted by the examination committees, they described how the assessments proceeded. They also reconstructed the events in the smallest details: the days and times of the assessments, the persons who examined the students, the way in which the supervision was organised. The archival descriptions of the exams were almost identical to this example drawn from the Normal Teachers' School in Câmpulung: "at the first section for the Romanian Language, we did the following: between 8-9 a.m., we sealed the envelopes with the students' names on the papers sent by Hon. Ministry, and we wrote on the blackboard the five items drafted by the inspectorate, after we opened the envelope containing them in front of the students. Between 9 and 11 in the morning, the students' work on the chosen questions followed, without any incident, and at 11 o'clock, the papers were taken and placed in an envelope with the students' names, which was signed by us"[28].

[26] The official statistics of the Ministry of Education include information about the examined school population. The documents register the students taking an exam, the ones who passed etc., all these data making possible a comparative systematic evaluation of academic achievement.

[27] Foucault, *A supraveghea şi a pedepsi*, 243-244.

[28] NAR, MCIP, 289/1905/6.

Written according to the above pattern, the reports show a similarity with the normative texts and signal the interest of the members of the committees to send a public message related to the observance of procedures which, in fact, validated the examination. These procedures were constantly re-enacted by the sealing of envelopes, the opening of envelopes with the exam questions in front of the students, taking the papers and their placing in the envelopes provided by the ministry. All these procedures were meant to guarantee the good organisation and outcome of the examinations. Also, the lack of incidents was always mentioned, being a detail that guaranteed, in the eyes of the teachers and the authorities, a correct procedure. The same purpose was served by the constant reminders regarding the observance of the legislation, the organisation of the examinations in accordance with the school regulations ("we proceeded to choose the subjects" [....] "adhering to the provisions of art. 95 of the Regulation"; or, the examination followed standard procedure "in accordance with Articles 96, 97 and 98 of the Rules of Procedure for the internal administration of normal schools")[29]. An examiners' report from Bârlad High School specified that "The manner of organising the exam was entirely in accordance with the procedure stipulated in the Regulation, art. 61 et seq., which can also be seen from the works I submit together with this report"[30].

Deviations from the standard procedure seemed to be exceptional, although one cannot rule out a voluntary intention to omit any incidents from the reports addressed to the authorities. An inspection made in February 1887 by the general inspector, Alexandru Vitzu, at the Girls' Secondary School No. 1 from Bucharest, in order to "see how the semester exams were organised" uncovered "several irregularities" related to procedures. The oral exam took place only in the morning, between 8-12 a.m., regardless of the size of classes, which led to a superficial examination, especially in the case of overcrowded classrooms; at the German Language exam, the students "were found unsupervised and helping each other"; finally, the reports were not signed by all the examining teachers. Following the customary practice, the inspector asked the minister to take the necessary measures to "fix things". In reality, the case reached the Permanent Board of Education,[31] which limited its action to reprimanding the principal, who was found responsible for the general disorder, and to formally re-

[29] NAR, MCIP, 289/1905/12.

[30] NAR, MCIP, 3523/1915/18.

[31] Institution of the Ministry of Education (including the minister, a president and five members: professors, former professors and professionals with contributions in the area of education), with a significant role in educational policy making. *Lege asupra instrucțiunii a Principatelor-Unite-Române,* 4-6.

questing her to "scrupulously maintain the rules in the school"[32], in the future. The authorities avoided the "dangerous" solution of cancelling the exams, as it generated criticism from society and signalled an institutional malfunction[33].

Ritualization as a way to evaluate the success of exams

The exams took place under the public eye. Parents, local residents, public figures, representatives of local authorities (mayors, local councillors) and of the central authorities (prefects, the Minister of Public Education) were allowed to attend. The end-of- year exam that took place in 1864 in the city of Neamț gathered "a significant number of residents", "respectable people"[34], while in Târgoviște, at a similar event, the public included "all the social classes"[35]. One teacher perceived the exam as "the most favourable opportunity of the year for a face-to-face meeting between the school and the citizens"[36], and the examining committees` reports recorded a large presence of parents, representatives of the authorities and local residents.

The ritualization of the examination, the co-opting of officials and public personalities emphasised the significance of the event, consecrating its social impact. In Giurgiu, besides the mayor of the city, the school committee[37], the school inspector, residents and the "parents of the children", the invitation to attend was also extended to "Mr Ioan Penescu, a retired elderly teacher who is now in town"[38]. The invitation of the teacher, whose honourable and long career heralded a vast experience, was made in order "to have a more accurate idea about it [the examination]"[39], and amounted to a public recognition of the role played by the teaching staff in the examination process[40].

The public became an audience and interlocutor addressed by the teaching staff, whose approval legitimized the examination. Its reactions were always recorded as positive in the reports of the examination committees. Empha-

[32] NAR, MCIP, 186/1887/6, 8.
[33] NAR, MCIP, 3524/1915/3 verso
[34] NAR, MCIP, 2 b/1864/128.
[35] NAR/ MCIP, 224/887/recto
[36] NAR, MCIP, 169/1864/34.
[37] The school committee, including city councillors in urban areas, and a priest and 1-2 public figures appointed by the minister in villages, supervised the teacher's professional conduct, the school properties and students' attendance. *Lege asupra instrucțiunii a Principatelor-Unite-Române*, 16-17.
[38] NAR, MCIP, 25/1865/157 recto.
[39] NAR, MCIP, 25/1865/157 recto.
[40] For this reason, the examination was conducted by the primary schoolmaster and Mr. Penescu.

sis was placed on the reactions of satisfaction and even delight – the answers "were applauded with general satisfaction" from the audience, "the result of the exam was quite satisfactory to the wishes of the audience", or "the answers of the majority were satisfactory and gratifying for all spectators"[41]. The author of one report informed the Minister that, at the end-of-semester exam held at Botoșani Gymnasium (1865), "the parents of the pupils, full of joy, not being able to contain their feelings, in the middle of the exam, asked us to send their thanks to the government for its willingness to spread and establish education, as well as to all the teachers for their zeal and commitment in fulfilling their duties"[42]. The satisfaction and appreciation of the public meant the recognition of the teaching staff's merits.

Starting with the end of the 19th century, the spectacular character of the manifestations diminished, following the process of bureaucratization of the public education system. This simplification was enhanced also by the expanding school network; the increase of the public events meant a reduction in the attendance of personalities who start taking part only in the most important occasions. Reminiscence of a system of valorisation dating from pre-modernity[43] the spectacular character of these events perpetuated in different forms and intensities until the interwar period.

No interventions from the parents or the audience were recorded, in the sense of direct participation in the examination, which seemed to be in line with the rationale of the ministry to restrict the procedure to a small social segment comprising the teachers and the political and administrative elites and authorities. In fact, the number of educated parents who were able to follow the examination, to evaluate the skills and knowledge of their children and to understand the exam format remained low. Despite this, the interest of the authorities and teachers in co-opting the parents remained significant throughout the period. The emphasis on the festive character of the exams had, among other things, the effect of attracting and co-opting the public. In Târgu Jiu, the mayor and the organising committee sought to give a veneer of "the utmost solemnity to these exams, making everything possible for them to be attended by anyone, both by the parents of students, and by outsiders…"[44].

The public dimension of the exams, their ritualization and their transformation into a performance accessible to parents and laymen alike, allowed the

[41] NAR; MCIP, 2 b/1864/128.
[42] NAR, MCIP, 41/1865/118 recto.
[43] See Michel Foucault, *A supraveghea și a pedepsi. Nașterea închisorii*, 2nd ed. (Pitești: Paralela 45, 2005).
[44] NAR, MCIP, 42, an 1865/4 recto.

audience to appreciate the success of the exam, to evaluate and pass judgement on the school. For this barely educated audience, a flawless performance indicated the success of the examination. Capable only of superficial assessments of knowledge and science, the participants were satisfied with the "showy accomplishments" and the ability of students to answer all the questions, even if they learned everything mechanically, by rote, in order to pass the examinations[45].

The public nature of the examination offered parents a purported guarantee of objectivity and fairness; for this reason, suspicions of fraudulent examinations were accompanied by a request to take the exam "publicly"[46]. When the exam ended with poor results, while scholarships, prestige or material resources were at stake, the parents asked the minister that their offspring be allowed to retake the exams. Financial difficulties, the issues faced by families burdened by many children, the minister's indulgence, or the minister's interest in spreading public education were part of the rhetoric used by parents to support their petitions. The authors used a sombre tone, alternating between emotional terms, fervent pleas and appeals to forgiveness of the child. They emphasised the consequences that failure would entail for the students: it would discourage, "destroy" them, or make them miserable "for life", instead of uplifting them[47]; it would "morally kill" the students, making them bad persons and citizens. Failure would be "a lightning bolt" which "tends to kidnap the future" of the children[48], "crushes the morale of the parents who make enormous sacrifices"[49]. In such unfavourable contexts, questioning the fairness of the evaluation gave parents hope that the authorities would repeat the process and the child would have a better chance[50]. Borrowing the rhetoric of the authorities, according to which the exam reflected the quality of the teachers' job and performance, the parents turned this rhetoric into an argument for challenging and contesting the poor results obtained by their offspring. The children's failure and the impossibility of promotion were attributed exclusively to the mistakes of the teaching staff, providing an occasion to question the latter's ability to educate, to examine and to grade, i.e., to fulfil their professional duties. The

[45] William J. Reese, *Testing Wars in the Public Schools: A Forgotten History* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2013), 24.

[46] NAR, MCIP, 186/1887/87.

[47] NAR, MCIP, 663/1905/ 87.

[48] NAR, MCIP, 1556/1906/10 recto.

[49] NAR, MCIP, 663/1905/36 verso.

[50] A father questioned the fairness of the examination by saying that his daughter's mark was for the "concept," not for the paper, but the Ministry classified the request as "against the regulations". NAR, MCIP, 186/1887/89.

solution proposed by the parents went beyond the institutional logic, reaching into the emotional realm: increasing the grade, re-examining or exempting the child from studying the problematic course or discipline[51].

Controlling the teachers

The exam placed teachers and students in a similar position: both were subjected to examination. This ambivalent aspect, defining a process destined to evaluate the activity of both students and teachers, was accepted and embraced by the teaching staff[52]. The examining apparatus fulfilled a dual function: first, to assess the assimilation of knowledge and information by students and, second, to check if the teachers had performed their duties to the best of their abilities[53]. In the case of the latter, the reflections of the ministry's delegates and the examination committees were centred on several points of interest: compliance with the curriculum, the structure of the course, the teaching methods.[54] These aspects suggest an image of a profession built around the three core issues mentioned above.

Of these three points of interest, compliance with the curriculum[55], in particular, caught the attention of the educational authorities. This special interest acquires deeper meanings, referring to the state's educational policy, the standardization of knowledge and the homogenisation of education, regulated by the education law of 1864. In the second half of the 1880s, the practice of sending to the ministry the curriculum completed by the teacher during the school year became established. The students were to be examined on the basis of this curriculum. In the view of the decision makers, this would have prevented the situation of students being examined using unstudied material. In addition, the measure allowed for control over how teachers did their job and gave the authorities a tool to assess whether they had covered the whole curriculum, making it easier to hold them accountable in case of non-compliance. The archival documents show that some teachers gave a superficial and biased interpretation of the curriculum, in the sense of specifying only the subject ar-

[51] NAR, MCIP, 668/1905/140.

[52] *Examenul pentru absolvirea cursului secundar la finele anului școlar 1902-1903* (Bucharest: Tipografia Ziarului „Cronica", Thoma Basilescu, 1904), 10 Ermina Kaminski „Câteva cuvinte despre examenul de absolvire", in *Revista generală a învățământului*, (Year VI, no.1, 1 June 1910), 26.

[53] The idea of the exam as a form of controlling teachers is often found in sources pertaining to secondary teachers: *Starea invețiamentului public*, 4; Const. Moisil, „Din practica examenelor de absolvire", in *Revista generală a învățământului* (Year IV, no.3, 1 October 1908), 186.

[54] Const. Moisil, „Din practica examenelor", 186-189.

[55] NAR, MCIP, 7/1864/230 recto.

eas which were to be tested. They did not view the curriculum in terms of the homonymous school document detailing the didactic units and topics covered during the academic year[56].

Successful examinations, with their outcomes visible in the students' achievements and correct answers, were a tangible proof of the transfer of learning and the exchange of knowledge from teacher to student, and were also seen as the merit of teachers, being an indicator of their success and professionalism[57]. A report signed by the chairman of the examination committee at Bacău High School explicitly attributed the good results to the zeal and involvement of the teaching staff: "…we were convinced that the students were seriously trained in all the four lower grades of the high school. The students proved to be well versed in the main issues which were touched upon in connection with different educational subjects and on the bases of the curriculum from different grades. In particular, we could see their thorough training in Geography, Romanian, Mathematics, Physics and French…"[58]. The personal and professional aspirations of the teachers, their desire to distinguish themselves and gain the appreciation of the authorities and the public, fuelled their ambition for a successful examination. Those at the beginning of their careers, faced with the need to strengthen their public image, perceived the exam as a difficult test. Elena Meissner wrote in a later confession about the concern caused by the first public examination, at the beginning of her teaching career: "…my worries and concern as a beginner teacher were indescribable. I kept wondering: How will I present myself in front of the students for the examination? What will the principal, the delegates, the school inspector say about me? Day and night, I thought and thought about how to better prepare the students I was responsible for.[59]"

The examination was intensely publicised and used by teachers to gain visibility and appreciation[60], however briefly, from the public and the authorities. Combining the exam with the issue of meritocracy and with the illusion of being offered and managing a merit-based social selection tool, gave the teachers who were dissatisfied with their social status a chance to capitalise on the acquired prestige and symbolically invest the teaching profession and the school institution with a higher standing. Starting from the end of the 19th century, the examination became an incentive of pedagogical reflections for teachers. These reflections found their expression in a substantial literature. The Gen-

[56] NAR, MCIP, 194/ 1887/5, 13, 16.
[57] NAR, MCIP, 41/1865/103; 194/1887/35.
[58] NAR, MCIP, 3522/1915/4 recto-verso.
[59] NAR, fond Meissner, XI/4/ 89-90.
[60] NAR, MCIP, 242/1870/82 recto.

eral Journal of Education[61], among others, published articles in which teachers approached the examinations from various pedagogical perspectives and proposed tools that could more accurately measure both teachers' and pupils' competence and performance. Most likely, the appetite for theory was an indicator of the professionalization of the teaching staff, an aspect also discussed in the specialised literature[62]. The desire of the teaching staff to be included in the process of decision-making cannot be ruled out as a potential explanation for this tendency. This hypothesis is also supported by the fact that, together with the reflections on examinations, the teachers sent to the Ministry of Education a number of proposals to reform the educational system.

The examination: glorification of merit and progress

In 1864, the admission to gymnasium or high school was possible on the basis of an examination, without the need for any certificate attesting the attendance of primary school. However, having a certificate confirming the completion of primary school exempted one from the gymnasium admission exam[63]. In the following decades the certificates shaped the individual educational paths and the public education system. Admission to secondary education[64], access from one course to another and the completion of studies required or resulted in a certificate that was conditional on passing an exam. The certificate confirmed that a person possessed studies, skills, aptitudes and knowledge; it was an attestation of competence conferred by the authority which granted academic titles[65]. The codification of professional trajectories in the 19th century, the formalization of the norms necessary for professional positions contributed to the

[61] Founded in 1905 with the contribution of the Minister of Education, Spiru Haret, *The General Journal of Education* was designed as a professional publication of the teaching staff, with the purpose of engaging them in theoretical debates and in signalling persistent issues of Romanian schools. For four decades, the journal had been a significant medium of expression of the teaching staff. Summarising numerous theoretical reflections about the educational process, problems encountered by teachers, and professional demands, the journal contributed to building a professional identity.

[62] See Gillian Sutherland, „Examinations and the Construction of Professional Identity: A Case Study of England, 1800–1950", in *Assessment in Education: Principles, Policy & Practice*, (Vol. 8, 1/2001), 51-64.

[63] *Lege asupra instrucțiunii a Principatelor-Unite-Române*, 22.

[64] In 1889 the certificate of primary school graduation became a mandatory requirement for those wanting to attend secondary education. „Regulament pentru înscrierea în clasa I secundară" (1888), in *Colecțiunea legilor 1864-1901*, 433.

[65] Pierre Bourdieu, *The State Nobility. Elite Schools in the Field of Power* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1996), 117.

acceptance of the diploma as a universal standard required by the job market[66].

The discourses produced by the various groups involved in examinations placed them within the rhetoric of progress. The reports described the unfolding of the examinations, mentioning „the progress" (*progresul*)[67] made by the students[68] or, on the contrary, the lack of progress[69]. "Reporting on progress" became synonymous with the description of the examination itself and indicated the dominant perspective from which examination reports were written[70]. This inclusion within the logic of progress had social consequences for the educational institutions and for society as a whole[71]. The rhetoric of progress contributed to the status consolidation and justification of the examinations. In that period's institutional context, progress was perceived as an indicator of students' perseverance, as a confirmation of the functioning of the institution and of the commitment of the teaching staff[72]. It was indispensable for guiding students to a higher level of education, to another status.

One of the functions of the exams was to "classify" students[73]. The classification established the position of the student in the school hierarchy according to individual achievements confirmed by transcripts and school registers. "After finishing the exam, a list was made with the students that passed, failed, graduated, those who had to retake the exam and the prize winners," mentioned a report[74]. The identification of the most accurate measurement and evaluation tools was a major concern for the teaching staff. Around 1864, several teachers proposed to the ministry to replace the old grading system, combining numerical and descriptive grades, with a more comprehensive model, based on numbers from 1 to 10, in order to obtain "a fairer classification and an appropriate

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[66] Bourdieu, *The State Nobility*, 117.

[67] Sources (discourses and reports) define the term "progress" (*progres*) as evolution, advancement, transformation for the better. The term had a double meaning: it signalled both the success of the competition and the good functioning of the school institution.

[68] NAR, MCIP, 25/1865/40 recto, 157 recto; 26/1865/ 411; 139/1866/5 recto; 169/1899/14, 16.

[69] *Starea inveţiamentului public,* 54-56, 182.

[70] The trope of progress was also a characteristic feature of examinations and the literature concerning this topic in France. See: Pierre Caspard, „Examen de soi-même, examen public, examen d'État. De l'admission à la Sainte-Cène aux certificats de fin d'études, XVIe-XIXe siècles", in *Histoire de l'éducation* (No. 94, 2002), Special issue „L'examen", 18.

[71] Ermina Kaminski „Câteva cuvinte despre examenul de absolvire", in *Revista generală a învăţământului* (Year VI, no.1, 1 June 1910), 20.

[72] NAR, MCIP, 89/1864/3 verso.

[73] The purpose of „classifications" was explicitly stated in examinations` reports. NAR, MCIP, 2b/1864/100.

[74] NAR, MCIP, 41/1865/64 verso.

comparison of the students"[75]. Other teachers thought that a correct classification should result in an overlap between the grades received during the semester/year and the exam results. This line of reasoning remained only an aspiration, because in practice the exams revealed discrepancies between the marks received during the year and those given by the exam committees[76]. This situation intensified the teachers' search for identifying tools – to be built into the examination apparatus – that should have ensured an infallible classification.

The specialised literature and the periodical press suggest a consensus of the members of the teaching staff on equating the exam with a meritocratic selection tool[77]. They saw the exam as a way to "choose the best"[78], to control and limit the access of "mediocre students" – "a hindrance to our education"[79] – into high school, to prevent the poor students from advancing further "together with the good ones"[80]. Professor George Oprescu thought the exam recruited "the most intellectually gifted [students], those who in four years have been able to acquire the necessary knowledge for further studies and for finishing high school"[81]. Oprescu's vision was based on the image that the teachers and the school authorities had regarding the social function assigned to high schools, of educating the intellectual and professional elite. As a member of an examination committee succinctly put it, secondary education "tends to train lawyers, doctors, teachers, civil servants and scientists"[82].

Praising the meritocratic system as the key to personal upward mobility and success, the professors and school authorities played a key role in disseminating the discourse of the meritocratic model. Supporting the new social ideal corresponded to this group's democratic ideas and offered the promise of an

[75] NAR, MCIP, 1/1864/38.

[76] NAR, MCIP, 3524/1915/3 verso; *Starea invețiamentului public,* 35.

[77] Const. Moisil, „Din practica examenelor", 187.

[78] NAR, MCIP, 3526/1915, p, 87,

[79] *Starea invețiamentului public*, 56.

[80] Dumitru Baciu, „Câteva observațiuni asupra noului regulament al școlilor secundare", in *Revista generală a învățământului* (Year VIII, no. 1-2, June-July 1912), 33; Eliodor Constantinescu, „Iarăș în chestiunea regulamentului școlar", in *Revista generală a învățământului* (Year VIII, no 4, November 1912), 203.

[81] G. Oprescu, „Impresii de la examenul de absolvire al cursului inferior", in *Revista generală a învățământului* (Year VI, no 4, 1 November 1910), 275. The pedagogical journals do not contain articles that addressed the issue of exam failure from an educational perspective, or that proposed educational strategies to prevent it. Although such topics cannot be excluded, they were rather isolated concerns, not shared by the whole group, for which exam failure was to be approached from a social perspective, through controlling the access to secondary schools.

[82] *Starea invețiamentului public*, 93.

upward mobility. Meritocracy was the path to social ascension, and the cultural capital obtained through education played a decisive role in this process. The idea that social and political positions should be earned based on merit, not social origin or rank, was present in speeches at award ceremonies throughout the 1860s. "Never before has the country needed enlightened and knowledgeable people more than today, for merit never had the same prospects of being embraced and encouraged"[83]. The author of the above-mentioned speech, Vasile Boerescu, was aspiring to a model associated with modernity and trying to escape the remnants of a not very remote period when administrative functions were obtained in a different way. Around the same time, Ion Zalomit, member of the High Council of Education, emphasised the disappearance of privileges and their replacement with the "privilege of knowledge" (privilegiul sciinței), in his speech at the award ceremony of 1864. "Knowledge will now replace wealth; from now on, it gives you rights that were before only granted by money"[84]. The same person, in a similar situation, praised education, assigning a series of social advantages to it: "Through education we acquire the competence that is required by various functions of the State"[85].

The speeches given at school festivities linked the concept of merit to the idea of citizenship, integrating it into the discourse about the "destiny" of the country. "To be deserving" entered the theoretical profile of an ideal citizen. A desirable trait, appreciated and encouraged, individual merit was subsumed, above all, to the image of the homeland and the common good, ensuring a "great future" to the country. This culture of meritocracy in the service of the common good[86] was in opposition to the vision of most parents, who saw schooling as a way to acquire individual benefits, to change the economic condition and the social status of their children.

Adapted to the educational context, merit was synonymous with the effort made by the student, culminating in good results at school. Viewed from

[83] „Cuventu rostit de Directorul Şcoalelor B. Boerescu, la împărţirea premiilor din anul şcolar 1858-1859", in *Starea Instrucțiunei publice în România de Sus la finitul annului şcolariu 1861-1862* (Bucharest: Typographia Statului Sf. Sawa și Niphon, 1862), 4.

[84] *Monitorul. Jurnalul Oficial al Principatelor-Unite -Române*, Wednesday, no. 144, 1/13 July 1864.

[85] *Starea Instrucțiunei publice în România-de-Sus la finitul annului scolariu 1861-1862. Discurs pronunciat cu occasiunea solemnității de împărțirea premielor în 29 Iuniu 1862 de Directorul școalelor I. Zalomit* (Bucharest: Typographia Statului Sf. Sawa și Niphon, 1862), 3.

[86] A study about public examinations in Mexico retraces a similar discourse, dominated by the logic of reciprocity. See Eugenia Roldán Vera, "Towards a Logic of Citizenship: Public Examinations in Elementary Schools in Mexico, 1788-1848. State and Education Before and After Independence," in *Paedagogica Historica* (Vol. 46, Nr. 4, 2010), 511-524.

a political standpoint, a successful examination was not only an aspiration and an expectation of the teachers and the authorities[87], but also a duty of the students towards their "Fatherland"[88], their vindication of the material efforts of the authorities[89], a way of expressing gratitude for "the goodwill of the government"[90]. The relationship between the school and the state was thus based upon a system of moral reciprocity, the state was a "protector" of education, and the children must reciprocate by proving their usefulness to one's country through diligence.

Teachers built and maintained an ideal model of the high school as a prestigious institution, designed to train the state elites. High schools and gymnasiums were to raise the intellectual level of the population[91], to transmit specialised knowledge and to offer their students a cultural background with a strong classical orientation that should speak to both reason and spirit. All these features were perceived as powerful means of transmitting cultural capital. Maintaining the schools' prestigious status was ensured, according to teachers, through a strictly controlled access, to be guaranteed by using a rigorous examination system[92] or even by reducing the number of high school students[93]. The opening of the institution to all social categories had to be applied "with a lot of foresight, because only in this manner will our high school get rid of many bad elements and will manage to maintain its prestige as an *educational school* [emphasised in text]"[94]. A rigorous selection system was seen as all the more necessary as it was discovered that primary school students, the basic recruitment pool for secondary schools, had a low level of knowledge. The explanation for this situation was linked to the generally low cultural level of the population and to the fact that the student "…learns almost nothing at home or outside of school…"[95]. The model of the elite high school, as conceptualized by some secondary school teachers, intertwined the culture of meritocracy and the as-

[87] NAR, MCIP, 7/1864/23.

[88] *Discurs pronunciat*, 5.

[89] NAR, MCIP, 241/1870/219 recto. See also: D. A. Sturdza, *Discursuri pedagogice* (Bucharest: Tipografia Curței Regale, F. Göbl Fii, 1887), 58. [Speech delivered at the award ceremony in Buzău High School].

[90] NAR, MCIP, 241/1870/206 verso.

[91] *Starea invețiamentului public,* 55, 120-121; 192; I. V., „Examenele de absolvire", in *Revista generală a învățământului* (Year X, no. 1-2, June-July 1914), 36.

[92] I. V., „Examenele de absolvire", in *Revista generală a învățământului* (Year X, no. 1-2, June-July 1914), 37.

[93] *Starea invețiamentului public*, 50; Dim. Baciu, „Din neajunsurile școlii noastre secundare", in *Revista generală a învățământului* (Year X, no. 1-2, June-July 1914), 17.

[94] Dim. Baciu, „Din neajunsurile școlii noastre," 17.

[95] *Starea invețiamentului public*, 56.

pirations of upward social mobility based on merit, with the idea of limiting access to high school based on social background, in order to ensure a rigorous selection of the future students.

Teachers pointed out some limitations of the examination system, which raised a question mark about the school as a vehicle of meritocracy. In an article published in the most important specialised journal for teachers, Constantin Moisil[96] was drawing attention to the fact that the graduation of students "was influenced in most cases by old customs: we should not destroy the prospects of too many students, or by local interests: we should not depopulate the school, or for countless considerations of friendship or political ties"[97]. Structural transformations, conditioning access to more and more professions by means of a high school diploma, generated an increase in the number of high school graduates which was perceived as decreasing the intellectual level of high school education and thus deviating from a system of meritocracy. Professor George Oprescu pointed out these dysfunctions in an analysis of the examination system. The author discussed the case of schools training technicians (telegraph operators and railway workers), which had raised their level of schooling by receiving only high school graduates with diplomas. The author suggested that employees of state structures, interested in career advancement, took the exam together with high school students, being subjected to less demanding criteria than their younger rivals[98]. The opportunity for students of technical schools to receive a more prestigious graduation certificate following an examination, but without attending high school, weakened the social competition and subverted the hierarchical universe of academic classification.

In 1912, the Ministry of Education introduced additional examinations for students with poor academic results[99], in an attempt to expel the undeserving students and to ensure a higher educational level. The endeavours to pursue a more rigorous system of examination produced opposite effects because of the vague legislative provisions. The situation generated criticism from a few

[96] Constantin Moisil (1876-1958), alumnus of the University of Bucharest, History section of the Literature Faculty. After graduation he taught in high schools in Focșani, Tulcea, and Bucharest (Matei Basarab High Scool). At the beginning of the 20th century, he became an assistant at the Romanian Academy, numismatics section. As a teacher he wrote regular contributions to The General Journal of Education on subjects related to the public school system and education.

[97] Const. Moisil, „Din practica examenelor", 186.

[98] G. Oprescu, „Impresii de la examenul de absolvire al cursului inferior", in *Revista generală a învățământului* (Year VI, no 4, 1 November 1910), 275-276.

[99] In 1911-12, the students whose average grade was under 6.50 were required to take additional exams.

secondary teachers which drew attention to the issue and argued that the measure, as designed by the legislator and formulated in school regulations, would encourage the easy promotion of very weak students[100].

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At the end of the 19th century, the examinations restricted the advancement within the school hierarchy. The end-of-year exam was essential for the transition to the upper grade or cycle of education (gymnasium, high school); the exam at the end of high school gave the student a diploma that paved the way to enter the university. Through it, access to higher education institutions (superior schools, universities) and professions (the case of aptitude exams for obtaining a teaching position) was increasingly controlled by the state.

The exam was considered an instrument allowing a rigorous selection of students, in accordance with the image of school as a key to individual upward social mobility based on the meritocratic ideal. This image partially overlapped with that of the parents who connected the exam to their children achieving an attractive social or economic status. Still there was not a uniform image of the school and its functions as revealed by the conceptual model of the high school as an elite school, sustained by some teachers. According to this model, high schools were assigned with the role of social selection, connecting the merit with cultural capital and sometimes social background. The examinations follow a similar logic, of selecting the school "elite", from whose ranks a bureaucratic elite was then recruited.

This article shows that various actors directly or indirectly involved in the examinations (the teaching staff, the school authorities, the family, the public) endowed the exams with multiple meanings. Although there were many points of convergence between these actors, one cannot speak about clear ruptures and overlaps or correlations between certain discourses, meanings and professional groups. Context, temporality, personal projects, professional strategies are some of the variables that should be taken into account when dwelling on the discourses about examinations articulated by various social categories. Last but not least, in the 19th century the public education was a key element of national and state building, being given the role of inoculating an identity construct and forming the bureaucratic elite. Viewed from this perspective, the exams vali-

[100] George Oprescu, „Regulamentul şcoalelor secundare", in *Revista generală a învăţământului* (Year VIII, no. 9, April 1912), 517-521; Dumitru Baciu, „Câteva observaţiuni asupra noului regulament al şcolilor secundare", in *Revista generală a învăţământului* (Year VIII, no. 1-2, June-July 1912), 33; Eliodor Constantinescu, „Iarăş în chestiunea regulamentului şcolar", in *Revista generală a învăţământului* (Year VIII, no 4, November 1912), 203.

dated the two functions of education. They were part of the range of methods and techniques through which the student was constructed and governed as a subject. These techniques operate as disciplinary practices, control the educational process, and enable behaviours, actions and expectations, through which students internalized desired norms in connection with the idea of citizenship.

The exam functioned as a regulating and organisational mechanism. It controlled the way training and education worked, assessed and supervised the teachers and their achievements, evaluated the curriculum, and sanctioned those who did not comply with the rules.

Public festivities, including their performative character and ritual aspect, played a key role in the symbolic elevation and establishment of the exam as a social instrument, as a crucial factor and site for the recognition of merit and for legitimizing the teaching profession. These festivities mediated the understanding and the reception of exams, schools and education by the broader public, especially by the parents.

Rezumat

Articolul oferă o perspectivă istorică asupra examenelor din școlile secundare românești la sfârșitul secolului al XIX-lea și începutul secolului următor, perioadă în care rețeaua școlară secundară cunoaște o extindere semnificativă. Prima parte a articolului discută instituționalizarea examenelor și formalizarea practicilor de examinare, iar cea de a doua se oprește asupra modului în care se construiește examinarea ca subiect de reflecție, urmărind discursurile produse de diferiți actori. În a doua jumătate a secolului al XIX-lea, școala a fost percepută ca un vector al mobilității sociale pe bază meritocratică și un element cheie în construirea statului-națiune, atribuindi-se rolul educării și inoculării identității naționale. În acest context socio-educațional, școlile secundare reprezintă bazinul de recrutare al viitoarei elite administrative și asigură achiziția capitalului cultural necesar accesului în funcții, aspecte care vor determina funcțiile sociale ale examenelor. Analiza documentară bazată pe arhive a scos la iveală o perspectivă socială nuanțată, în cadrul căreia corpul didactic și părinții construiesc noi sensuri noțiunii de examinare și atribuie noi funcții examenelor.

Cuvinte-cheie: școli secundare, examene, formalizarea practicilor de examen, mobilitate socială, meritocrație.

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Romanianization and Half-Hearted Concessions. The Last Four Years of German-Language Education in Southern Bessarabia (1936-1940)[1] [2]

Philippe Henri BLASEN

Abstract

The article discusses the status of German-language education in Southern Bessarabia in the last years of Romanian domination, before the Soviet takeover in June 1940 and the subsequent resettlement of the local German population in September 1940. It shows that neither the national-liberal government (1933-1938), nor the regime of King Carol II (1938-1940) complied with the 28 October 1920 treaty between the principal allied powers and Romania respecting Bessarabia, an agreement which granted the Romanian nationals of German ethnicity the right to establish and manage schools, as well as to use the German language in the educational sphere. Both the national-liberal government and the regime of King Carol II obstructed public and confessional German-language education in Southern Bessarabia. They did not restore school buildings confiscated in 1936 and did not authorize the establishment of German-language schools. Only in September 1939 did the regime of King Carol II make some palpable concessions to the Germans of Southern Bessarabia, apparently as a result of the departure of the autonomist leader of the German community in Romania. However, even then, the Romanian state did not return all of the confiscated school buildings and seemingly further pursued the Romanianization of the local Germans.

Keywords: Education, minorities, Bessarabia Germans, Romanianization, regime of Carol II.

During World War I, Germans in Southern Bessarabia, who had settled in the region during the first half of the 19th century, changed their political stance several times in response to the course of the events and the attitudes of the successive rulers. Though loyal to Russia, they became the target of a persecution by the tsarist authorities. In 1915, two emergency laws led to the seizure or the compulsory sale of their lands, a number of Germans were deported, and the German language was banned from education and Church service. After the 1917 February Revolution, the emergency laws were rescinded, but the land was not returned to the Germans. They held several meetings, demanding the res-

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toration of their autonomy and the recognition of their economic, social, and cultural rights. In late 1917 and in 1918, the Germans requested the protection of the German Empire and some of their local leaders envisaged the creation of an autonomous region in Southern Bessarabia, a union with Austrian-ruled Ukraine, or even their resettlement to Germany.[3] Almost a year after Sfatul Țării proclaimed the union of the Moldavian Democratic Republic (Bessarabia) with Romania on 9 April 1918 (Julian calendar: 27 March 1918), a congress of German settlers convened in the commune of Tarutino on 20 March 1919 (Julian calendar: 7 March 1919) and declared their allegiance to Romania. The congress referred to the decisions of Sfatul Țării "that every nation has the right to be led, taught, administrated, and judged in its own language and by its own sons, and to have a corresponding representation in the legislature and the government, which representation guarantees the autonomy of the Church and the school, as well as the rights owed to the German settlers".[4] This reference was anachronistic, as Sfatul Țării had abandoned the conditions for the union on 10 December 1918 (Julian calendar: 27 November 1918),[5] which included "respect for the rights of the minorities in Bessarabia".[6] However, when on 3 March 1920 the Supreme Council of the Paris Peace Conference declared itself ready to recognise the treaty on "the reunion of Bessarabia with Romania", the Supreme Council also considered "that the rights of minorities in [Bessarabia] should be guaranteed on the same terms as those residing in other parts of the Romanian Kingdom", with the possibility of an arbitration of the League of Nations.[7] A provision to this effect was included under Article 3 of the 28 October 1920 treaty between the principal allied powers and Romania respecting Bessarabia.[8] The

[3] Svetlana Suveică, "Negotiating Loyalty: The Bessarabian Germans from the Russian Empire to the Romanian Nation-State (1917-1919)," in *Mutter: Land - Vater: Staat: Loyalitätskonflikte, politische Neuorientierung und der Erste Weltkrieg im österreichisch-russländischen Grenzraum*, ed. Florian Kührer-Wielach and Markus Winkler (Regensburg: Friedrich Pustet, 2017), 135-152.

[4] Ștefan Ciobanu, *Unirea Basarabiei: Studiu și documente cu privire la mișcarea națională din Basarabia în anii 1917-1918* (București: Cartea Românească, 1929), 258-260 (doc. 174): „că fiecare națiie are dreptul de a fi condusă, educată, administrată și judecată în limba sa și de fii săi și să aibă reprezentare corespunzătoare în corpurile legiuitoare și în guvern, care reprezentare garantează autonomia bisericii și școalei precum și drepturile cuvenite coloniștilor germani".

[5] Ciobanu, *Unirea Basarabiei*, 276-277 (doc. 195).

[6] Ciobanu, *Unirea Basarabiei*, 239-240 (doc. 160): „Respectarea drepturilor minorităților din Basarabia."

[7] The National Archives, CAB 24/99/86, 260: Statement of the Supreme Council on Bessarabia, 03.03.1920.

[8] "Treaty between the principal allied powers and Roumania respecting Bessarabia of 28 October 1920," *The American Journal of International Law* 17, no. 1 Supplements (January 1923): 7-11.

article provided for the observance of the treaty between the principal allied and associated powers and Romania that had been signed in Paris the previous year on 9 December 1919. This treaty granted the Romanian nationals the right "to establish, manage and control at their own expense [...] schools and other educational establishments, with the right to use their own language [...]". It further stipulated that "Romania will provide in the public educational system in towns and districts in which a considerable proportion of Romanian nationals of other than Romanian speech are resident adequate facilities for ensuring that in the primary schools the instruction shall be given to the children of such Romanian nationals through the medium of their own language" (art. 10).[9]

On the one hand, even though the 28 October 1920 treaty between the principal allied powers and Romania respecting Bessarabia was never ratified by Japan, it was in Romania's interest to strictly abide by it so that the recognition of the union would not be questioned. On the other hand, Germany, who was most concerned by the fate of the Germans in Southern Bessarabia, was not party to the treaty.

This article examines the evolution of German-language education in Southern Bessarabia from the confiscation of the school buildings from the Evangelical Church in autumn 1936 to the cession of Bessarabia to the Soviet Union on 28 June 1940, which led to the resettlement of the local Germans organised by Germany from 15 September 1940.[10] It argues that the Romanian state did not grant the minorities the above-mentioned rights enshrined in the treaty of 28 October 1920 and that the rapprochement between Romania and Germany under the regime of King Carol II (10 February 1938-5/6 September 1940) had only a limited positive impact on German-language education in Southern Bessarabia.

From 1923, German had been gradually replaced by Romanian as the language of instruction in the public schools in the German settlements of Bessarabia.[11] Certain confessional schools were dissolved as early as 1924 in the context of Minister Constantin Angelescu's policy to create a national (Romanian)

[9] "Treaty between the principal allied and associated powers and Roumania of 9 December 1919," *League of Nations Treaty Series* 5, no. 1-4 (1921): 343.

[10] Dirk Jachomowski, *Die Umsiedlung der Bessarabien-, Bukowina- und Dobrudschadeutschen: Von der Volksgruppe in Rumänien zur „Siedlungsbrücke" an der Reichsgrenze* (München: R. Oldenbourg, 1984), 71.

[11] Luminița Fassel, *Das deutsche Schulwesen in Bessarabien (1812-1940): Eine komparativ-historische und sozio-kulturelle Untersuchung* (München: Verlag Südostdeutsches Kulturwerk, 2000), 123-129.

school.[12] The Romanian authorities could profit from the uncertain status of the school buildings. As Professor Karl Liebram from Cetatea-Albă wrote in 1925:

> *I cannot make a valid statement if our schools are public or confessional, since the question is still unresolved. We always have had purely confessional local schools and our political representatives continuously endeavour to restore the former situation of our schools, which, in several villages, has been turned upside down in the course of the last eight years.*[13]

Following the electoral victory of the National-Liberal Party in December 1933, Constantin Angelescu was once again appointed Minister of Education. This was probably the main reason why German language education in Southern Bessarabia was further undermined. No German teacher was appointed beginning with 1933.[14] Native German-speaking teachers were replaced with Romanians. According to historian Luminița Fassel, the number of the former fell from 202 to 136 (or from 202 to 124, according to historian Ute Schmidt) between 1933 and 1938 and the number of the latter rose from 81 to 124 (or from 81 to 238) over the same period.[15] Almost half of the 140 German communes remained without a German teacher.[16] For instance, after 1934 in Marienfeld, Tighina county, there were only ethnic Romanian teachers.[17] In autumn 1936, the state even confiscated the school buildings and teachers' homes from the Evangelical Church of Augustan Confession.[18] The

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[12] Fassel, *Das deutsche Schulwesen*, 131. Angelescu was the father of interwar national education in Romania: Irina Livezeanu, *Cultural Politics in Greater Romania: Regionalism, Nation Building, & Ethnic Struggle, 1918-1930* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1995), 34-48.

[13] Serviciul Județean Sibiu al Arhivelor Naționale (from now on: SJSAN), fond Liga Culturală a Germanilor din România (179), dosar 10, 31: Karl Liebram to the Cultural Office of the Association of the Germans in Greater Romania, 10. December 1925: „Eine gültige Angabe darüber, ob unsere Schulen staatlich oder konfessionell sind, kann ich nicht machen, da diese Frage noch in der Schwebe ist. Wir haben aber von jeher reine konfessionelle Gemeindeschulen gehabt, u. unsere politische Vertretung unablässig bemüht, diese frühere Lage unserer Schulen, die in manchen Dörfern erst in den letzten acht Jahren über den Haufen geworfen ist, wiederherzustellen."

[14] Ute Schmidt, *Die Deutschen aus Bessarabien: Eine Minderheit aus Südosteuropa (1814 bis heute)* (Köln: Böhlau, 2004), 93.

[15] Fassel, *Das deutsche Schulwesen*, 175; Schmidt, *Die Deutschen*, 93.

[16] Schmidt, *Die Deutschen*, 93.

[17] Artur Bogner, „Chronik der Gemeinde Marienfeld, Kreis Tighina," *Deutscher Volkskalender für Bessarabien*, 1937, 63.

[18] *Die Rumäniendeutschen zwischen Demokratie und Diktatur: Der politische Nachlass von Hans Otto Roth 1919-1951*, ed. Klaus Popa (Frankfurt/Main: Peter Lang, 2003), 554-556 (doc. 309).

exact moment of the confiscation could not be ascertained, but the number of seized buildings purportedly amounted to 140,[19] suggesting that the schools of all German communes were seized. A German delegation headed by Hans Otto Roth, the chairman of the German Party parliamentary group, which had represented the whole German minority since 1935, discussed the issue with the Minister of the Interior in late November or early December 1936. Roth emphasised that the parishes had been stripped of their rents (paid for by the state), that some German teachers had been forced to hand over their living quarters to ethnic Romanian teachers, and that the Evangelical Church could no longer consider the establishment of confessional (private) schools. These were perhaps the very reasons why the Romanian state had confiscated the buildings, so as to slash the costs and to speed up the Romanianization of the German communes. Eventually, the Minister and Roth agreed on creating a mixed commission.[20]

However, hostility to German-language education in Southern Bessarabia persisted. A local German newspaper, *Deutsche Zeitung Bessarabiens,* published a letter on 17 November 1937 that had been sent by the school inspectorate of Cetatea-Albă county to the district consistory of the Evangelical Church in Tarutino on 24 September 1937. The letter stated that the German language could be taught as an extracurricular subject for two hours a week if there were enough rooms available. The letter instructed the parishes to rent and furnish suitable rooms in order to get official permission.[21] This was a slap in the face both for the Evangelical Church, which was expected to rent its own confiscated buildings, and for the local Germans whose ability to teach and learn their mother tongue was further restricted.

However, in the same autumn of 1937 the national-liberal president of the senate invited Roth to join the National-Liberal Party in the elections.[22] According to Fritz Fabritius, who was the chairman of the Volksgemeinschaft der Deutschen in Rumänien, the larger political group of the German minority represented by the German Party in parliament, the Volksgemeinschaft had been unable to control the Deutsche Volkspartei, a small breakaway political group of the minority. As the national-liberals were announcing concessions, the

[19] „Die Entscheidung," *Banater Deutsche Zeitung*, November 30, 1937, 2.

[20] „Eine Abordnung unserer Parlamentarier beim Innenminister: Die Frage unseres Kirchenvermögens," *Deutsche Zeitung Bessarabiens*, December 2, 1936, 1

[21] „Schulisches," *Deutsche Zeitung Bessarabiens*, November 17, 1937, 2; cf. „Zum Artikel „Schulisches" in Folge 92 der D.Z.B.," *Deutsches Volksblatt* (Tarutino), November 27, 1937, 3.

[22] „Der große Appell an die deutschen Wähler," *Banater Deutsche Zeitung*, December 14, 1937, 2.

Volksgemeinschaft responded to their offer.[23] The German Party attached several preconditions to an electoral agreement with the National-Liberal Party. Among the stipulations was that the government should return the confiscated buildings, respect the legal right to establish new confessional schools, and enforce the legal provision that the Ministry of Education establish public minority language primary schools.[24] The German Party also requested that the graduates of the confessional teachers' school in Sărata/Sarata, Cetatea-Albă county, – the Wernerschule[25] – be appointed at local public primary schools where the language of instruction was German.[26] Fabritius announced the conclusion of the electoral agreement on 26 November 1937, emphasising that the chairman of the National-Liberal Party had promised to authorise the establishment of 21 confessional schools in Bessarabia and Bukovina, to introduce German language education in public schools with German pupils, and to return the school properties in Bessarabia.[27] According to Roth, on 12 December 1937, the Ministry of Education gave Franz Kräuter of the German Party permission to open 18 confessional schools in Bessarabia and 2 in Bukovina.[28] Minister Angelescu also ordered on 15 December 1937 that the legal provision concerning the establishment of public minority language primary schools be implemented in the communes where at least 30 German pupils attended public primary school.[29] According to a "survey on the German colonists in the south of Bessarabia" by

[23] „Aufruf des Landesobmanns," *Siebenbürgisch-Deutsches Tageblatt*, November 28, 1937, 1.

[24] *Monitorul Oficial*, no. 61, June 26, 1924, 8602-8629 (no. 2571, art. 7).

[25] The school was established in 1844 under Russian rule with a part of the legacy of Christian Friedrich Werner, a rich merchant from Giengen, Württemberg, who had emigrated to Sarata in 1823, and had died there the same year. At the beginning, the school trained orphans as teachers and clerks for the German colonies without charging them fees. With the war, the school lost its endowment capital. The Romanian state did not subsidise the school, which had to rely on tuition fees and donations. The resulting rise of the tuition fees and the absence of professional prospects caused a decrease in the number of pupils: Karl Baisch, „Kurzgefaßte geschichtliche Übersicht der Gründung und des Bestehens der Kolonieen des sarataer Bezirkes (Schluß)," *Unterhaltungsblatt für deutsche Ansiedler im südlichen Rußland*, September, 1852, 66-67; Albert Mauch, „Zur Geschichte der Wernerschule zu Sarata," *Heimat Kalender für die Deutschen Bessarabiens*, [1921], 76-77; Schmidt, *Die Deutschen*, 93-94.

[26] *Die Rumäniendeutschen*, 554-556 (doc. 309).

[27] „Aufruf des Landesobmanns," *Siebenbürgisch-Deutsches Tageblatt*, November 28, 1937, 1; cf. „Rückgabe unseres Schulvermögens," *Deutsches Volksblatt*, December 1, 1937, 1-2.

[28] „Der große Appell an die deutschen Wähler," *Banater Deutsche Zeitung*, December 14, 1937, 2.

[29] Serviciul Județean Suceava al Arhivelor Naționale, fond Inspectoratul școlar al județului Baia (209), dosar 2/1938, 89 = fond Inspectoratul școlar al județului Rădăuți (238), dosar 3/1938: copy of ministerial order no. 213102 of 15 December 1937.

the secret service SSI, three decisions by the Ministry of Interior even cancelled the confiscations.[30] Prospects seemed bright for the Germans,[31] that is, until the National-Liberal Party lost the elections on 20 December 1937.

The new far-right national-Christian cabinet also offered the Volksgemeinschaft an electoral agreement in late January 1938, ahead of the elections scheduled for early March. Amongst others, it pledged to implement the promises of the national-liberal government and to grant the Germans cultural autonomy.[32] However, King Carol II staged a coup on 10 February 1938, before the elections were held.

The new regime approached the Deutsche Volkspartei and the Volksgemeinschaft to avoid a similar situation to that which had occurred in Czechoslovakia.[33] The Volksgemeinschaft submitted a statute draft to the King and the Prime Minister in late July 1938, requesting the right to establish German-language schools, teach their own curricula, and train teachers for these schools. It also demanded legal autonomy for the German Churches, including the right to establish, administrate, manage, and finance confessional German language schools with their own curricula and a status equal to that of public schools.[34] The regime published a cabinet decision concerning the regulation of the General Commissariat for Minorities on 4 August 1938, which reaffirmed amongst others the right of the minorities to establish, manage, and control schools, as well as exercise the right to use their own language.[35] This stipulation was in accordance with the treaty between the principal allied and associated powers and Romania of 9 December 1919, which Article 3 of the 28 October 1920 treaty between the principal allied powers and Romania respecting Bessarabia referred to. However, the regime rejected the statute draft of the Volksgemeinschaft. In particular, Prime Minister Patriarch Miron Cristea declared to the German Minister Plenipotentiary Wilhelm Fabricius on 5 August 1938 that he deemed the number of German-language schools too large and that it would be

[30] Serviciul Arhive Naționale Istorice Centrale (from now on: SANIC), fond P.C.M. - S.S.I. (2379), dosar 74/1939, 17: report on the German colonists in the south of Bessarabia.

[31] „Aufbauarbeit für deutsche Zukunft," *Siebenbürgisch-Deutsches Tageblatt*, December 19, 1937, 1.

[32] Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amts, RAV Czernowitz, Paket 5/2: the German minister plenipotentiary to the Auswärtiges Amt, 3 February 1938.

[33] Rebecca Haynes, *Romanian Policy towards Germany, 1936-40* (Houndmills: Macmillan Press, 2000), 71.

[34] SANIC, fond Direcția Generală a Poliției (2350), dosar 179/1938, 4-10: memorandum draft, 25 July 1938.

[35] *Monitorul Oficial*, no. 178, August 4, 1938, 3595 (no. 1750 bis, art. 1); 3588 (no. 2761, art. 3-3-b).

in the Germans' own interest to reduce it.[36] Cristea was thus already questioning the provisions which had entered into force the previous day. Meanwhile, the obligation to return the confessional school buildings that had been confiscated without a valid legal reason had not even been included in the final version of the cabinet decision.[37]

Two weeks later, on 16 August 1938, Hans Hedrich, Gustav Rösler and Franz Kräuter, who represented the Volksgemeinschaft, the Evangelical Church, and the Catholic Church, initiated discussions with the new General Commissioner for Minorities, Silviu Dragomir, and the acting Minister of Education,[38] Armand Călinescu, a central figure of the regime. Kräuter summarised the past electoral agreements. The Undersecretary of State for National Education Dumitru Țoni promised Rösler to resolve the issue of public German language schools and teacher training.[39] Dragomir announced to the delegates on 25 August 1938 that he had discussed their demands with the director of the Department of Confessional Education and that the decisions were, on the whole, favourable to the Germans.[40] However, while Kräuter had the impression that Dragomir was supportive,[41] in fact, the General Commissariat for Minorities and the General Commissioner for Minorities himself shared Cristea's view that the Germans had more than enough private schools.[42]

In particular, opposition to German language education in Southern Bessarabia resulted from the intent of the Romanian state to Romanianise the local Germans, as the contemporaneous survey by the secret service SSI confirms:

> *The whole teaching staff of German origin, which serves in these schools, is permeated by the deepes nism and is recalcitrant to all attempts of nationalisation. The professors and teachers, who form without an exception the basic element of national-socialist propaganda, boycott the Romanian teaching staff and the effort of national re-education. There have been cases in several villages where*

[36] Johann Böhm, *Die Deutschen in Rumänien und das Dritte Reich 1933-1940* (Frankfurt/Main: Peter Lang, 1999), 344-345 (doc. 21): the German minister plenipotentiary to the Auswärtiges Amt, 5 August 1938.

[37] SANIC, fond P.C.M. (299), dosar 24/1938, 154-155: cabinet decision draft.

[38] *Monitorul Oficial*, no. 140, June 22, 1938, 2968 (no. 2257).

[39] SJSAN, Comunitatea germanilor din România (348), dosar A71, 9-10: Franz Kräuter to Hans Otto Roth, 24 August 1938.

[40] SJSAN, Comunitatea germanilor din România (348), dosar A71, 9-10: Franz Kräuter to Hans Otto Roth, 25 August 1938.

[41] SJSAN, Comunitatea germanilor din România (348), dosar A71, 9-10: Franz Kräuter to Hans Otto Roth, 24 August 1938.

[42] E.g., SANIC, fond P.C.M. (299), dosar 30/1938, 3: report by a technical adviser of the general commissariat for minorities, approved by the commissioner.

> *the Romanian teachers, as a result of the propaganda of their German colleagues, have been given no accommodation and have been sold no food, and have had to sleep on the school benches and to buy provisions from the neighbouring villages.*[43]

A similar mindset could be found in the Ministry of Education. On 12 September 1938 Undersecretary Țoni, acting for the Minister of Education, cancelled the authorisations for confessional primary schools, which had purportedly been issued illegally.[44] The permissions for the 18 schools that had been delivered in December 1937 were withdrawn[45] for spurious reasons.[46] The ministerial decision was published on 19 September 1938,[47] two days after an article had appeared in *Deutsche Zeitung Bessarabiens* in which the author had expressed his belief that the government would not continue to oppose German-language education.[48] Neither the district consistory of the Evangelical Church in Tarutino nor the affected communes were informed of the decision. The school inspector prohibited the confessional schools from using the rooms that the public schools had hitherto made use of, presumably in the same buildings that had been confiscated from the Evangelical Church. In response, the German sexton of Arciz, Cetatea-Albă county, padlocked the local school to keep out the ethnic Romanian teachers. The next day, the county prefect arrived in the village, broke the lock, and handed the building over to the public school. In protest, the vast majority of the German parents did not let their

[43] SANIC, fond P.C.M. - S.S.I. (2379), dosar 74/1939, 16-17: report on the German colonists in the south of Bessarabia: "Întreg Corpul Didactic de origină germană, care deservește aceste școli, este pătruns de cel mai adânc șovinism și refractar oricăror tendințe de naționalizare. Profesorii sau învățătorii, cari fără excepție sunt și elementul de bază al propagandei național-socialiste, boicotează corpul didactic român și opera de reeducare națională. În unele sate s'au întâmplat cazuri când învățătorii români, în urma propagandei făcută [sic] de camarazii lor germani, nu erau primiți în gazdă de nimeni și nici nu li se vindea hrană, trebuind să doarmă pe băncile școlii și să-și procure alimente din satele apropiate."; cf. fond P.C.M. (299), dosar 117/1939, 74: activity report by the cultural section of the ministry for minorities.

[44] *Monitorul Oficial*, no. 217, September 19, 1938, 4407 (no. 159678); cf. Schmidt, *Die Deutschen*, 105.

[45] SJSAN, Comunitatea germanilor din România (348), dosar E9, 2: letter by the German school counsellor in Tarutino, 22 November 1938.

[46] Schmidt, *Die Deutschen*, 105 (Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amts, R 60199: Lörner, „Schulzwischenfall in Arzis", 22 September 1938); SJSAN, Comunitatea germanilor din România (348), dosar E9, 5: letter by the parish priest in Albota, 17 November 1938.

[47] *Monitorul Oficial*, no. 217, September 19, 1938, 4407 (no. 159678).

[48] Hans Bender, „Wie stelle ich mir den Aufbau eines deutschen Schulwesens in Rumänien vor?" *Deutsche Zeitung Bessarabiens*, September 17, 1938, 1.

children go to school the following day.[49] In the parish of Albota, Cahul county, the confessional school of Alexandru-cel-Bun/Alexanderfeld was inaugurated, but the county prefect did not participate as the county school inspectorate had informed him that the school had no rights and was only tolerated. Members of the county school inspectorate also told the parish priest that the confessional schools had no rights, that the permission for the confessional school in Alexanderfeld was void because certain exams had not been held, that the pupils should be transferred to the public school, and that the confessional school could be immediately closed. Later, the sexton of Alexanderfeld informed the parish priest of a letter by an education authority, which stipulated that the German language must not be taught any more at the local school.[50] The worst aspect for some Germans, who strongly sympathised with national-socialist Germany, was that the prefect of Cahul county had not taken part in the inauguration of the German school in Alexanderfeld, but instead took part in that of the Czech school in Huluboaia.[51]

The delegate of the Volksgemeinschaft Hans Hedrich informed its headquarters on 20 September 1938 that the "original promise to open German private schools in Bessarabia and Bukovina had not been kept", but he hoped for a positive solution in the future.[52] Two days later, Prime Minister Cristea promised to examine the issue.[53] However, the events described above show that there were no immediate tangible results. In such circumstances, Fabritius demanded the end of the "persecutions" (*Verfolgungen*) against the Church and schools in Bessarabia, Banat, and Bukovina in a memorandum dated 14 October 1938.[54]

The Ministry of Education informed the consistory of the Evangelical Church in Sibiu, Transylvania, on 21 October 1938 that it had instructed the school inspectorates to organise, in accordance with the legal provisions, German-language education in public primary schools attended by at least

[49] Schmidt, *Die Deutschen*, 105 (Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amts, R 60199: Lörner, „Schulzwischenfall in Arzis", 22 September 1938).

[50] SJSAN, Comunitatea germanilor din România (348), dosar E9, 5: letter by the parish priest in Albota, 17 November 1938.

[51] SJSAN, Comunitatea germanilor din România (348), dosar E9, 8: school activity report.

[52] SJSAN, Comunitatea germanilor din România (348), dosar D35 - D40, 6-7: letter by Hans Hedrich, 20 September 1938: „Die ursprüngliche Zusage der Eröffnung deutscher Privatschulen in Bessarabien und Bukowina wurde nicht eingehalten, doch wird mit Hoffnung auf Erfolg in dieser Sache weitergekämpft."

[53] SJSAN, Comunitatea germanilor din România (348), dosar D38: minute by Hans Hedrich.

[54] SJSAN, Comunitatea germanilor din România (348), dosar D40: memorandum by Fritz Fabritius.

30 German pupils.[55] By all accounts, this was the order that the Ministry had given a year earlier, on 15 December 1937, and which the Minister, either Victor Iamandi or bishop Nicolae Colan, had blocked in spring 1938, deeming it an illegal advantage.[56] No evidence could be found that it was implemented in Bessarabia in autumn 1938. On the contrary, it would seem that Romanianization through public education continued. Thus, the two first levels of the German section of the public primary school in Tarutino were moved into the same building as the Romanian section on 1 September 1938. The General Commissariat for Minorities defended this decision, arguing that there needed be a "spiritual rapprochement" (*o apropiere sufletească*) between the locals.[57] The climate in the German communes of Southern Bessarabia was presumably tense. The Ministry of Education ordered the local ethnic Romanian teachers in the public schools to be tactful and "not provoke by attempts of majoritarian pretentiousness" (*să nu provoace prin încercări de ostentație de majoritar*), such as by displaying ethnic superiority.[58]

The Ministry of Education placed a lot of emphasis on its decision of 22 October 1938 that minority languages be taught in several public schools for teachers. German became a study subject in Caransebeș (Banat), Sibiu (Transylvania), and Cernăuți (Bukovina).[59] This decision was crucial for German language education, as it provided for the previously neglected[60] training of German teachers for public German language schools and allowed for the prospect of restoring German-language education in Romanianised schools.

The odds turned in favour of the Germans in Southern Bessarabia after Petre Andrei was appointed Minister of Education on 6 December 1938.[61] This probably had less to do with the personality of Andrei, a former member of the National Peasant Party[62] and professor of sociology and ethics at the University of Iași,[63] who had served as Undersecretary of State for Public Education in 1932

[55] SJSAN, Comunitatea germanilor din România (348), dosar E9, 7: the bishop of the Evangelical Church to the district consistory in Tarutino, 15 November 1938.

[56] SANIC, fond P.C.M. (299), dosar 33/1938, 19: report on the state of mind of the Germans in Romania.

[57] SANIC, fond P.C.M. (299), dosar 33/1938, 18: report on the state of mind of the Germans in Romania.

[58] SANIC, fond P.C.M. (299), dosar 117/1939, 73-74: activity report by the cultural section of the ministry for minorities.

[59] *Monitorul Oficial*, no. 249, October 26, 1938, 5077 (no. 189210).

[60] SANIC, fond P.C.M. (299), dosar 33/1938, 16: report on the state of mind of the Germans in Romania.

[61] *Monitorul Oficial*, no. 284, December 6, 1938, 5819 (no. 4117).

[62] *Monitorul Oficial*, no. 301, December 30, 1937, 9826.

[63] *Anuarul Universității pe anul academic 1936/1937* (Iași), 1938, 97.

and 1933, than with the relations between Romania and Germany. After King Carol II met the German Chancellor Adolf Hitler in Berchtesgaden, Bavaria, on 24 November 1938, the Romanian government had the Iron Guard leader Corneliu Zelea Codreanu killed during the night of 29-30 November 1938. As a result, Hitler was angered, because it looked as if he had agreed to the murder. Therefore, it was in the best interest of Romania to take "conciliatory measures" (Rebecca Ann Haynes).[64] Improving the status of the German minority was an obvious choice, as Field Marshal Hermann Göring had told Carol II on 26 November 1938 in Leipzig, Saxony, that "the German relation with Romania was substantially influenced by the treatment of the German minorities [sic]".[65]

Minister Andrei received Hedrich on 21 December 1938. According to the newspapers of the German minority, Andrei promised to examine the requests for permissions to establish new private schools and to take the necessary steps for their solution in accordance with the law. He also agreed to restore public German-language education on the basis of a plan that Rösler had prepared in the past under his direction,[66] presumably at the time when Andrei had been Undersecretary of State for Public Education.

In parallel, the regime pressed the Volksgemeinschaft to join the Front of National Rebirth, the single party it had created on 16 December 1938.[67] Commissioner Dragomir freely admitted that this move would help repair relations between Romania and Germany.[68] The Volksgemeinschaft imposed conditions, repeating the demands related to German language education previously stated in its statute draft and requesting the restitution of the properties of the Evangelical Church in Bessarabia.[69] In an assessment, the cultural section of the General Commissariat for Minorities took a favourable view of the opening of the 20 confessional schools in Bessarabia and Bukovina. It backed the establishment of German-language sections at public schools in communes with German inhabitants with more than 30 pupils, and where there was no exist-

[64] Haynes, *Romanian Policy*, 72-73; 172-173.

[65] *Akten zur deutschen auswärtigen Politik 1918-1945: Serie D (1937-1945): Band V* (Baden-Baden: Imprimerie nationale, 1953), 289 (doc. 257): minute, 30 November 1938: „Der Feldmarschall betonte, daß das deutsche Verhältnis zu Rumänien wesentlich beeinflußt würde durch die Behandlung der deutschen Minderheiten."

[66] „Deutsche Vorsprache bei der Regierung: Beim Unterrichtsminister," *Siebenbürgisch-Deutsches Tageblatt*, December 24, 1938, 1; „Politische Übersicht," *Groß-Kokler Bote & Schäßburger Zeitung*, January 1, 1939, 1.

[67] *Monitorul Oficial*, no. 293, December 16, 1938, 5972 (no. 4321).

[68] SJSAN, Comunitatea germanilor din România (348), dosar D41, 4-6: minute by Hans Hedrich, 21 December 1938.

[69] SANIC, fond P.C.M. (299), dosar 288/1939, 29-57: German demands.

ing confessional German-language school. The cultural section also proposed to introduce a special exam that would allow the graduates of the confessional teachers' schools to teach at the German-language sections of public schools. However, the assessment was evasive on the subject of the restitution of the properties of the Evangelical Church in Bessarabia:

> *It is a difficult issue. These are the properties used in the past by the German communities in Bessarabia. Strictly speaking, they are not Church properties. They were public goods, stemming from the donations of the Russian tsars in the 18th [sic] century for the use of the German colonies, for cultural purposes. The right of ownership, if they belong to the state or the communities, has always been open to debate. The Ministry of National Education has studies on the subject. These goods were allotted to the use of the primary schools - declared public - of the German communes in 1936. As a result, they still have been indirectly used for the benefit of the population. The resolution of this issue calls for a fundamental examination. Thereafter, a solution can be adopted with full knowledge of the facts.*[70]

The cultural section of the General Commissariat for Minorities tried to make a specious argument in favour of the confiscation, based on the ambiguous legal status of properties in imperial Russia. However, as the SSI clearly stated, "each colony built its own school in the first years of its existence, with the support of the other colonies or alone, but on no account with the support of the state".[71]

At one point, the General Commissariat for Minorities presumably communicated the demands of the Volksgemeinschaft to the Ministry of Education.[72] After the Volksgemeinschaft signed an agreement with the government on 10 January 1939 to join the Front of National Rebirth, Minister Andrei received Commissioner Dragomir and Hedrich on 26 January 1939. According to the

[70] SANIC, fond P.C.M. (299), dosar 288/1939, 292: report by the cultural section of the general commissariat for minorities: „Chestiunea este complicată. Este vorba de bunurile întrebuințate mai înainte de comunitățile germane din Basarabia. Nu sunt propriu zis averi bisericești. Au fost bunuri de interes public, provenite din donațiile Țarilor ruși în veacul al XVIII pentru utilitatea coloniilor germane în scopuri culturale. Dreptul de proprietate, dacă sunt ale Statului sau ale Comunităților, a fost întotdeauna discutat. La Ministerul Educației Naționale se află studii referitoare la această problemă. În 1936 - aceste bunuri au fost date pentru întrebuințarea școlilor primare - declarate de Stat - din comunele germane, deci indirect se utilizează tot pentru folosul populației. Rezolvarea problemei reclamă studii temeinice. Pe urma se va putea adopta o soluție cu bună înțelegere."

[71] SANIC, fond P.C.M. - S.S.I. (2379), dosar 74/1939, 16: report on the German colonists in the south of Bessarabia: „Fiecare colonie și-a construit școală proprie încă din primii ani ai existenței sale, fie cu concursul celorlalte colonii, fie singură, însă în nici un caz cu concursul Statului."

[72] SANIC, fond P.C.M. (299), dosar 288/1939, 36: German demands.

newspapers of the German minority, Dragomir showed support for the German demands and Andrei made promises, although with restrictions. He promised to immediately resolve the existing requests for permissions to establish new confessional schools, but specified that most of them could be implemented only at the beginning of the following school year. He declared that he would not hamper the restitution of the confiscated properties of the Evangelical Church in Bessarabia, whose fate, however, was in the hands of the Ministry of the Interior. He also announced that public German-language education would be reintroduced in accordance with the existing legal provisions, but that the order (of 15 December 1937?) would come fully into effect only the following school year, because a large part of the teachers at the public German language schools did not know German. He also promised to grant the graduates of the confessional teachers' schools the full right to be appointed at public German language schools, after they would take teaching classes during the summer break and pass an exam.[73] Accordingly, the Minister of Education authorised on 1 February 1939 that confessional German language schools be established in communes with a large German population and the minimum legal percentage of pupils. The Minister also issued instructions that requests for permissions to establish such schools be examined as soon as possible and the competent authorities be asked immediately for their recommendations regarding existing requests.[74] He also decided on 14 February 1939 to reserve 20% of the slots at the higher teachers' schools for minority secondary teacher candidates.[75]

These and some other concessions[76] had little, if any, impact.[77] Quite the opposite, the Ministry of Education rejected all the requests for minority sections at public schools. This prompted a reaction by the General Commissariat for Minorities, which was not only afraid that the minorities would continue to be dissatisfied, but was also aware that the state had a greater influence on the minorities through these sections than via confessional schools. The General Commissariat pleaded for the establishment of a number of sections, among which one German-language section in Catzbach/Katzbach, Cetatea-Albă

[73] „Politische Übersicht," *Groß-Kokler Bote & Schäßburger Zeitung*, January 29, 1939, 2.

[74] SANIC, fond P.C.M. (299), dosar 127/1939, 31: ministerial decision no. 20289/1 February 1939; cf. „Die Freiheit der Errichtung konfessioneller Schulen," *Siebenbürgisch-Deutsches Tageblatt*, February 7, 1939, 2; „Konfessionelle (Kirchen-) Schulen mit deutscher Unterrichtssprache," *Deutsches Volksblatt*, February 8, 1939, 1.

[75] *Monitorul Oficial*, no. 44, February 22, 1939, 907 (no. 28388).

[76] SANIC, fond P.C.M. (300), dosar 203/1940, 1-16: report by the cultural section of the ministry for minorities.

[77] Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amts, RAV Czernowitz, Paket 2/2: the German minister plenipotentiary to the Auswärtiges Amt, 8 April 1939.

county, as well as for the creation of a mixed commission together with the Ministry of Education.[78]

The May issue of *Mitteilungen des ev.-luth. Bezirkskonsistoriums für den Schulverein* [Bulletin of the Evangelical Lutheran district consistory regarding the school association] proved the assessment of the General Commissariat for Minorities right. Written in a nationalist key, the bulletin suggested that the definitive resolution of the "school issue" (*Schulfrage*) required the establishment of confessional schools in all the communes and their financing by the local Germans. It described public schools as places where children were taught to sing, play, pray and live in a "non-German language" (*nichtdeutsche Sprache*) and forced or lured to adopt the "mindset of an alien ethnicity" (*fremdvölkische Gesinnungsart*). The bulletin was particularly alarmed by the attraction and magnetism of *Straja Țării* [Sentinel of the Country], King Carol II's single youth organisation. It appealed for the safeguarding and the expansion of the confessional teachers' school in Sarata, underscoring the need to finish this new construction project during the summer, and announced a fundraiser on 29 May 1939.[79] Posted copies of the bulletin and an accompanying order by the illegal German organisation *Nationale Arbeitsfront* were seized by the police on 22-24 May 1939. The competent police inspectorate at first informed the general police directorate about these documents because of the bulletin's criticism of *Straja Țării*, but made it clear in a later message that it had also found fault with the appeal to establish confessional schools.[80]

Perhaps as a result of the recommendations of the General Commissariat for Minorities, the new law on primary education and teacher training, published on 27 May 1939, stated that public minority language schools or minority sections could be established in localities with a very large minority population and at least 20 children of school age (art. 7).[81] While fixing a minimum number of pupils, this provision diluted the former legal framework, which had compelled the Ministry of Education to establish public minority language primary schools and which had not required the minority population to be of a

[78] SANIC, fond P.C.M. (299), dosar 151/1939, 34-37: report by the general commissariat for minorities.

[79] SANIC, fond Direcția Generală a Poliției (2350), dosar 210/1939, 3-7: *Mitteilungen des ev.-luth. Bezirkskonsistoriums für den Schulverein*, no. 3, May 1939.

[80] SANIC, fond Direcția Generală a Poliției (2350), dosar 210/1939, 9: the police inspectorate of the Dniester Region to the general police directorate, 23 May 1939; 8: the general police directorate to the police inspectorate of the Dniester Region, 24 May 1939; 10: the police inspectorate of the Dniester Region to the general police directorate, 24 May 1939.

[81] *Monitorul Oficial*, no. 121, May 27, 1939, 3377-3393 (no. 2184).

specific size.[82] Making the establishment of public minority language schools and minority sections optional was a clear infringement of the treaty between the principal allied and associated powers and Romania of 9 December 1919 and of the treaty between the principal allied powers and Romania respecting Bessarabia of 28 October 1920. The new law also allowed the Ministry of Education to establish special teachers' schools for minorities (art. 221).[83] Simultaneously, the Ministry of Education confirmed the "right of publicity" of the confessional teachers' school in Sarata around 1 June 1939, which granted it a status close to that of a public school.[84] However, the ministerial decision specified that the diplomas issued by the school were valid only for confessional, and not for public schools.[85] Hence, it was clear that the Ministry intended to separate public and confessional teachers' training.

On Hedrich's proposal, Kräuter was appointed as school inspector for German-language schools on 15 June 1939. According to the newspapers of the German minority, Hedrich and the leaders of the Volksgemeinschaft in Bessarabia and Bukovina, Otto Broneske and Martin Runzer, had a meeting with Minister Andrei on the same day. The latter renewed his promises, and the representatives of the Volksgemeinschaft and the Minister agreed that the German school counsellors should submit proposals to Kräuter, who would communicate them to Andrei.[86]

Meanwhile, the chair of the Volksgemeinschaft Fabritius had become overly authoritarian and autonomist. His illegal actions included expanding the abovementioned *Nationale Arbeitsfront*. Prime Minister Călinescu did not want to take any steps on his own against Fabritius, so as not to provoke Germany.[87] Instead, he tried to bring the German minority into line with threats and promises. When Hedrich asked him on 22 July 1939 to resolve the issue of the school buildings in Bessarabia, Călinescu told him that the Volksgemeinschaft had first to get rid of the hurdles, so that they could establish a good relationship with the government.[88] Accordingly, after the Reich forced Fabritius to leave for Berlin in mid-

[82] *Monitorul Oficial*, no. 61, June 26, 1924, 8602-8629 (no. 2571, art. 7).
[83] *Monitorul Oficial*, no. 121, May 27, 1939, 3377-3393 (no. 2184).
[84] *Monitorul Oficial*, no. 57, March 10, 1926, (no. 611, art. 88-98).
[85] *Monitorul Oficial: Partea II-a*, no 124, June 1, 1939, 5293 (no. 72554/1939).
[86] „Bedeutungsvolle Entscheidungen des Unterrichtsministers: Bestellung eines deutschen Landesschulinspektors," *Siebenbürgisch-Deutsches Tageblatt*, June 17, 1939, 3; „Politische Übersicht," *Groß-Kokler Bote & Schäßburger Zeitung*, June 25, 1939, 1; *Monitorul Oficial*, no. 141, June 22, 1939, 4024 (no. 107879).
[87] *Die Rumäniendeutschen*, 576-579 (doc. 330).
[88] SJSAN, Comunitatea germanilor din România (348), dosar A71, 17-22: minute by Hans Hedrich, 24 July 1939.

August 1939[89] and Hedrich raised the "Bessarabian school issue" (*bessarabische Schulfrage*) on 30 August, Călinescu summoned Andrei[90] and informed Hedrich of his decision on 31 August,[91] that is, one day before the beginning of the new school year[92] and the German invasion of Poland. In agreement with Minister Andrei, all requests to establish confessional schools in Bessarabia were granted and all disputed school buildings and annexes were returned to the Evangelical Church, provided that the confessional schools would teach children to be loyal to the state.[93] Despite this decision, only the primary school buildings in 57 communes where confessional schools were to be established were returned by a decree-law "for the donation of some school buildings to the Lutheran-Evangelical parishes in Bessarabia", dated 19 September 1939.[94] In line with Călinescu's carrot-and-stick policy, the explanatory statement underscored that the "donation" was linked to the condition that the members of the communities concerned abide by the law and not plot against public order.[95] The permission to establish confessional schools in the "donated" buildings, dated 7 September 1939, was published on 23 September.[96] The authorisation for six additional confessional schools, dated 21 September 1939, was printed on 27 September.[97] Classes in the new building of the confessional teachers' school in Sarata, the Wernerschule, started on 15 September 1939[98] and the same presumably happened in the confessional schools in October 1939.[99]

A report by the German legation in Bucharest of 15 February 1940, which attributed the restitution of the school buildings to the foreign policy of the

[89] Paul Milata, *Zwischen Hitler, Stalin und Antonescu: Rumäniendeutsche in der Waffen-SS* (Köln: Böhlau, 2009), 43.

[90] SJSAN, Comunitatea germanilor din România (348), dosar D42, 1-3: minute by Hans Hedrich.

[91] SJSAN, Comunitatea germanilor din România (348), dosar D42, 3: minute by Hans Hedrich.

[92] „Der Schulbeginn an den Staatsschulen," *Siebenbürgisch-Deutsches Tageblatt*, August 15, 1939, 1.

[93] „Die Eröffnung deutscher Schulen und Rückgabe unseres Kirchenvermögens," *Deutsche Zeitung Bessarabiens*, September 6, 1939, 3; „Die deutschen Schulen in Bessarabien genehmigt," *Deutsches Volksblatt*, September 6, 1939, 2.

[94] *Monitorul Oficial*, no. 218, September 20, 1939, 5456 (no. 3425): „Decret-lege pentru donarea unor imobile școlare parohiilor lutherane-germane din Basarabia".

[95] *Monitorul Oficial*, no. 218, September 20, 1939, 5456 (no. 160627).

[96] *Monitorul Oficial*, no. 221, September 23, 1939, 5502 (no. 161617).

[97] *Monitorul Oficial*, no. 224, September 27, 1939, 5539-5540 (no. 170931).

[98] „Sarata," *Deutsche Zeitung Bessarabiens*, September 30, 1939, 3-4; *Jahrbuch (Kalender) der Deutschen Bessarabiens*, 1940, 209. For the items the pupils needed to own, cf. „Aus der Wernerschule," *Deutsche Zeitung Bessarabiens*, September 13, 1939, 3.

[99] „Wiedereröffnung des Unterrichts in deutschen Schulen Bessarabiens," *Siebenbürgisch-Deutsches Tageblatt*, November 1, 1939, 1.

Reich and particularly to the Molotov–Ribbentrop pact, did not mention the reintroduction of German-language education in public schools in Southern Bessarabia.[100] On the contrary, in two German communes, Borodino and Culm/Kulm, where new ethnic Romanian teachers had been appointed on 23 August 1939,[101] no confessional schools were authorised. It would therefore seem that Romanianization went on even during the school year 1939-1940. Only by way of a ministerial order of 15 March 1940 the furniture and the registers of the retroceded schools were handed over, while the state kept their archives. In late March 1940, the district consistory was still planning to open another 17 confessional schools.[102] However, after the Soviet takeover of Bessarabia from 28 to 30 June 1940, the fate of the local Germans was sealed. Starting from 15 September 1940, the Reich resettled them to the territories it controlled.

In conclusion, neither the national-liberal government, nor the regime of King Carol II complied with the 28 October 1920 treaty between the principal allied powers and Romania respecting Bessarabia. Both the national-liberal government and the regime of King Carol II obstructed public and confessional German-language education in Southern Bessarabia. The national-liberal government took reparatory measures in autumn 1937, but the regime of King Carol II reversed them. The rapprochement between Romania and Germany under this regime had little, if any, impact on German-language education in Southern Bessarabia. The regime did not make palpable concessions to the Germans in Southern Bessarabia until September 1939. Even then, it did not return all of the confiscated school buildings and seemingly further pursued the Romanianization of the local Germans.

This policy was at odds with the authorisation of German sections in Sălaj and Satu-Mare counties as early as late 1938.[103] In these counties bordering Hungary, the regime was interested in "re-Germanising" Magyarised Swabians and allowed for a certain development of German language and culture, in order to remove the group from Hungary's influence. The discrepancy in the regime's policy at the opposite ends of the country underscores how it disregarded its duties under the treaties of 9 December 1919 and 28 October 1920 as long as it was not facing pressure by another state. While the German group in Bessarabia was treated worse than that in Sălaj and Satu-Mare counties and

[100] Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amts, RAV Czernowitz, Paket 3/1: the German minister plenipotentiary to the Auswärtiges Amt, 15 February 1940.

[101] *Monitorul Oficial*, no. 194, August 24, 1939, 5090-5091 (no. 151273).

[102] Cornelia Schlarb, *Tradition im Wandel. Die evangelisch-lutherischen Gemeinden in Bessarabien 1814-1940* (Köln/Weimar/Wien: Böhlau, 2007), 479-480.

[103] „Lehrerernennungen," Sathmarer Schwabenpost, Dezember 20, 1938, 8.

while Carol II's flirt with Hitler apparently did not impact the regime's policy towards this group, it still held a better status than the ethno-linguistic minorities that lacked a powerful patron. Thus, the Ukrainians in Northern Bukovina and in Bessarabia were denied an education in their language up to 1940.

Eventually, the stance of the national-liberal government and the regime of King Carol II reveals not only their disregard for international engagements pertaining to minorities, but also their lack of pragmatism. They appear not to have seen an advantage in transforming the Germans in Southern Bessarabia into assets against Soviet propaganda and agitation. German settlers in Southern Bessarabia had helped crush a Soviet-led rebellion in 1924.[104] The influence of national-socialism turned the local Germans even more against Bolshevism. However, the national-liberal government and the regime of King Carol II chose to alienate these Germans by trying to Romanianise them rather than secure their loyalty through a favourable cultural policy.

Rezumat

Articolul examinează situația învățământului de limbă germană în Basarabia de sud în ultimii ani ai stăpânirii românești, înainte de trecerea provinciei sub puterea sovietică în iunie 1940 și a deplasării populației germane locale ce a urmat în septembrie 1940. Articolul arată că nici guvernul național-liberal (1933-1938), nici regimul personal al regelui Carol al II-lea (1938-1940) nu au respectat tratatul dintre principalele puteri aliate și România cu privire la Basarabia din 28 octombrie 1920, acord ce le dădea cetățenilor români de etnie germană dreptul de a deschide și de a administra școli și de a utiliza limba germană în cadru educațional. Atât guvernul național-liberal cât și regimul personal al lui Carol al II-lea au împiedicat educația publică și confesională de limbă germană din Basarabia de sud. Nu au retrocedat clădirile școlare confiscate în 1936 și nu au autorizat deschiderea de școli de limbă germană. Abia în septembrie 1939 regimul regelui Carol al II-lea le-a făcut concesii concrete germanilor din Basarabia de sud, se pare drept rezultat al plecării conducătorului autonomist al comunității germane din România. Însă, chiar și atunci, statul român nu a dat înapoi toate clădirile școlare confiscate și, după toate aparențele, a continuat românizarea germanilor locali.

Cuvinte-cheie: Învățământ, minorități, germani basarabeni, politica de românizare, regimul lui Carol al II-lea.

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[104] Schmidt, *Die Deutschen*, 92.

"The Future Belongs to Engineers"? The "Production" of Engineers in Romania, 1881 – 1939*

Dragoș SDROBIȘ

Abstract

The study aims to trace the numerical evolution of the engineering profession until 1939 focusing on the social and economic dimension. In this sense, my approach relies on the theory of professionalisation, the basic premise being that the profession is a constructed social identity and a social mobility elevator created by the state. According to this theory, the development of a specific educational training system is an essential prerequisite in this process. The study also discusses the main traits of polytechnic education in Romania, with a special focus on the Polytechnic School in Bucharest. Finally, the study analyzes the situation of the engineers' body in Romania during 1938, using data extracted from the Asociația Generală a Inginerilor fron România [The General Association of Engineers in Romania] (AGIR) yearbook, with the aim of highlighting the contribution of polytechnic schools in Romania to the numerical development of the engineering profession. The preliminary conclusion of this study is that engineers prepared the ground for the development of a new approach to economics, society, and politics that contributed to the increasing role played by the state in the late 1930s.

Keywords: higher education, engineers, Polytechnic School of Bucharest, AGIR, polytechnic students.

A profession for building a country: Introduction

In his memoirs, Constantin Argetoianu, a famous politician of Greater Romania with a style full of irony, recounts the only meeting he ever had with one of the founders of modern Romania, Ion C. Brătianu. This brief meeting took place in the late 1880s when the Liberal leader served as prime minister. It was the period of the "great liberal government" (1876-1888), during which Romania gained its independence and the kingdom was proclaimed. This era was all about a new beginning, during which everything was to be built from scratch.

What impression did the meeting with the Prime Minister of independent Romania leave on the young Argetoianu? "All the way he made nothing but jokes, telling all kinds of anecdotes. He asked me if I liked school (I was in 5th or 6th grade, I don't remember well) and if I had decided on a career. <<You should become an engineer, boy, because the future belongs to engineers. We

* The author would like to thank to the anonymous reviewer, and to Andrei Cușco and Petru Negură for their helpful comments and suggestions.

have a lot to build and we don't have professionals. We can't achieve anything with our arms alone. We also need people with a sound head, clever ones!>>"[1], thus ended the Prime Minister his exhortation for the young student.

For young Argetoianu, the Prime Minister's urgings did not matter much. He studied law in Paris, pursuing a career in diplomacy for a while. Instead, all three sons of Ion C. Brătianu – Ionel, Constantin, and Vintilă – studied engineering in France. Ion C. Brătianu's daughter, Sabina (married Cantacuzino), later remembered the dispute between her parents regarding the career path the family's three sons were to follow. Her mother was convinced that Ionel, for example, due to his elegant eloquence, would be suitable for a lawyer's career, a profession thanks to which "he will eliminate poverty from our home". Brătianu the father was totally against such a scenario: "It is the only profession I forbid my boys to choose, under the threat of curses and disinheritance. No conscience resists the temptations of pleas and political debates. In the Chamber (of Deputies), the lawyers made my days miserable enough"[2].

At the end of the nineteenth century, during the apex of the Second Industrial Revolution, the engineer embodied progress. Upward social mobility – as a characteristic feature of modernity – fascinated many young people, who hurried to dedicate themselves to the profession of 'building' reality. Elie Radu, for example, a famous Romanian engineer, was deeply impressed by the comfortable train journey between Vereşti and Iaşi in 1871. He was only 18 years old, and it was then that he decided to become an engineer. He studied in Belgium, graduating from the Polytechnic School in Brussels[3], and, after returning to his homeland, he supported the creation of the National School of Bridges and Roads. A similar case, highlighting the fascination for science and technology, was that of the liberal leader Eugeniu Carada, who seems to have "had a taste and a particular skill for engineering". That was why he regretted that he did not pursue any studies in this field. His only consolation was that he occasionally read scientific papers[4].

Engineering modernity

This article aims to trace and examine the development of engineering studies until 1939. In this sense, my approach will be based on the theory of profes-

[1] Constantin Argetoianu, *Pentru cei de mâine* (Bucharest: Humanitas, 1991, vol. I), 177.

[2] Sabina Cantacuzino, *Din viaţa familiei I.C. Brătianu 1821-1891*, 3rd edition, ed. Elisabeta Simion (Bucharest: Humanitas, 2013), 149.

[3] Petre Trofin, "Profesorul Elie Radu mare inginer constructor," *Construcţii. Revistă de informare şi dezbatere tehnică şi economică*, no. 11 (1986): 26.

[4] Cantacuzino, *Din viaţa familiei I.C. Brătianu*, 116.

sionalisation. The basic premise is that the profession is a constructed social identity and a social mobility elevator created by the state[5].

In western historiography, studies on the profile of the engineer were revived in the 1980s by the French historian and sociologist André Grélon[6]. In his opinion, the reassessment of the figure of the engineer had to be done by analyzing six defining aspects: "les représentations publiques des ingénieurs; leurs fonctions; leur rapport à l'innovation; leurs modes de raisonnement; leurs formes d'organisation; enfin, le développement de la formation des ingénieurs"[7]. Using both the tools of the historian and those of the sociologist, André Grélon aimed to capture the dynamism and the comprehensive profile of this new social and professional typology.

Based on this approach, I focus on how the Romanian case illustrated the last defining feature mentioned by Grélon in connection with the professionalisation of engineers, i.e., the development of their educational training system in Romania. In this sense, I examine the characteristic features of technical education in Romania – from the proclamation of the kingdom in 1881 until the establishment of the royal dictatorship in 1938; I discuss the academic life inside the Polytechnic school. Finally, I focus on the statistical aspect regarding the engineers "created" by the superior technical institutions in Romania.

Thereby, my approach opens up new directions of exploration and research. First, my article aims to broaden the analysis of the Romanian higher education system. Romanian historiography traditionally privileged the level of univer-

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[5] There are many theories regarding the evolution of professions in industrial societies, from Abraham Flexner's "canonic" definition of profession to the theory of "system of professions", formulated by Andrew Abbott in 1988. A recent work which provides an insight into the evolution of theories of professionalisation is Claude Dubar, Pierre Tripier, Valérie Boussard, *Sociologie des professions*, 3rd edition (Paris: Armand Colin, 2011). Its main conclusion is that all activities tend to evolve and to become professional. Therefore, a history of professions should not rely on and limit itself to the history of education and transfer of knowledge, since such an approach would be nothing more than a tautology. A sociological history of professions should reveal the moments of interaction between different social groups struggling to achieve a new and secure social status: "Ce n'est pas seulement ni d'abord l'activité du travailleur qui fait sa profession, mais sa reconnaissance, toujours à reconquérir, par tous ses partenaires" (Dubar, Tripier, Boussard, *Sociologie des professions*, 320).

[6] See the special issue of *Culture technique* (no. 12) from 1984, suggestively titled "Les ingénieurs". It was coordinated by André Grélon, who has since developed a new direction in the field of sociology of professions. Professor André Grélon holds the chair of *Sociologie des professions techniques* at L'École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales (Paris).

[7] Gouzévitch, Irina et al., "Introduction. « L'ingénieur dans tous ses états »: l'essor d'un champ de recherche pluridisciplinaire et transnational," *Quaderns d'història de l'enginyeria* XV (2016): 4.

sity studies, especially the humanities[8]. Given the fact that the historiographic rehabilitation of the interwar period after 1990 also implied the recuperation of a "lost generation" (symbolised through the triad of Mircea Eliade – Emil Cioran – Eugène Ionesco), and since political radicalism was closely related to the activity of student circles, the university became a legitimate, even fascinating, subject of inquiry. For some historians, the university seems to have "contained" all the ingredients of a pre- and interwar Romanian "microcosm", covering issues such as upward social mobility, the rise of political extremism or the building of a new society in the aftermath of World War I. For this type of research, the work of Irina Livezeanu is still a fundamental reference.

The second aim of the article is to evaluate the role of (higher) education in the professionalisation process in Romania. Analysts of the educational architecture and social reform projects from the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth century described this period as a time of crisis for educational systems, with many voices claiming to "orientate higher education towards practical knowledge and useful careers for the public good"[9]. This crisis was purportedly caused by the introduction of the compulsory education system, the change of the model of social elite reproduction (i.e., the transition from the aristocratic pattern to a democratic mechanism of elite selection) and the need to adapt the existing schools to the new requirements of industrial societies. This was the moment when pedagogy became a subject of international debates since such exchanges and transfers were viewed as a prerequisite for achieving prosperity and progress: "During the 19th century, the construction of a complex and coordinated educational system, which included a wide range of school levels based on sex, social origin, religion, age, individual skills or merit, became the general

[8] In the communist historiography, the subject of (interwar) universities was tackled in a propagandistic manner, in order to reveal the failures of the bourgeois system, which led to the proliferation of fascism in Greater Romania. See, for example, the works of Stelian Neagoe, *Triumful raţiunii împotriva violenţei. Viaţa universitară ieşeană interbelică* (Iaşi: Junimea Publishing House, 1977) and *Viaţa universitară clujeană interbelică*, 2 vol. (Cluj-Napoca: Dacia Publishing House, 1980). After 1990, the topic was discussed în the framework of fascism studies focusing on Romania, for instance in: Zigu Ornea, *Anii 1930. Extrema dreaptă interbelică* (Bucharest: Fundaţia Culturală Română Publishing House, 1995); Irina Livezeanu, *Cultură şi naţionalism în România Mare 1918-1930* (Bucharest: Humanitas Publishing House, 1998); Marta Petreu, *Diavolul şi ucenicul său: Nae Ionescu – Mihail Sebastian* (Iaşi: Polirom Publishing House, 2009). A sociological approach was developed by Lucian Nastasă in his *"Suveranii" universităţilor româneşti. Mecanisme de selecţie şi promovare a elitei intelectuale. Profesorii Facultăţilor de Filosofie şi Litere 1864-1948* (Cluj-Napoca: Limes Publishing House, 2007).

[9] Walter Rüegg, "Themes," in, *A History of the University in Europe. Vol. III: Universities in the 19th and early 20th centuries 1800-1945*, edited by Walter Rüegg (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 3.

long-term trend characterising most of the European school systems"[10]. Educational decision-makers thus aimed at a deeper understanding of the process of "segmentation of the education system" (Fritz Ringer). This fragmentation was viewed as a consequence of the universalisation of the pedagogical activity (that became free and compulsory) and of the school's adaptation to the new socio-economic reality (industrialisation, increasing social mobility). In his analysis, Fritz Ringer looked into the "educational transformations of the late 19th and early 20th centuries primarily in terms of their *social effects*, rather than primarily in terms of their *economic causes*"[11]. Ringer's approach mostly relied on Pierre Bourdieu's theory of elites' social reproduction. The turn of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries witnessed an important growth of students' enrollments in secondary and higher education institutions. However, this did not lead to an educational revolution in terms of students' social origin.

For the young people with a 'lower' social background in Romania between 1881 and 1939, higher education was more than just a stage in their studies. Higher education was increasingly conceived as a 'social elevator', granting privileged access to a professional career. The first question that arises in this context is the following: what were the rationales and motivations that pushed them towards a certain field of study? And, consequently, did the state have a clear policy for the recruiting and development of the elite, of what we call today "human capital"? Or was it simply a "segmentation of education", thus perpetuating the socio-cultural gaps within the population? From the perspective of these questions, the analysis of technical higher education can serve as a tool for evaluating the effectiveness of Romania's general educational policies. Additionally, a focus on the public perception of the engineers can reveal some interesting insights about what it meant to be an engineer in modern(ising) Romania.

The engineer: a "strange" profile in an agrarian society

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, the engineer was indeed a strange – somewhat exotic – figure in the Romanian lands, since this area was far away from the epicenter of the industrial revolution. Nevertheless, technol-

[10] Damiano Matasci, "International Congresses of Education and the Circulation of Pedagogical Knowledge in Western Europe, 1876–1910," in *Shaping the transnational sphere: experts, networks and issues from the 1840s to the 1930s*, edited by Davide Rodogno, Bernhard Struck and Jakob Vogel [Contemporary European history series, volume 14] (New York-Oxford: Berghahn Publishing House, 2015), 222, 231.

[11] Fritz Ringer, "Introduction," in *The Rise of the Modern Educational System. Structural Change and Social Reproduction 1870 – 1920*, edited by Detlef K. Müller, Fritz Ringer, Brian Simon, 3rd edition (London – Paris: Cambridge University Press & Editions de la Maison des Sciences de l'Homme, 1989), 3.

ogy began to attract many young people from the Principalities of Moldavia and Wallachia. Among the first Romanians who completed technical studies abroad, we find Alexandru Golescu, a graduate in 1839 of the École Centrale des Arts et Manufactures in Paris. After his return to his homeland, he discovered that his new profession did not enjoy much esteem, since "the peasants laughed and said that the boyar became a road measurement worker"[12]. The first Romanian mining engineer seems to have been Ion Ghica, who graduated from the École nationale supérieure des mines in Paris in 1841, while the first local architect was Alexandru Orăscu, a graduate of the Polytechnic School in Berlin. Orăscu is also known for designing the plans for the building of the University of Bucharest.

Among the first internally generated attempts to organise an engineering system of education, the project of Petrache Poenaru should be mentioned. After almost 10 years of study abroad (especially in France, where he had studied topographic engineering), Petrache Poenaru was commissioned in 1831 by Pavel Kiseleff, the Russian Governor of the Romanian Principalities (1829-1834), to draft a plan for organising a modern higher education system. Inspired by the Enlightenment ideas, with which he had come into contact in the French capital, Poenaru saw education as an essential factor in the development of Romanian society. He was also inspired by the French model in his project for the organisation of higher education in Wallachia. However, due to the lack of a local tradition for such an education, Poenaru had to implement his system under the label of "special courses". He also gave up the project for establishing a medical school, while the project of a high school focusing on the sciences ultimately resulted in "applied mathematics". The purpose of the latter school was to train civil engineers. Four years later, in 1835, applied mathematics courses were inaugurated at St. Sava College in Bucharest, where "engineers and topometry specialists were to be trained since these are much-needed professions in the country at a time when each of the boyars wanted to delimit and to have an exact plan of their estates" [13]. Starting with 1837, the first graduates of agronomic engineer's courses (*ingineri hotarnici*) trained in Wallachia would enter the local economy. It seems that, in an agrarian society, the only purpose of the engineer was to simply measure the land.

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[12] Ion Ionescu, "Istoricul învăţământului ingineresc în România până la înfiinţarea şcolilor politehnice," in *Şcoala Politehnică din Bucureşti. Aniversarea a 75 de ani de învăţământ tehnic în România, 50 de ani de la reorganizarea Şcolii Naţionale de Poduri şi Şosele, 10 ani de la înfiinţarea Şcolii Politehnice* (Bucharest: Cartea Românească, 1931), 148.

[13] George Potra, *Petrache Poenaru, ctitor al învăţământului în ţara noastră* (Bucharest: Editura Ştiinţifică, 1963), 100, 118.

Only after 1859 – the year of the Romanian state's foundation through the union of Moldavia and Wallachia – did the profile of the engineer began to claim to be recognised as a distinct profession in Romanian society. In 1866, P.S. Aurelian edited the *Politecnicul* magazine, which was followed nine years later by a similar project initiated by Petru Davidelu – the *Inginerul* magazine. These were timid and disjointed attempts to consolidate an engineering ethos in the Romanian context. What were the reasons for which technical studies were essentially ignored in the Romanian space, while many youngsters devoted themselves to a legal career? To answer this question, a long-term explanation is required, which would take into account the medieval heritage of the Romanian society and the agrarian background of the economy. These were features shared by all the societies in Eastern Europe in the eighteenth century. This region was a periphery of Western Europe that had to face disruptive transformations when confronted by the capitalist economy[14].

"The diploma and the job": the origin of the appetite for legal studies

The origin of this situation is to be found in the provisions of the Treaty of Adrianople of 1829, which opened the Romanian agrarian production to international trade. Although profitable in the first stage, it seems that international trade profoundly affected the social and economic status of the Romanian political elites. The solution preferred by the latter was to build the modern Romanian state as a mechanism for defending their own social and economic status. One of the most important analysts of this phenomenon was Ștefan Zeletin, who emphasised the consequences of the Treaty of Adrianople for the local society as a whole: entering in the area of international trade meant the transformation of peasant labor into a commodity, with the boyars seeking to secure their economic status along with their social and political privileges. This is how Ștefan Zeletin attempted to explain the elite's propensity for state careers. In Zeletin's own words, "Romanians did not become bureaucrats either out of pleasure or out of lack of dexterity for productive work [...]; they were forced to seek refuge

[14] See Andrew C. Janos, *East Central Europe in Modern World. The Politics of the Borderlands from pre- to post-Communism* (Stanford, Staford University Press, 2000). In his analysis, Janos pursue the theory of "great transformation" of Karl Polanyi, showing that the elite in underdeveloped agrarian societies from Eastern and Central Europe were "contaminated" by the extrinsic forces of Western developed societies, like consumption and fashion. The main problem of the elite in this part of Europe was that the "patterns of consumption were incongruous with existing modes of production", degenerating into a "development of the underdevelopment" (Janos, *East Central Europe in Modern World*, 61).

in this parasitic occupation because urban production had been ruined"[15] by the economic contacts with the Western countries. Recent studies have shown that the impact of the Treaty of Adrianople did not actually play such an important role in the rise of cereal exports from Moldavia and Wallachia, since Romanian exports increased especially after 1860[16]. The problem was that the rising cereal exports after 1860 coincided with a fall in cereal prices in Western Europe, and in particular in Great Britain, the main European importer of Romanian grain[17]. This resulted in the impoverishment of the Romanian peasant, who was forced to supply a greater production, usually through extensive agriculture, i.e., more labor. The winners were about 5,000 landlords, who held more than half of the agricultural area of the Old Kingdom in 1905[18].

Such a nefarious economic development of agrarian relations in the countryside played a major role in the underdevelopment of the urban centers. The exports of cereals were conceived as a mechanism of value extraction for the benefit of the tiny elite, hampering the industrialisation process. The local bourgeoisie had no place in the "chain of exports": "Thus, while the history of the modern Western state may well be described as one of the rising middle classes in quest of larger national markets, the history of the peripheral states is one of the declining middle classes trying to escape the vagaries of the market and hoping to find safe haven in political, rather than economic, entrepreneurship"[19].

Some statistics on the development of the bureaucratic apparatus in Eastern Europe are relevant in this regard. Hungary, a country with a population of about 14 million in 1867 (as part of the bi-cephalous monarchy of Austria-Hungary), had 16,000 civil servants, but their number reached approx. 98,000 in 1900, and almost 120,000 in 1910, in a context in which the population increased by only 20%. Around 1890, Romania had approx. 87,000 civil servants, for a total population of about 8 million inhabitants. By 1902, the body of civil servants reached approx. 102,000 and, in 1912, there were more than 139,000. In the Eastern European agrarian societies, "public employment is said to have exceeded 5 percent of the total labor force, compared to 1.5 percent for Germany and 0.9 percent for England and Wales"[20]. The main problem was, therefore,

[15] Ștefan Zeletin, *Burghezia română. Neoliberalismul*, edited by Cristian Preda (Bucharest: Nemira, 1997), 175-176.

[16] Bogdan Murgescu, *România și Europa. Acumularea decalajelor economice 1500 – 2010* (Iași: Polirom, 2010), 121.

[17] Murgescu, *România și Europa*, 122.

[18] Murgescu, *România și Europa*, 126.

[19] Janos, *East Central Europe in the Modern World*, 66.

[20] Janos, *East Central Europe in the Modern World*, 87.

that this large number of bureaucrats was in contradiction with the low degree of economic development and, implicitly, with the absence of social complexity. In addition to these two drawbacks, the financial demands of this *sui generis* social class were far beyond the financial capabilities of these peripheral economies. The resources needed to maintain this class varied between 25 and 40% of the budget of the respective countries. To this, the mechanisms of fundraising – legal or illegal – practised by economic entrepreneurs or even politicians should be added.

Mihai Eminescu called this new category the "proletarians of the pen" (*proletari ai condeiului*). In the public eye, an equivalence between "diploma and job" emerged. Holding a university degree – preferably received abroad – meant securing a career in the state apparatus. The statement attributed to Petre P. Carp, according to which "the Romanian is born a scholarship holder, lives as a civil servant and dies as a retiree of the Romanian state" was not far from the truth.

The brief contextual picture presented above explains the interest of young people in south-eastern Europe for a legal career. Such a trajectory all but guaranteed the prerequisites of social prestige, political or administrative upward mobility, and, implicitly, of financial security. Reasons for this situation are also to be found beyond the borders of the Old Kingdom, and even outside the agrarian-based south-east European economy. In France, for instance, the reputation of the legal profession increased following the introduction of higher educational standards, especially after 1870. The compulsory classical baccalaureate, with Latin as a mandatory discipline in legal studies, along with its intrinsic theoretical approach, made the legal career a special choice in the Third French Republic. Even so, it soon became a professional path that had to moderate its democratic tendencies through a meritocratic filter. Thus, financial lack of interest and high educational standards contributed to strengthening the legal career as a distinct source of identity in the new world of liberal professions[21]. The same state of affairs was to be found in German society, where engineers viewed themselves as discriminated against by the old professions, which benefited from greater social prestige. This was obvious in the professional structure of the state bureaucracy, dominated by law graduates. Engineers found themselves in an inferior position concerning the humanities since the latter had a better reputation within public opinion[22].

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[21] Julie Fette, *Exclusions. Practicing Prejudice in French Law and Medicine, 1920-1945*, (Ithaca&London: Cornell University Press, 2012), 16.

[22] Wolfgang König, "Education and Social Standing: German Engineers, 1870-1930," *L'ingénieur dans tous ses états»: l'essor d'un champ de recherche pluridisciplinaire et transnational. «Quaderns d'història de l'enginyeria»*, vol. XV (2016): 113-121.

At the outbreak of World War I, after more than eight decades of economic contacts with the West, Romania was a rather poor state. Even if modernisation had become an irreversible project, the effects of this phenomenon were rather unequal in a country situated on the periphery of the capitalist economic system. A predominantly agrarian economy, in which rural income inequality was at very high levels, existed against the background of a social landscape dominated by an oversized administrative apparatus, often perceived as useless and as a source of political corruption. As N. Xenopol remarked in a 1916 paper devoted to Romania's national wealth, Romanian society appeared "in an unfavourable light: a rather small class of the rich; alongside some very rich people, owning huge agricultural or forestry estates, financial institutions, and large commercial or industrial companies, thus enjoying very large profits; a small middle class; in the countryside, next to a class of wealthy peasants – whose number, fortunately, increases every year – we encounter a large mass of peasants and agricultural laborers, with a precarious financial situation; finally, throughout the whole country, we find a large number of public servants living on low-wages"[23].

Delineating the "space for crafting engineers"

Precisely to differentiate themselves in this landscape in which everything depended on the state budget, the Romanian engineers had started to build another public image of themselves, which was supposed to reveal a new and practical utilitarianism. The "Strousberg affair"[24] was a crucial moment for the engineering profession. By cancelling the railway concession granted to the German group Strousberg, Romania laid the foundations of a state company that needed professionals in order to accomplish the mission of merging the two halves of the country through railroads. The Romanian engineers took over the construction process of the railway network in the Old Kingdom. This was one of the reasons for which engineers demanded state support in setting up, protecting, and promoting this new profession. Their main argument was the work they could point to as the result of their efforts: the first railway built entirely by Romanian engineers (the Buzău – Mărășești

[23] N. Xenopol, *La Richesse de la Roumanie*, apud Gheorghe Iacob, *Modernizarea României 1859-1939. Legislație și strategie economică* (Iași: Editura Universității „Al.I. Cuza", 2012), 19-20.

[24] In 1868, Romania hired the Prussian group Strousberg to build the railroad Iași – Galați – Bucharest – Turnu-Severin, which was supposed to link Northern and Southern Romania through the capital city, Bucharest. For a brief overview of the political, economic and diplomatic dimensions of this affair, see Constantin Botez, *Epopeea feroviară românească* (Bucharest: Sport-Turism, 1977), 80-93.

line, 1881), the Cernavodă bridge built by Anghel Saligny (1895) or the modernisation of the Constanța harbor, including building silos (1904-1909), under the coordination of the same great Romanian engineer. All three projects were essential assets for a country that depended on cereal exports. Unlike the excessive bureaucratic class, which had taken over the state budget, engineers justified their claims by the fact that their work upheld and promoted an essential social value, i.e., the well-being of the community. It should be noted here that the same argument had been used by French engineers in 1828 when they were recognised by the state as an independent profession. The main justification of the latter was that engineering "c'est l'art de diriger les grandes sources de pouvoir de la nature pour l'usage et le bien-être des hommes"[25]. In industrialised countries like Great Britain, France or Germany, the phenomenon of professionalisation that began in the nineteenth century was closely intertwined with economic development. It thus became a relevant chapter in the historiography of "useful science"[26].

In 1864, the courses of the School of Bridges, Roads, Mines, and Architecture in Bucharest were inaugurated. The school's purpose was the training of specialists who were supposed to fulfill technical functions in the bureaucratic apparatus of the Romanian state. Due to the lack of students (especially in the architecture department), the institution rapidly declined. From 1867, the institution was known as the School of Bridges and Roads, with a dwindling number of students who enrolled and graduated. The engineer Scarlat Vârnav, the former director of the school, remarked in 1888 that "the school established in 1864 cannot be viewed, in any way, as a proof of progress, [since] the student body was admitted and evaluated based on a curriculum of very elementary notions of science, [thus] leaving the school without sufficient technical knowledge". For those who did graduate, professional training consisted mainly of "the practice they performed as graduates"[27]. Because of this situation, the first series of graduates of the School of Bridges and Roads were subjected to a 6-year internship in the service of public works, followed by a special examination which allowed them to be admitted to the main body of state engineers. The School of Bridges and Roads had the status of a secondary school, not of a higher education institution.

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[25] Dubar, Tripier, Boussard, *Sociologie des professions*, 81.

[26] Mina Kleiche-Dray et Roland Waast, "Introduction: De la science moderne et de son expansion," in *Les ancrages nationaux de la science mondiale XVIIIe-XXIe siècles*, coordinated by Mina Kleiche-Dray (Paris: Éditions des archives contemporaines, 2018), X.

[27] Apud Nicolae Șt. Noica, *Școala Națională de Poduri și Șosele – 125 de ani* (Bucharest: Vremea, 2010), 14-15.

Legislative initiatives to create a technical school in Bucharest, put forward between 1859 and 1881, were thwarted by financial shortages, and by the fact that young people chose to study in France or Prussia/Germany to obtain the engineering degree. Moreover, foreign companies entrusted with performing large public works projects (especially railways) came to Romania with their foreign-educated engineers, which also slowed the development of technical higher education in the country. Finally, it should be noted that Romania remained an autonomous state under Ottoman rule until 1881. Therefore, establishing economic relations or building railroads were tasks to be implemented with the help of the political powers in Europe at that time, as was the case with the Strousberg company. Such an approach had consequences in the development of modern technical and economic education. The proclamation of independence opened a new chapter in this process of developing an engineering system of education.

"Grounding" superior technical education in Romania: The National School of Bridges and Roads

After 1881, an important role in the reorganisation of the National School of Bridges and Roads (NSBR) in Bucharest was played by the Moldavian engineer Gheorghe Duca, who aimed to train engineers for the state public services. He introduced a new organisation of the educational process that would provide a more rigorous selection of the candidates for such a career on a meritocratic basis. He strengthened the school's staff by appointing several important names to the positions of mathematics teachers. Among them were Spiru Haret and D. Emmanuel, the first Romanians who received doctoral degrees in mathematics from the Sorbonne; Anghel Saligny as a professor of the bridges course; C. Istrati as the instructor for the chemistry course; Constantin Coandă etc[28].

Consequently, a rigorous selection at the entrance exams followed, which initially caused a decrease in the number of candidates. A first measure that would stimulate the social prestige of this field of study was implemented starting with 1885, when military courses were introduced, which provided the graduates with the option to become military engineers. The same year, the wearing of the uniform was introduced, and the prefects were assigned the rank of sergeants-major. On May 10th – Romania's national holiday – the students of NSBR marched in front of the king, which strengthened the positive public perception of this school[29].

[28] Ionescu, "Istoricul învățământului ingineresc în România până la înființarea școlilor politehnice," 187.

[29] Ionescu, "Istoricul învățământului ingineresc în România până la înființarea școlilor politehnice," 190.

The military *esprit* of engineering education was not limited to a mere public façade. The regime of rigid and severe discipline introduced by Gheorghe Duca was reflected at all levels of the students' lives: the quality of the papers and drawings was evaluated, weighting the average grade of the exams. Scholarships were awarded not only as a result of assessing the material conditions of the students but also for the outstanding "merit and diligence of the student"[30]. After 1890, the essential prerequisite for admission became the baccalaureate diploma (except for those who attended the preparatory one-year courses). From 1890 onwards, graduates with a diploma awarded by the School were allowed to be immediately employed as engineers in the Technical Corps of the country[31]. The decree-law of 1890 that regulated the conditions of admission to the State Technical Corps was elaborated by the Minister of Public Works, Alexandru Marghiloman. The engineering diplomas entitled the graduates of NSBR to the degree of 3rd class engineers within the State Technical Corps. The certificates of competence issued by the same institution allowed their enrollment as a "student engineer" (*elev inginer)*. Finally, the diplomas issued to public works supervisors gave graduates the right to be classified as a 3rd class conductor in the State Technical Corps[32].

Regarding the graduates that had studied abroad, their diplomas and certificates had to be confirmed and endorsed by a jury composed of the director and 6 professors of NSBR[33]. In the initial draft of the law, it was specified that the graduates should come from institutions "similar to the School of Bridges and Roads". Since the specialisation of the school in Bucharest focused on training road and bridge engineers, the provisions of the law prevented the recognition of the diplomas awarded for other specialisations, such as architecture, mining engineering, or mechanical engineering. This inconvenience was removed in 1892, when Constantin P. Olănescu (1891-1895), an engineer and

[30] Nicolae Vasilescu-Karpen, "Dare de seamă asupra învățământului în Școala Politehnică din București", in *Școala Politehnică din București. Aniversarea a 75 de ani de învățământ tehnic în România, 50 de ani de la reorganizarea Școlii Naționale de Poduri și Șosele, 10 ani de la înființarea Școlii Politehnice* (Bucharest: Cartea Românească, 1931), 187. A similar article was published on the occasion of the semi-centenary of The Polytechnic Society in Romania,1931. See Nicolae Vasilescu-Karpen, "Învățământul tehnic în România," *Istoricul dezvoltării tehnice în România. Buletinul Societății Politehnice*, year XLV, no. 12 (December 1931): 2297-2234.

[31] Ionescu, "Istoricul învățământului ingineresc în România până la înființarea școlilor politehnice," 105-210.

[32] Ionescu, "Istoricul învățământului ingineresc în România până la înființarea școlilor politehnice," 191.

[33] Arhivele Naționale Istorice Centrale (ANIC), *Fund Ministerul Lucrărilor Publice. Școala de Poduri și Șosele*, file 4/1892, 78-79.

a member of the Conservative Party, headed the Ministry of Public Works. In a memorandum sent to King Carol I, Olănescu drew the king's attention to the fact that the law of 1890 did not allow the inclusion of graduates of various special schools from abroad into the State Technical Corps, although the Romanian state lacked, for example, mechanical or mining engineers. As a result, according to a new decree-law issued on April 21, 1892, the phrase "similar to the national school of bridges and roads" was deleted, to allow the recognition and confirmation of these diplomas and the inclusion in the State Technical Corps of engineers that graduated abroad of various specialisations that did not exist in the curriculum of NSBR[34].

Two years later, a new law on the organisation of the Technical Corps, supervised by the Ministry of Public Works (a body composed only of engineers and foremen) stipulated, in Article 6, the official positions that engineering graduates could fill in the service of the Romanian state, depending on their graduation averages: "Those with a diploma bearing the qualification *very well* or *well* were entitled to serve as ordinary engineers 3rd class, while those with *sufficient* qualification received the degree of engineer-trainee" [35].

The economic crisis that affected Romania in 1899 – 1901 led to a decrease in the rhythm of public building projects, which, in turn, impacted the activity of NSBR. The new director, C. Mironescu, while trying to reinvigorate technical education, introduced some new industrial courses, with the explicit purpose to offer the school's graduates job opportunities in the private sector

[34] ANIC, *Fund Ministerul Lucrărilor Publice. Școala de Poduri și Șosele*, file 4/1892, 81-82. The jury rejected, on May 15th, 1892 the request of a graduate from Vienna Higher Technical School. The main reason was that the petitioner had presented only a certificate of graduation (*absolutorium*), which did not provide any academic degree. Also, the specialisation of the graduate was a good reason for the refusal of the jury to adjudicate: "Since we do not have any program for admission as an Architect in the service of the State, we cannot decide whether Mr. Ion Pamfilie has the title of architect or not". Instead, another application from a graduate in architecture of the Munich Polytechnic School, submitted in November 1892, received the following resolution: "Diploma in the field of architecture of Mr. [...] can be equated, at most, to a curriculum degree of our conductor-designers' school". The jury also rejected the application of a graduate of the School of Mines in Paris, who "could not have obtained the diploma of mining civil engineer [in France] with the grades shown in this certificate, and, therefore, cannot be enrolled as an engineer in the Technical Corps of the State" (ANIC, *Fund Ministerul Lucrărilor Publice. Școala de Poduri și Șosele*, file 4/1892, 94, 100, 128).

[35] The law was published in *Monitorul Oficial*, Part I, no. 58 of June 15, 1894, and amended in 1924, when the Law for completing art. 6 and 53 of the Law on the organisation of the Technical Corps of the Ministry of Public Works was passed (*Monitorul Oficial al României*, Part I, no. 174, 12 of August 1924).

of the economy. Despite these initiatives, the decreasing number of available positions in the Technical Corps of Romania discouraged young people from following a professional career in engineering. That is why, between 1901 and 1909, the number of polytechnic students decreased dramatically. Expanding the use of future engineers in the Romanian economy was necessary, which is why a commission was appointed in 1901 to elaborate the best scenarios for reorganising the school. The members of this commission (including Anghel Saligny) suggested the division of the 4 years of study into two cycles, with the final 2 years devoted entirely to specialised training focusing on three fields: construction engineers and architects; mechanical engineers and electricians; and mining and industrial engineers. Despite this project, after 1910, there was a general tendency toward "relaxing" the rigors of academic life in the School of Bridges and Roads, which made "the foundations of Duca's schools crumble, and the School move towards liberal education, which is the cornerstone of universities"[36].

World War I had a major influence on polytechnic education in Romania. Under the impact of the women's emancipation movement, in 1919, the School Board decided to admit female candidates[37]. Nevertheless, the share of women was very low in the polytechnic schools: in 1924/1925, only 13 women were enrolled at NSBR (out of 869 students), and in 1929/1930, their number dropped to 5 (out of 1240). In 1937/1938, the proportion of women studying at NSBR was the highest, i.e., 76 out of 1938[38].

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[36] Ionescu, "Istoricul învățământului ingineresc în România până la înființarea școlilor politehnice," 199.

[37] There were many important moments in the aftermath of World War I that confirmed the success of the women emancipation movement. Women were allowed to sit on school councils and to work in the railroad service. In June 1920 – following the precedent established by Ella Negruzzi – the right to practise law was granted to all women lawyers. Nevertheless, educational and socio-economic emancipation was not followed by political emancipation. See Ștefania Mihăilescu, *Amplificarea și maturizarea mișcării de emancipare a femeii române între 1929 și 1948*, in *Din istoria feminismului românesc. Studiu și antologie de texte 1929-1948*, edited by Ștefania Mihăilescu (Iași: Polirom, 2006), 17. Another negative aspect was the subordination of the wives to their husbands, since they were not allowed to sign a contract or to appear in court without prior consent of the husband. To use the words of Calypso Botez, a feminist activist, for the Romanian women marriage meant "le passage de la capacité à l'incapacité": Calypso Botez, *Raport sur la situation juridique de la femme dans la legislation roumaine* (Bucarest, 1932), 7.

[38] For a detailed analysis regarding the presence of women in the Romanian higher education system during the interwar period, see Dragoș Sdrobiș, "From the Absences of History toward the Unequal of the Equal. Women in the Higher Education of Romania 1919-1939," *Historia Universitatis Iassiensis* vol. V, (2014): 85-117.

The curriculum of NSBR was supplemented by the fields of technical study, which had been previously developed inside universities. The engineers condemned the unpredictable and inflationary development of technical education at universities, perceived as inferior to the training in polytechnic schools: "With the spirit of freedom that reigns in Universities, great thinkers, scientists, and doctors in the technical sciences can be created; however, it is not possible to create a technical army that would fight, from morning to evening, on construction sites, in workshops, in factories, that would monitor and control the labor of workers, that would improve and increase production; there can be no engineers who have not endured discipline, so that they can impose it, and who have been able to obey starting from the school benches so that they can then obey their superiors when exercising their profession"[39]. Engineers justified this monopoly on polytechnic education by the previously developed curriculum and by the spirit of discipline inculcated to the graduates. Both these features were incompatible with the bohemian and, sometimes, the rebellious atmosphere that had taken over the universities immediately after the Great Union[40]. So, what was the didactic praxis that defined the specificity of NSBR?

[39] Ion Ionescu, "Istoricul învățământului ingineresc în România până la înființarea școlilor politehnice," 210.

[40] The 1922 students' movements are iconic for the rebellious atmosphere in universities, while the level of the student body confirms the "bohemian" spirit inside the establishments. Gheorghe Gh. Longinescu, university professor at the Faculty of Sciences in Bucharest and founder of *Natura* magazine, published in 1926 some letters from a former student, who had attended in 1922 the courses of the Polytechnic School in Zurich. The student noticed, first of all, the order and discipline that prevailed in Switzerland, but also the high cost of the studies there. Regarding the exams, they were "a bit more difficult than in Bucharest": "While in Bucharest – I remember well – a student starts to prepare for his exams a month, or at most two, before facing the examination commission, here [in Zurich] you have to work during the entire academic year, because every week there are preparation sessions [*repetitorii*] held in groups of five or six students with teaching assistants, sessions in which grades are given, with a great impact on the final exam grades. I find that these preparation sessions are an excellent way for the student and the teacher to get to know each other, during which issues that cannot be fully understood in class can be clarified; in addition, these sessions prove to be a means of supervising students in order to assess if they actually work". From this account, G.G. Longinescu concluded that a well-established system of fees could help select genuine talents. Although he had initially opposed these fees (since poor students attended the Faculty of Sciences in Bucharest), eventually he agreed to their introduction. The main reason was that ¾ of first-year students were not prepared for these studies, since "out of 125 admitted to the exam, barely 25 succeed to pass the first exam session". See *Natura. Revistă pentru răspândirea științei*, year XV, no. 6, (15 September 1926): 30-31.

"All the incapables were sneaking in!": a time for reform

As mentioned above, engineer Gheorghe Duca played an important role in reorganising the National School of Bridges and Roads in Bucharest. An engineer who graduated in 1869 from the École Centrale des Arts et Manufactures in Paris, Duca then returned to his home country, where he played an important role in supervising the national railway network construction projects. After the revocation of the Strousberg concession, the Romanian state undertook the major technical works involved, with the support of Romanian engineers. As the number of young Romanians who pursued polytechnic studies abroad was very small, Gheorghe Duca was appointed, in 1881, as director of NSBR, with the clear mission to reorganise this institution. It was time for a new beginning.

The reasons for such an assertion are to be found in a report prepared by Gheorghe Duca and submitted to the Ministry of Public Works in 1887. This report emphasised the deplorable state of this school between 1864 and 1881. First of all, in Duca's opinion, there were no clear admission criteria. If abroad the baccalaureate exam and the preparatory year were necessary and inherent conditions, "in our country, the candidates who took the exam – for the most part – had not graduated from secondary school [...] and, although the admission curriculum was very general, they [the candidates] were completely unaware of the required knowledge. The slightest algebraic calculation, the use of logarithmic tables or the simplest problems of basic geometry were matters that simply exceeded their knowledge [...]"[41]. Even so, students who failed the entrance exam had the right to enroll as auditors, and "it was enough to pass in certain conditions, at the end of the first month, the exams regarding the subjects taught in school to be registered as a regular student. This was the way by which all the incapable [candidates] were sneaking in", Gheorghe Duca wrote in an outraged passage. He concluded that the atmosphere of the school was dominated by mediocrity: "The consequence was that, out of an initial class of 20 students, only four or five reached the third or fourth year of study"[42].

Another cause of this degradation was the exceeding number of classes, taught in a rush by a handful of teachers, and with insufficient time allocated for properly learning the basic notions and skills in practical application classes. The result could only be a "superficial acquisition" (*spoială*) of engineering knowledge and skills that made the future professionals believe that they knew enough about their field of expertise, without realising they were just at the beginning of

[41] Radu P. Voinea, "Gheorghe Duca," *Construcții. Revistă de informare și dezbatere tehnică și economică*, no. 11, (1986), 5. The article was re-edited by Nicolae Șt. Noica in *Școala Națională de Poduri și Șosele – 125 de ani*, 30-34.

[42] Voinea, "Gheorghe Duca," 6.

their studies: "We think there is no method more nefarious than this: superficial knowledge is far more harmful than ignorance; when one does not know, he is silent and seeks to learn; but when one thinks he knows, when he is unaware of his ignorance, he certainly makes the strangest mistakes, and it is much harder to rectify the wrong knowledge than to acquire new knowledge [...]"[43].

Similarly to the polytechnic training at the specialised institutions in the West, technical drawing was supposed to be an essential discipline for the NSBR students in Bucharest. The problem was that this discipline did not go beyond the stage of a "desideratum". Again, the deficiencies of secondary education were to blame for failing to provide students with the basics of drawing. For this reason, "project writing was sacrificed for the sake of drawing education"[44]. As for the practical training system, Duca complained that "the students were sent to the district engineers and, instead of working in the field, they were kept in the offices, where they worked as copyists [...][45]". Finally, another negative element was the lack of discipline and the irregular attendance of the courses and examinations. Therefore, in Duca's words, there were "students who had finished the fourth year and had not passed [even] the exams for the first year"[46].

Gheorghe Duca's report clearly showed the poor quality of secondary education, which did not endow its graduates with the necessary basic notions. Aware that his protests alone would not succeed in stimulating a reform of the high school, starting with 1881 Duca established the "preparatory division" of NSBR. This preliminary year became the "true foundation" of technical education. It was initially open to anyone, regardless of their level of knowledge. The selection was ensured through the severe regime of discipline and rigorous examinations. For instance, in 1882-1883, out of 122 students enrolled in the preparatory year, only 18 were admitted to the first year of study at NSBR. Because of the low admission rate, three years later, in 1885, an entrance exam for the preparatory year was introduced, which contributed to even stricter selection criteria of the candidates for the engineering degree[47].

A new curriculum

Before addressing the curricular changes that occurred at NSBR in Bucharest, a brief note regarding technical higher education in Europe is necessary. In the nineteenth century, under the impact of the industrial revolution, an important

[43] Voinea, "Gheorghe Duca," 6.
[44] Voinea, "Gheorghe Duca," 6.
[45] Voinea, "Gheorghe Duca," 6.
[46] Voinea, "Gheorghe Duca," 6.
[47] Voinea, "Gheorghe Duca," 7.

role in the development of technical higher education was played by two famous institutions in France: École Polytechnique and École Centrale des Arts et Manufactures, both based in Paris. Founded during the French Revolution (1794), the École Polytechnique became in 1805, under Napoléon, a military cadre school, which mainly trained specialists for the government apparatus: "[I]n the beginning a Polytechnicien was a kind of generalist, scholar, as <well as> also an inventor, architect and engineer, as well as <an> officer, trained in the basics of various fields of architecture and engineering [...]"[48]. In this case, the subsequent specialisation was the responsibility of other institutions of applied education. The École Centrale des Arts et Manufactures, founded in 1829, was a private initiative, which emerged in the context of a relative liberalisation of French society in the post-Napoleonic period. In their manifesto addressed to the public opinion, the founders of this institution referred to the economic superiority of Britain (as well as the political superiority of that country) as a result of implementing a profoundly liberal program in the field of technical higher education. As a result, École Centrale des Arts et Manufactures emphasised from the very beginning the positive role that civil engineers would play in society, in the context of the rise of capitalism and the scientific and technological revolution[49]. To meet the new challenges of the modern economy, "the school developed a greater tendency towards specialisation [...]. The Centraux understood themselves to be a group of dedicated engineers and architects working at the cutting-edge of social progress, applying themselves to improving the general welfare and comfort, participating in a modern, industrially based nation in the form of an *industrial army*. The Ancien Regime's *Corps royal* was replaced by a civil, democratic and republican *Corps industriel*"[50].

Unlike the two institutions mentioned above, whose major difference concerned the relationship to the state, the German polytechnic schools sought to combine several constitutive elements so as to shape a new balanced approach towards society and state. The most eloquent example is the Polytechnikum in Karlsruhe, which significantly influenced technical higher education establishments in Germany. In contrast to the French technical institutions, the Karlsruhe Polytechnikum "took control of general preparatory education [...].

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[48] Ulrich Pfammatter, *The Making of the Modern Architect and Engineer. The Origins and Development of a Scientific and Industrially oriented Education* (Basel – Boston – Berlin: Birkhäuser, 2000), 89.

[49] André Grelon, "Du bon usage du modèle étranger: la mise en place de l'Ecole des arts et manufactures," *Bulletin de la Sabix. Société des amis de la Bibliothèque et de l'Histoire de l'Ecole polytechnique*, 26 (2000): 47-52.

[50] Pfammatter, *The Making of the Modern Architect and Engineer*, 201-202.

Another difference is to be seen in the standardised education for engineers not only engaged in civil service but also private industry"[51]. The vision of the Karlsruhe Polytechnikum reflected the desire for economic development and adaptation to the local conditions, "thus acting not as an example to be exactly copied but as an inspirational model for integrating different characteristics and needs"[52]. The fact that technical higher education in Germany acquired equal status with the university (being granted the right to organise doctoral studies in 1899[53]) explains the growing influence of German polytechnic schools in Europe and beyond.

Returning to the topic of this article, NSBR had a curriculum that relied on the idea of specialisation during the years of study. Therefore, the institutional direction was much closer to the German pattern, unlike the French one, where polytechnic students received a general science education, as a basis for further specialisation within the "applied schools".

One can also point to a new pedagogical pattern fostered by engineering schools. It concerned the combination of theory and practice that had played a key role in the transmission of knowledge. It was increasingly seen as a process of accumulation and dissemination. This was the "new scientific spirit" developed in the German area. Alexander von Humboldt and "consequently the followers of the so-called Humboldt university model no longer saw the professor as a teacher who lectured on the current state of the art in an orderly, textbook fashion, but rather as a model that the student should follow so that he might scientifically grasp an object to arrive at new, rationally scrutinised, knowledge"[54].

This allowed for the creation of a "professional scale", according to which a certain level of technical and scientific knowledge granted a graduate access to different positions. Building on the Western model of "producing" specialists, towards the end of the nineteenth century the Romanian authorities were concerned with ensuring an efficient chain for training specialists. They elaborated a standardised curriculum, planned a predictable educational process, and established certain minimum requirements for admission in NSBR and for promoting every year of studies.

Regarding the admission criteria, the French model was emulated by NSBR. Besides the fact that the candidates had to be high school graduates, the basic discipline of the entrance exam was mathematics, along with physics or chemistry. In fact, during the preparatory year, mathematics dominated the

[51] Pfammatter, *The Making of the Modern Architect and Engineer,* 233.
[52] Pfammatter, *The Making of the Modern Architect and Engineer,* 235.
[53] Pfammatter, *The Making of the Modern Architect and Engineer,* 237.
[54] Rüegg, "Themes," 21.

curriculum (9 hours per week). Starting with 1885, an admission exam for the preparatory year was introduced. During the first and second year of study, the emphasis was placed on technical drawing, whereas the final years focused on drafting engineering projects[55].

In the first stage of the school's development, courses for engineers and public conductors were held in common. Strange as it may seem, the main reason was that the school did not have an adequate location that would allow students to be divided into groups. Only in 1886, with the inauguration of the NSBR building on Griviței Road in Bucharest, one could say that technical education was organised under proper conditions. The new building had an amphitheater for teaching courses, shared by the engineering department and the "preparatory division". It also featured physics and chemistry laboratories, a museum, a library, and a boarding school for students coming from outside Bucharest[56].

Classes were held Monday through Saturday, from 8:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. They resumed at 1 p.m. and finished at 4 p.m. (or 5:30 p.m., in some cases). These were the disciplines studied in the 1891/1892 academic year:

> *Year I - physics, differential calculus, topography, chemistry, mineralogy, stereotomy, regulations*
> *Year II - electricity, mechanics, statics, roads, industrial physics, civil engineering, military art*
> *Year III - cars, resistance, hydraulics, bridges, railways, civil engineering, artillery*
> *Year IV - hydraulics, endurance, navigation, steam cars, railways, bridges, economy, fortifications.*

The end-of-year exams were held between May 20 and June 25. A periodical monthly general assessment for each subject was used to monitor the level of students and to intervene with the necessary corrective measures. Regarding the grades system, NSBR used the French model, with grades from 1 to 20, 12 being the minimum passing grade. During the holidays, students were required to serve as interns in state institutions or the private sector[57]. As for graduation requirements, the criterion for receiving an engineering degree was to obtain a general average of at least 15 (out of 20) for all the years of study. Those performing below this minimum grade received only a graduation certificate, which gave them the right to a career as a public works supervisor[58].

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[55] Voinea, "Gheorghe Duca," 7.

[56] Nicolae Noica, "100 de ani de la punerea pietrei de temelie a clădirii Școlii Naționale de Poduri și Șosele," *Construcții. Revistă de informare și dezbatere tehnică și economică*, Bucharest, no. 11 (1986): 32. See also Nicolae Noica, *Școala Națională de Poduri și Șosele – 125 de ani*, 21.

[57] ANIC, *Fund Ministerul Lucrărilor Publice. Școala de Poduri și Șosele*, file 7/1892, 72, 128, 193, 211.

[58] Noica, *Școala Națională de Poduri și Șosele – 125 de ani*, 21.

Military discipline

Inside the school, students were subjected to a military regime. They benefited from military training, an innovation – as mentioned above – introduced by a law of 1895, which gave future engineers the right to become military officers in reserve. The reason for introducing military training for NSBR students can be connected to the broader process of creating a loyal bureaucratic elite, as also occurred in other countries[59]. At this point, no evidence could be found to prove that the access of candidates of non-Romanian ethnic origin to engineering studies was restricted.

Coming back to the military regime inside NSBR, students were forbidden to smoke or bring newspapers or magazines of any kind inside this institution. There were numerous cases of students being warned or even punished for non-compliance with the curriculum and the school rules, as well as for some other, sometimes hilarious reasons, such as the fact that the bed was in disarray or the fact that they were still in their room at the beginning of class. Regarding clothing, the boarding school students were obliged to wear the uniform in public spaces and to formally salute the Romanian army officers[60]. The engineering students in military uniform thus symbolised and promoted at the social level the new ideal of masculinity: virile figures, in uniforms worn according to the "German fashion", and physically fit.

Technical higher education in Greater Romania, 1919-1939

In the interwar period, the educational process in the field faced only small adjustments[61]. The curriculum of the newly renamed Polytechnic School of Bucharest continued to focus on science education, but also included general

[59] Darina Martykánová, *Reconstructing Ottoman Engineers. Archaeology of a Profession 1789-1914* (Pisa: Plus – Pisa University Press, 2010), 48-49, 70-72. The author tackles the case of the Ottoman Empire, where a Superior School for Engineering was founded in 1883 to prepare future civil engineers. However, the educational process was performed exclusively by the army. This peculiarity turned out to be an efficient "filter" for discouraging the non-Muslims to pursue an engineering career in the Ottoman Empire. Confronted with an increasing wave of centrifugal national emancipation movements, the Ottomans sought to counter this trend by the "ottomanisation" of the bureaucracy. For Ottoman decision-makers, this system was a way of protecting the future Muslim elite from the cosmopolitan and multicultural spirit generated by education in Western countries. The author notes that this cultural policy would have a boomerang effect on the regime of Sultan Abdul Hamid II: the nationalisation of youth laid the basis for the Young Turk movement, which eventually hastened the end of the Ottoman Empire.

[60] ANIC, *Fund Ministerul Lucrărilor Publice. Școala de Poduri și Șosele*, file 8/1889, 13, 28, 46-48.

[61] Vasilescu-Karpen, "Dare de seamă asupra învățământului în Școala Politehnică din București," 1-18.

courses. In addition, technical courses related to the speciality were taught. Their share varied from one speciality to another, with the main purpose of finding a balance between scientific and technical education. The purpose was to develop in the future engineer the two main characteristics necessary for the active life: technician and manager.

Such a system of organising the educational process placed the technical higher education in Romania between the French model (which emphasised encyclopedic education, as a basis for a future applied specialisation) and the German model (which relied on a very strong practical specialisation from the first years of study). However, Nicolae Vasilescu-Karpen pointed out that, such a system "overburdens the programs of some of the sections with a knowledge that, at least apparently, does not seem indispensable for a future career"[62]. For this reason, Karpen would have preferred the full adoption of the German model of polytechnic education, which relied on an early training and systematic specialisation of the graduates, following the pace of scientific development and the requirements of division of labor[63].

As director of the Polytechnic School in Bucharest between 1920 and 1940, Nicolae Vasilescu-Karpen advocated for this institution a status similar to universities. Karpen graduated first in his class from NSBR in 1891. After a short stint in the Technical Corps of the Ministry of Public Works, he left for Paris, where he attended the recently established École Supérieure d'Électricité, from which he graduated in 1902. Karpen also received his doctorate in physics in 1904. On his return to Romania, he obtained a position at NSBR, where he worked in the newly established department of electricity and electrical engineering. Although he had trained as an engineer and scientist in the French environment, Karpen greatly admired the German model, where polytechnic

[62] Vasilescu-Karpen, "Dare de seamă asupra învățământului în Școala Politehnică din București," 4.

[63] German professional literature had an increasing influence in imposing the German model of technical education in Romania, despite the fact that most members of the teaching staff at the Polytechnic School of Bucharest had pursued engineering studies in France. From the 127 members of the teaching staff of the Polytechnic School of Bucharest during 1881-1930, 66 graduated from institutions abroad, with 46 graduating exclusively in France. "Even if the group of teachers who studied in Germany is much smaller, it should not be overlooked that a large part of teachers who did not study directly abroad have a high esteem for the German technical literature, which is so rich and systematised. As a consequence, a clear distinction on this ground (French vs. German influence) can no longer be made, since it's the French who resort to German technical books". Another reason for this growing influence of the German model was the dizzying development of electro-mechanical engineering in this country. Luca Bădescu, "Legătura între tehnica română și străinătate," *Istoricul dezvoltării tehnice în România. Buletinul Societății Politehnice*, year XLV, no. 12 (December 1931): 2395.

schools had managed to achieve a status equal to that of universities. Through his efforts, in 1920, the law establishing the Polytechnic School in Bucharest was adopted. This was a sign of progress, even if the school was not recognised as a higher education institution. Karpen was among the most fervent promoters of the idea of a Polytechnic University, which he supported in all possible ways. His main discontent was that the Universities of Iaşi and Bucharest had established their own Technical Institutes, through which they awarded "university engineer" degrees, although this was not equivalent to the engineering degree issued by NSBR[64]. From his point of view, the polytechnic schools were the real "faculties of science", a statement he made in response to Petru Bogdan's reception speech at the Romanian Academy in 1931[65]. His efforts proved successful only in 1938, when, by law, the polytechnic schools were recognised as higher education institutions, on a par with universities[66].

Regarding the curriculum in the Polytechnic School, it should be pointed out that the French influence was still obvious as mathematical studies, viewed as "a unique tool for shaping the fair and exact judgment indispensable to the engineer"[67], were given a prominent position. It should be noted here that one of the most enduring popularisation magazines in the field of mathematics in Romania, *Gazeta matematică* [*Mathematical Gazette*] stemmed from the initiative of some engineers, graduates of NSBR[68].

Mathematics was followed in the curriculum by physical and chemical sciences, mineralogy, geology, and botany, since "the engineering technique is an emanation of these sciences"[69]. Finally, to prepare the engineer for future management positions, courses in economics, law, accounting, trade, and the

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[64] Regarding the "unfair competition" between universities and polytechnic schools for granting the title of engineer in interwar Romania, see Dragoş Sdrobiş, "Building a Profession. An Insight on the Professionalisation of Engineers in Romania 1919-1940," *New Europe College Ştefan Odobleja Yearbook*, (2017-2018): 249-256.

[65] *Sub cupola Academiei. Discursuri de recepţie ale inginerilor,* edited by Mihai Mihăiţă, (Bucharest: AGIR, 2011), 193.

[66] See *Legea pentru modificarea şi completarea legilor privitoare la învăţământul superior şi special în vederea raţionalizării*, in *Monitorul Oficial al României* (no. 257 of 4th of November 1938).

[67] Vasilescu-Karpen, "Dare de seamă asupra învăţământului în Şcoala Politehnică din Bucureşti," 5.

[68] The reason for such an initiative had to do with the very poor results achieved by the candidates at the entrance exam for NSBR in the autumn of 1894. The magazine was founded to fill their gaps in mathematical knowledge. Therefore, its aim was for "all our high school students to benefit" from *Gazeta matematică*, while also ensuring a better preparation for the candidates to an engineering degree. See "Istoricul Gazetei matematice", last modified January 6, 2021, http://www.gazetamatematica.net/?q=node/26.

[69] Vasilescu-Karpen, "Dare de seamă asupra învăţământului," 5-6.

scientific organisation of labor were also introduced. Education for continuous training was not neglected either. English and German language courses were offered, thus securing the future professionals' immediate access to the technical literature produced by the great industrial powers. There was plenty of evidence that the poor linguistic and economic skills of the graduates of polytechnic studies in Romania turned out to be a major hampering factor for getting a job, in comparison to the graduates of similar institutions abroad[70].

The profile of the polytechnic student in Greater Romania

In a speech given on the occasion of the 75th anniversary of technical higher education in Romania, the director of NSBR, Nicolae Vasilescu-Karpen, spoke extensively about the students' social and cultural profile. Thus, about 98% of the students of the polytechnic school were high school graduates (baccalaureates). To these students was added an insignificant number of graduates of commercial high schools or professional secondary schools. The admission curriculum consisted of disciplines previously studied in high school. It was valid both for the preparatory year and for the first-year exam. The preparatory year did not require mandatory attendance of the Polytechnic School, since students could choose to enroll for that year of study at the university-based faculties of sciences or at a higher technical school. However, those who passed the admission exam came almost exclusively from the ranks of the students of the preparatory year[71]. This shows the efficiency of this preliminary preparation program. Unlike the universities, the Polytechnic Schools in Bucharest and Timișoara had a fixed quota of students that could enrol in the first year of studies. This quota was related to the available number of seats in laboratories and in seminar or lecture rooms. Thus, the admission contest proved to be an effective selection tool for future engineers.

An interesting analysis of the admission contest at the Polytechnic School of Bucharest[72] dates from 1943. It was drawn up by the rector of the institution, Professor C.C. Teodorescu. Aiming to highlight the specificity of polytechnic

[70] Vasilescu-Karpen, "Dare de seamă asupra învățământului," 5-6.

[71] Following the secondary education reform of 1928, the period of study was reduced to 7 years (from the previous 8). As a result, it was decided to introduce a preparatory year at the Polytechnic School, starting with the 1929-1930 academic year, specifically in order to supplement the scientific training of the candidates for the title of engineer.

[72] The Law on the "Rationalisation of Higher Education in Romania", passed in the fall of 1938, stipulated that the polytechnic schools in Bucharest and Timișoara were established as higher education institutions. The Iași Polytechnic was also established on this occasion. See *Monitorul Oficial al României*, Part I, no. 257, 4th of November 1938.

training, Teodorescu emphasised the role played by the admission examinations, which represented the main "means of selecting the elements that knock on the gates of the engineering profession", within which "the scientific training of the candidate prevailed"[73]. In other words, the criterion of merit was already part of the peculiar polytechnic rhetoric.

In September 1943, the regular admission exam was organised, with 1458 candidates attempting to secure a place at the Polytechnic School of Bucharest. Out of them, 751 were admitted, which resulted in a success rate of 53%. Analyzing the average grades the candidates got at the baccalaureate and entrance exams, rector Teodorescu emphasised the strong correlation between those two types of evaluation. Less gratifying was the fact that the majority of high school graduates (67% of the total enrollment) had received poor results at this exam, while the share of candidates with good and very good results at the baccalaureate exam amounted to about 10% of the total number of candidates. "With such results, the problem of the elites' [training] appears to be very difficult to solve", the rector noted.

Candidates enrolled for the admission examination at the Polytechnic School of Bucharest 1943

Baccalaureate average	Enrolled candidates	Admitted	Rejected	Admitted %
Very good 9-10	33	32	1	97%
good 8-9	103	83	20	80.50%
medium 7-8	290	177	113	61%
mediocre 6-7	861	400	461	46.50%
Total	1287[74]	692	595	54%

Source: C.C. Teodorescu, "Rezultatele unui concurs," *Școala românească*, year IV, no. 3 (March 1944): 179.

Thus, another aspect that had to be taken into account was the age at which young people could start their polytechnic studies. This age "must be young

[73] C.C. Teodorescu, "Rezultatele unui concurs," *Școala românească*, year IV, no. 3 (March 1944): 177.

[74] According to the author, the difference between the 1458 enrolled candidates and the 1287 processed registration files results from the fact that he did not have access to the original documents of the candidates. The candidates who did not feature in the statistics were enrolled in other admission examinations at the same time, meaning they left copies and/or incomplete registration forms for the admission contest organised by the Polytechnic School of Bucharest. Therefore, rector C.C. Teodorescu decided to use only the complete registration files for his analysis, i.e. those of 1287 candidates.

enough for them, so they can graduate and start working at a more fruitful age"[75]. Regarding this issue, C.C. Teodorescu published a separate work a year later. For these purposes, he used the data collected on the occasion of a statistical survey on the entire student body in Romania, initiated by the Ministry of National Culture and Confessions in the fall of 1943. Since the Central Institute of Statistics did not manage to publish the results of this survey, Teodorescu himself processed the data relating to the students of the Polytechnic School in Bucharest. This was possible because he had asked for the filling in of the questionnaires in two copies. The collected data revealed some fundamental characteristic features of the young people pursuing their higher technical education in Bucharest[76].

The average age of the students of the Bucharest Polytechnic School during the first year of study was about 21, and during the fifth year (the final year of studies) it was 26. The almost 2-year gap between the average age of completion of secondary education (19) and the age of admission to polytechnic studies was due to the rigorous character of the entrance exam to the Polytechnic. The good news was that, due to its curriculum, the Polytechnic School guaranteed a predictable trajectory in the training and promotion of students. "The engineering degree is therefore earned at the average age of 26"[77], noted rector C.C. Teodorescu. The lower average age of the students in the Faculty of Civil Engineering could be explained by the fact that this specialisation was pursued especially by students who had good results during their high school studies. At the opposite end was the Faculty of Electro-mechanics, where "belated students"[78] from the former Electro-Technical Institute at the University of Bucharest, abolished by the 1938 law, were enrolled, thus increasing the average age of the student body.

The collected data revealed the large number of students who graduated from high schools in Bucharest (1131 out of the total 2578 students, i.e., 42.2%). The students living in the capital were to be mostly found at the Faculty of Architecture (60%), while at the Faculty of Forestry there were only 21.3% Bucharest graduates. A large percentage of Bucharest-born students were to be found at the Faculty of Agronomy (44.2%), a somewhat strange situation that could

[75] Teodorescu, "Rezultatele unui concurs," 184.

[76] C.C. Teodorescu, "Chestionarul statistic pentru studenți," *Școala românească*, year IV, no. 9-10 (September – October 1944): 517-550.

[77] Teodorescu, "Chestionarul statistic pentru studenți," 527.

[78] By "belated students", Teodorescu meant the almost bohemian character of the engineering studies carried out at the universities until 1938, with no strict conditions for passing exams. It should be pointed out that starting with 1943, the maximum age for enrollment as a student was 24. Teodorescu, "Chestionarul statistic pentru studenți," 523.

be explained by the fact that "the sons of the big landowners, of whom many live in the capital city" chose this field of study[79].

A peculiar reason for the high academic level reached by the Polytechnic School of Bucharest was the weight of students recruited from Bucharest high schools (representing more than 40% of the student body). Since teachers in Bucharest high schools were believed to be very well prepared, the prestige of the Polytechnic School of Bucharest was based on the quality of the student body. Despite this fact, Teodorescu noted that "the recruitment of students [should] involve all academic centers of the country, because, for the most part, they [the graduates] tend to return to locations close to their families after graduation[80]". Regarding the social origin of the students, almost 60% came from urban areas, with half of them being born in Bucharest. Almost 40% of the students came from rural areas, in a country where the general share of the rural population was about 80%. The numbers for each historical province further highlight the essential problems of interwar Romania, such as the urban-rural cleavage and the socio-economic discrepancies among regions, also showing the better quality of secondary education in the capital city.

Distribution of the Polytechnic School of Bucharest student body according to historical regions 1943-1944

Historical region	no. of students	% students
Bucharest	1131	42.2%
Wallachia	513	19.2%
Transylvania	294	11.0%
Moldavia	239	8.9%
Oltenia	200	7.5%
Bessarabia	128	4.8%
Banat	44	1.6%
Bukovina	44	1.6%
Dobrogea	35	1.3%
Abroad	50	1.9%
TOTAL	2678	100.0%

Source: C.C. Teodorescu, "Chestionarul statistic pentru studenți," *Școala românească*, year IV, no. 9-10 (September – October 1944): 535.

As for the parents' profession, "the students belong [...] mostly to the category of intellectuals or civil servants, who send their sons to study, to fill a

[79] Teodorescu, "Chestionarul statistic pentru studenți," 533.
[80] Teodorescu, "Chestionarul statistic pentru studenți," 535.

position in the bureaucratic system"[81]. The last relevant aspect touched upon in his work by rector Teodorescu concerned the foreign languages known/spoken by the students. Almost half of the students who filled in this statistical questionnaire declared they were proficient in 2 foreign languages, 12% declared that they knew only one foreign language, while another 12% only spoke their mother tongue. It should be pointed out that about 20% of the students spoke at least 3 foreign languages, which was a clear indicator of the geographical origin of those students coming from the multicultural areas of Romania. Thus, 165 students declared that they spoke Russian, and another 120 were fluent in Hungarian. Despite this, although more than 200 students came from Transylvania, the number of Hungarian speakers was well below this figure. Based on this estimate, the author concluded that "Hungarian is not perceived as a language of the culture that could be used in scientific training, so that young people no longer feel the impetus to study it"[82]. By contrast, the impact/popularity of the Russian language among polytechnic students went beyond an explanation invoking mere regional origins. It wasn't just the Bessarabian students who spoke this language. The use of Russian was encouraged by the fact that an increasing number of textbooks or technical magazines were published in Russian[83]. However, French was by far the most widespread foreign language among the young high school graduates in Romania; it was followed by German.

Number of foreign languages spoken by students of the Bucharest Polytechnic School 1943-1944

Faculty	none	1	2	3	≥4	Total
Constructions	64	180	405	125	30	**804**
Electro-Mechanics	60	97	261	100	28	**546**
Mining and Metallurgy	22	30	64	21	4	**141**
Industrial Chemistry	33	82	177	65	17	**374**
Forestry	59	66	124	38	9	**296**
Agronomy	59	96	115	46	6	**322**
Architecture	37	64	119	54	14	**288**
TOTAL	**334**	**615**	**1265**	**449**	**108**	**2771**

Source: C.C. Teodorescu, "Chestionarul statistic pentru studenți," 546.

[81] Teodorescu, "Chestionarul statistic pentru studenți," 539.
[82] Teodorescu, "Chestionarul statistic pentru studenți," 548.
[83] Teodorescu, "Chestionarul statistic pentru studenți," 548.

Languages spoken by students of the Bucharest Polytechnic School 1943-1944

Language	no. of students	% students
French	2250	81.2%
German	1452	52.4%
Italian	397	14.3%
English	325	11.7%
Russian	165	6.0%
Hungarian	120	4.3%
Greek	49	1.8%
Bulgarian	44	1.6%
Other language	79	2.9%
No foreign language	334	12.1%

Source: C.C. Teodorescu, "Chestionarul statistic pentru studenți," 548.

The conclusions reached by C.C. Teodorescu, based on the analysis of the student body at a time when Romania – and the whole world – was at war, do not differ much from the previous situation. First of all, the high quality of the training provided by this educational institution should be emphasised. A specific feature of the Polytechnic School of Bucharest was the increasing role played by laboratory practice and activity. The weight of this kind of didactic activity grew after 1900 in all technical higher education institutions across Europe and the entire world. This trend was supposed to overcome the epistemic divide between scientists in universities and those in polytechnic institutions. The aim was to prove that technology was no longer dependent on science. Instead, a relation of mutual and complementary reinforcement was being established: "Technology's aims differed from those of science in that they were essentially practical, but its theoretical foundations were equally demanding and intellectually dignified"[84].

Starting with 1930, polytechnic schooling had been divided into two cycles: science education (mathematics, physics, chemistry, natural sciences); and technical education. Each cycle lasted for 4 semesters. A final semester was devoted to the completion of individual projects or practical assignments necessary for the graduation exam. Taking into account the preparatory year, after 1930 the average optimal time for earning the engineering degree was at least 5 and a half years. Between 1920 and 1931, out of the 833 graduates of the Polytech-

[84] Anna Guagnini, "Technology," in *A History of the University in Europe 1800-1945*, edited by Walter Rüegg, vol. 3, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 619.

nic School of Bucharest, 445 had completed their studies in a period of between 4-5 years[85]. The natural question that arises in this context is the following: how many engineers did technical higher education in Romania succeed to train?

The "production" of engineers by the polytechnic schools of Romania, 1881 – 1937

The evolution of technical education must be linked to the socio-economic development of Romania. Victor Axenciuc analysed the prerequisites for the development of the modern capitalist system in the Old Kingdom. He used numerous statistical data with the declared purpose of dismantling certain myths regarding the presumable "negative effects" of Romania's entry into the international capitalist system. For example, Romanian economists like P.S. Aurelian or Ștefan Zeletin decried the disappearance of traditional "trades" because of the "invasion" of the local market by foreign industrial goods or because of the increased factory production. The data collected by Axenciuc refute such assertions, proving that, between 1860 and 1912, the number of craftsmen "increased 1.5 times, and their production grew 3.3 times"[86]. In other words, the lamentations of economists like P.S. Aurelian or Ștefan Zeletin were just rhetorical figures of speech, rather than reflections of reality. "[H]ence, it is rather risky and unscientific to write economic history based on quotes and political opinions"[87], Axenciuc concluded. Statistical data for the Old Kingdom for 1859-1860 reveal the existence of about 60,000 employees, out of a total population estimated at 3.5 million inhabitants, which "would amount only to 1.7% of the total population"[88]. Thus, Ștefan Zeletin's thesis on the specificity of the development of capitalist relations in the Romanian lands immediately after 1829, i.e. after the Treaty of Adrianople, was unsubstantiated[89].

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[85] Nicolae Vasilescu-Karpen, "Învățământul tehnic în România", *Istoricul dezvoltării tehnice în România. Buletinul Societății Politehnice*, year XLV, no. 12, (December 1931): 2320.

[86] Victor Axenciuc, *Formarea sistemului industrial modern 1859-1914. Demarajul industrializării*, (Bucharest: Editura Academiei Române, 2008), 13.

[87] Axenciuc, *Formarea sistemului industrial modern 1859-1914*, 13.

[88] Axenciuc, *Formarea sistemului industrial modern 1859-1914*, 35.

[89] The censuses conducted in Moldavia and Wallachia in 1859-1860 listed the following categories of employees: about 23,000 workers, 23,000 civil servants, 6,000 teachers, to which were added several thousand employees in trade, transport etc. In terms of occupations, out of 3.9 million inhabitants, 71.2% were farmers or stockbreeders; 124,000 were craftsmen or manual workers; about 30,000 were merchants; 22,800 were servants; 6,100 were teachers; 18,500 were priests and monks, while the number of intellectual professionals (engineers, doctors, lawyers) did not exceed 1,000 people (Axenciuc, *Formarea sistemului industrial modern 1859-1914*, 56-57).

The lack of trained staff needed for industrial production led to an increase in the number of foreign specialists (skilled workers, technicians, officials, etc.) in the Romanian economy. The lack of Romanian specialists was mainly due to the weak development of vocational education. Consequently, that developed a real "vicious circle: there were no teachers and no specialists for vocational schools, and, for their training, there were no specialised educational institutions"[90]. After 1886, however, the authorities pursued a policy of promoting and encouraging the local labor force in the industry, which partly explains the state's involvement in the reorganisation of NSBR, starting with the mandate of Gheorghe Duca (1881-1888), mentioned above.

According to the data summarised by Axenciuc, between 1871 and 1916, NSBR "gave" the national economy 524 engineers, who mainly filled positions in state institutions, along with another 468 technical supervisors. For this reason, the private industry had to look for Romanian engineers trained abroad or even had to employ foreign engineers. "[U]ntil 1916, state institutions and enterprises had the largest demand for technical staff in the country; as a result, most engineers and technicians were employed in the service of the state"[91]. According to the law of the Technical Engineering Corps, only the registered engineers had the right to fill a position in the Romanian state institutions. To achieve this goal, however, the pool of engineers provided by NSBR was not sufficient, which is why a fairly large number of engineers were still trained outside the country. Romania's economic boom during the first two decades of the twentieth century explains the increase of the membership of the Technical Engineering Corps from 197 members to 882 registered engineers[92]. Between 1878 and 1920, when NSBR was reorganised, the number of engineers "produced" by this institution amounted to 575[93].

The interwar period brought major changes to the organisation and functioning of technical education in Romania. First of all, on July 10, 1920, the National School of Bridges and Roads was transformed into the Polytechnic School of Bucharest. A few months later, in November 1920, a new Polytechnic School was founded in Timișoara. Although polytechnic schools were viewed as "technical higher education institutions, on a similar cultural level with universities", these establishments had still not achieved equal status with universities. Therefore, the fields of study were divided into "sections", the heads of these institutions

[90] Axenciuc, *Formarea sistemului industrial modern 1859-1914*, 57.
[91] Axenciuc, *Formarea sistemului industrial modern 1859-1914*, 220.
[92] Axenciuc, *Formarea sistemului industrial modern 1859-1914*, 220.
[93] See "Tabloul absolvenților Școlii de Poduri și Șosele începând cu seria 1878," in *Școala Politehnică din București*, (Bucharest: Cartea Românească, 1931), 237-260.

were called "directors" (not "rectors"), and those who attended the courses were called "pupils" (*elevi*) (not "students")[94]. The Bucharest Polytechnic School consisted of six "sections" (not "faculties"): construction, electro-mechanics, mining and metallurgy, industry, forestry, aviation and weapons. In the newly-established Polytechnic School in Timișoara, there were only two sections for the training of mining and electro-mechanical engineers, as seen in the table below.

Number of Graduates of the Polytechnic Schools in Bucharest and Timișoara, 1921-1937

Year	Constructions		Electro-mechanics		Mining	Industry	Forestry	Total
	Bucharest	Timișoara	Bucharest	Timișoara	Bucharest	Bucharest	Bucharest	
1921	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	**1**
1922	14	0	30	0	12	0	0	**56**
1923	9	0	9	0	3	0	0	**21**
1924	7	1	46	14	7	12	0	**87**
1925	7	18	54	4	52	22	0	**157**
1926	12	18	35	11	24	6	0	**106**
1927	10	15	33	24	18	7	6	**113**
1928	35	48	30	36	31	16	51	**247**
1929	41	30	29	48	24	13	42	**227**
1930	35	14	15	16	27	9	20	**136**
1931	29	12	22	32	18	9	52	**174**
1932	32	10	28	22	28	9	46	**175**
1933	33	30	25	19	16	12	52	**187**
1934	36	32	22	12	18	10	34	**164**
1935	39	31	41	9	12	11	19	**162**
1936	51	27	42	12	6	10	16	**164**
1937	69	26	23	7	25	7	19	**176**
	459	312	485	266				
Total	**771**		**751**		**321**	**153**	**357**	**2353**

Source: Data processed by the author based on information extracted from *Anuarul Școlii Politehnice Regele Carol al II-lea București 1934-1937* (București, 1938), 857-889; and *Anuarul Școlii Politehnice din Timișoara pe anii 1933/34 – 1936/37* (Timișoara: Editura Școlii Politehnice, 1937).

[94] See "Decret-lege de înființare și organizare a școalelor politehnice din România," *Monitorul Oficial al României*, no. 61 of 19th of June 1920.

There was an exponential growth in the average annual output of engineers. If, in the pre-war period, the graduates' average was about 14 engineers per year (575 engineers graduated overall between 1878 and 1920), in the interwar period the graduation rate reached about 140 engineers per year. Also, since the Polytechnic School of Bucharest had a large number of specialised fields of study, it could offer a wide range of options for those who wanted to pursue engineering studies in their home country.

Despite these relative advances, the question was: did the two Polytechnic Schools manage to ensure the necessary number of engineers for the Romanian economy? This question troubled the administration of these Polytechnic Schools in Romania, for at least two reasons. First, as mentioned above, Nicolae Vasilescu-Karpen strove to consolidate the social prestige of technical education, since the universities were attracting the largest number of students. The polytechnic schools often accused the universities of unfair competition. They primarily targeted the technical institutes attached to the Faculties of Sciences in Iași and Bucharest. These institutes claimed to award a special engineering degree, i.e., "university engineer", that did not grant the same rights as the engineering degree awarded by the Polytechnic Schools. Second, a very large number of engineers were trained abroad, at well-established institutions with solid traditions in this field. Therefore, the existence of two distinct institutions for training future engineers was viewed as a waste of human and financial resources. Karpen expressed his opinion clearly during a conference held in 1929, in the framework of "Săptămâna Culturii Raționalizate" [Week of Rationalised Culture] organised by Institutul Român de Organizare Științifică a Muncii [Romanian Institute for Scientific Management of Work]. In his speech, Karpen highlighted the major role played by technology in the progress of mankind, a path that Romania must follow immediately, giving up the "eternal plowing" (*veșnica plugărie*), an economic feature that kept the state in a relationship of dependence from Western industrial powers. Stimulating technical higher education had to begin with its rational reorganisation. Here, Karpen referred explicitly to university technical institutes which undermined the seriousness and importance of polytechnic education. It was time to overcome this "irrational" situation in favour of a concentration of all technical higher education in polytechnic schools[95].

Nevertheless, the polytechnic schools in Romania did their best to avoid the phenomenon of mass access to education, faced by all higher education institutions after 1918, both in Romania and all over Europe. Therefore, the

[95] ANIC, *Fund Institutul Român de Organizare Științifică a Muncii*, file 19/1930, 101-103.

polytechnic schools established enrollment quotas, according to the number of places available in classrooms and laboratories. The problem, however, was that the labor market for engineers soon became oversaturated: a large number of engineers graduated from institutions abroad, while the 1929-33 economic crisis led to a sharp decline in the demand for engineers. According to some estimative data presented in 1930 by Karpen, out of the 612 engineers working at the Autonomous Administration of the Railways (CFR), 300 had earned their engineering degree abroad[96]. The important mining and oil companies in Romania in Reșița, the Jiu Valley, or Prahova Valley suggested a reduction of the enrollment quotas. Karpen estimated the number of engineers in Romania, in 1930, at about 4000 people. Taking into account that the average duration of an engineer's career was 25 years, it resulted that Romania needed "a maximum output of 200 engineers per year. This is currently the output of engineers from the two Polytechnic Schools in the country; they can therefore respond to the current needs of the country"[97], Vasilescu-Karpen concluded.

The problem of the number of engineers increasingly concerned the prominent representatives of this profession after 1930. A related problem was the concentration of engineering studies under the aegis of the polytechnic schools. According to the latter's perspective, from a budgetary point of view, the funding of the university technical institutes represented a waste of public resources. In 1935/36, the total expenses for the university technical institutes in Bucharest amounted to 19 million lei, while the two polytechnic schools were allocated 34 million lei from state funds[98]. Additionally, due to the number of graduates released on the labour market, the technical institutes attached to universities contributed to worsening unemployment among engineers. Out of the 240 engineers who graduated from the Polytechnic School of Bucharest in 1934 and 1935, "only 20% found a good job. Others have found a suitable work, but we have also cases of graduates who have become teachers at vocational schools in the countryside. [Furthermore], many of them have been hired and are being paid as workers, because they could not be included in the [school] budget [as teachers]. So, there is indeed a significant amount of intellectual unemployment [among engineers]"[99].

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[96] Vasilescu-Karpen, "Dare de seamă asupra învățământului în Școala Politehnică din București," 10.

[97] Vasilescu-Karpen, "Dare de seamă asupra învățământului în Școala Politehnică din București," 10.

[98] Ștefan Mihăescu, "Organizarea rațională a învățământului tehnic superior," *Buletinul AGIR*, year XVIII, no. 5 (May 1936): 164.

[99] Mihăescu, "Organizarea rațională a învățământului tehnic superior," 164.

The Engineers of Greater Romania

In 1935, the new chairman of the General Association of Romanian Engineers (AGIR), Mihail Manoilescu, set two major objectives for this professional association: the restriction of technical higher education exclusively to the polytechnic schools and the establishment of a special College of Engineers, in which all engineers working in Romania had to be registered on a mandatory basis. The Polytechnic Society, the other important professional organisation of Romanian engineers, led by Constantin Buşilă, joined these efforts[100]. On March 20, 1937, the law for the centralisation of engineering training in the Polytechnic Schools was published in the Official Bulletin. It stipulated the foundation of a third Polytechnic School in Iaşi, the former capital city of Moldavia. One year later, in November 1938, in order to "rationalise" higher education, the first law in the history of Romanian education which regulated the status of all higher education institutions was adopted. Thus, the agronomy academies of Cluj and Bucharest were to be included in the Polytechnic School of Timişoara and Bucharest, respectively; the technical institutes in Bucharest, along with the Academy of Architecture, were to be incorporated into the Polytechnic School of Bucharest; finally, the Agronomy Faculty in Chişinău was to become a part of the newly established Polytechnic School in Iaşi. The reasons for the promulgation of this law were listed by the ad-interim minister of education, Armand Călinescu, who aimed for "a better recruitment of the teaching staff" and "a more serious training of the students". In this respect, the law aimed at setting "a brake on the endless inflation [of engineers] that did not serve either the proper development of science or the good training of students"[101].

After February 1938, when the "royal dictatorship" of King Carol II had been established in Romania, the AGIR became the main professional organisation of the engineers in Romania. The lobbying actively pursued by this association came to fruition in the "Law concerning the title and the exercise of the engineering profession and the establishment of the College of Engineers" published in the Official Bulletin no. 303 on December 30, 1938. According to this law, only engineers who were members of the College of Engineers could

[100] The motion of February 14, 1937, which the Polytechnic Society adopted unanimously, stated that "the abnormal situation of this double system of higher technical education [...] must end as soon as possible". The Society decided to appeal to the government and parliament to implement de centralisation of technical higher education in polytechnic schools. Constantin Buşilă, *Învăţământul superior tehnic* (Bucharest: 1939), 149.

[101] "Legea pentru modificarea şi completarea legilor privitoare la învăţământul superior şi special în vederea raţionalizării," *Monitorul Oficial al României*, Part I, no. 257, 4th of November 1938.

practice this profession. The lists published in the Official Bulletin, including all the engineers recognised as members of this College, are very significant sources because they offer a clear picture of the size of this professional body in that period[102].

The evolution of engineers' membership in the College of Engineers, 1938-1940

Section	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	TOTAL
1938	1279	1943	71	774	816	1014	1508	**7405**
1939	1452	2319	90	774	1056	1130	1595	**8416**
1940	**1592**	**2548**	**90**	**941**	**1241**	**1060**	**1708**	**9180**

Explanatory note: A - construction engineers, B - mechanical and electrical engineers, C - aeronautical, marine and armament engineers, D - mining and metallurgical engineers, E - chemical industry engineers, F - forestry engineers, G - agronomic engineers.

Source: data processed by the author based on the lists of engineers published in *Monitorul Oficial al României*, Part I, no. 288, 289, 290, 291, 292, 293, 296, 298, 299 and 304 of 1938; 253, 259, 266, 270, 278, 285, 290 and 295 of 1939; and no. 9, 31, 38, 217, 234, 242, 266, 290 and 297 of 1940. It should be noted that, after 1938, many minorities were excluded, due to the racial laws, from professional organisations, which may have affected this statistical table (author's note).

The data in this table reveal the impressive number of engineers still trained outside Romania. If one starts from the fact that, in 1930, there were 4000 engineers in Romania (according to the estimated data provided by Nicolae Vasilescu-Karpen), it results that, during the 1930s, the growth rate of the number of engineers was impressive, amounting to about 500 new engineers per year. It should be noted that, in his statistics, Karpen did not refer to the agronomic engineers trained in the Academies of Agriculture in Cluj and Bucharest or at the Faculty of Agronomy in Chișinău. Thus, if we exclude the agronomic engineers from the table above, it seems that, in 1940, there were 3600 more engineers than Karpen's estimate had shown back in 1930. Even according to the most optimistic projections, the two polytechnic schools could not have "produced," between 1930 and 1940, more than a total number of 1800 engineers. This means that, even in the 1930s, at least half of the Romanian engineers were trained abroad.

The role played by the polytechnic schools in Romania in the training of engineers can be better understood by analyzing some raw data included in the AGIR Yearbook for the years 1938-1939. This publication comprises the list of over 3,000 engineers enrolled in the association, including information on the

[102] *Monitorul Oficial al României*, Part I, no. 183 of 10th of August, 1938.

institution attended, their speciality, and their current employment. This data is crucial as it covers 30% of the total body of engineers.

Comparative table between the list of AGIR experts (1938) and the College of Engineers membership (1940)

Speciality	1938	%	1940	%
Agronomy engineers	427	13.5%	1708	18.60%
Forestry engineers	460	14.5%	1060	11.50%
Mining and metallurgy engineers	342	10.8%	941	10.30%
Construction engineers	725	22.9%	1592	17.30%
Electro-mechanic engineers	909	28.7%	2548	27.80%
Industrial and chemistry engineers	299	9.5%	1241	13.50%
Aviation engineers	1	0.0%	90	1.00%
TOTAL	**3163**	**100.0%**	**9180**	**100.00%**

Source: *Anuarul AGIR. Lista de experți 1938-1939*, edited by Octav Păduraru [1939], and *Monitorul Oficial al României*, Part I, 1938-1940.

In the statistics of AGIR experts, 520 engineers declared that they had a university-based higher education, while 2597 mentioned that they had graduated from technical higher education institutions, in different formats (including Academies, polytechnic schools, technical institutes, etc.). Regarding the locality where they graduated, there is available data for 3147 engineers. 2339 engineers declared that they had graduated from technical educational institutions in Romania (Bucharest - 1579, Forestry School of Brănești – 144, Agricultural School of Herăstrău – 109, Academy of Higher Agronomic Studies in Cluj – 82, Faculty of Agronomic Studies in Chișinău-Iași – 227, Polytechnic School of Timișoara – 198). 338 engineers had been trained in the former German Empire. They were followed by those trained in the former Habsburg regions (Hungary, Austria, Czechoslovakia) – 274 people. Finally, the number of engineers trained in the French-speaking area (France and Belgium) amounted to 132 people. 3100 engineers specified their year of graduation, with 2304 people graduating between 1919 and 1938. In terms of occupation, 1880 declared themselves to be practising engineers, 182 – freelancers, and 105 – entrepreneurs. 142 engineers worked in higher or secondary education institutions, filling various teaching positions, while 700 among them held various management positions in state or private institutions, including directors, deputy directors, heads of services, etc. Over 1200 engineers (35%) had their professional residence in Bucharest, while 1562 declared that they resided in the capital city of Romania [103].

[103] The data below have been processed on the basis of the information provided by *Anuarul AGIR. Lista de experți 1938-1939*, edited by Octav Păduraru [1939].

An important objective of the present study was to pinpoint the total number of engineers trained in Romania. According to the AGIR statistics from 1938, 1210 engineers declared themselves to be graduates of the Polytechnic School of Bucharest, while 198 named the Polytechnic School of Timişoara as their home institution. Although I do not have exact data available, it appears that, between 1881 and 1938, the two polytechnic schools trained approximately 3,000 engineers, i.e., around 30% of all engineer professionals in Greater Romania.

A new professional body demanding state intervention in society: In lieu of conclusions

In the opening of the third volume dedicated to the history of universities in Europe, the general editor Walter Rüegg emphasised the expansion of institutions of higher education in different fields between the mid-nineteenth and the mid-twentieth century. The expansion was so impetuous, that "the 200 universities existing in the 1930s were surrounded by some 300 institutions of higher education in the military, technical, polytechnic, commercial, medical, veterinary, agricultural, educational, political and musical fields. But they had not replaced the universities and were attended by a relatively small minority of students"[104]. The reason for such a small attendance is to be found in the "segmentation" (Fritz Ringer) of the secondary education all over Europe. Ringer applies this notion to the "division of the educational system into parallel segments or 'tracks', which differ both in the curricula and in the social origin of the pupils". Consequently, the curricular differences would be laden with "socially hierarchical meanings, which in turn will define the social status of graduates"[105].

This article traces the evolutionary stages of technical higher education in Romania through the lens of the theory of professionalisation. It examines the institutional evolution of the National School of Bridges and Roads in Bucharest from a special education institution to a higher education establishment in 1938. To reveal the peculiarity of the training provided by this institution, the article tackles European influences in shaping its curriculum and fields of study. The goal of the leading figures of technical education in Romania was to

[104] Rüegg, "Themes," 3.

[105] Fritz Ringer, "On Segmentation in modern European educational systems: the case of French secondary education, 1865-1920," in *The Rise of the Modern Educational System. Structural Change and Social Reproduction 1870-1920*, ed. Detlef K. Müller, Fritz Ringer, Brian Simon, 3rd edition (London-Paris: Cambridge University Press & Editions de la Maison des Sciences, 1989), 53.

obtain a symbolic, cultural, and educational status for the polytechnic schools at least equal to that of universities. As we have seen, it was a long process, during which the Romanian university conflicted with the new vision promoted especially by Nicolae Vasilescu-Karpen. For the latter, the training of engineers had to remain the exclusive prerogative of the polytechnic schools.

Another aspect discussed is the development and diversification of the Romanian higher education system. Until 1900, the training of Romanian specialists occurred mainly at foreign education institutions. In the interwar period, young people began to prefer Romanian establishments. One of the reasons was most probably the systematic organisation of Romanian higher education, with various fields corresponding to different career options. In 1938, one third of Romanian engineers were graduates of the national polytechnic schools of Bucharest or Timișoara.

One last aspect addressed is the growing number of young people who pursued higher education. This phenomenon which may be interpreted as a democratisation of education, which might suggest that education was a tool of social change in interwar Romania. Even if we did not find any study in the field of historical sociology to confirm or refute this thesis, the main consequence of this diversification of the Romanian educational system was the convergence between education and profession. Since the state was the main employer for higher education graduates (including engineers), the educational system proved to be a mechanism geared towards state purposes and not necessarily towards the economy, despite making the system look meritocratic and democratic. Pierre Bourdieu called this system social reproduction through education.

Undoubtedly, the professionalisation of engineers in Romania was a success. In 1938, they secured the training of engineers only in polytechnic schools, with the help of the two important professional organisations *Asociația Generală a Inginerilor din România* and *Societatea Politehnică*. In a capitalist system, however, professionalisation contrasts with proletarianisation. This is why any profession tends to raise the minimum criteria for access to its field. In this respect, the role of the state is decisive. This issue was at the centre of political and ideological debates and developments after the Great Depression of 1929-1933. A.M. Carr-Saunders and Paul Alexander Wilson, in their book called *The Professions* published in 1933, noted that establishing a fair relationship between "knowledge and power" would become "the central problem of modern democracies"[106].

[106] Dubar, Tripier Boussard, *Sociologie des professions*, 83.

The proletarianisation of intellectual professionals was addressed in the Weimar Republic by a Marxist analyst, Siegfried Kracauer, who noticed a growing gap between the horizon of expectations and the increasingly precarious and proletarian daily existence of the German bureaucracy. Although (higher) education had become, at the end of the nineteenth century, the entrance permit to a truly bourgeois life, the growing number of higher education graduates threatened certain notions cherished by bourgeois identity, such as personality, education, culture, profession, or community. In reality, in terms of their economic role, professionals became nothing more than a "salaried mass" focused on intellectual work. However, with regard to capital, the position of the intellectual worker was by no means superior to that of the manual worker: "Today the social space in which we find modern slavery is no longer the plant in which the great mass of workers works; that social space is instead the office"[107].

This might explain the support of the engineers' professional associations for the dictatorial turn in the late 1930s. Since 1935, the president of AGIR was Mihail Manoilescu, an engineer who had graduated first in his class from NSBR in Bucharest in 1915. Manoilescu is well known for supporting protectionism in international trade. According to this doctrine, agrarian economies, including Romania, were disadvantaged in their commercial relations with the industrialised societies. Therefore, Manoilescu urged increased state intervention in the economy, which he viewed as the main incentive for economic development, aiming to industrialise the country through a planned-economy system. "In a society where peasants constituted the vast majority of the population, such a program was incompatible with representative democracy, and thus Manoilescu quite naturally shifted his position from a rather conservative liberalism to authoritarianism during the thirties"[108]. As a consequence, Manoilescu became a supporter and ideologist of the corporatist state. He perceived the intellectual professions – engineers among them – as the top corporation of society. Since democracy had purportedly failed to deliver prosperity, Manoilescu argued that only an authoritarian system could solve the underlying problems of Romanian society, such as poverty and social inequality. The *laissez-faire* attitude had to be left behind, while a new state – the corporatist state – was to coordinate and apply the 'real' program of national development and social solidarity[109]. His

[107] Siegfried Kracauer, *The Salaried Masses. Duty and Distraction in Weimar Germany*, ed. Inka Mülder-Bach (London – New York: Verso, 1998), 30.

[108] Dylan Riley, *The Civic Foundations of Fascism in Europe. Italy, Spain, and Romania 1870-1945* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2010), 131.

[109] In 1942, Mihail Manoilescu gave an extent account of his vision regarding the necessity to reorganise Romanian society. He emphasised that the time of liberal bourgeoisie was over

shift towards authoritarisanism reflected in his adhesion to the Fascist *Legionary Movement* and the dictatorial regime of King Carol II. The same shift could be observed in the growing influence of the professional associations in the late 1930s. It was quite obvious that the professional associations played a major role in discrediting democratic practices and were among the first entities to support the new regime installed by Carol II.

While promoting this new vision, the heads of the engineers' professional associations played a key role in changing the economic paradigm of the Romanian state. In 1931, Romania was a country deeply affected by the Great Depression. In a public speech held that year, engineer Constantin Bușilă argued that Romania's economic policy should be controlled by engineers, since their industrial, technological, and economic expertise entitled them to this leading position. In exchange for this privileged role, engineers were supposed to develop a policy that would draw its roots from "the true general interests of our national economy"[110]. In the late 1930s, Bușilă became a supporter of the authoritarian turn in Romanian politics. During World War II, he was appointed Minister of Public Works and Communications in the government led by the dictator Ion Antonescu.

Romanian engineers like Manoilescu or Bușilă were promoters of and active participants in a pan-European trend that had a general impact on their profession. Through the development of the polytechnic educational system, engineers "were broadening their perspective and increasingly shifting their attention from the factory workshop to the economy as a whole"[111]. This change in the evolution of the engineering profession must be linked to the development of a specific system of knowledge networks. This allowed Romanian engineers to join the international community of experts, which anticipated and predicted that scientific progress would solve the basic social questions. The transfers of scientific and technical knowledge engendered, slowly but surely, a state of mind that purported to understand reality and envisaged solutions for a "better society" – from the point of view of the engineers. In a century marked

and a new form of economic and political organisation was required. He concluded that "the Romanian bourgeoisie is overwhelmingly on the State's payroll" [Burghezia românească stă în mod precumpănitor în solda Statului]. Mihail Manoilescu, *Rostul și destinul burgheziei românești* (Bucharest: Cugetarea – Georgescu Delafras, 1942), 110.

[110] Constantin Bușilă, "Industria românească în decurs de 50 de ani (1881-1931)," *Istoricul dezvoltării tehnice în România. Buletinul Societății Politehnice*, year XLV, no. 12 (December 1931): 2351.

[111] Jackie Clarke, "Engineering a New Order in the 1930s: The Case of Jean Coutrot," *French Historical Studies*, Volume 24, no. 1 (Winter 2001): 68.

by the temptation of breathing life into utopias, engineers tried to implement their holistic vision of society. In other words, engineers laid claim to building and mastering the future.

Rezumat

Studiul relevă evoluția numerică a inginerilor din România până în anul 1939, analizând prerechizitele socio-economice care ar fi putut contribui la alegerea studiilor inginerești. În acest sens, utilizez conceptele teoriei profesionalizării, premisa de bază fiind că profesia este o identitate socială construită ce implică promisiunea mobilității sociale ascendente. Conform acestei teorii, dezvoltarea unui sistem specific de formare educațională este o condiție esențială în acest proces. Studiul analizează principalele trăsături ale învățământului politehnic din România, cu un accent special pe Școala Politehnică din București, de-a lungul a mai bine de 60 de ani. În ultima parte, studiul analizează situația corpului inginerilor din România în anul 1938, folosind date extrase din anuarul Asociației Generale a Inginerilor din România (AGIR), cu scopul de a evidenția contribuția învățământului politehnic din România la dezvoltarea numerică a profesiei de inginer. Concluzia preliminară a acestui studiu este că, la sfârșitul perioadei interbelice, inginerii au devenit promotori ai unei noi abordări economice, sociale și politice în România, care promova creșterea rolului jucat de stat în toate palierele societății.

Cuvinte-cheie: învățământ superior, ingineri, Școala Politehnică din București, AGIR, studenți politehnici.

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Healthy Young Bodies of an (Un)healthy Nation: Physical Education and Discipline in *Straja Țării* (1934-1940)

Anca FILIPOVICI

Abstract

This text discusses Straja Țării, the Romanian youth organization patronized by King Carol II, and created in the tense social and political atmosphere of the 1930s. While reinforcing the loyalty to the king, Străjeria aimed for an integral education based on moral values, religious and patriotic feelings, and physical training. Although active for a short time, Straja was one of the main social intervention institutions, with high autonomy during the royal dictatorship, mobilizing considerable human and financial resources. It developed specific mechanisms and tools for youth control, including discipline through physical education leading to the strengthening of the young bodies. The paper analyzes the multiple functions of these mechanisms using archival documents, legislation and health surveys carried out in that epoch. The research builds on three levels of analysis: the regulation of physical education and public health in interwar Romania (1); the social control of young bodies through Straja Țării (2); the health deficiencies of the young generation (3). The main argument of this article is that Straja has built an overrated national prototype of the vitality of youth, without properly addressing the deficiencies and cleavages of a relatively healthy nation.

Keywords: youth, discipline, physical education, public health, Straja Țării, biopolitics.

Straja Țării – the royal laboratory for the bright future of the nation

We have high school kids. These children complain that they are too tired. Your Majesty, almost 6 hours of sentinel training on Thursday is too much in addition to the crowded schedule during the week [...] We are not against this beneficial education, but keep in mind that they are children of various kinds, weak, helpless, hungry and malnourished. They live in improper conditions at their hosts and in boarding schools. I have seen children, who come so tired from high school, that they fall asleep at the table; they come back exhausted and don't even eat anymore[1].

This extract is part of a complaint addressed to King Carol II in the autumn of 1938, by a group of parents of high school students from Bucharest who were

[1] Arhivele Naționale Istorice Centrale (ANIC), Fund The Ministry of Education, file 622/1938, 294.

also trained as *străjeri* [sentinels] – members of the compulsory youth organization *Straja Țării* [The Sentinel of the Motherland]. The petition reflects two competing political and social realities in 1930s Romania: on the one hand, the regime's vision of the young people enrolled in Straja Țării as the future strong defenders of the homeland, and on the other hand, the precarious health and overwork of a large part of the students engaged in this extracurricular training. What was the context for the development of education outside the school premises through the Străjerie?

Straja Țării followed the model of European youth policies after the First World War, with most states intervening directly in the management of the so-called new generations without ideals. The Romanian state designed social engineering mechanisms for young people of different ages, starting with the educational-cultural training from an early age and subsequently involving young adults in social work projects for raising the cultural level of Romanian villages. In 1933-1938, legislative measures were introduced targeting young people through the Law for the Royal Cultural Foundations (1933)[2], followed by the creation of the *Oficiu de Educație a Tineretului Român* [Romanian Youth Education Office] (OETR) (1934)[3] under the circumstances triggered by violent incidents involving high school students. Political radicalization and the excesses of indiscipline were consequences of the social tensions of the post-war realities, which were exacerbated by the economic crisis and the rise of local fascism, represented by the Legionary Movement. In 1934, regulations were also implemented for young people aged 18-20, by establishing compulsory pre-military training, which should have developed morality, patriotism, law and order, and civic discipline[4]. After 1938, with the establishment of the king's dictatorship (February 10, 1938 – September 6, 1940), the other youth organizations were incorporated into Straja Țării or officially disbanded.

All these forms of mobilization worked together as tools of foreign policy, but they also represented an internal intervention with a dual purpose. Packed with a high degree of formality and military symbolism, these institutions aimed at social improvement, but also at diminishing the influence of the competing Legionary Movement on the youth, with its Brotherhoods of the Cross and work camps. Also, the organization aimed to strengthen national unity while manifesting an ambiguous and sometimes deceitful attitude towards the minority youth.

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[2] Lege pentru Fundațiunile Culturale Regale, *Monitorul Oficial*, Part I, no. 88, 14 April 1933.

[3] Lege pentru înființarea Oficiului de Educație a Tineretului Român (OETR), *Monitorul Oficial*, Part I, no. 106, 9 May 1934.

[4] Lege pentru pregătirea premilitară, *Monitorul Oficial*, Part I, no. 107, 11 May 1934.

Thus, in the second half of the 1930s, the school-age youth in Romania was integrated into a mass organization outside the traditional pattern of education within the school. The youth organization created in 1934 under OETR became an autonomous institution enshrined in legislation by a decree-law in 1937[5] and by a special law a year later[6]. Enrollment was mandatory and included all youngsters (boys aged 7-18 and girls aged 7-21). It pursued "the national and physical education of young people of both sexes" and "the coordination and control of similar activities of state and private institutions" (1934 OETR Law, art. 1). In the beginning, it used the infrastructure of the scouting movement for the training courses of the future commanders of the sentinels – mainly comprising teachers and other professional categories[7]. As the commanders graduated from the courses, the schools gradually introduced the sentinel program into the curriculum, allocating one day a week for practical courses and outdoor training. Starting from 1938, the organization also introduced a similar program for the working youth affiliated to Asociația Creștină a Tinerilor [the Christian Youth Association] and Asociația Creștină a Femeilor [the Christian Women Association]. Young people from Transylvania and Bukovina also participated in the Străjerie through the regional organizations Șoimii Carpaților [the Carpathian Hawks] and Arcașii Bucovinei [the Archers of Bukovina]. The highly propagandistic dimension was displayed especially by the participation of the sentinels in uniforms at the royal festivities of June 8 (The Youth and Restoration Day)[8]. These programs aimed at rearing and perfecting future disciplined citizens, attached to national, moral and religious values, with an adequate physical condition fit to defend the country and to conceive vigorous future generations.

During its relatively short existence, Straja Țării functioned as a fundamental tool for consolidating royal power and for the ideological reconfiguration of the nation's youth. Logistically and organizationally, it shared the principles of fascist-type youth organizations (especially the Opera Nazionale Balilla in Italy[9]) but shaped its formal aspects according to local politi-

[5] Decret regal. Înființarea Straja Țării, *Monitorul Oficial*, Part I, no. 233, 8 October 1937.

[6] Lege pentru organizarea și funcționarea Străjii Țării, *Monitorul Oficial*, Part I, no. 292, 15 December 1938.

[7] Regulament pentru organizarea și funcționarea Oficiului de Educație a Tineretului Român, *Monitorul Oficial*, Part I, no. 272, 24 November 1934. Scouting merged with Straja Țării in 1937, for reasons of financial economy, Cf. ANIC, Fund The Ministry of Instruction, file 571/1937, 235.

[8] These festivities celebrated Carol's return to the country in June 1930, after a 5 years exile, and his ascending to the throne as king of Romania. Since 1936, June 8 was also designated as Youth Day.

[9] See, for instance, Eden K. McLean, *Mussolini's Children*. Race and Elementary Education in Fascist Italy (Lincoln & London: University of Nebraska Press, 2018).

cal interests. By setting in motion the king's vision of control over youth, the organization expanded and gradually gained power and autonomy. A statistical survey indicates for the year 1939 over 27,000 commanders of all ranks, who guided over 3 million sentinels[10]. A year later, the statistics registered 4,373,039 sentinels and 44,875 commanders[11]. Straja had tried to coagulate this generation through various mechanisms that soon showed their shortcomings. However, this institution provided the future regimes with a paradigmatic model for organizing the Romanian youth.

Physical education as a generator of discipline and health of the young people was a fundamental pillar underpinning the doctrine of the sentinels. As recent research shows, the privileged status of sports and physical activity produced results that were considered valuable in themselves. However, they differed depending on the agency that designed these tools: state authorities can manage physical education to achieve educational improvements, health, regeneration, social control, discipline, patriotism etc.; for the individuals, physical activity produces values at a personal level (status, wealth, health etc.)[12].

Research on physical culture opens a new perspective on the study of nation-states in the 20th century. Romanian historiography also features several works that explore physical education, and especially sports, both as social phenomena and as national ideological and propaganda tools[13]. Recent research on social history and ethnography places physical culture within the debates on public health during the past centuries, viewing it as a landmark of state mod-

[10] *Straja Țării*. Romanian Youth Educational Movement (Bucharest: s.n., 1939), 25.

[11] C. Enescu-Bughea, „Cinci ani de activitate 1935-1940", in *Straja Țării*. Cinci ani de activitate. 1935-1940 (Bucharest: Vremea, 1940), 216.

[12] Cathy Devine, Hamish Telfer, "Why Are Sport and Physical Education Valuable? Values, Sport, and Physical Education", in *Values in Youth Sport and Physical Education*, eds. Jean Whitehead, Hamish Telfer, John Lambert (London, New York: Routledge, 2013), 16. Modern sport is categorized according to similar criteria by the scholarly literature: sports for the sake of movement – an elitist form of competition and performance, with individual values at its core; sports of discipline and integration, as a social value; and sports as a context of socialization and relationships, with specific value for human groups. Henning Eichberg, *Bodily Democracy: Towards a Philosophy of Sport for All* (London, New York: Routledge, 2013).

[13] Bogdan Popa, *Educație fizică, sport și societate în România interbelică* (Cluj-Napoca: Eikon, 2013); Florin Faje, "Playing For and Against the Nation: Football in Interwar Romania", *Nationalities Papers*, vol. 43, no. 1 (2015): 160-177, https://doi.org/10.1080/00905992.2014.937684; Constantin Pompiliu-Nicolae, Valentin Maier, "Sport and Physical Education in Communist Factories: From the Soviet Union to Romania", *Romanian Journal of History and International Studies*, no. 2(2) (2015): 217-232; Marius Rotar, Vasile Emil Ursu, "Romanian Religious Environments and the Development of Sports in Romania in the 1930s", *Sport in History* (published online 16 December 2020), DOI: 10.1080/17460263.2020.1858149.

ernization[14]. This article bases its approach on these conceptual models, focusing on the interwar youth and arguing that physical activity was instrumentalized by the regime of King Carol II as a factor of national regeneration, though achieving poor results in improving the health of the young people.

The paper discusses Straja Țării as a body control mechanism from two perspectives: physical education and the health of the young bodies. The significance of these elements is analyzed at the following levels: 1) legal norms and regulations, 2) the doctrine and principles of sentinel training, 3) and the grassroots view captured by public health surveys and case studies on the vitality of the young generation. The article is a segment of a broader research project on Straja Țării and is based on a rich array of primary sources. These sources include the regulation of physical education and public health, providing an overview of the evolution of the norms, but also underscoring the limited capacity of the state to solve key health and social problems. Other laws, regulations and archival documents highlight the solutions proposed by Straja Țării for social improvement and regeneration. Most documents were issued by the Ministry of Education and contain the provisions and decisions of the OETR and Straja Țării, institutional correspondence, investigation reports and petitions that allow a closer look at the organization's operation and reception from below. Finally, among the relevant sources from that era one could mention some surveys on school health and hygiene produced in the 1920s and 1930s, as well as the results of the 1938 "sanitary offensive" – a complex national survey published in four volumes regarding the assessment of and the state interventions concerning public health in Romania.

Discipline in motion/Building the body of tomorrow

Some research has identified the use of physical education in the educational discourse of 17th-century scholarly literature for children[15], while in modern times, gymnastics revealed a valuable potential for the processes of national

[14] Constantin Bărbulescu, *România medicilor. Medici, țărani și igienă rurală în România de la 1860 la 1910* (Bucharest: Humanitas, 2015); Lidia Trăușan-Matu, *De la leac la rețetă. Medicalizarea societății românești în veacul al XIX-lea* (1831-1869) (Bucharest: Editura Universității din București, 2011); Octavian Buda, *Identitate națională și medicină socială: antropologie culturală, psihiatrie și eugenism în România: 1800-1945* (Bucharest: Muzeul Național al Literaturii Române, 2013).

[15] Rebekka Horlacher, "The Emergence of Physical Education as a Subject for Compulsory Schooling in the First Half of the Nineteenth Century: The Case of Phokion Heinrich Clias and Adolf Spiess", *Nordic Journal of Educational History*, vol. 4, no. 2 (2017): 13-30, https://doi.org/10.36368/njedh.v4i2.93.

unification or independence[16]. In the 20th century, sports and physical education guided youth policies in most nation-states, regardless of the political regime. In the matrix of power relations between state authority and individuals, bodies became the locus of social control. Youngsters, in particular, have been drawn into historical processes through various practices and discourses that have classified and modified their bodies[17]. Following the ground-breaking formulations of Michel Foucault[18], sports and physical activity were among the disciplinary practices through which the free, explosive energy of the juvenile body was transformed into constrained, obedient energy, directed by authorities towards meaningful and useful purposes.

In the 1930s, the social control of youth through discipline supported by physical education became state policy. An analysis of the management of youth policies worldwide showed that, in industrialized countries, youth was associated with the danger of delinquency, demoralization, and unemployment. Under these conditions, some countries tried to involve young people in activities that would keep them busy, concluding that "modern youth's difficulties have their roots in idleness"[19]. The theory of moral education developed by the French sociologist Émile Durkheim in the late 19th century was thus still relevant during the 1930s: "when the individual activity does not know where to take hold, it turns against itself. When moral forces of society remain unemployed, they deviate from their moral sense and are used up in a morbid and harmful manner"[20]. Most states sought to control youth organizations through programs meant to regenerate society, with a special emphasis on physical education[21]. Since 1934, Romania also followed this path, by creating the OETR

[16] Examples include the German Turner movement inspired by Friedrich Ludwig Jahn, in Ken Hardman, Roland Naul, "Introduction", in *Sport and Physical Education in Germany* (London, New York: Routledge, 2002). On the ideological instrumentalization of physical education see also Conor Heffernan, "Marching Forwards or Backwards? Physical Education and the Army in Early Twentieth-Century Ireland", *Sport in Society*, vol. 23, no. 8 (2020): 1280-1298, https://doi.org/10.1080/17430437.2020.1769945.

[17] R.W. Connell, *The Men and the Boys* (Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 2000), 57-58.

[18] Michel Foucault, *A supraveghea și a pedepsi. Nașterea închisorii* (Bucharest: Humanitas, 1997).

[19] *Youth. A World Problem. A Study in World Perspective of Youth Conditions, Movements and Programs*, by W. Thacher Winslow. With a foreword by Aubrey Williams. National Youth Administration (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1937), 117.

[20] Émile Durkheim, *Moral Education. A Study in the Theory and Application of the Sociology of Education* (London: The Free Press, 1973), 13.

[21] In Bulgaria – the Bulgarian Youth Union (a national 'patriotic organization aiming to regenerate the country's moral and social life'); in Germany – Hitlerjugend (the only officially allowed youth organization); in Italy – Opera Nazionale Balilla (centered on moral and phy-

and Straja Țării. However, the first steps in the institutionalization of physical education had been taken a decade earlier.

The compulsory physical education for young people was introduced and regulated by the Law for the establishment of the House of People's Culture (November 3, 1921), updated by the Law for Physical Education of June 17, 1923. The organization of physical education in schools and other institutions and associations was coordinated by Oficiul Național de Educație Fizică [the National Office of Physical Education] (ONEF), subordinated to the Ministry of Public Instruction, in collaboration with the Ministry of War and the Ministry of Health, Labor, and Social Welfare (art. 2)[22]. The institutional triad under which this body was created and the composition of the steering committee suggested the authorities' approach toward the functions and significance of physical education for the future of the nation. Prince Carol, at that time, the successor to the throne of Romania, was the honorary chairman of this committee (1923 Law, art. 7). The National Institute of Physical Education (1923 Law, art. 16) was founded to train the staff in charge of implementing the policy of health through physical activity. The support of the Royal House for youth and physical education was also manifested through its involvement in the creation of the Scouts and the Christian youth organizations. Sports and outdoor activities were practiced by the young offspring of the royal family, but also by Queen Marie, famous for her passion for riding. The initial forms of organization of school sports associations are attributed to the initiative of young Prince Carol, around 1908. These were followed by the creation, in 1912, of a federation of sports associations and clubs (Federația Societăților de Sport din România [The Federation of Sports Societies in Romania])[23]. Two decades later, Straja Țării appeared as a follow up of these projects, although evolving under the influence of the king's political agenda.

Physical education was a fundamental component of the doctrine of integral education, which emphasized the failure of purely intellectual training and proposed the educational formation of young people through morality, religion, and physical activity. This theory was also promoted by the schooling legisla-

sical education); in Portugal – the Acção Escolar Vanguarda (focused on nationalism, and the moral and physical development of youth); in the Soviet Union – the Young Pioneers etc.

[22] In 1929, ONEF was reorganized, being subordinated only to the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare, according to Legea educației fizice, *Monitorul Oficial*, Part I, no. 196, 4 September 1929. The law also stipulated the creation of Uniunea Federațiilor Sportive din România (UFSR) [the Union of Sports Federations in Romania].

[23] Constantin F. Nicolescu, *Pagini uitate din istoria educației fizice* (Bucharest: Editura Enciclopedică, 2014), 29-30.

tion in force at the time, though schools didn't manage to generate an effective pedagogical model along these lines. Străjeria took over this desideratum, controlling the free time of young people and redirecting them ideally away from radical youth movements. The ideologues of Straja Țării emphasized that "the impulse of the youth to act is so strong that, if it is not allowed to work for good, it works for evil"; at the same time, in their view, the passivity of less temperamental youths became useless, as long as they were not guided toward constructive, social action[24].

Therefore, the instrumentalization of the body through physical education and sports had multiple functions, aiming not only at a healthy personal development but also at reclaiming the energy of youth, otherwise wasted in harmful directions. Disciplining the body was the path to national regeneration. The basic legislation on sentinel training included some sketchy references to this aspect. The concern for the young body substantiated and legitimized the establishment of the OETR[25]. The Decree-Law of 1937, according to which Straja Țării became an autonomous institution, declared the new type of education to be mandatory, including its physical component (1937 Decree, art. 1). At the organizational level, sports were represented in the leadership of the OETR by the President of the Union of Sports Federations in Romania (OETR Law, art. 2)[26]. In collaboration with the Union, the OETR aimed to encourage practicing sports, though not the competitive element (OETR Regulation, art. 42), which would have countered the non-individualistic spirit it tried to inoculate into young people. Though the legislation lacked further details in this regard, propaganda pamphlets and doctrinal works developed this fundamental dimension of Straja Țării's activity. Based on these sources, the following pages will discuss some of the values attached to the social control of the young people by using physical education, including inculcating morality and obedience (a), reconnecting to nature / outdoor areas (b), and the revival of the nation (c).

(a) The ultimate goal of physical education was restoring the morality of the young. The post-war period had left a powerful impact on society, especially on the young generation, blamed for succumbing to immorality. Teachers and pedagogues thought that the youth had lost any guiding principles, that it suffered from destructive individualism, excessive materialism, and

[24] Ștefan Șoimescu, *Doctrină, metodă sau curent de viață?* (Bucharest: s.n., 1940), 14.

[25] "[...] for the moral, national, and physical education of young people of both sexes up to the age of 18" (OETR Law, art. 1).

[26] Subsequently, *Straja* took over the leadership of UFSR, of the sports federations and associations, appointing their presidents and half of the members of the management committees. (1937 Decree, art. 4).

that it displayed a propensity for radicalization and violence. The economic crisis of the early 1930s exacerbated this perceived decline, and the youth's prospects seemed disoriented. The increasingly frequent acts of delinquency among the younger generation were associated with the excessive politicization of young people and their growing attachment to extremist movements. The Christian youth became more and more attracted to the radical anti-systemic organization, the Legionary Movement, with high schools functioning as recruitment sites[27]. In the winter of 1933-1934, certain actions involving young people of different ages sparked a public outcry. Prime Minister I.G. Duca was killed in December 1933 by a group of young legionnaires on the platform of the Sinaia train station. Two months later, three high school students in Bucharest killed a member of the Chamber of Deputies during a burglary[28]. The latter case spurred and accelerated the official implementation of the first measures involving severe controls in schools and organizations, as well as the creation of the OETR.

Sports promoters linked these violent incidents to the lack of a controlled channeling of youth energies. According to officer Constantin F. Nicolescu, a teacher in the field of military education, the discipline of sports would have accustomed the young to obedience and to the need to follow rules. In his opinion, sports should have held a prominent place in the activity of the school youth, because, "if these young people had taken up sports, they would not have had time to think about murder"[29]. At the same time, Nicolescu put the blame for this situation on the deficiencies of the sports infrastructure in the early 1930s: the lack of a recreational sports park, the discouragement of young people to participate in sports competitions, the excesses of sports shows[30].

A similar position was held by Ștefan Șoimescu, a professor and publicist, as well as a member of the Superior Committee and the Standing Committee of Straja Țării. He was perceived as the main ideologue of the sentinels, but also as a creator of the king's personality cult. During the royal dictatorship, his writings framed Carol's actions regarding youth in terms of a social and pedagogical doctrine aiming at the revival of the new generation[31]. Șoimescu legitimized

[27] Roland Clark, *Holy Legionary Youth*. Fascist Activism in Interwar Romania (Ithaca, NY & London: Cornell University Press, 2015); Anca Filipovici, "The Youth of the Unified Nation: Social Control and Discipline in Romanian Interwar High Schools", *New Europe College, Ştefan Odobleja Program Yearbook 2018–2019* (in print): 137-164.

[28] „Prinderea asasinilor lui Eusebiu Popovici", *Dimineața*, no. 9807 (18 April 1934): 1.

[29] Nicolescu, *Pagini uitate*, 203.

[30] Nicolescu, *Pagini uitate*, 204.

[31] Ștefan Șoimescu, *Pe drumul reînoirii* (Bucharest: Bucovina I.E. Torouțiu, 1939), 6.

and defended the king's political decisions through his theories and arguments, showing that, within the purported conflict between generations, Carol took the side of the youth, continuing the work he had started in the scouting movement[32]. Straja Țării was to change the individualistic temperament of the youngsters and to inspire them with joy and exuberance, which would amount to remarkable results on the moral and national-ethnic terrain: "if we want a Romanian character, we must also aspire to a Romanian temperament"[33]. Physical education through gymnastics certainly responded to the need for bodily health. However, the Straja leaders believed that, unlike the limited approach of the school, gymnastics harmonized the body with morality and the spiritual dimension: "the educational ideal of the sentinel is the harmonious and fully developed man, citizen and soldier, member of a family and a free nation, faithful to the King". The tools necessary for achieving this ideal included exercise, hygiene, work, freedom, order, discipline, and healthy outdoor activities[34].

(b) Discussing the limits and deficiencies of the school, Șoimescu concluded: "[...] the school no longer responded to the call of life. Literally and figuratively, the children lacked air, sun, movement, joy"[35]. It should be remembered, however, that in the last decades of the 19th century, school architecture had undergone a reforming shift. School construction policies began to consider the imperatives of modernization, with buildings designed in compliance with contemporary aesthetic and hygiene standards[36]. The introduction of gymnastics in the curriculum also involved the creation of large and well-ventilated gym halls. But, as in-depth research of the topic shows, the application of this new policy only had an impact on secondary schools, and in some cases, on urban primary schools. These projects also conceived the schoolyard as a remote recreational space[37]. However, the students still spent most of their time sitting at rigid school desks. In the second half of the 19th century, educators were already promoting the "Fröbelian games," to be practiced every 20-30 minutes to remedy the effects of the time students spent sitting, while "their bodies are tortured"[38]. The new buildings failed to meet the needs of the entire school

[32] Șoimescu, *Pe drumul reînoirii*, 9.
[33] Șoimescu, *Pe drumul reînoirii*, 14.
[34] Șoimescu, *Pe drumul reînoirii*, 62-63
[35] Șoimescu, *Doctrină...?*, 6.
[36] Ramona Caramelea, „Spațiu fizic și spațiu social: arhitectura școlară în România în a doua jumătate a secolului al XIX-lea", *Archiva Moldaviae. Studii de istorie socială. Noi perspective*, eds. Constantin Iordachi, Alin Ciupală, Supliment I (2014): 100.
[37] Caramelea, „Spațiu fizic și spațiu social," 103.
[38] I.P. Florantin, *Recreațiuni fröbeliane pentru tinerime în școală și familie* (Iași: Editura Librăriei Școlelor Frații Șaraga, 1887), 1.

population. After the war, the building offensive was resumed by Minister C. Angelescu, but the projects only sporadically met the requirements of the educational ideal. In rural areas, improvised school spaces remained in use. These buildings were often crowded, dimly lit, and unventilated.

From a gender perspective, this reconnection to nature was a display of masculinity[39] for boys. Scouting and Straja Țării were conceived as gendered institutions. The training for girls aimed mainly at preparing young women for becoming mothers and housewives, according to the traditional distribution of roles. The masculinization of the boys through scouting as a means to counter their feminization by the school environment was a theory applied to the Anglo-Saxon environment at the crossroads of the 19th and 20th century when the expansion of public secondary education took place. In patriarchal societies, in which female emancipation progressed slowly, the feminization of the educational environment was linked to the increase in the number of girls in gymnasiums and high schools. Furthermore, female teachers emerged as a result of the access of girls to teachers' schools and universities. Even the imposition of school obedience through the passivity required while sitting at school desks was assimilated to the cultural construct of femininity[40]. As research shows, the reconnection of the boys with "manhood", through sports activities and the difficult challenges of adapting to the natural environment, accompanied by paramilitary training, were viewed by the creators of scouting as having strengthened the traditional hierarchies and gender roles[41]. Thus, training and discipline programs with specific designs for boys and girls were meant to produce "gendered bodies".

Releasing the body from the constraints of the school furniture was not only a desideratum for healthy development but also a form of social integration. The school was perceived as an artificial community, based on the relationship between each student and the teacher, while Straja Țării intended to become an organic community, where each youngster had a social responsibility to the whole community[42].

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[39] Masculinity as a relational concept – which implies individual difference and personal agency – is defined by the essentialist perspectives in terms of action and power, in opposition to passivity and femininity. See, e.g., R.W. Connell, *Masculinities*, 2nd edition (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), 68. According to a more complex approach, masculinity represents a social construct, a dynamic process of configuring practice within gender relations. See, e.g., Connell, *The Men and the Boys*, 29.

[40] Jeffrey P. Hantover, "The Boy Scouts and the Validation of Masculinity", *Journal of Social Issues*, vol. 34, no. 1 (1978): 187, https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-4560.1978.tb02548.x.

[41] Hantover, "The Boy Scouts," 187.

[42] Iosif Gabrea, *Școala și străjeria în pregătirea tineretului* (Bucharest: Bucovina I.E. Torouțiu, 1938), 13.

(c) From this perspective, the revival of the younger generation was equivalent to the revival of the nation[43]. The direct link between the health of the individual and the vigor of the nation through state intervention had been proclaimed by eugenic theories since the 19th century[44]. In Romania, almost a decade before the appearance of Straja, the university professor from Cluj Iuliu Hațieganu had developed a eugenic and biopolitical program within the ASTRA organization[45], through the subsection of physical and moral education, which aimed to improve the health of the Romanian people in Transylvania. Physical education instructors, together with the intellectuals of the villages, were to train and guide the population towards a healthy life, correcting their pernicious daily habits linked to hygiene, nutrition, and the effects of overwork in agriculture[46]. The promotion of physical education as a matter of national interest was also supported by Col. Virgil I. Bădulescu, director of the Office and the National Institute of Physical Education. In a conference held at an ASTRA meeting, he emphasized the importance of physical education for preparing young people for national defense: "In peacetime, we tend to raise our children like gentle lambs […] then suddenly, in times of war, we break the balance and ask the lambs to become lions"[47].

The physical education subsection was transformed in 1928 into the organization *Șoimii Carpaților* [Carpathian Hawks], a regional variant of the Czechoslovak Sokols, with statutes elaborated by Professors Iuliu Moldovan and Atanasie Popa. The new organization was institutionalized in 1930, in Cluj, under the leadership of Hațieganu[48]. Adult youths between the ages of 18 and 35 became members of this association. They were called *șoimani* (sic!) [hawks]. The association placed a special emphasis on physical education, in the core cities of the region: Sibiu, Brașov, Cluj, and Sighet. Starting from 1932, it was gradually extended to the villages, where it achieved greater success than in the cities. Under the motto "All for the good of the nation", Șoimii Carpaților

[43] See, for instance, Irina Livezeanu, *Cultural Politics in Greater Romania: Regionalism, Nation Building, and Ethnic Struggle, 1918–1930* (Ithaca, N. Y.: Cornell University Press, 1995); Clark, *Holy legionary youth*.

[44] Marius Turda, *Eugenism și modernitate. Națiune, rasă și biopolitică în Europa (1870-1950)* (Iași: Polirom, 2014), 73.

[45] The Transylvanian Association for Romanian Literature and the Culture of the Romanian People (ASTRA) had been created in Sibiu in 1861 and was the main group that strove for the political and cultural emancipation of the Romanians from Transylvania.

[46] Popa, *Sport și educație fizică*, 126.

[47] Virgil I. Bădulescu, *Educația fizică, o problemă națională* (Sibiu: Astra, 1927), 10.

[48] Dragoș Petrescu, Daniela Petrescu, „Organizația *Șoimii Carpaților* în perioada interbelică", *Carpica*, no. 32 (2003): 187.

promoted the work for the nation's progress, along with the sentinels and the scouts[49]. However, the physical education of the "hawks" was based exclusively on Romanian biopolitical and ethnic principles: Their education was tailored according to the individual and the national biological doctrine. It aspired to the physical-moral and intellectual prosperity of the individual and the nation by capitalizing on the physical, moral, and intellectual forces and directing them towards the service of the community. [...] The physical and moral vigor ensures the eternity of the nation [...] – discipline is the force that transforms freedom into power"[50].

Not that strong, nor that healthy. Young bodies, hygiene, and public health in Romania

The concerns for hygiene and public health have been increasingly obvious in Europe since the end of the 18th century, when the first systematic actions of public health research took place, along with growing state intervention in matters related to the death and the birth rate, fertility, and the eradication of social diseases. During the next century, the standardization of public hygiene, various models of a social security system, and the concern for improving the quality of the living environment (urban-industrial planning) constituted the main fields of intervention of a new form of technology of power, called biopolitics[51]. However, unlike discipline, biopolitics did not aim at individual control, supervision and training but at establishing a set of mechanisms for collective regulation and optimization, to be carried out over the long term. Power was exercised in this complex process through its regularizing ability to intervene through assisting certain people to live while allowing others to die[52].

In the 18th century, the Romanian Principalities also introduced the first norms for a permanent organization of hospital institutions and the management of hygiene and public health. The Organic Regulations (1831/32) and other modern laws were gradually adopted throughout the 19th century, culminating in more complex legislation concerning curative and preventive medicine[53]. The law of 1910 – the work of Dr Ion Cantacuzino[54] – symbol-

[49] Iuliu Hațieganu, „Șoimii Carpaților", *Transilvania*, no. 4 (July-August 1936): 232.

[50] Hațieganu, „Șoimii Carpaților", 233-234.

[51] Michel Foucault, *„Trebuie să apărăm societatea". Cursuri ținute la Collège de France (1975-1976)*, 2nd edition, trans. Bogdan Ghiu (Cluj-Napoca: Idea Design & Print, 2009), 192-193.

[52] Foucault, *„Trebuie să apărăm societatea"*, 195.

[53] Alina Ioana Șuta, Oana Mihaela Tămaș, Alin Ciupală, Constantin Bărbulescu, Vlad Popovici, coord., *Legislația sanitară în România modernă (1874-1910)* (Cluj-Napoca: Presa Universitară Clujeană, 2009).

[54] Legea sanitară din 1910, *Monitorul Oficial*, Part I, no. 211, 20 December 1910.

ized certain progress in introducing elements of modern medical approaches and remained in force for the next twenty years. However, material difficulties and staff shortages led to unsatisfactory results in its application, especially in rural areas[55]. This also had an impact on the situation of the youth of all ages.

In 1929, the hygienist doctor Gheorghe Banu[56] discussed the relationship between school attendance, young people's health, and delinquency, based on data collected for the 1920s and on the results of a survey conducted at schools in Mănăștur, Cluj County. Banu pointed out that poor school attendance was caused by three factors. Almost 5% of students of all grades were affected by physical problems, which altered the child's personality and psychology. Most of these issues were the result of hereditary factors[57]. Even more students suffered from chronic diseases (especially tuberculosis (25.5%)) and other transient, recurrent diseases[58]: eye diseases – myopia (53.2% girls, 46.8% boys), ENT diseases (40%), dental problems (76.8 %), pediculosis (79% girls, 24% boys), spinal issues – scoliosis (20%), heart diseases (2%). Finally, the social factors of non-attendance had the largest share in the country where 80% of the population lived in rural areas. Banu identified parental ignorance, poverty, poor hygiene conditions, and malnutrition as the main problems. The considerable distance from the school and the exploitation of child labor in agriculture also led to poor attendance. 48% of the students lived in inappropriate conditions, sharing the same room, and sometimes even the same bed, with several other family members. For 50% of the children, the diet was irregular and insufficient[59]. The solutions envisaged in this case study aimed at fining students for not attending primary instruction, but also at establishing medical supervision in schools and increasing social protection measures[60].

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[55] Virgiliu Leonte, *Sănătatea publică în România* (Bucharest: Imprimeria Națională, 1938), 72. Estimative data in 1938 indicated 9000 doctors in urban areas (1 doctor per 390 people) and only 1000 doctors in villages (1 doctor per 15,500 people), in Leonte, *Sănătatea publică*, 74. Specialists suggested some solutions for this situation. These included the reform of the medical system, encouraging practitioners to reside in villages, and granting them a temporary state allowance, coupled with the training of hygienists, to be focused exclusively on hygiene and preventive medicine, in Leonte, *Sănătatea publică*, 84.

[56] The future Minister of Health and Social Care in the Goga-Cuza government (December 29, 1937 – February 10, 1938).

[57] D.G. Banu, *Rapport sur la non-fréquentation scolaire en Roumanie*, Extrait du Bulletin International de la Protection de l'Enfance, no. 85 (October 1929), 5.

[58] Banu, *Rapport*, 6-7.

[59] Banu, *Rapport*, 13-15.

[60] Banu, *Rapport*, 18-21.

The health of schoolchildren was still far from being satisfactory and mirrored, in fact, the general state of the population's health. In the 1920s, eugenics-influenced doctors claimed that the dangers that "threaten and wreak havoc in schools are largely medical". In this context, eugenics would have been essential, because it would have ensured "the strengthening of the body through physical and hygienic education". The responsibility fell to the school doctor – "the second parent, in front of whom no student should have anything to hide" – because "the school has the great mission to give tomorrow's society perfect bodies"[61].

A new step towards public health reform was made by the Sanitary and Care Law of July 14, 1930, which remained in force, with several amendments, until the 1940s[62]. Social Welfare Establishments, with their special sections and institutions for various vulnerable categories, coordinated the actions of the social assistance for schoolchildren until the age of adolescence (1930 Sanitary Law with amendments, art. 138). At the same time, the law provided for specialized sanitary supervision for primary and secondary school students in school dispensaries, school canteens, open-air schools, prevention centers, holiday camps[63], and other special school institutions (1930 Sanitary Law, art. 435). School hygiene was a distinct policy direction. It was promoted through a program established by the Ministry of Education in collaboration with the Ministry of Labor, Health and Social Welfare, which involved the direct contribution of school doctors (1930 Sanitary Law, art. 436), but also the creation of career guidance offices (1930 Sanitary Law, art. 437). Social assistance had to be supplemented by private initiative, through charitable societies concerned with the protection of youth (1930 Sanitary Law, art. 458). But this law was also applied with only partial success. The reality, including the situation of the youth, was generally inconsistent with the desiderata of the regulations. There are numerous school surveys relevant in this regard. Many of them represented the research work of the members of the Sociological School in Bucharest.

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[61] Dominic Stanca, *O anchetă sanitară la un liceu* (Cluj: Editura Revistei Societatea de Mâine, 1924), 4.

[62] *Legea sanitară și de ocrotire din 22 iunie 1935, cu toate modificările la zi*, ediția a IV-a (Bucharest: Editura Socec & Co., 1941). In its initial form, the law was promulgated by the Royal Decree no. 2515 of 1930, *Monitorul Oficial*, Part I, no. 154, 14 July 1930.

[63] The number of summer camps in the mountains and at the seaside, created by the Ministry of Health, local authorities, and private institutions, increased considerably in the late 1930s. 75 summer colonies operated in 1937 for children with various diseases, and 3 preventive medicine facilities were opened for children prone to tuberculosis. In *Enciclopedia României*, vol. 1 (1938), 530-531.

Medical sociology research[64] often refers to the school surveys published in 1937, under the coordination of doctors G. Banu and Anatole Cressin, who correlated the situation of the youth with its living standards. The first step was to assess the physical condition and dietary practices of schoolchildren from various social backgrounds enrolled in the schools of Bucharest and Ialomița County. The results showed that they developed most diseases and health conditions (48.4% in rural areas and 42.7.4% in urban areas) at the age of puberty (13-14). While researching nutrition, the survey also targeted more than 132,000 students in Bukovina. Only 23.8% of Bukovinian students ate 4-5 times a day, while 36.6% ate meat once a week, and 73.5% ate polenta at all meals. Estimating the situation at the national level, the doctors indicated that 24-34% of students were well fed, 36-62% were malnourished, and another 14-30% were poorly fed[65]. Ultimately, the investigation sounded the alarm concerning the state of affairs in schools: "we must not only take care of the school walls, but we must also take care of the human material". The state had to watch over the normal development of the youth "if it does not want this half-hungry and half-grown youth to slip further towards the slope of degeneration"[66].

Another survey coordinated in 1932-1936 by Banu and Cressin, involving 827 students of King Carol I Commercial School in Bucharest, analyzed the robustness index in correlation with the origin and profession of the father. The survey concluded that the most robust students were children of peasants. As expected, only relatively wealthy peasants could afford to financially support their children in secondary schools. At the same time, the malnourished students were usually children of factory workers and craftsmen[67]. The authors also pointed out that the creation of public jobs for school doctors in all secondary schools existed only on paper, as their duties were not precisely defined and no auxiliary staff was provided to assist them. Due to budgetary difficulties, this provision was only applied to a small extent[68].

In addition to the issue of harmonious development through physical education and hygiene, another aspect related to the young people's trajectory on

[64] See, e.g., Bogdan Bucur, "Population Health in Interwar Romania Reflected in the Sociological School of Bucharest's Research and Publication", in *Health and the Media. Essays on the Effects of Mass Communication,* eds., Valentina Marinescu, Bianca Mitu (Jefferson, North Carolina: McFarland & Company, 2016), 215-240.

[65] Data extracted from Anatole Cressin, *Starea fizică și alimentația școlarilor în România*, extras din *Sociologie românească*, no. 5-6 (May-June 1937).

[66] Cressin, *Starea fizică*, 4.

[67] Anatole Cressin, *Starea fizică și socială a elevilor școalei comerciale „Regele Carol I" din București. Studiu statistic și de igienă școlară, extras din Revista de igienă socială*, no. 3 (1937).

[68] Cressin, *Starea fizică și socială*, 6.

the verge of adolescence – sexual life – became subject to adult control. Doctors were encouraged to guide the youth regarding a topic that was considered taboo and dangerous: masturbation and premature sexual intercourse generating venereal diseases[69]. Since the previous century, the medical and educational literature had been campaigning to preserve the innocence of children and young people, insisting on the fact that non-adult sexuality was unnatural. In-depth research of the sources produced in the 19th century shows that the youngsters' sin of masturbation, especially when practiced in school, generated a genuine moral panic among adults, which was amplified by pseudo-medical opinions that proposed a list of diseases presumably caused by such habits[70]. With too few supporters of sex education for young people, the prevention of what was considered abnormal involved medical treatments, special diets, but also rigorous hygiene and physical education[71].

Disciplining sexuality aimed not only at having a general effect on the body but also at implementing biopolitical ideals. Sexual debauchery was believed to lead to social degeneration, with a long-term collective effect[72]. These elements became principles of the eugenic foundations of education, coupled with other specific requirements, such as periodic medical controls and treatment of diseases, ensuring the best possible learning spaces, providing baths (showers) for body hygiene etc. All this should have produced a healthy young generation, free from the old deficiencies of the school that created weak and exhausted people. In the 1920s, the Scout association, the forerunner of Straja Țării, was invoked as a model organization adhering to hygienic principles: "being the best platform for the education of the school masses, scouting responds to the supreme desire for hygiene". The outdoor release of energies was meant to ensure not only an enduring success in the fight against the social diseases of the time – tuberculosis and bodily weakness – but also against the "hybrid vice of masturbation"[73]. And yet, this vice did not cause the greatest fears among educators. Something else was viewed as much scarier. Adolescents were seen by pedagogues and doctors as part of a generation plagued by nervous breakdowns. Confronted with the crises of coming of age and with adult pressures, teenagers sometimes resorted to the extreme gesture of suicide.

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[69] Stanca, *O anchetă*, 9.

[70] Ramona Caramelea, *„În etatea critică a amorului*. Copilărie, adolescență, sexualitate și educație publică (deceniile șase-opt ale secolului al XIX-lea)", in *Sexualitate și discurs politico-religios în societatea românească premodernă*, ed. Constanța Vintilă-Ghițulescu (Iași: Editura Universității Al. I. Cuza, 2016), 302.

[71] Caramelea, *„În etatea critică a amorului"*, 303.

[72] Foucault, *„Trebuie să apărăm societatea"*, 198.

[73] Stanca, *O anchetă*, 10-11.

The Straja ideologues and the school pedagogues drew constant attention to the increasingly common phenomenon of suicide among school-age adolescents: "due to a strong disappointment, to a worse grade, to a failed exam, or to a rebuke, the poor youngsters threw away the gift of life like an unbearable burden". The responsibility for this situation presumably fell on the shoulders of the immoral society, the disoriented family, and the school emphasizing "exclusively and excessively intellectualist" preoccupations, which resulted in training an intellectual proletariat[74]. As the cases in the archives show, many suicides of teenagers occurred also on a depressive background and for extracurricular reasons, related to family relationships or emotional failures, but also due to poverty and lack of career perspectives.

A certain typology of suicidal acts of high school students can be found in the archival documents generated by the Ministry of Education during the interwar period. The case files contain three perspectives: the accusatory act of the parents/ the victim against the school; the investigation of the school inspectors and the resolution of the ministry; the press reports. Some resounding cases highlight the problematic relationship between the school and the student, but also the magnitude of mental challenges, at an age of extremes, in a society beset by various crises. In 1924, Gheorghe Buciumeanu, a student at Andrei Șaguna High School in Brașov, committed suicide by poisoning. His father accused the director of the boarding school, Professor I. Hangu, of subjecting his son to physical and mental persecution[75]. The same year, in Tulcea, Ștefan Bogatu threw himself from the top of a cliff following a nervous breakdown caused by the examination in mathematics conducted by professor Motomancea[76]. Traian Botlovan, a student from Caransebeș, shot himself in 1932 on the grounds of a week-long expulsion sentence, following complaints addressed to the high school principal, after a sleigh incident[77]. Nicolae Gheorghe, a high school student from Pitești, committed suicide also due to his expulsion from school, after being punished for trying to deceive the teachers' vigilance when caught without his enrollment number on the uniform's sleeve[78]. Suicide also claimed female victims. Eugenia Munteanu, a student at the Girls' High School in Galați, ended her life by poisoning herself in 1934, following a love affair with a high school student. The harmful psychological pressure was exerted upon her by her mother and by the teacher who had found out about the relationship[79].

[74] Șoimescu, *Doctrină...?*, 5.
[75] ANIC, Fund The Ministry of Education, file 357/1924, 25.
[76] ANIC, Fund The Ministry of Education, file 358/1924, 100.
[77] ANIC, Fund The Ministry of Education, file 308/1932, 128.
[78] ANIC, Fund The Ministry of Education, file 437/1934, 210.
[79] ANIC, Fund The Ministry of Education, file 382/1933, 25.

Juvenile suicides had become an alarming phenomenon that required the authorities' intervention, including action by Straja Țării. Teachers' extreme requirements and even violence usually determined the unfortunate decision, even if some pedagogues, such as the inspector investigating the case at the A. Șaguna boarding school, believed that "severity is often, and especially nowadays, a necessity for educators". Moreover, "corporal punishments [are] used – and can be useful – in many boarding schools, without causing suicide"[80]. In some situations, tensions at school overlapped with a lack of communication with the family and other unbearable pressures. As the victims' descriptions show, nervous breakdowns were a feature of sensitive, apathetic natures. The suicidal acts were not spontaneous, but instead meticulously prepared. All the above-mentioned wrote letters to family and friends as a farewell, but also to justify their action and to denounce those carrying the blame: "Dear Father, my dear brothers and relatives, I did this only because of the school", wrote student Buciumeanu in the introduction to his emotional letter[81]. The farewell note of student Bogatu had been found by his mother before his committing suicide, but this did not prevent him from carrying out his intention[82]. Traian Botlovan confessed that "because I cannot bear this unfair punishment – as I swear to my innocence – I asked for my high school documents, deciding to shoot myself and thus put an end to my life"[83]. Eugenia Munteanu from Galați wrote to her mother: "You were too cruel, well, yes, too cruel [...] And too distant"[84]. These testimonies reflect the high pressure exerted by the school on youngsters, which was sometimes amplified by the parents.

Schools denied any responsibility, shifting the blame exclusively onto the parents of the victims – and the victims themselves. In the above-mentioned suicide cases, they usually invoked external causes: the depressive mood of the victims[85]; the lack of parental action[86]; or even the fact that "death is due to suicide, for which no one can be held responsible"[87]. Schools usually defended the teachers. Some notes drafted by the teachers' superiors dealt superficially with the situation. Thus, the management of A. Șaguna High School stated dryly: "We have the honor to kindly instruct Mr I. Hangu, Director of the Boarding

[80] ANIC, Fund The Ministry of Education, file 357/1924, 27.
[81] ANIC, Fund The Ministry of Education, file 357/1924, 33.
[82] ANIC, Fund The Ministry of Education, file 358/1924, 100.
[83] ANIC, Fund The Ministry of Education, file 308/1932, 133.
[84] ANIC, Fund The Ministry of Education, file 382/1933, 44.
[85] ANIC, Fund The Ministry of Education, file 357/1924, 27.
[86] ANIC, Fund The Ministry of Education, file 358/1924, 100.
[87] ANIC, Fund The Ministry of Education, file 308/1932, 129.

School, not to use corporal punishment"[88]. As regarded Professor Motomancea, the school committee declared that any accusations against him were pure slander[89]. The act of Eugenia Munteanu, who had succumbed under the psychological pressures of her teacher, was explained as the exclusive result of the "mother's reprimands"[90]. The conclusion of the investigations submitted by the inspectors generally declared the cases closed.

However, closing the case did not solve the purported fundamental problem, which pedagogues and educational analysts always brought back to the center of the debate: the increasingly sensitive and depressed youth was not only a sad image in itself but also a danger for the future of the nation. The deficiencies of the dominant pedagogical model were well captured by the local newspaper from Tulcea, which wrote about the case of Ștefan Bogatu: "an outdated and pointless education system, which today has no further reason to function. To decide so easily on a student's situation, without taking into account his state of mind, his temperament, his background, and his school activity, means to push him towards acts of despair"[91].

Sentinels in good shape

Taking over a reportedly declining youth, Straja Țării campaigned for the health of the young generation and took on the role of mentor over the mental and physical development of the youthful bodies. "The movement aroused by the sentinels has aimed to regenerate the country by regenerating children. It has promoted health against disease, and order against moral chaos", the promoters of Straja asserted[92]. At its inception, the OETR provided for the possibility of free medical treatment for young people enrolled in Straja Țării, based on the recommendation of the organization, as well as mandatory medical check-ups twice a year (OETR Regulation, art. 57). However, I have not found any evidence of such controls so far.

Given the increasing importance of the festivities of June 8, marking the Day of Youth and the Restoration, the authorities decided which sentinels were allowed to attend based on health criteria. School doctors had to recruit students participating in parades only among those with a good physical condition. This can be interpreted as a form of eugenic selection meant to impress the audience – the large public but also foreign officials – with the display of

[88] ANIC, Fund The Ministry of Education, file 357/1924, 26.
[89] ANIC, Fund The Ministry of Education, file 358/1924, 109.
[90] ANIC, Fund The Ministry of Education, file 382/1933, 25.
[91] „Dureri mute", *Curierul Tulcei*, III, no. 92 (7 July 1924): 1.
[92] Șoimescu, *Doctrină...?*, 9.

a healthy young generation. Those deemed unfit, with mental or convalescent problems were usually left at home[93]. Feeding the participants in the parades remained the responsibility of the parents: "The school doctors will inform the sentinels that they should eat before going to the demonstrations and that they should also take 2-3 pieces of sugar and a bagel to eat between 11-13"[94].

This aspiration for remedying young people's health had scarcely any practical results. As early as March 1937, the General Sanitary Inspectorate of the OETR had initiated a unitary health plan, requesting the participation of school doctors[95]. The action had no concrete results, though. Straja Țării Law of 1938 reiterated, in theory, its responsibility regarding health issues. However, it only took on a passive role in the supervision of the nutrition practices and hygiene of the youth (1938 Law, art. 8). Meanwhile, the adult youth became involved in the social work programs for public benefit (1938 Law, art. 9). In March 1939, the rules for the collaboration between Straja Țării, the Ministry of National Education, the Social Service, and the Pre-Military Training established the obligation of the sentinel commanders to carry out social visits to individual families to investigate and trace the social reality[96]. However, in 1940, Straja Țării still discovered that "there is a very high proportion of sentinels who suffer from various deformities of the spine or chest, as well as respiratory failure, conditions which cause disorders in their normal development". As a result, Straja set up "a voluntary gymnastics and orthopedics course"[97]. Straja interventions in the sentinel's health condition were therefore minimal, reflecting the fragile involvement of the state in the public health sphere.

A large-scale initiative in this regard took place in 1938, during the royal dictatorship when a so-called "health offensive" was initiated. This was a pilot project under the coordination of the Ministry of Health and Welfare and represented the first complex health campaign after 1918. Through its emphasis on public health and hygiene, the project is similar to another major social reformist initiative from the interwar period, namely, the monographic campaigns carried out in rural areas by the Sociological School of Bucharest, under the coordination of Professor Dimitrie Gusti. In the 1930s, these campaigns developed a series of health initiatives, which enlisted the participation of the Royal

[93] ANIC, Fund The Ministry of Education, file 571/1937, 195.
[94] ANIC, Fund The Ministry of Education, file 571/1937, 195.
[95] ANIC, Fund The Ministry of Education, file 571/1937, 139.
[96] ANIC, Fund The Ministry of Education, file 822/1939, 106.
[97] ANIC, Fund The Ministry of Education, file 739/1940, 22.

Student Teams (1934-1938) and the Social Service (1938-1939), supported by the Ministry of Health[98].

In the summer of 1938, this ministry coordinated a large-scale campaign in villages and towns, which aimed to elaborate a full sanitary record of the country. Among its goals was health improvement, which should have been achieved by organizing and supplementing the local medical staff, by measures to combat contagious and social diseases, by hygiene interventions and sanitation projects, and by other social protection and educational measures intended for different social categories. The survey-based plan and methodology were complex and ambitious, but they would have required a consistent budget, significant materials and a trained staff, coupled with a long-term implementation strategy to achieve these goals. The course of events and the start of the war interrupted the application of the project. Yet, the four published volumes detailing the conduct of the campaign constitute an important source for assessing the state of public health at the grassroots level, with peculiarities depending on the regions and the urban or rural environment[99].

The health campaigns of August-September 1938 also aimed at intervening concerning the children and youth's health. The sanitary teams were supported by staff from various institutions and organizations, including Straja Țării commanders and sentinels mobilized for collective hygiene actions[100]. School hygiene was a distinct aspect of the campaigns and aimed at prioritizing the

[98] For a broader view on the voluntary campaigns, see the monographic study of Raluca Mușat, *Sociologists and the Transformation of the Peasantry in Romania, 1925-1940*, PhD Thesis (2011). The platform *Cooperativa Gusti* (http://www.cooperativag.ro/), initiated by Professor Zoltán Rostás, holds extensive materials on the activity of the Sociological School in Bucharest. In recent years, impressive works have been published on this topic by the researchers joining Cooperativa G.

[99] Some reports from the regional inspectorates show bleak images of stagnation. For instance, the General Sanitary Inspectorate of Iași emphasized that, in 1938, sanitation in urban areas was almost as bad as in villages: only 34% of homes had latrines, of which almost half were unsanitary; in almost all county capitals there were no sewers; in the suburbs, the manure was thrown directly onto the street; water was used from unhygienic wells; no Moldavian city had garbage processing services or an efficient slaughter service. Under these conditions, in Moldavian cities, epidemics of typhoid fever were constantly occurring. In: Ministerul Sănătății și Asistenței Sociale, *Probleme și realizări*, vol. 1 (Bucharest: Imprimeria Națională, 1939), 436-437.

[100] Ministerul Sănătății, *Probleme și realizări*, 15. The mobilized human resources involved over 2,000 doctors, supported by over 5,000 people from the auxiliary medical staff, the teams of the Royal Foundation, and the staff of the Cultural Society "ASTRA". They were joined by over 144,000 supporting staff, among them, 63,771 pre-military students and 35,210 sentinels. In Ministerul Sănătății, *Probleme și realizări*, 44.

medical care of primary school students within the activity of urban and rural health services. A series of measures were to be implemented at the beginning of the school year (sanitary controls and interventions), followed by periodic evaluations. The medical staff was to treat the youngsters' diseases, place them at school desks according to their health condition, organize summer camps for treatment, evaluate their nutrition practices and monitor the accommodation conditions. However, without a rigorous budget, the methodology relied too little on effective intervention, rather emphasizing recommendations, instructions, and evaluation activities[101]. According to the health authorities, the medical care of the students had to become a question of national interest, since the school population represented almost a quarter of the country's entire population (i.e., 4,466,274 children aged 5-18). The lack of measures targeting the young generation would have had serious long-term consequences. The authorities were aware of the precarious state of students' health revealed by numerous school surveys. They thought that this was due to the poor performance of rural health workers and school doctors[102]. Furthermore, the state had a limited contribution to providing food or accommodation to students lacking resources in secondary education. It was clear that, without such supports, the evolution of the students' health would hardly improve[103]. At the initiative of Minister Marinescu, a fund for school canteens had been set up in 1938[104], and an appeal had been launched to wealthy private persons to get involved in village

[101] Even if the periodical health assessments provided an up-to-date image of the situation, school infrastructure in some areas needed massive overhauls and investments. For example, according to a report of the Chișinău Sanitary Inspectorate, schools were housed in inappropriate premises; some were even without built floors, toilets, water vessels, or heating during the winter. Ministerul Sănătății, *Probleme și realizări,* 516.

[102] Ministerul Sănătății, *Probleme și realizări,* vol. 2, 1145. However, a report referring to the city of Sibiu highlighted the politicization of the health officials and environment: "Until now, health services could only prosper if the doctor and the prefect or mayor were on the same political side or when there were friendly relations between the two sides", in Ministerul Sănătății, *Probleme și realizări*, vol. 3, 1492.

[103] Ministerul Sănătății, *Probleme și realizări*, vol. 1, 37-38. The minister of Health noted that social assistance was provided primarily by private charities, and that the achievements of the ministry were only in their initial stage. In terms of the current situation of school health and hygiene, the state had managed to improve the medical infrastructure, but the steps towards a general modernization of the health system were still insignificant. Ministerul Sănătății, *Probleme și realizări,* vol. I, 50.

[104] Similar initiatives, though ineffective, were launched by the ministers of Education during the 1930s as part of the reforms of primary education. See Petru Negură, "Compulsory Primary Education and State Building in Rural Bessarabia (1918-1940)", *Journal of Romanian Studies*, vol. 2, no. 2 (2020): 55.

life through charities. The state admitted its helplessness: "Across the country, the assistance of children is so poor, despite all the benevolent interventions of a few persons, that our children have remained unprotected"[105].

Conclusions

Being aware that controlling the country's youth allowed to achieve political goals, Carol II transformed Straja Țării into the main state institution that instrumentalized youth policies, competing with anti-establishment youth movements. Among the mechanisms developed for capturing the energy of young people and monitoring them before their reaching adulthood were physical education and the improvement of physical and mental health. Physical education within sentinel training was a fundamental component of the doctrine of integral education that aimed at reeducating the young based on the triad: morals – religion – physical activity. The physical activity involved multiple components, which aimed not only at fostering healthy development but also at cultivating loyalty to the king, building an organic community and especially at encouraging national regeneration by disciplining the body. Physical education should have spread morality through the useful direction it would have given to the dynamics of adolescence. The authorities viewed the social control exercised through Straja Țării as compensation for the limitations of the school system unable to manage juvenile energies. Subordinated directly to the king self-appointed as the Grand Sentinel, Straja expended its autonomy and dominated all youth structures, including primary and secondary schools. The introduction of the sentinel training in the school curriculum was a central stake, as most of the sentinel youth were students enrolled in the public or private education system. It was imperative because young people with an unhealthy lifestyle, lacking morals and discipline were considered a danger to the future of the state.

At the same time, prioritizing propaganda over social and health-related issues, the ideals of Straja did not produce the expected results. Public health had been a thorny issue for decades, especially in rural areas. The 1938 campaign, which also involved the sentinels, would probably have improved the health of the young people if it had been applied consistently in the long run. Dr N. Marinescu, the minister of Health, attributed the initiative of the "sanitary offensive" to King Carol II, presenting it as a project designed by an enlightened mind. Although the underlying reality was not new, the project was thus used for the royal cult of personality, which was fueled with everything deemed potentially

[105] Ministerul Sănătății, *Probleme și realizări*, vol. 2, 1147.

beneficial: "A new consciousness awakens, a unanimous sense of defense boosts the will to raise the standard of living in our country"[106]. At the same time, the minister took the blame: "We have been too seduced by the value of the physical endurance of our people, a value which we have tried to turn into a label, and we have gone so far that we have even forgotten that this value must be taken care of, must be maintained and developed"[107].

Straja Țării wished for vigorous soldiers, for young healthy bodies similar to those of the young people depicted in the propaganda posters of Hitlerjugend in Germany or Opera Nazionale Balilla in Italy. Romanian sentinels were shown on the covers of propaganda brochures and magazines[108] as strong, healthy youngsters, wearing their uniforms with the distinctive berets, scarves and belts, doing farmwork or marching or greeting King Carol II. Michael, Carol's son and heir apparent was commonly depicted as the model sentinel guarding the country. However, in the absence of concrete and effective state interventions, "Good health!" – the ideal of the sentinels – remained nothing more than a greeting formula[109].

Rezumat

Acest articol analizează organizația de tineret Straja Țării, creată de regele Carol al II-lea în contextul tensiunilor sociale și politice din România anilor '30. Având ca scop major formarea loialității tineretului față de rege, Străjeria încerca să implementeze un sistem alternativ de educație integrală bazată pe valori morale, religiozitate, patriotism și pregătire fizică. Deși a activat pentru puțină vreme (1934-1940), Straja Țării a reprezentat una dintre principalele instituții de intervenție socială, cu autonomie proprie, mobilizând resurse umane și financiare considerabile. A dezvoltat mecanisme și instrumente specifice pentru controlul tineretului, incluzând disciplina prin educație fizică ce ar fi trebuit să confere forță trupurilor tinere. Articolul analizează funcțiile multiple ale acestor mecanisme pe baza documentelor de arhivă, a legislației aferente și a anchetelor de sănătate desfășurate la acea vreme. Cercetarea urmărește trei nivele de analiză: reglementarea educației

[106] Ministerul Sănătății, *Probleme și realizări*, vol. 1, 40.

[107] Ministerul Sănătății, *Probleme și realizări*, vol. 1, 40.

[108] See, for instance, the illustrations and pictures in the sentinels' magazine *De Strajă* (Bucharest: 1937-1940).

[109] The Scouts' salute was taken over by the sentinels, according to the 1934 OETR Regulation, art. 41. Subsequently, a decision of the OETR in February 1937 informed the Ministry of Education about the obligation to use the greeting "Good health!" in school, on all occasions, and not just during the sentinels' program and activities. ANIC, Fund the Ministry of Education, file 571/1937, 41.

fizice și a sănătății publice în România interbelică (1); controlul social al corpului tinerilor prin Straja Țării (2); deficiențele de sănătate ale tinerei generații (3). Principalul argument al textului este acela că Straja a construit un prototip național supraevaluat al vitalității tineretului, fără a aborda eficient carențele și clivajele din cadrul unei națiuni doar relativ sănătoase.

Cuvinte-cheie: tineret, disciplină, educație fizică, sănătate publică, Straja Țării, biopolitică.

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De la separatism regional la centralizare: două proiecte legislative ale universitarilor clujeni privind reforma învățământului superior românesc după 1918

Ana-Maria STAN

Abstract

After the Great War and the union of Bessarabia, Bukovina, Transylvania, and the Banat with the Old Kingdom, the reform of higher education and, implicitly, its transformation into a unitary and efficient system required a lot of efforts. A significant number of initiatives and projects were discussed by the Romanian academic circles, politicians, and by the broader public before the first law for the organization of universities in Greater Romania was adopted and implemented, in April 1932. This article is a case study, which focuses on two proposals put forward in the 1920s by some prominent professors of the University of Cluj. My research tries to clarify and enrich our knowledge regarding the various stages that preceded and shaped the 1932 higher education law. It highlights the similarities and differences between these projects, looking, in particular, at their most relevant and modern elements. The article could equally provide points of comparison for future analysis regarding the reconstruction of the educational systems in other Central or Eastern European countries, in the first half of the 20th century.

Keywords: Romanian university reform, interwar period, legislative initiatives, Romanian University of Cluj, Emil Racoviță, 1932 Law on higher education.

Integrarea administrativă și sincronizarea funcționării instituțiilor după unirea Basarabiei (27 martie/ 9 aprilie 1918), a Bucovinei (15/ 28 noiembrie 1918), a Transilvaniei și Banatului (1 decembrie 1918) cu vechiul Regat al României a reprezentat un proces îndelungat și complex, iar domeniul educațional nu a făcut nici el excepție de la regulă. Nu doar Parlamentul și politicienii s-au implicat în acest demers, ci și presa vremii sau diferitele organizații profesionale au dezbătut intens cele mai potrivite soluții de funcționare pentru fiecare nivel de instrucție (primar, secundar, universitar). Dintre toate, reformarea învățământului superior și, implicit, transformarea acestuia într-un sistem deopotrivă unitar și performant a necesitat cele mai multe eforturi, cea dintâi lege pentru organizarea universităților din România Mare fiind adoptată și pusă în aplicare abia în aprilie 1932.

Deși negocierile pe acest subiect au început aproape imediat după Primul Război Mondial, durata lor și dificultatea cu care s-a ajuns la un consens sunt parțial explicabile tocmai prin diversitatea structurilor academice de pe teritoriul statului român. În octombrie 1922, un document aflat în dezbatere la Adu-

narea Deputaților, descria situația în următorii termeni: „în România întregită avem astăzi patru universități și o Academie de Drept; ele se găsesc însă sub regimuri legale diferite. Pe când la Universitățile din București și Iași se aplică legea învățământului nostru superior, Universitatea din Cernăuți se conduce după legile austriace, iar Universitatea din Cluj și Academia din Oradea-Mare nu recunosc decât legislația ungară. Din această cauză, o sumă de greutăți în conducere și de anomalii în aplicare…”[1]. Primul rector al Universității românești din Cluj, profesorul Sextil Pușcariu[2], exprimase și el o opinie similară în 1919, la scurt timp după instalarea sa în funcție: „Alcătuirea internă a universității noastre este […] cea moștenită de la înaintașii noștri, rămânând ca ea să se modifice deodată cu reforma învățământului superior din România întregită. Din deosebirea ce există între organizația universităților din Vechiul Regat – în cea mai mare parte alcătuite după tipul francez – și al universității noastre – care, ca și cea din Cernăuți, are tipul german – au rezultat multe neajunsuri. […] De aceea, ținând la unele forme vechi, fără să ne simțim atinși de reproșul de *separatism regional*, am alcătuit noile regulamente ale facultăților, luând ca bază pe cele din Vechiul Regat și modificându-le numai întrucât ni se par că nu mai corespund cerințelor”[3]. Așa cum arată și Walter Ruegg în lucrarea sa monumentală privind istoria universităților europene, Vechiul Regat al României era într-adevăr singura țară de pe continent care își organizase sistemul academic după modelul francez (a se înțelege napoleonian), și care menținuse traiectoria impusă de acesta dinspre studiile universitare către o funcție publică, în timp ce în restul Europei, la finalul secolului secolului XIX-lea și începutul secolului al XX-lea predomina modelul german de universitate, adică humboldtian, bazat pe stimularea gândirii științifice, orientată către cercetări și descoperiri, dar și pe ideea de libertate sau autonomie academică[4].

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[1] Diana-Gabriela Reianu, *Politica educațională românească în dezbaterile parlamentare, 1919-1929* (Cluj-Napoca: Presa Universitară Clujeană, 2018), 101.

[2] Sextil Pușcariu (1877-1948), filolog român, specializat în lingvistică și istorie literară. Între 1906-1918 a fost profesor titular de limba și literatura română la Universitatea din Cernăuți (pe atunci universitate de limbă germană, parte a sistemului academic din Imperiul Austro-Ungar). Din primăvara lui 1919 a fost chemat în România Mare, la Cluj, unde a prezidat Comisiunea Universitară, care s-a ocupat de transformarea universității din localitate în instituție academică românească. În anul universitar 1919-1920 a fost ales rector al noii Universități românești de la Cluj, funcție pe care a deținut-o și între 1940-1941. Între 1919-1947 a fost profesor titular de limba și literatura română la Cluj. Membru al Academiei Române (membru corespondent din 1905, membru titular din 1914).

[3] Sextil Pușcariu, *Memorii* (București: Editura Minerva, 1978), 417 și 419.

[4] Walter Ruegg, ed., *A history of the university in Europe. Volume III - Universities in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (1800–1945)* (Cambridge/ New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 4-10.

Pornind de la premisele menționate mai sus, nu este de mirare că anii interbelici abundă în inițiative și proiecte care și-au propus să ofere soluții de armonizare a vieții universitare românești. Toți actorii sistemului academic, atât cei vechi (adică universitățile din Iași și București), cât și cei mai noi (adică universitățile din Cluj și Cernăuți) s-au implicat activ în elaborarea de modele de lucru comune, dar și eficiente, pentru învățământul superior. Uneori, proiectele aparțineau instituției, alteori erau rodul unei munci de echipă (a 2-3 colegi) sau chiar inițiative individuale, ale anumitor profesori universitari, care dețineau și funcții politice (ca de exemplu P. P. Negulescu – ministru al Instrucțiunii Publice între martie 1920 și decembrie 1921, în timpul guvernului Averescu[5]). Parlamentul României avea să discute în repetate rânduri tema reformei universităților, cei mai vocali fiind, în mod firesc, deputații ori senatorii care veneau din mediul universitar. Dezbaterile au fost purtate și la nivelul organizațiilor profesionale, ca de exemplu în Asociația Profesorilor Universitari din România[6] sau în cadrul societăților studențești. Presa generalistă și cea cultural-științifică a reflectat și ea pe larg subiectul, secondată fiind de ziarele și revistele publicate de studenți.

Analiza noastră este un studiu de caz, care discută două propuneri făcute de către universitarii de la Cluj pe acest subiect. Universitatea clujeană reprezintă un reper în domeniu, ea fiind practic reînființată după 1918 ca instituție academică românească în urma unei transformări etapizate, organizate temeinic, dar și destul de rapid[7]. Această metamorfoză s-a desfășurat în perioada 12 mai 1919-2 februarie 1920. Astfel, la 12 mai 1919, o comisie coordonată de către Onisifor Ghibu, pe atunci secretar general al Resortului (Ministerului) Cultelor și Instrucțiunii Publice din cadrul Consiliului Dirigent, a preluat în administrarea autorităților române întreg patrimoniul mobil și imobil al universității maghiare din Cluj. Cursurile în limba română s-au deschis în 3 noiembrie 1919, prelegerea inaugurală, intitulată „Datoria vieții noastre", fiind rostită de profesorul Vasile Pârvan, de la Universitatea din București. Universitatea funcționa cu patru facultăți: Drept, Medicină, Litere și Filozofie, Științe, și cu un corp profesoral aproape exclusiv românesc, cu toate că printre studenții înscriși la cursuri s-au regăsit și destui reprezentanți ai minorităților care trăiau în Transilvania:

[5] P. P. Negulescu, *Reforma învățământului. Proiecte de legi*, ediția a II-a (București: Editura Casa Școalelor, 1927).

[6] Ana-Maria Stan, „Universitarii în conclav: congresele Asociației Profesorilor Universitari din România în Clujul interbelic", in *Fragmente de pe un câmp de luptă: studii în istoria universității*, eds. Florea Ioncioaia, Leonidas Rados (Iași: Editura Universității Alexandru Ioan Cuza, 2018), 339-364.

[7] Vasile Pușcaș, *Universitate, societate, modernizare. Organizarea și activitatea științifică a universității din Cluj,1919-1940,* ediția a II-a (Cluj-Napoca: Ed. Eikon, 2003), 79-245.

maghiari, evrei, germani. Ultimul episod important din procesul de fondare a universității românești din Cluj s-a derulat între 31 ianuarie-2 februarie 1920, când au avut loc Serbările oficiale de inaugurare ale universității, în prezența Regelui Ferdinand I, a reginei Maria a României, precum și a numeroase personalități românești și străine. Cu această ocazie, Regele Ferdinand I a donat suma de 400.000 de lei din propria avere pentru înființarea unui „Institut pentru studiul istoriei române, atât de vitreg tratată sub stăpînirea trecută”[8].

Clujul deținea așadar o poziție privilegiată în sistemul universitar românesc, nu doar pentru că era singura instituție de acest tip din Transilvania (cea mai mare și mai relevantă provincie recâștigată după război atât pentru mentalul colectiv național, cât și pentru autoritățile statului român), ci și fiindcă era percepută și se percepea ea însăși drept un model, un „exemplu pentru cum trebuie făcută unificarea”[9]. În prezent, există puține cercetări care s-au concentrat asupra transformărilor sistemului educațional din România anilor 1918-1940, și mai ales asupra etapelor și dezbaterilor care au dus la modernizarea acestuia, a mecanismelor și factorilor de influență care au făcut să se prefere anumite soluții în detrimentul altora. Iată de ce analiza inițiativelor legislative pornite de la Cluj pe tema reformei învățământului superior este importantă pentru a completa imaginea societății românești din perioada interbelică. Acest studiu de caz oferă celor interesați informații care pot clarifica unele aspecte privind funcționarea (și funcționalitatea) statului, precum și raporturile care se stabiliseră între diferite grupuri socio-profesionale și anumite structuri sau autorități administrative.

În cele ce urmează vom examina câteva puncte cheie, și anume:

1. Cine și în ce mod s-a implicat în redactarea și/sau discutarea planurilor de reformă educațională;
2. În ce măsură tradiția academică anterioară se reflectă în documentele elaborate la Cluj;
3. Care sunt elementele de continuitate și/sau de fractură de la un tip de proiect la altul;
4. Câte din ideile sugerate de universitarii clujeni au fost preluate în textul legii din 1932.

Unul dintre primele texte redactate de profesorii clujeni a fost cel intitulat *Anteproect de lege a învățământului superior întocmit de Universitatea din Cluj.* Deși existent sub formă tipărită, nu manuscrisă sau dactilografiată, despre data

[8] *Serbările pentru inaugurarea universității române din Cluj 31 ianuarie – 2 februarie 1920* (București: Cartea Românească, 1920), 17.

[9] Sextil Pușcariu, *Cuvânt de deschidere rostit la al doilea congres al Asociației [profesorilor universitari] la Cluj în 3 iunie 1921* (Cluj: Cartea Românească, 1921), 11.

exactă a elaborării acestuia avem puține indicii. Documentul de 22 de pagini, aflat în colecțiile Bibliotecii Centrale Universitare „Lucian Blaga" din Cluj-Napoca, nu are menționate editura, tirajul sau anul publicării, însă este posibil ca de-a lungul timpului coperta și filele de început să fi fost distruse/pierdute. Intrat în fondul de carte ca parte a unei donații făcute de doamna profesor Viorica Lascu, fiica profesorului universitar Alexandru Borza, el a fost datat de specialiștii bibliologi, pe baza informațiilor obținute de la donatoare, cu anul 1923. Totuși, o privire mai atentă asupra celor 108 articole ale anteproiectului pune sub semnul întrebării această situare cronologică.

În opinia noastră, documentul a fost elaborat și tipărit ceva mai târziu, mai exact, în perioada 1924-1926, fapt susținut de anumite detalii din conținutul documentului. Astfel, secțiunea a XI-a, în speță art. 90-92 ale anteproiectului sunt dedicate Extensiunii Universitare și activității ei. Or, este binecunoscut că Extensiunea Universitară, atât ca denumire specifică, cât și ca structură de sine stătătoare, a fost înființată la Universitatea din Cluj abia în toamna lui 1924, la inițiativa și sub directa îndrumare a profesorului Virgil Bărbat, sociolog, și a colegilor săi de la Facultatea de Litere, printre care îi menționăm aici pe filologul Vasile Bogrea, psihologul Florian Ștefănescu-Goangă și istoricul Silviu Dragomir[10]. Coroborăm ideea că *Anteproectul de lege…* este posterior anului 1923 și cu faptul că, în vara anului 1925, orașul Cluj a găzduit Congresul anual al Asociației Profesorilor Universitari din România (A.P.U.R.), iar în cadrul acestuia, una dintre temele abordate a fost tocmai chestiunea reformei sistemului de învățământ superior din întreaga Românie. Cu această ocazie, profesorii Emil Racoviță[11] și Dimitrie Călugăreanu[12] au alcătuit și prezentat spre dezbatere, în fața tuturor participanților, un anteproiect de lege[13]. Aceste două argumente ne conduc la concluzia că *Anteproectul* la care ne referim poate fi datat mai degrabă cu 1925, decât cu anul stabilit de bibliotecarii clujeni.

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[10] Virgil Bărbat, Florian Ștefănescu-Goangă, eds., *Extensiunea Universitară* (Cluj: 1926).

[11] Emil Racoviță (1868-1947), biolog, speolog și explorator român. Profesor universitar de biologie la Universitatea românească din Cluj între 1919 și 1947, rector al acesteia în anul universitar 1929-1930. În aprilie 1920 a fondat Institutul de Speologie de la Cluj, la acea vreme primul de acest fel din lume. Membru al Academiei Române din 1905 și președinte al acesteia în perioada 1926-1929.

[12] Dimitrie Călugăreanu (1868-1937), fiziolog și naturalist român. Profesor universitar de fiziologie animală la Universitatea românească din Cluj (1919-1926), transferat apoi la Universitatea din București. Rector al universității clujene în anul universitar 1921-1922. Din 1920 membru corespondent al Academiei Române.

[13] Asociația profesorilor Universitari din România (A.P.U.R.), *Adunarea generală din anul 1925, ținută la Cluj. Dare de seamă* (Cluj: Institutul de Arte Grafice Ardealul, 1926), 14; Stan, „Universitarii în conclav", 349-350.

Aceleași indicii ne permit, de asemenea, să lansăm câteva ipoteze referitoare la autorii *Anteproiectului…*, sau la semnatarii săi, detalii importante, care lipsesc din paginile documentului. Este întemeiat să presupunem că un astfel de text putea să fie elaborat, în special, de către universitarii cu experiență administrativă, respectiv rector, decani sau prodecani, alături de șefi ai unor institute, laboratoare, catedre, etc. La acel moment, Clujul împlinise deja cinci ani de funcționare ca instituție academică românească, timp suficient pentru a-și dovedi viabilitatea științifică și didactică. În pofida anumitor tensiuni etnice care i-au perturbat temporar activitatea (ne referim aici la tulburările studențești antisemite declanșate în toamna lui 1922, comune de altfel întregii Românii, și chiar Europei centrale, în acea epocă[14]), Clujul începea să se impună pe harta academică a țării, oferind deja primele generații de specialiști. Dintre opiniile care recunoșteau reușitele acestei noi universități o citām aici pe cea a lui Onisifor Ghibu, unul dintre cei mai atenți și avizați observatori ai sistemului educațional și pedagogic românesc de după 1918. În 1924, Ghibu spunea: „activitatea acestor cinci ani este o carte deschisă pentru oricine și această carte face onoare neamului nostru înaintea lumii întregi. […] Sub raportul organizării, universitatea românească din Cluj nu este o simplă continuare a vechii universități ungurești. Noi n-am schimbat numai firma și limba vechiului așezământ; noi am creat și forme noi pe lângă spiritul larg pe care l-am adus. O serie întreagă de institute și de catedre noi s-au adăugat la cele existente. […] În ce privește activitatea științifică a profesorilor, ea a întrecut în unele privințe toate așteptările. […] Aceasta a avut fericirea să fie ajutată și de unii colegi străini, care nu s-au sfiit să se înșiruie alături de tinerele forțe ale Ardealului și să lucreze mână în mână cu acestea pentru promovarea științei. Astfel au fost contribuțiile dlor. E. de Martonne de la Sorbona, dr. Levaditi de la Facultatea de Medicină din Paris, H. Focillon și Guyart de la Lyon, precum și ale profesorilor de la celelalte universități române: V. Pârvan, D. Pompeiu, George Murgoci, dr. Victor Babeș, dr. George Marinescu, dr. G. Leon, dr. Ioan Cantacuzino, care au venit în mijlocul nostru pentru a ține cursuri pentru studenții clujeni”[15].

În anul universitar 1924-1925 conducerea Universității clujene era compusă din: profesorul Camil Negrea – rector, Nicolae Bănescu – prorector,

[14] Ana-Maria Stan, “The 1922-1923 Student Revolts at the University of Cluj, Romania: From Local Anti-Semitic Academic Protests to National Events”, in *Student Revolt, City, and Society in Europe,* ed. Pieter Dhondt, Elizabethanne Boran (New York/London: Routledge, 2017), 286-303; Lucian Năstasă-Kovacs, *Antisemitismul universitar în România (1919–1939). Mărturii documentare* (Cluj-Napoca: Ed. ISPMN/ Kriterion, 2011).

[15] Onisifor Ghibu, *Universitatea românească a Daciei superioare, cu prilejul împlinirii a cinci ani de activitate* (Cluj: Tipografia Viața, 1924), 18-23.

Petre Poruțiu – decan al Facultății de Drept, Iuliu Moldovan – decan al Facultății de Medicină, Virgil Bărbat – decan al Facultății de Litere și Filozofie, George Spacu – decan al Facultății de Științe, alături de prodecanii Romulus Boilă (Drept), Dimitrie Negru (Medicină), Nicolae Drăganu (Litere și Filozofie), George Bratu (Științe)[16]. Marea majoritate dintre ei erau și membri ai filialei clujene a A.P.U.R. încă de la înființarea acesteia, în mai 1920[17], deci erau la curent cu temele care îi interesau pe membrii comunității academice. Acestor universitari li s-au adăugat cu siguranță și alți colegi clujeni, personalități cu influență pe plan național sau internațional, precum Emil Racoviță, Sextil Pușcariu, ori Alexandru Lapedatu[18], ministru al Cultelor și Artelor între octombrie 1923 – martie 1926, în guvernul liberal condus de Ion I.C. Brătianu.

Revenind la conținutul *Anteproectului de lege…*, o analiză detaliată ne oferă date interesante despre viziunea profesorilor din Transilvania asupra învățământului superior din România Mare. Prima observație în acest context este că aceștia aveau o privire integrativă asupra problemei, căci textul se ocupa de toate aspectele vieții academice și de întreaga comunitate din Alma Mater. Cele paisprezece capitole ale documentului iau în discuție atât structura internă, drepturile și obligațiile corpului didactic și ale studenților, cât și alte lucruri importante, ca, de exemplu, chestiunea publicațiilor universitare sau cea a bibliotecilor universitare. O atenție deosebită, explicabilă în contextul în care universitatea clujeană se afla la început de drum ca instituție românească, a fost acordată problemei clădirilor în care urma să se desfășoare activitatea de predare și de cercetare, dar și implicării academice în viața publică (a se vedea secțiunea dedicată *Extensiunii Universitare*, deja pomenită).

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[16] Selectați în vara lui 1919 de către Comisiunea Universitară pentru a ocupa catedrele vacante de la Cluj, cei mai mulți dintre ei erau ardeleni școliți la universități din Occident (în special din fostul Imperiu Austro-Ungar, Germania, Franța și Italia), iar alții veniseră de la Universitatea din Iași (de exemplu chimistul Gheorghe Spacu sau matematicianul Gheorghe Bratu) și de la Universitatea din București, tocmai pentru a asigura necesarul de cadre didactice al noii instituții. Cu una sau două excepții, corpul didactic care activase la Universitatea maghiară din Cluj înainte de 1918 a părăsit *in corpore* România și s-a refugiat în Ungaria, unde și-a continuat activitatea în cadrul Universității Francisc Iosif de la Szeged.

[17] Stan, „Universitarii în conclav", 341, 348-349.

[18] Alexandru Lapedatu (1876-1950), istoric și om politic român. Membru titular al Academiei Române din 1918. Între 1919-1938 a fost profesor de istorie veche a României la Universitatea din Cluj. Alături de Ioan Lupaș a fondat în 1920 Institutul de Istorie Națională de la Cluj, pe care l-a și condus în tandem cu colegul său până în 1938. A deținut și numeroase funcții politice, din partea Partidului Național Liberal: a fost de mai multe ori deputat și senator în Parlamentul României și a avut mai multe mandate de ministru al Cultelor și Artelor sau ministru de stat în guvernele din anii 1920 și 1930.

Autorii anteproiectului își deschid textul cu o afirmație îndrăzneață, care recunoștea o realitate deja existentă în spațiul românesc și care reprezenta totodată unul din punctele cele mai sensibile pentru reforma și uniformizarea sistemului educațional, anume faptul că „învățământul superior se predă în: a) universități și institute tehnice universitare și b) școli superioare speciale *cu caracter universitar* [s.n.]" (art. 1). Ulterior, în art. 3, se făcea precizarea că școlile superioare cu caracter universitar erau Academia de Drept de la Oradea, respectiv, Academia Comercială din Cluj[19]. Această „radiografiere" instituțională impune deja câteva comentarii. Pe de o parte, ar trebui observat faptul că, la început de secol XX, în România existau mai multe categorii de școli care asigurau pregătire de nivel superior, terțiar, însă nu toate aveau competențele ori se bucurau de prestigiul universităților propriu-zise. Acest mediu concurențial a provocat, de altfel, îndelungi dezbateri privind subiecte precum *Ce este* o universitate?, dacă academiile sau școlile speciale (tehnice, artistice, agricole, comerciale, silvice etc.) puteau fi considerate ca atare, și cum avea să fie selectat și salarizat personalul din cadrul lor. Legea din aprilie 1932 va îmbrățișa parțial viziunea din *Anteproectul de lege…* și va menține hegemonia universităților față de restul școlilor superioare și/sau academiilor. Definite drept „așezăminte de învățământ universitar teoretic și aplicat, precum și instituțiuni de cercetări pentru progresul științei și răspândirea culturii"[20], universitățile beneficiau așadar de un statut privilegiat. Această diferențiere clară dintre universități și alte tipuri de școli superioare și/ sau academii, păstrată de sistemul educațional interbelic, reflectă în parte conflictul dintre modelul german și cel francez de pregătire academică, precum și o anumită concepție privind controlul pe care statul român dorea să îl exercite asupra acestui domeniu. Putem adăuga aici și alte mize de natură financiară sau chiar social-politică (în sensul că universitarii doreau să fie percepuți ca elită, ca resursă de expertiză pentru toate instituțiile și structurile publice).

Pe de altă parte, limitarea listei de școli superioare doar la cele care funcționau în Transilvania indică, în opinia noastră, fie o abordare voit unilaterală, regionalistă a situației, fie o destul de mare lipsă de informare, ca să nu spunem necunoaștere a situației generale, din toate provinciile românești, în privința unor asemenea instituții. Evident, există și posibilitatea să se fi urmărit ca evidența acestor școli să fie completată ulterior, deci extinsă, cu sprijinul

[19] *Anteproect de lege a învățământului superior întocmit de Universitatea din Cluj* (Cluj, [1925?]), 3.
[20] *Antologia legilor învățământului din România* (București: Institutul de Științe ale Educației, 2004), 257.

colegilor din alte centre universitare din țară și numai după o reflecție atentă asupra trăsăturilor lor specifice, mai precis, asupra acelui *„caracter universitar”*, pe care însă anteproiectul nu îl definea deloc.

Un alt element extrem de important și subliniat încă de la început în textul redactat la Cluj în prima jumătate a anilor 1920 se referă la *autonomia universitară* – în fapt, la soclul pe care trebuia clădită întreaga funcționare instituțională a universităților. Autonomia urma să cuprindă, printre altele, „dreptul de a propune numirea personalului didactic, administrativ și al personalului de serviciu, inviolabilitate, dreptul de a rechiziționa forța publică (...), dreptul de a trimite un senator în Parlamentul Țării sau executarea [proprie] a legii bugetare”[21]. Considerăm că referința la dreptul de a trimite reprezentanți în Parlamentul Țării reprezintă în fapt o corelare între dorința universitarilor de a li se recunoaște un statut socio-profesional special, privilegiat (de înalt funcționar public), și prevederile deja existente în Constituția din 1923 care, la secțiunea II, art. 71, menționa că „fiecare universitate alege, din sânul sau, prin votul profesorilor săi, câte un senator”[22]. Acesta este, de altfel, un alt indiciu că textul anteproiectului clujean a fost redactat după adoptarea legii fundamentale a țării.

La fel ca și definiția universităților, și noțiunea de *autonomie universitară* avea să fie discutată constant în perioada interbelică, atât în Parlament, cât și în mediul academic ori în mass-media, iar limitele și modalitățile ei concrete de aplicare vor fi (re)definite în aproape toate propunerile și planurile legislative interbelice și încununate prin adoptarea în iulie 1931 a legii pentu autonomia universitară, în elaborarea căreia un rol esențial l-a avut Constantin Kirițescu, consilier pentru învățământul superior din Ministerul Instrucțiunii Publice[23].

Din punct de vedere organizatoric, anteproiectul exprima atât idei sincrone cu tendințele europene ale vremii, cât și un anumit atașament față de tradiția academică anterioară, când Alma Mater de la Cluj a funcționat după regulile existente în cadrul Imperiului Austro-Ungar.

Păstrând ideea separării pe facultăți de profil, universitarii clujeni au prevăzut ca funcționarea instituțională să se desfășoare în cadrul mai multor unități distincte, anume: „catedre de științe teoretice, catedre de științe experimentale, servicii de cercetări, institute și oficii universitare”[24]. Componentele noi, inovatoare, din această enumerare sunt serviciile de cercetări și

[21] *Anteproect de lege*, 3.

[22] *Constituția din 1923*, http://legislatie.resurse-pentru-democratie.org/constitutie/constitutiunea-din-1923.php.

[23] Reianu, *Politica educațională*, 103-128.

[24] *Anteproect de lege*, 3.

oficiile universitare, care, în viziunea autorilor documentului, aveau roluri deosebit de importante. Astfel, serviciul de cercetări era definit ca o „unitate de cercetare fără însărcinări didactice, a cărei menire este cercetarea științifică și formarea cercetătorilor", care putea să existe fie de sine stătător, fie ca parte a unui institut de cercetări. Un alt aspect progresist, care ducea de asemenea cu gândul la modelele de organizare din Occident (în special, la cel francez), se referea la predarea științelor experimentale nu doar în laboratoare sau clinici, ci și cu ajutorul muzeelor, „câmpurilor de experiență" sau altor metode (de exemplu, excursii de teren etc.). La rândul său, oficiul universitar (noțiune pe care o vom regăsi sub o formă ușor modificată și în Legea din 1932) era gândit ca „o entitate administrativă, care îndeplinește servicii comune întregii universități sau unei singure facultăți" [25].

În ceea ce privește cursurile, acestea erau împărțite în cursuri generale obligatorii și cursuri de specializare, „menite a da studenților o pregătire științifică superioară într-o direcție anumită, fie teoretică, fie practică". Pe lângă acestea, documentul mai prevedea ca la fiecare universitate din România să se poată organiza cursuri enciclopedice, cu caracter de sinteză, care trebuiau să „îndrepteze neajunsurile specializării înaintate pe care o reclamă progresele culturii moderne", acest tip de cursuri putând fi comun „mai multor facultăți sau tuturor". De asemenea, era prevăzută și posibilitatea derulării unor cursuri sau conferințe libere și gratuite „asupra oricărei ramuri de științe și de către persoane care nu aparțin corpului universitar". Singura condiție în acest sens era să se obțină aprobările preliminare necesare din partea facultății, a Senatului universitar, dar și a Ministerului Educației[26]. Structura pregătirii universitare era și ea foarte bine detaliată în anteproiectul de lege clujean, după cum urmează: „începutul studiilor universitare se face în *anul preparator,* care constă în cursuri însoțite de lucrări practice de laborator și seminar. Cursurile anului preparator se pot grupa în mai multe secțiuni determinate de regulamentele Facultăților. În fiecare secțiune se predau disciplinele ajutătoare materiilor fundamentale ale licenței sau doctoratului pentru care se înscrie studentul. Nu se pot înscrie la cursurile fundamentale pentru licență sau doctorat decât studenții care au trecut examenele secțiunii corespunzătoare a anului preparator"[27]. O asemenea propunere duce parțial cu gândul la realitățile mediului universitar din Franța, unde *année préparatoire* reprezenta o componentă esențială a educației superioare, dar pe de altă parte poate fi interpretată și altfel decât dorința unei sincronicități cu Occidentul. Mai exact, cerința unui an de pregătire înainte de

[25] *Anteproect de lege*, 4.
[26] *Anteproect de lege*, 4.
[27] *Anteproect de lege*, 4.

începerea licenței poate fi văzută și ca un semnal cu privire la diferențele existente între numeroasele tipuri de școli de nivel secundar din România Mare, diferențe care impuneau o anumită uniformizare a cunoștințelor, precum și familiarizarea cu rigorile limbajului științific și ale activității de cercetare pentru cei care își doreau să devină studenți. Pe de altă parte, aici era implicită și ideea existenței unor niveluri contrastante ale cunoașterii limbii române, mai ales în rândul minoritarilor (evrei, maghiari, germani), care trebuiau acum să își facă studiile universitare exclusiv în limba oficială a statului, adică în română.

Activitatea academică de zi cu zi urma să fie coordonată de Senatul universitar și de Consiliile Facultăților, iar în fruntea instituției, pentru „administrație și supraveghere", se afla rectorul, respectiv decanii. Propunerea făcută de clujeni pentru mandatul rectorului este una clar inspirată de practica existentă anterior, în perioada universității maghiare din urbea de pe Someș, o practică care se dovedise pe placul universitarilor, mai ales pentru că avea un caracter foarte democratic, nepermițând eventuale abuzuri de putere. Se dorea ca în universitățile românești rectorul să fie „ales pe termen de un an, dintre profesorii titulari cu o vechime de cel puțin trei ani (...)", iar ulterior să fie „confirmat prin decret regal". Mai mult, se preciza că alegerea rectorului trebuia făcută „după sistemul rotațiilor pe facultăți, rectorul neputând fi în același timp și alesul universității în Senatul țării", iar după încheierea mandatului său, fostul rector îl putea suplini pe rectorul în funcție, în calitate de pro-rector[28]. Aceste prevederi se aflau în contrast destul de mare cu tradiția încetățenită în Vechiul Regat la nivelul conducerii academice, căci la Universitățile din Iași și București, potrivit legii învățământului superior din 1912, rectorul era „numit prin decret regal, pe termen de trei ani (...), fiind reeligibil o singură dată în continuare"[29]. Pentru comparație, trebuie să precizăm și că în legea din 1932, care s-a aplicat unitar la nivelul României Mari, rectorul beneficia de un mandat de cinci ani, care se putea reînnoi o singură dată în continuare, el fiind ales dintre membrii titulari ai universității[30]. Acest fapt demonstrează nu doar că modalitatea de desemnare a rectorului, precum și durata și prerogativele funcției sale, au reprezentat un aspect semnificativ al dezbaterilor interbelice privind reforma sistemului universitar românesc, ci și că soluția adoptată în final a fost un compromis care a favorizat modelul administrativ centralizat, al autorităților de la București, și nu pe cel existent în provinciile nou alăturate statului român.

Așa cum am afirmat deja, anteproiectul de lege întocmit de Universitatea din Cluj la începutul anilor 1920 conținea și câteva capitole foarte interesante,

[28] *Anteproect de lege*, 12.
[29] *Antologia legilor*, 180.
[30] *Antologia legilor*, 257.

dedicate unor chestiuni care, de obicei, sunt reglementate prin acte normative de alt gen decât o lege organică. Avem în vedere aici secțiunile care făceau referire la construirea și întreținerea patrimoniului imobiliar al universităților sau cele privind editarea de manuale și alte publicații universitare ori implicarea în comunitate (Extensiunea Universitară). Astfel, pe lângă posibilitatea ca fiecare universitate să înființeze ateliere proprii (de mecanică, tâmplărie, legătorie de cărți, sticlărie etc.), care puteau lucra, în anumite condiții, și pentru particulari, nu doar pentru comunitatea academică sau pentru mentenanța clădirilor Almei Mater, se preconiza și crearea unui fond special de construcții, amenajări și reparații[31]. Acesta urma să fie coordonat de un consiliu de administrație compus dintr-un reprezentant al ministerului de Finanțe, un reprezentant al ministerului Instrucțiunii Publice/Educației, delegați ai facultăților, cărora li se alătura și reprezentantul universității în Senatul României. Documentul detalia totodată procedurile de lucru ale fondului, deși rămâneau și unele aspecte neclarificate, ca, de exemplu, ordinea sau prioritatea în care aveau să se efectueze construcțiile și/sau reparațiile[32].

În privința publicării de manuale și cursuri universitare, reține atenția faptul că, în viziunea universitarilor clujeni, manuscrisele trebuiau să primească avizul facultăților de profil, iar ulterior Senatul transmitea comisiei care gestiona fondurile editoriale, ordinea în care aceste volume trebuiau tipărite[33]. La fel de atent era reglementată și acțiunea Extensiunii Universitare, care urma să se ocupe de „orientarea opiniei publice cu privire la chestiunile mai importante pe care evenimentele le pun în ordinea zilei". Cu alte cuvinte, Extensiunea avea să ofere expertiza deținută de către personalul didactic și de cercetare spre beneficiul populației generale. Concret, Senatul universitar trebuia să decidă, la fiecare început de an, care erau temele de interes pentru public, iar ulterior, la sediul universității, precum și „în orașele mai mari din provincia unde funcționează [aceasta]" se preconiza susținerea de cicluri de conferințe, în formă populară, de către „profesorii și agregații desemnați de consiliile facultăților cărora le aparțin". Activitatea acestora nu era una benevolă, ci trebuia remunerată[34]. Ideea de popularizare a științei și culturii, de deschidere a elitelor universitare înspre mase sugera o bună cunoaștere a tendințelor mondiale din domeniul educației adulților, având în vedere faptul că la sfârșitul secolului al XIX-lea și începutul secolului al XX-lea, universitățile populare erau foarte răspândite și

[31] *Anteproect de lege,* 17-18.
[32] *Anteproect de lege,* 18-19.
[33] *Anteproect de lege,* 18.
[34] *Anteproect de lege,* 18-19.

apreciate în Vestul Europei și în SUA[35]. De asemenea, existența acestui capitol în anteproiectul de lege atesta și interesul pentru ridicarea și uniformizarea nivelului de instruire a cetățenilor României Mari.

Foarte detaliat, pe alocuri chiar prea stufos, documentul elaborat de profesorii clujeni atestă pronunțatul spirit organizatoric al inițiatorilor săi, un spirit deja călit, așa cum am arătat anterior, în procesul de (re)fondare al universității transilvănene ca universitate românească. De aici decurg însă și anumite limite ale acestui anteproiect de lege. Dacă intenția de a extinde o serie de realități regionale sau internaționale la nivelul tuturor universităților din România este ușor sesizabilă, se acordă o mai mică atenție îmbinării în mod funcțional a realităților academice din spațiul Vechiului Regat cu cele din provinciile nou intrate în componența României Mari. Totuși, chiar și fără a analiza exhaustiv prevederile sale, putem concluziona că propunerea legislativă din 1925 a fost o inițiativă interesantă, inovatoare, care a semnalat deopotrivă autorităților și universitarilor din întreaga Românie principalele probleme cu care se confrunta lumea academică, propunând în același timp numeroase soluții concrete pentru reglementarea lor.

Ecoul acestui proiect a fost unul important în comunitatea academică, ceea ce a fost confirmat și de faptul că, în anii următori, li s-au solicitat clujenilor și alte propuneri legate de subiectul reformei și unificării sistemului universitar românesc.

De altfel, nu avea să treacă mult timp până la apariția noilor proiecte, căci în 1929, când Clujul a găzduit iarăși congresul anual al A.P.U.R., profesorul Emil Racoviță le-a prezentat colegilor o mică broșură, intitulată *Câteva norme pentru organizarea universităților și a învățământului superior.* Demersul său era motivat atât de un interes personal în această chestiune, cât și de rugăminţile venite din partea celorlalți profesori universitari, după cum o și mărturisea: ,,afară de mandatul colegilor, m-a ademenit încă ceva la publicarea acestui sumar raport. Am constatat cu oarecare mâhnire, dar fără mirare, că chestionarele Administrației centrale, și chiar discuțiile interesaților, asupra reorganizării universitare, se mărginesc numai la cele câteva vechi probleme ce s-au vânturat de vreo sută de ani, ori de câte ori a fost vorba în vreo țară de o nouă lege a învățământului

[35] Tom Steele, "A science of democracy: an outline of the development of University Extension in Europe 1890-1920" in *Adult Education between Cultures. Encounters and identities in European adult education since 1890*, ed. Barry J. Hake and Stuart Marriott (Leeds: University of Leeds, 1992), 61-85; Janet Coles, "University Extension in the United States: the English connection" in *Adult Education between Cultures. Encounters and identities in European adult education since 1890*, ed. Barry J. Hake and Stuart Marriott (Leeds: University of Leeds, 1992), 113-130.

superior. [...] Mă mâhnește indiferența multor colegi față de necesitatea de a armoniza organizarea universitară cu stadiul actual al dezvoltării științei și al nevoilor obștești”[36].

Spre deosebire de anteproiectul de lege foarte stufos, elaborat la începutul anilor 1920 de către Universitatea din Cluj, documentul redactat de Emil Racoviță era mult mai sintetic, dar și mai conceptual, dovedind calitățile și viziunea de om de știință a acestuia. Astfel, el susținea că în lege trebuiau să fie trasate doar principii sau norme generale, iar detaliile și aplicarea acestora trebuiau să fie realizate prin intermediul unor regulamente. Totodată, Racoviță pleda pentru păstrarea unui anumit specific local și/sau regional în procesul de dezvoltare și funcționare a universităților românești: „nu trebuie o lege *calup*, în care să fie cu sila ticsite toate universitățile noastre. Trebuie să permitem ca fiecare universitate să își formeze personalitatea sa, fizionomia sa proprie. Nu ne trebuie un model de universitate în patru exemplare cu exact aceleași catedre, servicii, institute și oficii. Vrem universități nesimetrice, fiecare dezvoltându-se liber în partea ei cea mai vitală (...), vrem într-un cuvânt o dezvoltare firească după năzuințele, nevoile, aptitudinile și puterile locale, și nu o alcătuire artificială după șabloane birocratice”[37].

Structurat în șapte mari părți, proiectul lui Racoviță puncta cele mai importante elemente care contribuiau la bunul mers al instituțiilor academice. Viziunea sa privind organizarea administrativă a universității era oarecum asemănătoare cu propunerile anterioare ale clujenilor. În opinia sa, universitatea (și implicit facultățile, ca entități secundare ale universităților) era alcătuită din: „catedră, servicii, institute și oficii”. Așadar, serviciul și oficiul sunt unități organizatorice pe care și profesorul Racoviță le considera utile și necesare în cadrul Almei Mater, însă definițiile pe care le dădea acestora erau mai nuanțate decât cele propuse în anteproiectul de lege din 1925. Potrivit lui Racoviță, *serviciul* era ,,unitatea didactică a disciplinelor cu laborator. Anexele acestor unități sunt laboratoarele, clinicile, câmpurile de experiențe, stațiunile de cercetări temporare și permanente, muzeele etc.”[38]. Putem remarca, așadar, că savantul clujean acorda o importanță sporită dimensiunii practice a formării studenților și, de asemenea, că, pentru Emil Racoviță, *serviciul universitar* reprezenta echivalentul catedrelor teoretice, beneficiind de numeroase facilități care să asigure performanța didactică și științifică. Față de varianta legislativă anterioară, în care se vorbea despre serviciu, subliniem că în această versiune atribuțiile sale

[36] Emil Racoviță, *Câteva norme pentru organizarea universităților și a învățământului superior* (Cluj: Congresul A.P.U.R., 1929), 1-2.

[37] Racoviță, *Câteva norme*, 1-2.

[38] Racoviță, *Câteva norme*, 3.

erau sporite, extinse, rolul acestuia nefiind limitat doar la efectuarea de cercetări. În mod aproape vizionar, am spune, Racoviță înțelegea că viitorul avea să aducă o pondere din ce în ce mai mare disciplinelor aplicate, așa zisele științe „dure ” (*hard sciences*) în universitate, ceea ce explică locul privilegiat pe care l-a rezervat serviciilor în ierarhia organizațională a universității.

Cât privește *oficiile universitare*, aici concepția lui Racoviță era destul de apropiată de cea oferită în documentul din 1925. Profesorul vedea oficiile drept ,,entități administrative simple sau compuse, subordonate facultății din care face parte sau universității”[39].

La nivelul conducerii universitare Emil Racoviță rămânea credincios tradiției clujene deja încetățenite, anume concepției care prevedea ca rectorul să dețină funcția doar pentru câte un an. Exista însă și o modificare semnificativă în acest sens. Astfel, apărea posibilitatea realegerii rectorului (ceea ce sugera implicit și o mai mare eficiență administrativă), fără însă a se preciza dacă era vorba despre mandate consecutive sau exercitate la un anumit interval[40].

Modernitatea gândirii profesorului Racoviță era dovedită și de modul în care a conceput programa de învățământ universitar. Proiectul său din 1929 apare astăzi drept surprinzător de similar cu sistemul Bologna, cu ciclurile sale de Licență-Masterat-Doctorat. Dar ce propunea, în mod concret, marele savant? El susținea, cu argumente întemeiate, necesitatea împărțirii disciplinelor universitare în două mari categorii, anume discipline fundamentale și, respectiv, discipline de specialitate. Materiile fundamentale corespundeau ,,primelor diviziuni ale științei: Zoologia, Botanica, Fizica, Geologia, Chimia minerală (….), Istoria universală, Dreptul civil…”. Aceste discipline trebuiau să fie predate numai pentru pregătirea licenței. Prin contrast, disciplinele de specialitate, înțelese ca niște ,,entități recente care se înmulțesc mereu, paralel cu dezvoltarea cunoștințelor și cu nevoile de specializare și de diviziune a muncii în cercetări, de exemplu: Citologia, ecologia, radiologia, hematologia (…) subdiviziunile istoriei, filologiei, etc.” urmau să pregătească studenții ,,doar pentru diplomele superioare licenței”[41]. Totodată, Racoviță atenționa asupra unor fenomene inevitabile, care constituiau, în același timp, și un posibil factor de risc: ,,înmulțirea progresivă a catedrelor și serviciilor este fatală și necesară; ea este foarte prielnică dezvoltării cunoștințelor dacă se stabilește distincția între discipline propusă mai sus; altfel se va ajunge la falimentul desăvârșit al învățământului superior”[42]. În puține cuvinte, Emil Racoviță punea, așadar, un diagnostic foar-

[39] Racoviță, *Câteva norme*, 3.
[40] Racoviță, *Câteva norme*, 3.
[41] Racoviță, *Câteva norme*, 9.
[42] Racoviță, *Câteva norme*, 10.

te corect lumii universitare, iar capacitatea sa de anticipare privind evoluția sistemului academic din România îi confirmă, dacă mai era nevoie, competența științifică deosebită. Regăsim în considerațiile lui Racoviță despre universități un ecou al ideilor și conceptelor pe care savantul clujean le exprimase în lucrările despre evoluționismul lumii naturale, un subiect căruia îi dedicase multe ore de cercetare. Astfel, în volumul *Evoluția și problemele ei*, apărut tot în 1929, profesorul Racoviță afirma următoarele „trebuie să ne adaptăm evoluționismului integral, trebuie să ne croim mentalitatea, viața individuală, organizarea socială pe noțiunea de evoluție"[43]. Veridicitatea observațiilor lui Racoviță despre lumea academică fac ca acestea să rămână actuale chiar și în prezent, putând servi ca bază de discuție pentru alte reforme ale învățământului superior.

Multe alte asemănări și deosebiri pot să fie decelate pe parcursul unei analize comparative a propunerilor legislative lansate de universitarii clujeni în anii 1920. Ceea ce merită însă reținut, înainte de toate, este implicarea lor profundă în dezbaterile dedicate înfățișării pe care trebuia să o primească lumea universitară în cadrul României de după 1919. Se poate spune că majoritatea inițiativelor pe care le-au avut, la fel ca și pozițiile și intervențiile lor din presă sau din Parlament, au dovedit dorința realizării unor instituții solide, care să se afle, pe cât era posibil, în sincronicitate cu statutul și modul de funcționare al universităților din restul continentului european În același timp, documentele elaborate de profesorii de la Cluj au servit, la momentul publicării lor, drept bază de discuție printre colegii universitari din țară, impulsionând totodată și apariția altor proiecte asemănătoare, provenite de la universitățile din Cernăuți (în 1930), București (în 1931) sau Iași.

Toate anteproiectele elaborate până la adoptarea legii învățământului superior din 1932 (deocamdată fiind identificate 6 asemenea acte[44]) atestă, în opinia noastră, faptul că în România Mare a existat o reală discuție publică pe tema reformei universităților, că profesorii universitari, la fel ca și alți actori din domeniu, s-au simțit și responsabilizați, și auziți de către autorități, dincolo de orice divergențe politice sau de altă natură. În pofida controverselor, a ezitărilor sau amânărilor, legile universitare adoptate în 1931 și 1932 au reprezentat o încercare, nu complet reușită, de a păstra un echilibru între specificul regional al universităților din Cluj și Cernăuți, marcate de o practică și de o tradiție academică diferită de cea din Vechiul Regat, mai occidentalizată în unele privințe, și tendința de centralizare și integrare într-un model educațional comun, în cadrul căruia statul și-a păstrat un rol de control destul de important. Pe lângă

[43] Emil Racoviță, *Evoluția și problemele ei* (Cluj: Astra, 1929), http://emil-racovita.speosub.ro/biologie/evolutia-si-problemele-ei/

[44] Reianu, *Politica educațională*, 131-132.

anumite limitări sau ingerințe ale autorităților, prevederile legislației interbelice au fost totuși unele democratice, obținute și adoptate în urma unor consultări reale, iar drept urmare universitățile românești au beneficiat de o reală autonomie și libertate de funcționare. Această evoluție spre performanțe științifice și didactice, dar și înspre o sincronicitate cu tendințele academice internaționale avea să fie brutal întreruptă odată cu instaurarea comuniștilor în România după cel de-al doilea război mondial. Astfel, prin decretul-lege nr. 658 din 24 august 1946 autonomia universitară avea să fie anulată, iar legea pentru reforma învățământului din 3 august 1948 a consfințit ingerința politicului în actul educațional, modificând complet forma și spiritul sistemului universitar românesc, unele consecințe fiind resimțite și în prezent. Cercetări ulterioare, mai aprofundate, sunt desigur necesare pentru a ajunge treptat la o imagine de ansamblu asupra lumii academice interbelice din România, a felului în care s-a realizat procesul decizional în și despre universități, și pentru a putea apoi compara realizările (sau eșecurile) acestor instituții cu cele ale universităților din alte țări europene.

Rezumat

După Marele Război și unirea Basarabiei, Bucovinei, Transilvaniei și Banatului cu Vechiul Regat, reforma învățământului superior românesc și, implicit, transformarea acestuia într-un sistem unitar și eficient a necesitat multe eforturi. Un număr semnificativ de inițiative și proiecte au fost discutate de cercurile academice românești, de politicieni și de publicul larg, înainte de adoptarea și implementarea primei legi pentru organizarea universităților din România Mare, în aprilie 1932. Acest articol este un studiu de caz, care se apleacă asupra a două propuneri prezentate în anii 1920 de unii profesori proeminenți ai Universității din Cluj. Cercetarea mea încearcă să clarifice și să îmbogățească cunoștințele noastre despre diferitele etape care au precedat și modelat legea învățământului superior din 1932. Ea evidențiază asemănările și diferențele dintre aceste proiecte, examinând, în special, elementele lor cele mai relevante și mai moderne. Articolul oferă în egală măsură puncte de comparație pentru viitoare analize privind reconstrucția sistemelor educaționale din alte țări ale Europei Centrale și de Est, în prima jumătate a secolului al XX-lea.

Cuvinte cheie: reforma universităților românești, perioada interbelică, inițiative legislative, Universitatea românească din Cluj, Emil Racoviță, Legea învățământului superior din 1932.

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Les débuts hésitants de la soviétisation de la littérature française à l'Université de Bucarest (1948-1949). Les programmes analytiques comme instrument de contrôle[1]

Dragoș JIPA

Abstract

Starting from previously unexplored primary sources, namely the syllabi of French literature developed for the first time at the University of Bucharest in 1948-1949, this article aims to illustrate the transformations of foreign literatures teaching in Romania at that time, in the context of the education reform decree adopted by the new Communist regime. In the field of French literature, which was an important tool in disseminating the official ideology, the analysis of these syllabi, both from the point of view of the authors, professors trained in the interwar period, such as Nicolae N. Condeescu (1904-1966), and of the pedagogical contents conveyed (literary works, writers, explanatory discourses), shows the internal mechanisms of the Sovietization process put into practice by the new regime. This process was not an immediate and mechanical imitation of the Soviet model, but a cultural transfer that depended on the actors of the educational process, their skills (more or less developed in terms of ideology and even in their command of Russian), as well as the previous institutional history of the university, particularly that of the department of French language and literature. Following the elaboration of the first versions of the syllabus of French literature, established by the new regime as tools of ideological control, we can capture the way in which their authors strove to apply the new Marxist discursive framework, but only in a formal manner, without developing a substantial reflection on French literature from this point of view.

Keywords: Sovietization, French literature, Syllabus, University of Bucharest, Nicolae N. Condeescu.

Pour le chercheur qui dépouille les archives de l'Université de Bucarest, les dossiers des années 1948 et 1949 sont différents de tout ce qu'il avait pu voir auparavant, concernant les périodes précédentes. Cette différence s'explique par le contexte politique particulier, l'année 1948 étant celle de la transformation du système d'enseignement roumain, conformément aux injonctions

[1] Cet article a été réalisé dans le cadre du projet TRANSINTELL 21-AUF/01.03.2019 (« Transferts culturels et champs intellectuels transnationaux. Modernité et anti-modernité à l'Ouest et à l'Est: France, Roumanie, Serbie »), avec le soutien financier de l'AUF et de l'IFA.

du décret 175/1948 promulgué par le nouveau régime communiste[2]. Au niveau universitaire, le changement vise le contrôle idéologique des institutions, ainsi que la réorganisation du système, censé dorénavant accomplir le programme du Parti Ouvrier Roumain. Les chercheurs qui ont étudié ces transformations ont mis en lumière la radicalité de la transformation mise en œuvre par le nouveau pouvoir, tant au niveau de la morphologie du corps enseignant (les épurations[3], les nouveaux mécanismes de sélection[4]) qu'au niveau de l'introduction du marxisme dans les programmes d'enseignement de toutes les facultés[5]. Toutefois, par rapport aux documents produits dans le système universitaire roumain à partir du milieu du XIX[e] siècle, on voit apparaître dans les archives de l'institution un nouveau type de sources qui représentent une partie importante des dossiers de ces années-là[6]: des « programmes analytiques » pour toutes les disciplines enseignées. Détaillés sur des centaines de pages, avec les contenus de chaque matière et le calendrier des enseignements (cours, pro-séminaires et séminaires), ces programmes expriment un état du savoir acquis et systématisé par les enseignants en vue de la transmission aux étudiants. Ce qui de nos jours est, pour les professeurs de l'université, au moins en Roumanie, un document obligatoire, exigé par les différents organismes d'assurance de la qualité de l'enseignement supérieur, était en 1948 une nouveauté, au moins pour ce niveau d'études.

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[2] Pendant l'année 1948, le processus de soviétisation commencé quelques années auparavant s'intensifie. Après le 23 août 1944, quand la Roumanie change de camp et commence à lutter contre l'Allemagne nazie aux côtés de l'Armée rouge, les communistes roumains avec l'aide des soviétiques imposent le gouvernement de Petru Groza en mars 1945, falsifient les résultats des élections du 9 novembre 1946, forcent la dissolution des autres partis pendant l'été 1947 et l'abdication du Roi le 30 décembre 1947. Au début de l'année 1948, la nouvelle République Populaire conclut le traité d'amitié avec l'Union Soviétique, légalise la répression de « l'activité contre-révolutionnaire » et adopte une nouvelle Constitution. Au mois de juin 1948, le régime nationalise les entreprises industrielles, financières, d'assurance et de transport et commence la transformation de l'agriculture et de l'enseignement.

[3] Maria Someşan, *Universitate şi politică în deceniile 4-6 ale secolului XX – episoade şi documente* (Bucarest: Editura Universităţii din Bucureşti, 2004), 241-276.

[4] Alina Pavelescu, « Noile politici de selecţie a studenţilor şi a profesorilor de ştiinţe sociale la Universitatea din Bucureşti, 1948-1955, I », *Arhivele Totalitarismului* 1-2 (2013) : 93-109.

[5] Les formes et les effets de la soviétisation dans l'enseignement roumain ont été étudiés par Cristian Vasile dans « Sistemul de învăţământ românesc în epoca stalinistă (1947-1953). Consideraţii », *Revista Istorică*, XX (2009) : 115-137. Sur les circonstances de l'adoption du décret 175, voir les pages 119-123.

[6] Archives Nationales de la Roumanie – Succursale Municipale Bucarest (dorénavant SMBAN), Fonds Universitatea din Bucureşti, Rectorat, dossiers 97/1948, 86/1949, 96/1949.

Du point de vue de l'histoire des disciplines[7], ces programmes d'enseignement constituent une source d'une grande valeur. Le savoir propre à un domaine, à un certain moment et dans un certain lieu, y est résumé dans ses composantes essentielles, ainsi que dans ses articulations, en fonction des différentes étapes de sa transmission pédagogique. Toutefois, ce type de document n'a pas une teneur uniquement scientifique. Dans tout régime politique moderne, que ce soit une démocratie libérale ou un régime autoritaire, les programmes véhiculent une certaine conception de la discipline en question, propre aux institutions qui les exigent, les élaborent et les mettent en œuvre. Par ces programmes, les autorités s'assurent que les élèves ou étudiants recevront une formation commune, conforme à ce qu'elles considèrent comme le contenu légitime de la discipline. Pierre Bourdieu le précise : « les programmes sont une affaire d'État ; changer un programme, c'est changer la structure de distribution du capital, c'est faire dépérir certaines formes de capital. La culture légitime est la culture de l'État. »[8] Cette dimension politique des programmes est d'autant plus visible au cours des périodes de passage d'un régime politique à un autre, comme c'est le cas de celle qui nous intéresse dans cette étude. En dépit de son caractère très général (beaucoup de détails devaient être précisés par des décisions du Ministère), le décret 175 adopté en août 1948 mentionnait à l'article 20 « l'élaboration de programmes analytiques minimaux, obligatoires et uniques pour toutes les chaires d'une même spécialité »[9]. Vue à juste titre comme une composante de l'action politique du régime qui visait la limitation de l'autonomie universitaire par le contrôle central de l'enseignement[10], l'élaboration de programmes correspondait toutefois à une pratique ancienne dans le système d'enseignement roumain, autant primaire que secondaire. Depuis les années 1860, le Ministère faisait publier périodiquement dans le Moniteur Officiel les programmes d'enseignement pour toutes les disciplines et pour toutes les classes, du niveau primaire jusqu'au lycée. Le savoir est déjà une affaire d'État, dès la création de la Roumanie moderne. L'importation du modèle soviétique consiste à généraliser cette pratique au niveau de l'enseignement supérieur, avec l'intention d'exercer un contrôle idéologique accru sur les contenus enseignés.

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[7] Parmi les études récentes sur la littérature française comme discipline scolaire, voir Clémence Cardon-Quint, *Des lettres au français. Une discipline à l'heure de la démocratisation (1945-1981)* (Rennes: Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2015).

[8] Pierre Bourdieu, *Sur l'État. Cours au Collège de France (1989-1992)* (Paris: Raisons d'agir/Le Seuil, 2012), 162.

[9] Gheorghe Bunescu (dir.), *Antologia legilor învățământului din România* (Bucarest: Institutul de Științe ale Educației, 2004), 343.

[10] Alina Pavelescu, « Noile politici de selecție », 99.

Ce type de sources peut ainsi constituer le point de départ d'une enquête visant à élucider les modalités de la transformation de l'enseignement supérieur en Roumanie, à l'époque de l'instauration du régime communiste. Les recherches sur la soviétisation des universités en Europe de l'Est ont pu découvrir comment le modèle original a été imposé dans différents contextes. L'exemple allemand[11] montre comment les autorités soviétiques d'occupation essaient d'introduire ces programmes depuis 1946, mais sans grand succès : en 1949, les officiers soviétiques déplorent le fait que les universités « continuent d'enseigner des cours inutiles et nuisibles » et, en 1951, la Division Éducative de l'Administration Militaire Soviétique en Allemagne sollicite les programmes standard des universités de Moscou. D'autres recherches[12] expliquent pourtant que, loin d'être un transfert culturel automatique et mécanique, la nature des transformations est déterminée par plusieurs facteurs propres aux pays d'accueil, entre autres la composition du corps professoral, les diverses modalités des « sorties de guerre » et, finalement, la culture politique de la communauté qui se situait du côté « récepteur » du transfert. De ce point de vue, l'étude des programmes analytiques que les universitaires roumains doivent élaborer pour la première fois en 1949 peut contribuer à une connaissance plus fine de ce processus, en mettant à profit deux tendances du champ de l'histoire des disciplines. Premièrement, si les disciplines sont vues comme des « créations [internes] du système scolaire » (A. Chervel[13]), l'étude des programmes peut montrer comment le paradigme marxiste s'articule aux savoirs déjà existants, comment il les transforme et oriente leur enseignement. Cette histoire « interne », des contenus, doit toutefois être complétée par ce qu'on pourrait appeler une histoire « externe ». Ainsi, la seconde tendance voit les programmes non pas comme des « dispositifs consensuels et cohérents de transmission des connaissances », mais comme le résultat d'interactions multiples, entre une pluralité d'acteurs, chacun aves ses stratégies et ses intérêts. Cette perspective, illustrée par Patricia Legris[14] pour le cas de la discipline historique en France pendant la seconde moitié du XX^{e} siècle, implique la prise en compte non seulement des processus d'élaboration des programmes, mais aussi des acteurs qui

[11] Voir Natalia Tsvetkova, *Failure of American and Soviet Cultural Imperialism in German Universities, 1945-1990* (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2013), 151.

[12] John Connelly, *Captive University. The Sovietization of East German, Czech, and Polish Higher Education, 1945-1956* (Chapel Hill, London: University of North Carolina Press, 2000).

[13] André Chervel, « L'histoire des disciplines scolaires. Réflexions sur un domaine de recherche », *Histoire de l'éducation* 38 (1988) : 59-119.

[14] Patricia Legris, *Qui écrit les programmes d'histoire ?* (Grenoble : Presses universitaires de Grenoble, 2014).

les produisent, avec leurs biographies et leur position dans le champ du savoir, ainsi que par rapport au champ politique. Dans les contextes de forte hétéronomie, comme celui de l'instauration du régime communiste en Roumanie, une telle approche est d'autant plus nécessaire.

La discipline que nous étudions dans ce qui suit est la littérature française[15]. Moins importante pour le régime que la littérature nationale roumaine et l'histoire, la littérature française avait de quoi intéresser les nouveaux dirigeants, pour plusieurs raisons. D'une part, comme littérature « étrangère », elle fait partie du système de discours sur « l'étranger » qui contribue à la consolidation de l'identité nationale dans les États de l'Europe moderne. En prenant encore une fois l'exemple de la France, la création des chaires de littératures étrangères pendant le XIX^{e} siècle coïncide avec l'affirmation scolaire de la littérature française[16]. D'autre part, au XX^{e} siècle, l'enseignement des langues et des littératures étrangères devient un instrument privilégié des diplomaties culturelles et traduit les relations entre les États.[17] Même l'apparition en Europe d'une nouvelle discipline comme la « littérature comparée » avec la création de la *Revue de littérature comparée* au début des années 1920 n'est pas exempte des tentations nationalistes.[18] En raison d'une certaine francophilie historique des élites roumaines, dès la fondation des premières deux universités dans les années 1860, à Iaşi et à Bucarest, les chaires de langue et littérature françaises apparaissent dans l'organisation institutionnelle des facultés, tandis que, jusqu'à la fin du XIX^{e} siècle, la littérature roumaine est enseignée dans le cadre d'une chaire intitulée « Histoire critique des Roumains et de la littérature roumaine ». Continuant une tradition qui remonte au XVIII^{e} siècle, la langue française est très présente dans l'enseignement secondaire, jusqu'à devenir pendant l'entre-deux-guerres la langue étrangère obligatoire au lycée. En dépit de

[15] Même si en France on désigne par « lettres » les disciplines qui s'occupent de l'étude des littératures à l'école, nous avons préféré traduire les intitulés roumains des disciplines (« littératures étrangères », « littérature française »), parce qu'ils reflètent une spécificité nationale de l'institutionnalisation des études littéraires dans les facultés de philosophie et lettres (au sens large, incluant l'histoire, la psychologie, la sociologie, etc.) qui se transforment avec la mise en place du régime communiste en des facultés de philologie, de philosophie, d'histoire, etc.).

[16] Michel Espagne, *Le paradigme de l'étranger : les chaires de littérature étrangère au XIX^{e} siècle* (Paris : Éditions du Cerf, 1993).

[17] Voir, par exemple, Jérémie Dubois, *L'enseignement de l'italien en France (1880-1940). Une discipline au cœur des relations franco-italiennes* (Grenoble : ELLUG, 2015).

[18] Fernand Baldensperger, « La littérature comparée : le mot et la chose, » *Revue de littérature comparée*, 1 (1921): 5-29. Pour une critique des présupposés nationalistes de « l'école française » de littérature comparée, voir René Wellek, « The Crisis of Comparative Literature, » dans *Concepts of Criticism* (New Haven and London : Yale University Press, 1963), 282-295.

diverses critiques, venant de positions nationalistes (comme celles de Nicolae Iorga en 1906) ou de la fascination de la jeune génération pour les mouvements extrémistes (à partir des années 1920), la francophilie reste importante chez les anciennes élites roumaines surtout dans les années de l'instauration du régime communiste, au moins si on fait confiance aux rapports des diplomates français en poste à Bucarest jusqu'en 1948[19]. Par rapport aux autres littératures étrangères[20], le contrôle de la littérature française en tant que discipline représente ainsi un enjeu important dans le processus de transformation de l'enseignement imposé par le nouveau régime politique.

Considérer le programme d'enseignement de la littérature française comme un objet d'étude historique nous permet de formuler deux séries de questions. D'une part, qui sont les acteurs, individuels ou institutionnels, qui élaborent et mettent en œuvre cet enseignement et comment la « réforme » communiste se traduit-elle au niveau du corps enseignant de la discipline ? À travers ces questions, nous envisageons d'inscrire l'élaboration du programme dans une histoire de l'enseignement de cette littérature réalisé par des acteurs individuels, certes liés par leur appartenance à une même « communauté épistémique », mais qui doivent faire face à des conditions politiques changeantes. D'autre part, quelle représentation de la littérature française est véhiculée par ces programmes et comment se différencie-t-elle de celle qui était enseignée avant l'instauration du régime communiste ? Dans ce qui suit, nous allons essayer d'apporter des éléments de réponse à ces deux séries de questions.

Qui peut enseigner une littérature étrangère ? Trajectoires (trans)nationales, compétences professionnelles et allégeances politiques

Si, jusqu'en 1948, la morphologie du champ universitaire roumain a une évolution assez régulière, la nouvelle législation introduite par le régime communiste change complètement les « règles du jeu ». D'une part, ont lieu des épurations massives du corps didactique. Déclenchées en 1945 contre les partisans du régime du maréchal Antonescu, elles visent des catégories de plus en plus larges : à commencer par ceux qui ont des relations scientifiques avec les universités allemandes et italiennes jusqu'à ceux qui n'ont pas de sympathies politiques de gauche. En 1947, des mises à la retraite et des suppressions de chaires contri-

[19] Annie Guénard-Maget, *Une diplomatie culturelle dans les tensions internationales : La France en Europe centrale et orientale (1936-1940 / 1944-1951)* (Bruxelles : Peter Lang, 2014).

[20] Les autres littératures étrangères enseignées à l'Université de Bucarest sont la littérature allemande, la littérature anglaise, la littérature italienne et la littérature russe. L'enseignement de la littérature espagnole s'arrête avec la retraite du professeur Alexandru Popescu-Telega en 1948.

buent au changement du corps universitaire, à travers le remplacement des anciens professeurs par de nouvelles recrues qui adhèrent aux principes du Parti. Ainsi, en 1949, parmi les professeurs et les maîtres de conférences enseignant dans les facultés qui succèdent à l'ancienne faculté de philosophie et de lettres de Bucarest, seuls 7% à la faculté de philosophie, 14% à la faculté de philologie, 30% à la faculté d'histoire-géographie ont une ancienneté supérieure à 3 ans.[21] En même temps, d'autres mécanismes de formation et de sélection du corps professoral sont mis en place pendant les décennies suivantes. L'adhésion à la politique du Parti devient le critère dominant pour l'entrée dans l'enseignement et la recherche qui se font à l'université (ou dans la nouvelle Académie de la République populaire roumaine).

Au niveau du corps professoral, l'impact de la réforme est diffèrent en fonction des disciplines. Si les sciences naturelles, les mathématiques, la physique ou la chimie ne présentent pas une importance si grande, les lettres, l'histoire, la philosophie sont beaucoup plus touchées, en vertu de leur capacité à transmettre l'idéologie officielle. Une demande de la Commission Alliée de Contrôle, l'organisme dirigé par les Soviétiques qui veille à l'application de l'armistice, en date du 7 juin 1946, annonce déjà ce qui va venir : la faculté est invitée à fournir d'urgence les cours d'histoire de la littérature roumaine, de grammaire du roumain et d'histoire de la langue roumaine.[22]

En comparaison à ces domaines, les « langues et littératures étrangères » représentent un enjeu particulier. Elles n'ont pas une dimension nationale explicite, sur laquelle le contrôle idéologique doit s'exercer, mais les enseignants titulaires sont vus comme les représentants des intérêts des pays étrangers, par rapport auxquels la Roumanie est en train de changer de politique. Ainsi, on enregistre des épurations (Alexandru Marcu), des transformations institutionnelles (la chaire d'histoire des États et de la culture des Slaves devient une chaire de langue et littérature russe) et, en général, une incertitude quant aux positions des titulaires de ces chaires.

En 1946, le conseil de faculté reconnaît la difficulté de trouver des spécialistes pour ces disciplines en Roumanie et recommande au Ministère d'embaucher par contrat des professeurs étrangers, « jusqu'à ce que, parmi les éléments roumains envoyés à l'étranger, se soient formés des chercheurs en mesure d'occuper avec dignité un poste de professeur d'université »[23]. En ce qui concerne

[21] Maria Someşan, *Universitate şi politică*, 264.

[22] SMBAN, Fonds Universitatea din Bucureşti, Facultatea de Litere şi Filosofie, Dossier 399/1946, f. 519.

[23] SMBAN, Fonds Universitatea din Bucureşti, Facultatea de Litere şi Filosofie, Dossier 406/1946-1948, f. 4.

les professeurs français, cette pratique avait été inaugurée en 1919, avec la venue de la Mission Universitaire française en Roumanie[24]. Ainsi, on peut voir dans cette recommandation, conforme à la loi de 1943, un des derniers signes d'autonomie dans le recrutement dont les universités peuvent encore bénéficier, avant que la réforme communiste ne vienne restreindre sérieusement la possibilité pour un étranger d'enseigner le français en Roumanie[25].

Parmi les « littératures étrangères », l'enseignement de la littérature française jouit d'un statut à part. D'une part, le français continue d'être la langue étrangère la plus demandée par les étudiants. Dans un rapport de décembre 1945[26], le directeur de l'Institut Français de Bucarest, Jean Mouton, se félicite de « la proportion proprement écrasante des futurs étudiants en français, en face des autres disciplines de la philologie moderne ». C'est par l'intermédiaire du professeur Basil Munteanu, titulaire de la chaire de français à l'Université de Bucarest, que Mouton apprend « les constatations réconfortantes » sur « l'admiration des jeunes pour la France et sa vie spirituelle, leur foi dans l'avenir de ce pays, leur gratitude, leurs espérances », telles qu'elles ressortent des réponses des candidats aux questions de l'examen d'admission. D'autre part, la diplomatie culturelle de la France est très présente en Roumanie, non seulement avec l'Institut Français des Hautes Études de Bucarest (avec nombre de cours et conférences), mais aussi avec un réseau important de Centres français à travers tout le pays, animés par quelques dizaines de professeurs appartenant à la Mission Universitaire qui enseignent dans les lycées et les facultés. La fin de la Guerre et la victoire des Alliés vont donner un nouvel élan tant aux étudiants qui souhaitent poursuivre l'étude de cette langue symbolisant pour eux la civilisation occidentale qu'aux autorités françaises qui désirent réaffirmer leur prestige dans les nouvelles « démocraties populaires ».

Toutefois, ce n'est plus Basil Munteanu qui répond aux intérêts des étudiants roumains, ainsi qu'à ceux de la diplomatie française. Ayant enseigné la littérature française à l'Université de Bucarest pendant les années difficiles de

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[24] Sur les débuts de cette Mission, voir Ana-Maria Stan, « Vizita Misiunii Universitare Franceze în România (iunie 1919) şi semnificaţiile ei » dans *Biserică, Societate, Identitate. In honorem Nicolae Bocşan*, dir. Ion Cârja, Rudolf Gräf, Sorin Mitu, Ana-Victoria Sima (Cluj: Presa Universitară Clujeană, 2007), 691-697.

[25] L'exception est Henri Jacquier, professeur français membre de l'ancienne Mission Universitaire à Cluj, qui obtient un contrat de la part des autorités roumaines et décide de rester comme professeur à l'Université de Cluj. Ce choix va le séparer des autorités françaises pendant les années 1950 et la France lui refusera ses droits de retraite au début des années 1960.

[26] Centre des Archives Diplomatiques de Nantes (dorénavant CADN), Fonds Ambassade de France à Bucarest, 124PO/1, dossier 343, *Note sur la proportion des étudiants de l'Université de Bucarest se consacrant à l'étude du français comme matière d'enseignement*, 27 décembre 1945.

la Guerre, ce spécialiste de littérature comparée formé pendant l'entre-deux-guerres à Paris auprès de Paul Hazard et de la *Revue de littérature comparée* décide d'y retourner lorsque l'occasion se présente (en 1946, comme directeur de l'École Roumaine de Fontenay-aux-Roses) et de ne plus rentrer en Roumanie.

Après son départ, il est remplacé à l'Université par Michel Dard. Ayant déjà travaillé comme lecteur de français pendant les années de la guerre, Dard est nommé pour remplacer Munteanu du 20 mars au 20 juin 1946, c'est-à-dire jusqu'à la fin de l'année académique. Mais le baron Dard n'est pas un simple lecteur de français. Sa fiche[27] élaborée par les services secrets roumains révèle sa fonction d'ancien chef des renseignements français en Roumanie avant la Guerre et ensuite de directeur-adjoint de l'Institut Français pendant le mandat de Jean Mouton. Son activité montre à quel point l'enseignement de la littérature française en Roumanie a eu aussi une dimension politique pendant la guerre, à savoir la lutte contre le nazisme. D'une part, Dard est le responsable de l'organisation des cours publics et des conférences à l'Institut de Bucarest, une activité que la France développe à partir de 1941 pour contrecarrer la propagande allemande et italienne.[28] D'autre part, avec Mouton et d'autres professeurs français de l'Institut, Dard fait partie d'un réseau secret qui recueille des informations sur les mouvements des troupes allemandes et les transmet aux Britanniques[29]. Ainsi s'expliquent les nombreuses notes que les agents des services secrets roumains écrivent au sujet de Dard et de ses conférences à l'Institut, lors desquelles il coordonnerait non seulement l'envoi de livres et de revues aux professeurs de français en Roumanie, mais aussi l'action contre Allemands, discutant le rôle des Français libres ou la contribution des colonies à la guerre.

Après le départ de Michel Dard, c'est George Oprescu, doyen de la faculté, qui est chargé d'occuper la chaire de français jusqu'au retour de son collègue. Deux documents des archives de la faculté, l'un daté le 2 décembre 1946 et l'autre le 20 mars 1947, font état de l'avis positif du Ministère pour cette suppléance. Pour l'historien de l'art roumain et directeur du Musée « Toma Stelian » ce n'est pas sa première expérience de professeur de français. Ayant commencé sa carrière dans cette discipline avant la Première Guerre, à savoir dans les lycées de Giurgiu et de Turnu-Severin, il enseigne aussi dans la nou-

[27] Consiliul Național de Studiere a Arhivelor Securității (dorénavant CNSAS), Fonds Institutul Francez de Înalte Studii (1935-1946), D 0013417, f. 105. Voir aussi Ana-Maria Stan, « Aspects de la Résistance française en Roumanie après 1940. Diplomates, enseignants et écrivains » dans *De part et d'autre du Danube. L'Allemagne, l'Autriche et les Balkans de 1815 à nos jours*, dir. Mathieu Dubois, Renaud Meltz (Paris : PUPS, 2015), 139.

[28] *Ibidem*, f. 39.

[29] Dennis Deletant, *British Clandestine Activities in Romania during the Second World War* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), 120.

velle université roumaine « Ferdinand » de Cluj entre 1919 et 1923, avant son départ à la Société des Nations comme secrétaire de la Commission de Coopération Intellectuelle. L'autre argument qui détermine sans doute cette suppléance est le rapprochement de George Oprescu des milieux diplomatiques et universitaires français. Une chaire de civilisation française, financée par la France, avait été fondée pour lui à l'Université de Bucarest à la fin des années 1920 et l'idée est reprise en 1947 par le nouveau directeur de l'Institut Français, Philippe Rébeyrol. Cette fois, le premier – et l'unique – titulaire de la chaire, venu de France pendant un semestre, est l'historien Ernest Labrousse.

Les liens de longue date entre George Oprescu et l'Institut Français contribuent aussi à la participation d'autres professeurs français à l'enseignement de la discipline à l'Université de Bucarest. Embauchés par contrat sur la recommandation de Basil Munteanu, Robert Régnier commence son activité de lecteur le 17 novembre 1945 et Jean Sirinelli le 30 octobre 1946. Le premier, évadé d'un camp allemand de prisonniers, vient de Cluj, où il a été depuis 1943 lecteur à l'université hongroise et directeur du Centre Culturel Français. Jusqu'en 1948, parallèlement à son activité de lecteur de français à l'Université de Bucarest, il donne des cours à l'Institut Français, où il organise aussi des « matinées poétiques » qui ont un grand succès chez le public bucarestois[30]. Le second, venu en Roumanie à l'automne 1946 pour remplacer Michel Dard, est aussi le responsable des conférences organisées par l'Institut Français tant à Bucarest que dans les autres villes[31].

Cette participation importante des professeurs français à l'enseignement universitaire et secondaire roumain s'arrête de manière brusque en juin 1948 avec la résiliation de tous les contrats, ce qui sonne le glas de la Mission Universitaire française. Début juillet, l'Ambassadeur de France essaie en vain d'obtenir une dispense du Ministère roumain de l'Instruction pour les professeurs qui ont travaillé dans le supérieur, en employant tous les arguments possibles : l'absence de professeurs roumains ayant les titres nécessaires pour enseigner à l'université, la pratique de l'échange des lecteurs natifs qui fonctionne partout dans le monde, y compris dans les « démocraties populaires », le dévouement des enseignants français qui travaillent en Roumanie depuis des décennies, mais sans aucun succès[32]. Le mois d'août 1948 voit paraître le décret sur la réforme

[30] CADN, Fonds Ambassade de France à Bucarest, 124PO/1, dossier 346, *Matinées poétiques organisées par l'Institut Français*, 23 mai 1947.

[31] CADN, Fonds Ambassade de France à Bucarest, 124PO/1, dossier 346, *Congrès de la Mission Universitaire Française*, 17 juin 1947.

[32] CADN, Fonds Ambassade de France à Bucarest, 124PO/1, dossier 343, *Résiliation des contrats des professeurs de la Mission Universitaire en Roumanie*, 2 juillet 1948.

de l'enseignement, qui transforme l'enseignement roumain selon le modèle soviétique et, quelques mois plus tard, la Roumanie dénonce l'accord culturel franco-roumain de 1939, ce qui entraîne la fermeture de l'Institut Français[33]. Si l'enseignement des littératures étrangères peut être vu comme un exemple classique de circulations transnationales entre les différents espaces universitaires, la suppression de la Mission Universitaire française par les autorités communistes illustre aussi les difficultés qui peuvent apparaître lorsque les différentes institutions ou États empêchent ces circulations et mettent en place des frontières nationales dures qui affectent les relations universitaires.

À l'Université de Bucarest, les départs de Régnier et de Sirinelli laissent cinq cents étudiants sans professeur. L'été 1948 est consacré à la recherche de remplaçants. Même si plusieurs sources (une lettre de Valentin Lipatti, frère cadet du fameux compositeur et doctorant en littérature française, adressée au professeur Tudor Vianu[34], un message du directeur de l'Institut Français pour le Quai d'Orsay[35]) suggèrent que le professeur Nicolae Popa, titulaire de la chaire de français à l'Université de Iași serait le candidat avec les plus grandes chances, celui qui est finalement choisi, sur la recommandation des professeurs George Oprescu et Alexandru Rosetti[36], est Nicolae N. Condeescu, à l'époque titulaire de la chaire de français à l'Académie commerciale de Brașov.

Né le 19 octobre 1904 (son père était fonctionnaire de préfecture), diplômé de la faculté de lettres et de philosophie de Bucarest en 1925, élève de l'École Normale Supérieure de la rue d'Ulm (promotion 1928), N. N. Condeescu obtient son doctorat ès lettres à Bucarest et enseigne dans différents lycées jusqu'en 1944, année de l'obtention du poste à Brașov. En juillet 1947, sans savoir ce que l'avenir lui réserve, il envoie une lettre à Basil Munteanu, à Paris :

> Ici nous vivons tous sous le signe de l'épuration – massive et radicale cette fois – qu'on nous prépare. Si j'en suis atteint, je répéterai comme Virgile *fortunatus et ille deos qui novit agrestes* et j'installerai mes pénates à Pucioasa pour faire de la pomiculture. En exerçant n'importe quel autre métier, je m'en tirerai sans doute mieux que dans l'enseignement. Savez-vous que notre traitement actuel est d'environ 5 millions par mois, mais qu'il nous en faut au

[33] Pour plus de détails sur les circonstances de la fermeture de l'Institut Français, voir André Godin, *Une passion roumaine, Histoire de l'Institut Français des Hautes Etudes en Roumanie (1924-1948)* (Paris : L'Harmattan, 1997).

[34] Maria Alexandrescu Vianu, Vlad Alexandrescu (éd.), *Scrisori către Tudor Vianu*, II, (1936-1949) (Bucarest : Ed. Minerva, 1994), « Lettre de Valentin Lipatti », 9 août 1948, 322.

[35] CADN, *Résiliation des contrats*.

[36] SMBAN, Fonds Universitatea din București, Facultatea de Litere și Filosofie, Dossier 406/1946-1948, f. 64.

> moins trente pour vivre, non pas décemment, mais pour vivre tout court ? Une fois de retour, si tant est que vous commettrez la faute de rentrer avant que cette situation lamentable ait cessé, une fois de retour vous dis-je, vous regrettez votre Fontenay et vous prendrez vos heures actuelles de lassitude et de découragement pour du bon vieux temps ![37]

Présentant apparemment des garanties intellectuelles, mais aussi idéologiques, étant membre du Parti depuis 1947 et membre de l'ARLUS[38], Condeescu est nommé à la fin de 1948 professeur de français à l'Université de Bucarest. Condeescu voit probablement sa nomination comme une réussite, après de trop longues années passées dans l'enseignement secondaire et à un poste dans une académie commerciale qui ne correspondait guère à sa préparation de normalien. Une nomination qu'il n'aurait jamais obtenue dans les circonstances antérieures, lorsque Basil Munteanu était le titulaire de la chaire et que les professeurs français y travaillaient comme ses assistants. Les autres enseignants qui, sans avoir le grade de professeur, assurent cette année-là les séminaires pour les étudiants sont Valentin Lipatti, nouvellement recruté à l'Université, ainsi que Maria Pătrășcanu et Ana Pierret-Antoniu, déjà assistantes à la chaire de français. Condeescu est aussi le responsable de la nouvelle section de philologie moderne, qui comprend toutes les chaires de langues et littératures modernes, plus une chaire de littérature universelle dont le titulaire est Tudor Vianu, critique littéraire et ancien titulaire de la chaire d'esthétique, supprimée en 1948[39].

Comme dans le cas des autres littératures étrangères[40], l'année 1948 marque ainsi le renoncement aux professeurs étrangers qui sont vus comme des instruments des puissances occidentales ne pouvant être contrôlés par le régime. Leurs remplaçants roumains doivent toutefois, au moins à ce moment-là, faire preuve d'un niveau professionnel satisfaisant qu'ils pourront compenser dans les années suivantes par leur engagement politique. Il faut noter pourtant que la connaissance des littératures étrangères qui doivent être enseignées limite la restructuration du corps enseignant. De ce point de vue, le cas de la chaire de français n'est pas comparable à celui de la chaire de littérature roumaine, où

[37] Basil Munteanu, *Corespondențe* (Paris : Ethos, Ioan Cușa, 1979), 332.

[38] L'Association Roumaine pour le resserrement des Liens avec l'Union Soviétique (ARLUS) fut créée en 1944 et s'occupa de la propagande soviétique en Roumanie jusqu'au début des années 1960. Comprenant plusieurs sections, l'association fut dirigée par C. I. Parhon, médecin et professeur, président du Présidium de la Grande Assemblée Nationale de la République de 1948 à 1952.

[39] Le « cas » Tudor Vianu est discuté par Cristian Vasile, « Sistemul de învățământ », 123-126.

[40] Pendant la même période, les contrats des professeurs italiens ne sont pas renouvelés.

l'historien de la littérature G. Călinescu est remplacé par le dentiste Ion Vitner[41]. D'autre part, cette observation ne vaut que pour le début de la soviétisation. L'historiographie récente relève l'illusion d'uniformité du régime : en fonction des circonstances internes (luttes pour le pouvoir) et externes (transformations au sein de l'U.R.S.S.), certains acteurs perdent leur position centrale et sont marginalisés, tandis que d'autres occupent le devant de la scène. Comme on le verra, le cas du professeur Condeescu illustre une trajectoire changeante.

Planifier la littérature française : la matière et le processus

En réponse à l'article du décret 175, ainsi qu'aux multiples injonctions de l'administration de l'Université, N. N. Condeescu élabore en mars 1949 un ample document détaillant le programme du cours de langue et littérature françaises, pour la période entière des quatre années d'étude. Pour mieux faire comprendre ce que l'introduction des programmes analytiques a signifié pour la littérature française en tant que discipline universitaire, il faut d'abord passer en revue comment la matière était enseignée avant la mise en œuvre de ce décret.

Dès le milieu du XIX^e^ siècle, lorsque les premières universités roumaines sont créées et que la littérature française figure parmi les premières disciplines à se voir consacrer une chaire au sein des facultés de lettres et de philosophie, l'instance qui décide sur les contenus à transmettre aux étudiants est ostensiblement le professeur titulaire de la chaire. Influencés sans doute par la formation du professeur en question, par sa connaissance de l'état de la discipline en France, ainsi que par ses propres recherches, les cours de littérature française enseignés à l'université sont à l'image de leurs auteurs. Ainsi, Charles Drouhet, professeur à Bucarest entre 1915 et 1940, consacre ses cours annuels à des sujets aussi divers que « Le roman historique à l'époque du romantisme », « Le théâtre français au XVII^e^ siècle », « Les moralistes français », tout en réservant un deuxième cours à l'explication de textes d'auteurs tels Villon, Ronsard, Montaigne, La Fontaine, Boileau ou Voltaire[42]. Son successeur, Basil Munteanu, se concentre de son côté pendant la Seconde Guerre Mondiale sur la littérature des XVII^e^ et XVIII^e^ siècles et leur applique l'histoire des idées qu'il chérit à l'instar

[41] Voir A. Berciu-Drăghicescu, *Facultatea de Litere a Universității din București* (Bucarest : Editura Universității din București, 2013).

[42] Pour les enseignements de Charles Drouhet à l'Université de Bucarest, nous nous permettons de renvoyer à notre article « La littérature française comme discipline académique dans la Roumanie de l'entre-deux-guerres. Le cas de Charles Drouhet » dans Veran Stanojevic, Milica Vinaver-Kovic (éd.*) Les études françaises aujourd'hui 2018. Interactions dans les Sciences du Langages, Interactions disciplinaires dans les études littéraires* (Belgrade : Faculté de Philologie de l'Université de Belgrade, 2019), 293-307.

de son maître, Paul Hazard. Dans le contexte du développement de « l'histoire de la littérature » comme paradigme central de l'enseignement littéraire depuis la fin du XIX^e^ siècle, que ce soit en France ou ailleurs, cette relative liberté du choix des sujets des cours a de quoi surprendre. Toutefois, il ne faut pas oublier la place importante que la littérature française occupe dans le curriculum roumain pendant la première moitié du XX^e^ siècle, importance visible au niveau de l'enseignement secondaire : l'élève de lycée étudie tout au long de ses études l'histoire de la littérature française, à commencer par une vue d'ensemble en V^e^ classe, suivie par trois séquences par ordre chronologique, jusqu'en VIII^e^ classe du lycée). Disposant ainsi, au moins en théorie, d'une connaissance générale de la littérature française avant l'admission à la faculté, l'étudiant est prêt à recevoir un enseignement plus poussé, qui couvre des époques déterminées de la littérature française ou des écrivains précis.

Pendant l'année 1948, lorsque, suite au départ de Basil Munteanu, les enseignements sont assurés par les lecteurs français Jean Sirinelli et Robert Régnier, la matière est organisée ainsi[43] : en 1^re^ année, le XVII^e^ siècle, en 2^e^ année, le XVIII^e^ siècle, en 3^e^ année, le XIX^e^ siècle, et, en 4^e^ année, à la fois le Moyen Âge, le XVI^e^ siècle, la révision du XVII^e^ siècle et des notions de littérature contemporaine. On peut reconnaître dans cette organisation du contenu l'influence de la conception de Munteanu, notamment dans l'enseignement par ordre chronologique ainsi que dans la distinction entre une approche générale et une perspective plus spécialisée : les « matières » des deux premières années sont communes à ceux qui optent pour le français comme matière principale et à ceux qui le choisissent comme matière secondaire, alors que les 3^e^ et 4^e^ années sont réservées à ceux qui ont le français comme matière principale.

Au début de l'année universitaire 1948-1949 qui commence au mois de décembre, conformément au décret entré en vigueur au mois d'août 1948, le nouveau titulaire de la chaire, le professeur N. N. Condeescu, fournit au nouveau doyen Iorgu Iordan le programme pour l'année en cours[44]. Le document comprend la description synthétique des cours et séminaires qu'il assure avec ses collègues, c'est-à-dire Valentin Lipatti, Maria Pătrăşcanu et Ana Pierret-Antoniu. Les sujets des enseignements littéraires proviennent des recherches antérieures des professeurs : Condeescu enseigne « l'humanisme et la poésie au XVI^e^ siècle » et un cours général de présentation de la France (géographie, histoire, patrimoine). Lipatti dirige un séminaire sur « Molière et son théâtre » et un

[43] CADN, Fonds Bucarest, Institut Français des Hautes Études, 1919-1949, 126PO/1, Dossier 35, *Rapport d'ensemble sur la situation de l'enseignement français*, 14 mai 1948, 21.

[44] SMBAN, Fonds Universitatea din Bucureşti, Rectorat, Dossier 97/1948, f. 169-173.

autre sur « La comédie au XVIII[e] siècle ». La description des thématiques révèle une vision traditionnelle de la littérature avec, par exemple, la conception platonicienne de Ronsard sur la majesté de la poésie et la mission du poète, agrémentée de sujets présentés dans le nouveau langage de l'idéologie en train de s'installer : *L'Avare* comme exemple de critique de la bourgeoisie et l'avarice comme étape du processus capitaliste dans la psychologie du bourgeois. D'autres séminaires, sous la direction d'Ana Pierret-Antoniu, sont consacrés à J.-J. Rousseau et Anatole France. À la différence de la situation antérieure, le programme de français offre également une série de cours de composition et d'explication de textes pour toutes les quatre années d'étude et, dans leur description, on peut identifier plusieurs éléments du « nouveau monde ». Ainsi, Maria Pătrăşcanu propose aux étudiants des sujets de composition marqués par l'idéologie marxiste comme : « L'Idéologie du Moyen Âge a détruit le développement des forces productives de l'homme », « La religion catholique du Moyen Âge comme arme de défense de la classe dominante », « Une interprétation moderne, progressiste du roman de Tristan et Iseut ». Ana Pierret-Antoniu propose, quant à elle, des explications de textes littéraires de la Résistance, en soulignant le rôle du Parti Communiste Français, avec des fragments de Benjamin Fondane, Louis Aragon, Paul Éluard, Jean Cassou, Robert Desnos, Pierre-Henri Simon, Vercors et Elsa Triolet, ainsi que, dans un autre séminaire, des « Actualités littéraires françaises », avec des articles extraits des revues *Europe*, *La Pensée*, *Lettres françaises*, etc. On pourrait conclure, à la lecture de ces programmes, que pendant l'année universitaire 1948-1949 et surtout au printemps 1949, l'enseignement de la littérature française était en grande partie l'œuvre des enseignants, libres dans le choix de leurs sujets, mais qui essayaient quand même de s'adapter aux nouvelles conditions politiques, en utilisant dans leurs présentations la perspective du matérialisme dialectique pour que les contenus conviennent aux nouveaux dirigeants. Dans un rapport envoyé fin juin 1949 en réponse aux questions du ministre Eduard Mezincescu sur la réussite de la réforme de l'enseignement, le doyen Iorgu Iordan répond que les programmes élaborés à l'automne 1948 n'ont pas pu être suivis en totalité parce que, d'une part, les procédures d'embauche des nouveaux professeurs se sont faites avec grand retard et, d'autre part, « leurs auteurs avaient l'habitude d'autrefois de concevoir le cours en fonction de leurs préférences personnelles et non pas dans l'intérêt de l'enseignement »[45].

Toutefois, alors que les enseignements mentionnés ci-dessus sont mis en application, la discussion institutionnelle autour des programmes s'intensifie. Au mois de janvier et de février 1949, le conseil de faculté invite les professeurs à

[45] SMBAN, Fonds Universitatea din Bucureşti. Facultatea de Litere şi Filosofie, Dossier 417/1949, f. 269.

soumettre au secrétariat les programmes de leurs cours et, à partir du 15 février, les titulaires des cours présentent leurs programmes lors des réunions collectives des sections. Condeescu est nommé chef de la section de philologie moderne et préside en cette qualité les séances lors desquelles Tudor Vianu présente le programme du cours d'histoire de la littérature universelle (le 15 février), Bruno Colbert présente le cours d'histoire de la littérature allemande (les 1er et 10 mars), Alexandru Balaci présente le cours d'histoire de la littérature italienne (le 8 avril)[46]. Chargé aussi de la coordination des programmes, Condeescu élabore à son tour au mois de mars un autre programme de littérature française, qu'il présente pendant la réunion de la section le 1er avril. Ces réunions collectives constituent ainsi une première étape de la validation des programmes, avant d'être envoyés à la Direction des Études, l'instance de l'université chargée de vérifier la conformité idéologique des enseignements. D'ailleurs, le chef de la Direction, le physicien Valeriu Novacu, prodigue lors d'une des réunions de « précieuses indications » aux professeurs.

Dans plusieurs documents des archives on peut retrouver les principes formulés par Condeescu, qui sont à la base de l'élaboration de programmes unitaires pour les littératures étrangères. Ainsi, elles doivent être enseignées de manière chronologique et concordante, les cours de littérature doivent être complétés par des cours de civilisation et d'histoire de la langue, les exercices d'explication de texte doivent illustrer les cours de littérature, les cours et les séminaires doivent avoir le même nombre d'heures et la dénomination marxiste des époques doit être employée dans toutes les situations, tout comme la présentation de la littérature comme phénomène de superstructure. Cette planification des littératures étrangères, concomitante de celle de la littérature roumaine, représente la principale méthode de contrôle employée par les nouveaux dirigeants de l'université. Les programmes sont exigés par la Direction des Études du Rectorat qui vérifie la conformité avec les nouvelles injonctions du parti. Le rapport de fin d'année de la section de philologie moderne, daté du 17 mai 1949, révèle de nouveaux détails concernant le processus d'élaboration de ces programmes : les réunions collectives ont contribué à « éliminer l'explication idéaliste des phénomènes littéraires »[47], les cours pour la 4e année ont dû « combler les lacunes d'un passé caractérisé par le travail non planifié, lorsque les enseignements ne répondaient à d'autres critères qu'aux caprices du professeur », mais Condeescu admet aussi des défauts :

[46] Il n'y avait pas encore de professeur pour le cours de littérature russe, tandis que le cours de littérature anglaise était assuré par Mihnea Gheorghiu, qui venait d'être nommé professeur suppléant.

[47] Cette citation et les suivantes, SMBAN, Fonds Universitatea din București. Rectorat, Dossier 86/1949, f. 151.

> Le manque de manuels soviétiques a rendu très difficiles les tentatives de restructuration de la matière, des traces involontaires de terminologie ou même d'interprétation idéaliste pouvant encore subsister dans les cours.
> Les explications de textes [prévues dans les] programmes de langues et littératures étrangères se sont faites très difficilement parce que les étudiants ne trouvent plus dans le commerce les œuvres des grands écrivains français, allemands, italiens ou anglais.

Pour l'avenir, le chef de la section demande, entre autres, « un traducteur ou une équipe de traducteurs affectés à la faculté pour qu'on dispose au plus vite, en roumain, des principaux études et manuels soviétiques pour les domaines concernés » et suggère une liste d'ouvrages à traduire d'urgence, au cas où le Ministère de l'Enseignement ou les Éditions de l'État ont un tel projet.

Le programme de littérature française élaboré par Condeescu au printemps 1949 est précédé par une note qui en explique les principes :

> La littérature française s'étudie de manière chronologique, évolutive; sa périodisation se fait selon les époques de développement des sociétés humaines établies par les grands penseurs du socialisme; en tant que phénomène de superstructure, la littérature d'une époque est précédée par une présentation de l'économie sociale de cette époque-là.[48]

L'histoire de la discipline est ainsi divisée en quatre périodes, correspondant aux quatre années d'études, présentées comme suit :

> 1ere année : l'époque féodale et le siècle de l'apparition du capitalisme (le Moyen Âge et la Renaissance) ;
> 2e année : la période d'ascension de la bourgeoisie sous la protection de l'absolutisme royal (le XVIIe siècle, le classicisme) ;
> 3e année : la période de préparation de la Révolution bourgeoise de 1789 (le XVIIIe siècle) ;
> 4e année : la période du triomphe du système capitaliste, avec sa période impérialiste et la lutte des classes entre le prolétariat et la bourgeoisie (depuis la Révolution bourgeoise de 1789 jusqu'à nos jours).

Organisée de cette manière, la littérature française est abordée à travers les mêmes écrivains qu'auparavant et on n'observe pour la plupart des périodes aucune élimination ou censure. La seule nouveauté, à l'exception de la stricte chronologie, est le cadre discursif qui indique le changement de régime[49].

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[48] Cette citation et la suivante, *Ibidem*, f. 37

[49] Cette adoption au niveau superficiel du nouveau cadre discursif marxiste, sans une réflexion substantielle sur la littérature française de cette perspective n'est pas sans rappeler les observations d'Alexei Yurchak sur la dimension performative des discours officiels dans l'Union Soviétique poststalinienne, discours dont la reproduction formelle était plus importante que

Pour le traitement de chaque époque, si on laisse de côté les premières et les dernières phrases, telles « La Renaissance et l'Humanisme comme manifestations de l'ascension de la bourgeoisie et comme instruments de la lutte de classe contre la noblesse féodale », la liste des écrivains et des œuvres enseignés ne semble pas avoir été affectée par le nouveau contexte. Pour le XVII[e] siècle, on y retrouve, aux côtés des grands classiques comme Corneille, Racine et Molière, les noms de Pascal, Bossuet, Madame de La Fayette, Fénelon, etc. De la même façon, pour le séminaire, on retrouve Théophile de Viau et Guez de Balzac parmi les auteurs des textes traités mais aussi *Les Pensées* de Pascal, *Le Cid*, *Horace* et *Polyeucte* de Corneille. Le dernier cours offre, apres une présentation détaillée de la littérature du XIX[e] siecle, à savoir Chateaubriand, Lamartine, Vigny, Hugo, Musset, Stendhal, Balzac, Flaubert, Zola, le symbolisme, une incursion dans ce qu'on pourrait appeler la littérature récente ou « contemporaine ». C'est ici qu'on peut voir le critère politique dans la sélection des auteurs : y figurent Romain Rolland, le roman populaire de l'entre-deux-guerres et la littérature de la Résistance (surtout Aragon et Éluard).

Conclusions

L'analyse des sources montre que, dans les premières années du régime, plus que le contenu proprement dit des programmes, c'est plutôt le processus complexe d'élaboration et de validation institutionnelle qui est le principal instrument de contrôle dans la soviétisation de la littérature française. À la différence du passé, quand le professeur, titulaire de la chaire, avait une grande autonomie dans l'enseignement de sa matière et que le seul compte rendu qu'il devait donner de son enseignement à l'université était un rapport de fin d'année, le nouveau régime politique qui se met en place après l'abdication du Roi impose un contrôle suivi, en exigeant l'élaboration de programmes selon la doctrine du parti, programmes qui soient chronologiques et uniformes dans leur présentation des littératures étrangères. Cette restructuration est faite toutefois par quelqu'un qui n'a pas dans sa biographie jusqu'à ce moment-là des épisodes d'engagement politique à gauche. Produit d'un parcours universitaire traditionnel, boursier roumain dans une grande école française, N. N. Condeescu ne voit pas la littérature française de la perspective du matérialisme historique ni même d'un point de vue marxiste, comme c'est le cas, par exemple, d'un Paul Bénichou qui publie en 1948 un ouvrage fondamental sur la littérature française du XVII[e] siècle,[50] dans lequel il prend en compte les conditions sociales des

les contenus. Voir Alexei Yurchak, *Everything Was Forever, Until It Was No More. The Last Soviet Generation* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005).

[50] Paul Bénichou, *Morales du Grand Siècle* (Paris : Gallimard, 1948).

œuvres littéraires, conditions qui n'étaient pas discutées par « la critique bourgeoise du XIX^e siècle ». Le marxisme de celui-ci est toutefois très personnel et met l'accent plutôt sur le côté éthique que sur les seules réalités économiques et sociologiques.[51] À comparer ces deux perspectives, bien que dans un cas il s'agisse d'un programme analytique et dans l'autre d'un ouvrage plus ample, on ne peut s'empêcher d'observer le caractère assez caricatural de la lecture matérialiste de la littérature française par N. N. Condeescu. Comme dans le cas de la discipline historique[52], l'adoption de la perspective marxiste est superficielle et simpliste, l'imposition de la chronologie canonique et de l'opposition progressiste-réactionnaire ne pouvant pas changer en profondeur le tableau de la littérature française.

D'ailleurs, au mois de mai 1950, Condeescu est exclu du Parti, dans le contexte des purges visant la soi-disant « déviation de droite ». Il continue d'enseigner à la chaire de français et, dans une biographie[53] élaborée par le Service des Cadres de l'Université le 28 février 1961, il intervient pour démonter les causes de son exclusion qu'étaient la fortune de son père, son socialisme de droite et le fait d'avoir enseigné le français au Roi Michel entre 1934-1936 : son père n'aurait pas eu une vraie exploitation foncière, son socialisme serait venu du fait qu'il avait fréquenté le cercle des étudiants socialistes de l'ENS dans les années 1920 et il n'aurait pas été le professeur officiel du Roi, les quelques leçons données pendant 18 mois ne suffisant pas pour lui conférer ce titre. Un autre document de 1955[54], toujours en provenance du Service des Cadres, le cite comme membre du parti fasciste d'A. C. Cuza de 1923 à 1928 (la raison de son exclusion en 1950) et le caractérise comme ayant « un niveau idéologique assez bas, des réminiscences petites-bourgeoises et des concepts anciens. Ses cours sont encombrés d'objectivisme et bourrés de fautes cosmopolites »[55]. Selon la caractérisation d'une collègue, les cours donnés par Condeescu entre 1949 et 1950 étaient « pleins de détails, d'une érudition stérile, une mise à jour maladroite et idéalisme »[56]. Ces documents sont réunis au début des années 1960, lorsqu'il souhaite réintégrer

[51] Sur l'évolution de Paul Bénichou du marxisme antistalinien des années 1930 aux positions antimarxistes des années 1970, voir Alexandre de Vitry, « Politique de l'histoire des idées : autour de Paul Bénichou » dans *Histoire et historiens des idées : Figures, méthodes, problèmes*, dir. David Simonetta, Alexandre de Vitry (Paris : Collège de France, 2020), 167-184.

[52] Pour une synthèse sur l'évolution de l'historiographie roumaine, voir Bogdan Murgescu, *A fi istoric în anul 2000* (Bucarest: All Educațional, 2000).

[53] CNSAS, Fonds Documentaire, I 0392183, f. 8.

[54] *Ibidem*, f. 23.

[55] *Ibidem*, f.16.

[56] *Ibidem*, f. 16.

le Parti et qu'il fait l'objet d'une surveillance de la *Securitate*. Plusieurs notes fournies par ses collègues soulignent le fait que, depuis le temps de 1949, lorsque son niveau idéologique était assez faible, « on a pu noter une évolution évidente dans sa manière de voir les phénomènes de la littérature française, dans le sens d'une appropriation des principes de base de l'interprétation marxiste »[57]. Chef du département de français et doyen de la nouvelle faculté de langues et littératures romanes, il réussit à garder l'équilibre entre les différents groupes d'enseignants, en se présentant comme très fidèle à la cause du Parti, jusqu'à sa mort, en 1966. Si dans la première partie de sa carrière ses recherches sont consacrées à des sujets de littérature comparée[58], après l'instauration du régime communiste il s'impliquera dans les projets de la nouvelle section de traducteurs de l'Union des écrivains, en contribuant avec des préfaces et des notes aux traductions de Molière, La Fontaine, La Bruyère, Voltaire, Balzac, Victor Hugo, etc. À lire ces préfaces, on constate, comme dans le cas des programmes, le même usage du principe de la lutte des classes pour expliquer l'évolution de la littérature, sans pour autant oublier l'individualité des grands écrivains, leurs tempéraments et leurs préférences personnelles. Après sa mort, ses cours d'introduction à la philologie et d'histoire de la langue française seront publiés par ses collaborateurs. La soviétisation de la littérature française commencée sous sa direction en 1949 était en fait l'œuvre d'une personne sans trop de convictions de gauche, récemment convertie au nouveau régime et c'est pour cette raison que le processus en question commence de manière assez hésitante. Des recherches supplémentaires sont nécessaires pour approfondir la connaissance de la soviétisation, de sa temporalité et des négociations entre les divers acteurs. Ce qui apparaît à première vue comme une reproduction fidele du modèle soviétique d'interprétation de la littérature se révèle être un processus bien plus complexe[59]. Pour revenir aux programmes, une question nécessaire est celle du rapport entre le docu-

[57] *Ibidem*, f. 43.

[58] Voir N. N. Condeescu, *La légende de Geneviève de Brabant et ses versions roumaines* (Moniteur Officiel, Bucarest : 1938).

[59] Dans un rapport confidentiel de 1959 au Ministre de France à Bucarest, Henri Jacquier, professeur français à Cluj, explique ses diverses manières de contourner le discours officiel en employant des éléments du même discours : « Nous nous sommes fait tout un arsenal d'arguments protecteurs, tirés soit des maîtres du marxisme, soit des critiques soviétiques d'esprit plus indépendant, moins dogmatiques, à l'aide desquels nous nous gardons du 'sociologisme vulgaire' et de toutes les autres erreurs de méthode ou d'idéologie. Une seule formule comme celle selon laquelle 'le marxisme est ennemi de tout dogmatisme' suffit à nous assurer la même liberté que celle dont jouissent mes collègues en France. » CADN, Fonds Ambassade de France à Bucarest, 124PO/1, dossier 401.

ment administratif, approuvé par les instances officielles de l'université, et la pratique effective de l'enseignement, dans l'amphithéâtre, devant les étudiants. Trouver une réponse à cette question est plus difficile, compte tenu des sources nécessaires pour trouver ce genre d'informations. L'exemple de Tudor Vianu, dont le cours de littérature universelle est critiqué dans un rapport de 1952 de la Section de Propagande du Parti pour « une conception objectiviste et cosmopolite »[60], peut fournir quelques pistes en ce sens.

D'ailleurs, au début de l'année universitaire 1949-1950, le 27 octobre, le doyen de la faculté de philologie demande au recteur de faire retirer le programme analytique élaboré par Condeescu et de le remplacer par un nouveau programme, élaboré par Theodosia Ioachimescu-Graur (la collègue qui critiquera plus tard son « idéalisme et érudition stérile »), récemment nommée maîtresse de conférences auprès de la chaire de langue et littérature française. Bénéficiaire elle-aussi d'une bourse en France dans les années 1920 et titulaire d'un doctorat obtenu à la Sorbonne en 1929 sur Amadis Jamyn, un disciple de Ronsard, l'ancienne épouse du linguiste aux convictions de gauche Alexandru Graur vient de finir un mandat de conseillère de presse à la légation roumaine de Paris. Pendant ce mandat, elle avait été affectée (faisant l'objet de mauvais traitements de la part de la police française, selon le Ministère roumain des Affaires Étrangères[61]) par les tensions qui avaient conduit entre été et automne 1948 à la rupture des relations culturelles entre la France et la Roumanie, symbolisée par la fermeture de l'Institut Français des Hautes Études de Bucarest. Le 1er novembre 1948, le Ministère des Affaires Étrangères, dirigé alors par Ana Pauker, fait cesser sa fonction de conseiller de presse, vu sa nomination au Ministère de l'Enseignement Public. Les dirigeants communistes sentaient déjà, peut-être, le besoin de recrues plus convaincues pour la soviétisation de la littérature française à Bucarest.

Rezumat

Pornind de la niște surse inedite, programele analitice de literatură franceză elaborate pentru prima dată la Universitatea din București în anii 1948-1949, articolul de față își propune să ilustreze transformările din predarea literaturilor străine în România în acea perioadă, în contextul decretului de reformă a învățământului adoptat de noul regim comunist. În domeniul predării literaturii franceze, care avea un potențial important de difuzare a ideologiei oficiale, analiza acestor programe, atât din punctul de vedere

[60] Voir Cristian Vasile, « Sistemul de învățământ », 124.

[61] Archives du Ministère Roumain des Affaires Etrangères (AMAE), Franța, Dossier 43A/20/1948, f. 1.

al autorilor, profesori formați în perioada interbelică, precum Nicolae N. Condeescu (1904-1966), cât și din cel al conținuturilor pedagogice vehiculate (opere literare, scriitori, discursuri explicative), arată mecanismele interne ale procesului de sovietizare pus în practică de noul regim. Acest proces nu a reprezentat o imitare imediată și mecanică a modelului sovietic, ci un transfer cultural care a depins de actorii procesului de învățământ, de competențele acestora (mai mult sau mai puțin dezvoltate în ce privește ideologia ce trebuia aplicată sau chiar în privința cunoașterii limbii ruse), precum și de istoria anterioară a instituției universitare (în speță, a catedrei de limba și literatura franceză). Urmărind elaborarea primelor versiuni ale programelor analitice de literatură franceză, instituite de noul regim ca instrumente de control ideologic, putem surprinde modul în care autorii lor se străduiesc să aplice noul cadru discursiv marxist, dar nu reușesc să o facă decât la nivel formal, fără să dezvolte o reflecție substanțială din acest punct de vedere asupra literaturii franceze.

Cuvinte-cheie: sovietizare, literatură franceză, programe analitice, Universitatea din București, Nicolae N. Condeescu.

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The Humboldt Fellowships for Eastern Europe During the Cold War: Politics and Numbers[1]

Irina NASTASĂ-MATEI

Abstract

The Alexander von Humboldt Foundation was re-established in the Federal Republic of Germany in 1953, with the aim of demonstrating that Germany continued to be a great cultural power and of marking its place on the international arena. It awarded very prestigious fellowships to researchers from abroad, based on the criteria of academic excellence and lack of quotas. Even if sporadically at the beginning, the Foundation's relationship with the countries of Eastern Europe started to develop in the late 1960s, despite the opposite political systems of the two blocs. This happened in the context of the FRG's East-centered foreign policy (Ostpolitik), and was also due to the opening of socialist countries to the West. The relationship, however, was marked in many cases by tensions, as political interests, as opposed to the cultural or academic dimension, prevailed. The article tackles the situation of the Humboldt fellows from Eastern Europe during the Cold War, focusing, from a comparative perspective, on the quantitative aspect, as well as on the political dynamics which determined their presence in West Germany.

Keywords: West Germany, Soviet bloc, Cold War; academic relations; Humboldt fellowships.

The Alexander von Humboldt Foundation has been an important vector of academic collaboration, as well as of the configuration and coordination of the cultural policy and cultural diplomacy of the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG). Consequently, analysing the dynamics of granting fellowships and the Foundation's collaboration with various countries of the world is a precise indicator of the FRG's interest in one region or another, and of the way West Germany's relations with those countries functioned during the Cold War, despite the Foundation's policy of not establishing quotas based on regional – or any other – criteria.

This article aims to analyze the academic relations between West Germany and the countries of the Eastern bloc, using as the main variable the granting of Humboldt fellowships to scholars coming from these countries. Although based, theoretically, only on the quality of the applications, the granting of these fellowships proved to be dependent on the political relations of the FRG

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with the states from where the applications were received, since the access to information and a greater number of applications meant automatically a greater number of recipients. In addition, the political issues involved in the decision-making process, and especially in the implementation of the West German offer, were decisive.

The analysis of the relationship between the FRG and the countries of the Soviet bloc reveals a rather coherent policy promoted by West Germany towards the socialist countries. One can notice certain specific features of this collaboration, which proved to be common in the relationship with all these countries and which were mainly due to the political regimes in power at the time - communist, autoritarian regimes, based on planning and control - and to the loyalty level towards USSR or GDR, which varied. However, the comparative analysis highlights also the differences in the academic exchange dynamics, due to the same factors as the similarities: a various and fluctuating level of ideological control in each socialist country during the Cold War, and a fluctuating dynamic of relations within the Soviet bloc, especially concerning the other communist countries' relations with the German Democratic Republic and with the USSR.

The topic of the academic exchange between the FRG and the countries of the Eastern bloc should be placed in the context of relatively recent scholarly developments in Cold War studies. While, traditionally, the literature regarding the Cold War focused on political, military and economic developments, which favored the perspective of conflict and rivalry between the two sides, new approaches increasingly focus on instances of collaboration and exchange. These perspectives go beyond the long-established paradigm of dichotomy and antagonism between Good vs. Evil, Capitalism vs. Communism, Liberal vs. Authoritarian regimes. These analyses show that the Iron Curtain was, in fact, a "semi-permeable membrane"[2] or a "nylon curtain"[3], and that cooperation and joint efforts between the East and West were possible, and did indeed occur. This happened, for example, in those cases when both blocs were fighting against

[2] Michael David-Fox, „The Iron Curtain as Semi-Permeable Membrane: The Origins and Demise of the Stalinist Superiority Complex", in Patryk Babiracki and Kenyon Zimmer, eds., *Cold War Crossings: International Travel and Exchange Across the Soviet Bloc, 1940s-1960s* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2014), 14-40.

[3] György Péteri, *Nylon Curtain: Transnational and Transsystemic Tendencies in the Cultural Life of State-Socialist Russia and East-Central Europe* (Trondheim: Program on East European Cultures and Societies, 2006). See also Simo Mikkonen, Pia Koivunen, eds., *Beyond the Divide: Entangled Histories of Cold War Europe* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2015); Sari Autio-Sarasmo and Brendan Humphreys, eds., *Winter Kept Us Warm: Cold War Interactions Reconsidered*. (Aleksanteri Cold War Series). (Helsinki: University of Helsinki Press, 2010).

common threats, such as epidemics, or when the exchange of medical knowledge and the shared efforts towards producing a vaccine ignored the existing political and ideological barriers[4]. The pursuit of leisure was another instance in which the borders were more easily crossed. Tourism across the Iron Curtain was also a part of the "cultural diplomacy" or "soft power"[5] projected by the states involved[6]. In this respect, particularly notable are some relatively recent works on the cultural diplomacy of the Soviet Union[7], the research discussing the United States' soft power strategies in Eastern Europe and the USSR[8], as well as certain recent publications in the field of scienctific and academic diplomacy, which focus on the period of the Cold War[9].

Academic and student migration are complex phenomena which cannot be completely covered or explained by the concepts of "cultural diplomacy" or "soft power." However, they can be viewed as exemplary models of these notions. Significant and innovative literature has been published on the patterns of cultural and academic collaboration between East and West[10], as well as

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[4] See Dora Vargha, *Polio Across the Iron Curtain: Hungary's Cold War with an Epidemic* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018).

[5] A concept introduced by Joseph Nye for describing the strategy of exercising influence or ascendancy by using the strategy of appeal and attraction instead of force or coercion ("hard power"). See Joseph S. Nye, "Soft Power", in *Foreign Policy* 80, no. 3 (1990): 153–171.

[6] Sune Bechmann Pedersen, Christian Noack, eds., *Tourism and Travel during the Cold War. Negotiating Tourist Experiences Across the Iron Curtain* (London: Routledge, 2020).

[7] Michael David-Fox, *Crossing Borders: Modernity, Ideology, and Culture in Soviet Russia* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2015); Michael David-Fox, *Showcasing the Great Experiment: Cultural Diplomacy and Western Visitors to the Soviet Union, 1921-1941* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012). See also Frederick Barghoorn, *The Soviet Cultural Offensive: The Role of Cultural Diplomacy in Soviet Foreign Policy* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1976); Nigel Gould-Davies, "The Logic of Soviet Cultural Diplomacy", in *Diplomatic History* 27, no. 2 (2003): 193–214.

[8] Walter L. Hixson, *Parting the Curtain: Propaganda, Culture, and the Cold War, 1945-1961* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1997).

[9] Pierre-Bruno Ruffini, *Science and Diplomacy. A New Dimension of International Relations* (New York: Springer, 2017); Alison Kraft, Carola Sachse, *Science, (Anti-)Communism and Diplomacy. The Pugwash Conferences on Science and World Affairs in the Early Cold War* (Leiden: Brill, 2019); Glenn E. Schweitzer, *Scientists, Engineers, and Two-Track Diplomacy: A Half-Century of U.S.-Russian Interacademy Cooperation* (Washington, DC: National Academies Press, 2004).

[10] Denis Kallen, "New Perspectives on Academic Exchange Between Eastern and Western Europe", in *Higher Education in Europe* 15, no. 1 (1990): 12-22; Allen H. Kassof, "Scholarly Exchanges and the Collapse of Communism", in *Soviet and Post-Soviet Review* 22, no. 3 (1995): 263-274; Liping Bu, "Educational Exchange and Cultural Diplomacy in the Cold War", in *Journal of American Studies* 33, no. 3, Part 1: Women in America (December 1999): 393-415; Jeroen van Dongen, ed., *Cold War Science and the Transatlantic Circulation of Knowledge* (Leiden: Brill, 2015).

concerning the relevant case studies[11]. However, the topic of the 'soft power' role of the academic exchanges between Soviet Russia and the United States has held pride of place[12], while equaly interesting case studies, which did not involve these two superpowers as main actors, are still underresearched. This is also the case of the fellowship system established by the Federal Republic of Germany during the Cold War, a subject which still needs to be researched and analyzed in depth. The literature on the relations and academic collaboration between West Germany and various East European countries is also scarce – at least if one takes into account publications printed in English or German. This state of the art makes it difficut to establish the proper context in which this variety of academic migration patterns unfolded.

This article deals, in particular, with the granting of fellowships by the Alexander-von-Humboldt Foundation to scholars from Yugoslavia, Poland, Hungary, Bulgaria, Romania, Czechoslovakia and the USSR.

The relations between the FRG and the countries of the Eastern bloc

The Federal Republic of Germany was established on May 23, 1949, and consisted of three – out of the four - military occupation zones: the French, the British and the US-American. On October 7, 1949, the German Democratic Republic was founded, as a socialist state, in the former Soviet zone. Both German states claimed to be the „true" Germany, refusing for a long period to recognize each other and, implicitly, to maintain relations of any kind.

In the first years after the establishment of West Germany, its relations with the countries of Eastern Europe were very limited, for obvious reasons. The FRG was primarly concerned with its reconstruction and with the development of a strong, sustainable political and economic system. Consequently, its most important partners at this time could only be other Western states, which were economically strong and with which the FRG shared the same economic values and the same political system. Therefore, the 1950s were marked by the strengthening of West Germany's relationship with countries such as Great Britain and the United States, which invested in the reorganiza-

[11] See, for example: Ludovic Tournès, Giles Scott-Smith, eds., *Global Exchanges: Scholarships and Transnational Circulations in the Modern World* (Oxford & New York: Berghahn Books, 2017).

[12] See: Yale Richmond, *Cultural Exchange and the Cold War: Raising the Iron Curtain* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2003); Campbell F. Scribner, "American Teenagers, Educational Exchange, and Cold War Politics", in *History of Education Quarterly* 57, no. 4 (2017): 542-569.

tion and reconstruction of the FRG, and by the laying of the foundations of the European community[13].

On the other hand, the Eastern European countries, being under the influence of the USSR, with a different political regime and ideology than the West, maintained relations mainly with the other socialist states. Moreover, after having signed the Warsaw Pact in 1955, the Eastern European countries had very close relations with the German Democratic Republic. This meant that, of all the Western countries, with which some communist states still had various economic and cultural collaboration projects, the FRG was the only country with which any cooperation was tabooed, since it was viewed as a betrayal of the GDR, a sabotage of its status as the only German state recognized by the entire Soviet bloc.

The 1950s and early 1960s were a time when the Cold War was displayed in various ways, being close to becoming very „hot" on several occasions (e.g., during the Cuban missile crisis in 1962). FRG's relations with the socialist countries during this period were marked by mutual distrust and ideological conflict. While the Bonn authorities expressed concern about the social and political developments in the Soviet bloc (political purges, censorship, nationalization and collectivization, etc.), being especially worried about the human rights violations in these countries, within the opposite camp West Germany was accused of pursuing an „imperialist" policy.

The 1960s, however, brought a gradual rapprochement between the FRG and the countries of the Soviet bloc. For the West German politicians, the stakes were clear: by attempting to make their presence felt and play an economic, political and cultural role in these countries, they were trying to present the FRG as a viable German partner, more convenient than the GDR[14]. The strategy of implementing a soft-power policy in Eastern Europe, which was aimed at turning West Germany into an important political actor in this region, was followed by a clear, well-designed policy of political rapprochement with the socialist countries in the East, including the GDR: the so-called „Ostpolitik"[15].

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[13] See: Tony Judt, *Postwar: A History of Europe since 1945* (New York: The Penguin Press, 2005); Detlef Junker, ed., *The United States and Germany in the Era of the Cold War, 1945–1990. A Handbook*. Volume 1: *1945–1968* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004).

[14] See: William Glenn Gray, *Germany's Cold War: The Global Campaign to Isolate East Germany, 1949-1969* (Chapell Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 2003).

[15] West German foreign policy promoted by Willy Brandt, Foreign Affairs Minister between 1966 and 1969 and Chancellor between 1969 and 1974. It marked the start of the FRG-GDR collaboration and the beginning of the FRG's relations with Soviet bloc states. See: Carole Fink, Bernd Schaefer, eds., *Ostpolitik, 1969-1974: European and Global Responses* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008).

More or less willingly or reluctantly, the socialist countries had their own reasons for developing relations with the FRG, including economic, financial interests; the intention to import knowledge and technology from this highly developed state; the existence of an old tradition of collaboration with certain institutions that were now located in West Germany; the wish to show some autonomy with respect to the USSR in their foreign policy. A consistent collaboration between West Germany and the countries of the Eastern bloc was initiated in the mid-1960s[16], in a context marked by ideological and political relaxation in the communist countries, a context in which even the USSR explored a closer relationship with the FRG and with other West European countries, including the USA[17].

The conflicting political systems did not allow, however, for a consistent development of these relations, which soon showed their limits. Initially, the FRG considered an economically centered collaboration, through opening commercial agencies in the countries of the Soviet bloc[18]. Diplomatic relations with the socialist states were then established during the interval 1967-1973 – at the beginning of the above-mentioned period of "Ostpolitik" - which represented a great victory for West German foreign policy (especially in relation to the GDR), and which ensured, in the long run, up to the end of the Cold War, the continued existence of relations with these countries, despite the alternation of periods of relaxation with periods of strict control and ideological conflict.

The academic relations between the FRG and the countries of the Eastern bloc

The cultural and academic relations between the FRG and the socialist countries were established in the context of a certain distancing of the Eastern European states from Soviet hegemony, and of their willingness to resume relations with Western Europe at a formal, political and diplomatic level.

The first socialist country with which the FRG began to cooperate was Yugoslavia. Josip Tito had allowed Yugoslav citizens to travel freely to West Germany since the 1950s, with many of them employed there as migrant workers (*Gastarbeiter*). This also led to a cultural rapprochement in the sphere of ideas and val-

[16] See: David F. Patton, *Cold War Politics in Post War Germany* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 1999).

[17] George C. Herring, *From Colony to Superpower: U.S. Foreign Relations since 1776* (The Oxford History of the United States) (London & Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 770-772.

[18] See: Robert Mark Spaulding, *Osthandel and Ostpolitik*: *German Foreign Trade Policies* in *Eastern Europe from Bismarck to Adenauer* (Oxford & New York: Berghahn Books Inc., 1997).

ues between the two countries[19]. Since the early 1960s, several bilateral cultural agreements were signed, and the FRG initiated an intensive cultural-academic program in this country. In 1962, for example, Yugoslavia was the first socialist country to initiate university-level partnerships with West Germany; a Yugoslav-German conference was organized annually in Dubrovnik, professors from both countries visited each other, and the access of Yugoslav citizens to study and research trips and to academic events in the FRG was made easier[20]. Of course, the rapprochement between the two countries could only have taken place in the context of Tito's policy of neutrality initiated after 1948 and due to the fact that this socialist state was not part of the Central-Eastern European military alliance formalized in 1955 by the Warsaw Pact. Therefore, the distancing from the foreign policy pursued by the Soviet Union and the lack of political and diplomatic obligations towards the GDR allowed Yugoslavia to successfully cooperate with the West, and especially with the FRG. As the West German authorities noticed in 1971, "After its detachment from the ruling system of the Soviet Union, Yugoslavia also opened up culturally to the West to such an extent that there is now a network of lively relations with scientific institutions in the Western world"[21].

Sporadic academic relations had existed since the 1950s between the FRG, on the one hand, and Poland and Hungary, on the other. Especially in the case of Poland, there was a cultural collaboration with West-German cultural and academic institutions throughout the Cold War, in spite of the territorial disputes between the two countries[22]. It intensified during the following decades, starting with 1970. In December 1970, the FRG and Poland established diplomatic relations. This positive dynamic pleased even the authorities in Bonn, who were, in general, constantly dissatisfied by the level of cooperation with the countries of the Eastern bloc. On October 10, 1970, for example, an agreement was signed between DAAD, several offices for international collaboration at West German

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[19] Richard West, *Tito and the Rise and Fall of Yugoslavia* (New York: Carroll & Graf Publishers, 1995), 271.

[20] *Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amts Berlin* (*PAAA Berlin*), AV Neues Amt, Folder B 94, File no. 504, January 17, 1972, p. 2.

[21] *PAAA Berlin*, AV Neues Amt, Folder B 94, File no. 504, January 15, 1971.

[22] See Dieter Bingen, „Der lange Weg der „Normalisierung". Die Entwicklung der Beziehungen zwischen der Bundesrepublik Deutschland und Polen 1949-1990", in Wolf-Dieter Eberwein, Basil Kerski (eds.). *Die deutsch-polnischen Beziehungen 1949-2000. Eine Werte- und Interessengemeinschaft?* (Opladen: Leske + Budrich Verlag, 2001), 35-59; Dieter Bingen, *Die Polenpolitik der Bonner Republik von Adenauer bis Kohl 1949-1991* (Baden-Baden: Nomos, 1998); Mieczysław Tomala, *Deutschland von Polen gesehen. Zu den deutsch-polnischen Beziehungen 1945-1990* (Marburg: Schüren Verlag, 2000); Debra J. Allen, *The Oder-Neisse Line: The United States, Poland, and Germany in the Cold War* (Westport & London: Praeger, 2003).

universities, and the Polish Academy of Sciences, with the support of the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Education[23]. This led to an intense exchange of students and researchers between the two countries[24].

On the contrary, the academic collaboration with Hungary was difficult and sporadic. Although initiated rather early, the reports from the German Foreign Ministry[25] show that it was controlled excessively by the Hungarian authorities, taking place mainly in those areas where Hungary intended to import technology and knowledge from the West, first of all in technical fields and in agriculture[26]. The difficulties of this cooperation were evident in the slowness with which Hungary and the FRG managed to establish diplomatic relations: this took place as late as December 21, 1973[27].

The academic collaboration with Bulgaria officially started in 1966, although for the first several years nothing happened, besides declarations and plans[28]. As in the case of most other socialist states, the relations were limited, on the one hand, by the lack of political and diplomatic links between the two countries and, on the other hand, especially in the case of Bulgaria, by the very close connection it had with East Germany: "The position of the GDR in Bulgaria is so dominant, especially in the cultural-political area, and focused only on representation, that such agreements [on the cooperation between Bulgarian and West German higher education institutions] will surely cause disapproval in East Berlin"[29]. Besides, Bulgaria was known as the "most loyal ally" and satellite of the USSR[30]. In addition, the ideological divergences between the two

[23] *PAAA Berlin*, AV Neues Amt, Folder B 94, File no. 504, January 18, 1971.

[24] On the Polish-West German relations see Dominik Pick, „Zwischen offiziellem Protokoll und subversiver Tätigkeit. Polnisch–westdeutsche gesellschaftliche Kontakte 1972-1981", in *„Schleichwege": Inoffizielle Begegnungen sozialistischer Staatsbürger zwischen 1956 und 1989,* ed. Jerzy Kochanowski, Włodzimierz Borodziej and Joachim von Puttkamer (Jena: Böhlau Verlag, 2010), 275-290.

[25] *PAAA Berlin*, AV Neues Amt/Bukarest, File no. 13437.

[26] *PAAA Berlin*, AV Neues Amt, Folder B 94, File no. 498.

[27] For more details on Hungary's relations with the West during this period, see: László Borhi, *Hungary in the Cold War, 1945-1956: Between the United States and the Soviet Union* (Budapest & New York: Central European University Press, 2004); Anikó Macher, "Hungarian Cultural Diplomacy, 1957-1963: Echoes of Western Cultural Activity in a Communist Country", in: Jessica C. E. Gienow-Hecht, Mark C. Donfried (eds.). *Searching for a Cultural Diplomacy*, 75-108.

[28] *PAAA Berlin*, AV Neues Amt, Folder B 94, File no. 504, January 17, 1972, p. 3

[29] *PAAA Berlin*, AV Neues Amt, Folder B 94, File no. 504, January 14, 1971, p. 2.

[30] Jordan Baev, "The Establishment of Bulgarian–West German Diplomatic Relations within the Coordinating Framework of the Warsaw Pact", in *Journal of Cold War Studies*, Volume 18, Issue 3, Summer 2016, p. 161.

countries made a real academic collaboration possible only in technical fields and in natural sciences: again, a situation similar to other socialist states[31]. The initiation of diplomatic relations with Bulgaria was delayed until December 1973, despite West German hopes and long negotiations in this sense.

The FRG's cooperation with Romania was, for a short period, a source of great hope for the authorities in Bonn. After Nicolae Ceaușescu came to power, Romania was the first country in the Eastern bloc to establish diplomatic relations with the FRG: on January 31, 1967, the West German Embassy was opened in Bucharest[32]. This set a precedent, as in the following years the other communist states would follow suit. The political rapprochement was accompanied by an intensifying cultural and academic collaboration: in 1966 a first Romanian scholar was able to travel and pursue research in the FRG, and in 1967 negotiations started on the signing of partnerships between Romanian and West German universities. There was a period of several years (1967-1971) when Romania was FRG's closest partner in the Eastern bloc. However, this cooperation soon showed its limits. Ceaușescu's ideological shift in the 1970s (the 1971 July theses[33], decree no. 95 of July 29, 1975[34], and the reorientation of Ceaușescu's foreign policy towards Africa, Asia, and Latin America), the severe economic crisis and the increased ideological control during the 1980s led to the „freezing" of the relations between the two countries[35]. The

[31] *PAAA Berlin*, AV Neues Amt, Folder B 94, File no. 504, January 14, 1971.

[32] See Vasile Buga, *Sub lupa Moscovei. Politica externă a României, 1965-1989* (Bucharest: Institutul Național pentru Studiul Totalitarismului, 2015), 11-38. Also see: *România-Republica Federală Germania. Începutul relațiilor diplomatice*. Volume I, *1966-1967*, ed. Claudiu Florian, Dumitru Preda, Ottmar Trașcă (Bucharest: Editura Enciclopedică, 2009); Ion M. Anghel, „Stabilirea relațiilor diplomatice între România și Republica Federală a Germaniei," în *Pagini de diplomația României*, vol. I (Asociația ambasadorilor și diplomaților de carieră din România) (Iași: Editura Junimea, 2009); Mioara Anton, „Stabilirea relațiilor diplomatice româno-vest-germane, 31 ianuarie 1967", în *Arhivele Totalitarismului*, nr. 1-2/2008 (Bucharest: Institutul Național pentru Studiul Totalitarismului, 2008); Anneli Ute Gabanyi, „Stabilirea relațiilor diplomatice între Republica Federală a Germaniei și România în anul 1967", în *România. Supraviețuire și afirmare prin diplomație în anii războiului rece*. Vol. 3. (Târgoviște: Editura Cetatea de Scaun, 2014).

[33] "Law 23 regarding the defense of the state secret in the Socialist Republic of Romania", published in the Official Bulletin no. 157, December 17, 1971, which tightened ideological control and strenghened the propaganda.

[34] "Decree 95 regarding studying, specializing and obtaining a PhD abroad", published in the Official Bulletin no. 83, July 30, 1975, which imposed very restrictive criteria for being allowed to travel abroad.

[35] See Irina Nastasă-Matei, „Academic Migration and Cultural Diplomacy during the Cold War. Humboldt Fellowships for Romania in the Context of Eastern Europe", in *History of Communism in Europe*, Vol. 9 (2018): 141-144.

academic collaboration was particularly intense in the fields of agricultural research and nuclear energy, especially during the 1970s.[36] The most prestigious Romanian universities – in Cluj, Iasi and later Bucharest - welcomed lecturers of the German language from the FRG[37], while a West German Cultural Institute was to be established in Romania according to the "Agreement for cooperation in the field of scientific research and scientific development between the government of the SRR and the government of the FRG," signed in 1973. The Institute only opened in Bucharest in 1979, yet it was the first Goethe Institute established in the capital of a Communist country[38]. At the same time, Romania's academic and cultural relations with the GDR were not very intensive: Romania was the only country of the Warsaw Pact where the GDR had not opened any cultural institute[39] and where there was no German lectureship from East Germany. Although dissatisfied with the stagnation of the bilateral academic relations, West German embassy officials in Bucharest acknowledged, in 1982, that

> *"When looking through the cultural-political annual reports from our Eastern bloc embassies from 1981, I had the impression that, despite all the mishaps, harrassment and lack of reliability we experienced from the part of the Romanians in Bucharest, this is where the best opportunities for a German cultural policy are to be found. Yugoslavia is an exception here, but this case has no comparative significance, not even in the field of the German language, since here [in Yugoslavia] a German population no longer exists"*[40].

The relations between the FRG and Czechoslovakia were difficult. Although at the political level there was an urge to build connections with West Germany (and Yugoslavia) as early as 1956[41], the cultural and academic relations were so insignificant that they were barely mentioned in the West German reports regarding the links to Eastern Europe. That was mainly due to the memory of the Munich Agreement of 1938, at least in Czechoslovakia's case, and to the deportation, after the Second World War, of the German minority from the Sudetenland region, in West Germany's case. Student and researcher exchanges did develop, however, and many Czechoslovakians traveled for study or research to West Germany, starting with 1967 and through-

[36] *PAAA Berlin*, AV Neues Amt/Bukarest, File no. 13346.
[37] *PAAA Berlin*, AV Neues Amt/Bukarest, File no. 13353, February 19, 1974.
[38] *PAAA Berlin*, AV Neues Amt/Bukarest, File no. 13418, April 21, 1980.
[39] *PAAA Berlin*, AV Neues Amt/Bukarest, File no. 13419.
[40] *PAAA Berlin*, AV Neues Amt/Bukarest, File no. 13437, Juni 29, 1982.
[41] See *National Archives of the United Kingdom*, Foreign Office: Political Departments: General Correspondence from 1906-1966, FO 371/122141.

out the 1970s. This tendency received a great boost around the period of the Prague Spring of 1968[42].

The USSR's relations with the Federal Republic of Germany began with the signing, on August 12, 1970, of a framework agreement known as "the Moscow Treaty"[43]. This was the official milestone in the beginning of FRG's Ostpolitik. It was the first of the so-called "Ostverträge." This treaty allowed the establishment of political, economic, cultural and diplomatic relations between the two countries. It was followed, in 1972, by the signing of an "Agreement between the FRG and the USSR on cultural cooperation"[44]. The agreement emphasized the Soviet interest mainly in scientific collaboration, more specifically, in the field of natural sciences, so that the USSR's technological and agricultural development might benefit from this exchange. This was a part of the Soviet change in strategy regarding the access to scientific and technological knowledge: it evolved from the unsuccessful attempts at technological espionage in the 1950s, to procurement of advanced technology from the West through collaboration and, more exactly, through the scientists', researchers' and students' exchanges starting from the late 1960s[45].

Actually, this dynamic was something common in the relations between most of the communist countries: trying to get technology from the West through academic exchanges and allowing collaboration only in those scientific fields where the communist regimes might have an immediate interest. By contrast, for the FRG authorities it was the West German presence in these countries – through institutes, lectureships, students and academics, and through various cultural productions - that mattered. It underscored the FRG's competition with East Germany and served to highlight their cultural prominence and their status as an acknowledged German state in this part of the world.

Although the USSR's cultural and academic collaboration with the West unfolded especially in the Soviet relations with West Germany and Finland[46], and in spite of fulfilling the formal requirements for this collaboration (based on the stipulations of the agreements), the actual extent of collaboration between the USSR and West Germany remained limited. Ideological barriers, as well as

[42] „New programme initiatives for the promotion of research in Central and Eastern Europe", in Alexander-von-Humboldt Stiftung / Foundation, *Jahresbericht / Annual Report 2000*, p. 14.

[43] Treaty between the Federal Republic of Germany and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics ["Moskauer Vertrag"], August 12, 1970.

[44] *PAAA Berlin*, AV Neues Amt, Folder B 94, File no. 498.

[45] Sari Autio-Sarasmo, "Knowledge through the Iron Curtain: Soviet Scientific-Technical Cooperation with Finland and West Germany", in Sari Autio-Sarasmo and Katalin Miklossy, eds., *Reassessing Cold War Europe* (London: Routledge Studies in the History of Russia and Eastern Europe, 2011), 66-82.

[46] Autio-Sarasmo, "Knowledge through the Iron Curtain."

the USSR's strict controls and rigid planning policy prevented a full-scale and consistent cooperation.

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Most instances of cultural and academic collaboration between the FRG and the countries of the Eastern bloc were initiated by various West German institutions even prior to the development of diplomatic relations with these countries, and before there was a coherent German official policy in this respect. The DAAD (Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst - The German Academic Exchange Service), in particular, was involved in planning student and youth exchanges since the mid 1960s, while in the same period the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation started to advertise its offers in Eastern Europe and to invite former fellows from the region to reconnect with the Foundation[47]. In 1970 these two institutions joined a consortium, together with the German Research Foundation (Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft), the Max Planck Society (Max-Planck-Gesellschaft) and the German Rectors' Conference (Hochschulrektorenkonferenz)[48] in a bid to build partnerships between universities from the FRG and those from the Soviet bloc. An Eastern European Partnerships Commission (Kommission für Osteuropäischen Partnerschaften) was established to coordinate policy in this respect[49]. The first agreement of this kind was signed on May 9, 1970, between the Karlsruhe Institute of Technology and the Technical University of Budapest. It was soon followed by many other similar examples, for which it served as a model.

The university partnerships were financed exclusively by West Germany, with most of the funds coming from the Foreign Ministry (Auswärtiges Amt - AA), which was immediately indicative of the fact that the FRG was perceiving this type of academic collaboration as a part of its "foreign affairs". The political significance of these partnerships was in fact acknowledged by the German authorities. In December 1970, when the representatives of the AA and the Rectors' Conference discussed this issue, "the participants agreed that university partnerships with Eastern European universities and research institutions are of considerable importance given the current political situation (author's empahsis) and that they should be promoted as far as possible"[50]. Similarly, in October 1971, the director of the German Research Foundation stated that

[47] Irina Nastasă-Matei, „Academic Migration," 151.

[48] The German Rectors' Conference (Hochschulrektorenkonferenz) is an organization comprising universities and higher education institutions. It was established in 1949 in West Germany.

[49] *PAAA Berlin*, AV Neues Amt, Folder B 94, File no. 504.

[50] *PAAA Berlin*, AV Neues Amt, Folder B 94, File no. 504, December 23, 1970.

> *"There is certainly no doubt that the cultural and scientific relations with the countries of Eastern Europe are characterized by special political nuances. This is due to the fact that the scientific institutions in Eastern Europe cannot act as freely as those in our country, but are, to a considerable extent, dependent on the wishes and instructions of their governments. However, one should not overlook the fact that, of course, a political interest in these questions cannot be denied on our part as well, that cultural and scientific relations are to be classified as a subdivision of the overall field of politics and that they are of considerable significance, alongside economic and political issues"*[51].

The political stakes involved in the academic relations with Eastern Europe were also obvious from the West German reports concerning Romania:

> *"In our opinion, there is an elementary German interest in promoting the exchange of scientifically qualified people between the two states by all means possible, because these are propagators. If, for certain internal reasons, the Romanian authorities wish to choose the less official way of engaging into partnerships in order to increase their exchange rates, then, in my opinion, this opportunity should be used, taking into account the difficulties that Romania may encounter within the socialist bloc due to an obviously important exchange with the FRG. Therefore, in the interest of a stronger representation of the FRG, especially given its competition with the GDR, the Embassy asks that the applications of the Rectors' Conference and the DAAD respectively, for funding the exchange projects at the partnership level be supported financially"*[52].

Unsurprisingly, the academic relations between the FRG and the countries of the Eastern bloc soon displayed their limits. In the eyes of the German authorities, the university partnerships could not function properly because the universities from the Eastern bloc did not enjoy any autonomy and were completely dependent on the state. Moreover, as previously shown, the scientific exchanges took place only in specific fields[53], at the sole choice of the Eastern partners. The exchanges involved, in particular, technical disciplines, medicine, physics, chemistry, and agriculture. These difficulties were summed up by Werner Heisenberg, at that time president of the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation, in a report he submitted to Hans Georg Steltzer, the director of the cultural department within the AA:

> *"In my opinion, aspects of a purely political nature are to be observed, first of all, in the contractual agreements with the universities from Eastern Europe. In comparison to Western European conditions, the Eastern European universities are, to a much greater extent, representatives of the state and of its ideology. There is no - or only a very modest degree of - autonomy with regard to the state, although*

[51] *PAAA Berlin*, AV Neues Amt, Folder B 94, File no. 504, October 29, 1971.
[52] *PAAA Berlin*, AV Neues Amt, Folder B 94, File no. 520, May 18, 1972.
[53] *PAAA Berlin*, AV Neues Amt, Folder B 94, File no. 498.

> *it is inherent in the universities of the Federal Republic. That is why the contractual relations between universities in Germany and Eastern European universities have an eminently foreign policy dimension. Under these circumstances, it is conceivable that partnerships in the case of the Eastern Europeans are not always used solely to promote scientific relations. It is possible that, through the partnership agreements, an attempt is made to display, at least, some general political claims. (...)*
> *The Eastern European partners would like to gain access to the research developments that are currently taking place in the technical universities of the FRG, especially in the field of technology, by concluding partnership agreements.*
> *Furthermore, it is all too well known how easily this special promotion of partnership agreements with Eastern European universities could be misunderstood by the latter states as a subversive attempt of "imperialism" and interpreted accordingly. This danger can only be countered if we do not grant any particular cultural-political funding for Eastern European countries, but rather embed them into a larger international context"*[54].

The organization of youth exchanges and summer trips for students also encountered difficulties. In the case of all Eastern European countries these contacts were hindered by the strict control exercised by the communist youth travel services. If initially the requirements for receiving exit permits in order to visit West Germany were looser, the numerous cases of escapes by the youth who decided not to return to their socialist country of origin led to a more rigid policy in this respect and to difficulties in obtaining the exit permits[55]. The efforts made by the Germans to develop a less official, less formalized exchange in this respect remained unsuccessful, as the controls continued to tighten throughout the 1970s and the 1980s, while the number of exit permits became smaller and smaller. The desire of the communist authorities to plan everything in advance was also an important impediment in this regard. Ultimately, it was mostly the German youth who visited Eastern Europe, with their Eastern European counterparts being denied passports and visas by their own governments[56]. That might have been a pleasant experience for the German teens, but it did not meet the expectations of the West German authorities concerning the role this kind of exchanges should play. This fact was proven by an official letter from the AA sent to the West German embassies in Moscow, Bucharest and Belgrade and to the West German commercial agencies in Warsaw, Prague, Budapest and Sofia:

> *"Inquiries from youth organizations and groups, as well as reports on trips made, show the difficulty of finding concrete partners for a collaboration with the youth in Eastern Europe. The state travel agencies only organize group contacts which,*

[54] *PAAA Berlin*, AV Neues Amt, Folder B 94, File no. 504, August 16, 1971.
[55] *PAAA Berlin*, AV Neues Amt, Folder B 94, File no. 498, November 13, 1969.
[56] *PAAA Berlin*, AV Neues Amt, Folder B 94, File no. 498, November 13, 1969.

due to their time limitation and rigorous organization, do not provide any possibility for actual mutual connection. Therefore, the study trips often take on a touristic character, which is only partially satisfactory for the German young people involved and does not fulfill the purpose of the operation, which is the exchange of views between young people with the aim of raising European awareness"[57].

The many cases of escape were also to blame for the vigilence of the authorities from the communist states with regard to letting their citizens travel to the West. In 1969, for example, 13 out of a group of 28 Romanian young people who visited West Germany at the invitation of the German Society for International Youth Exchange (Deutschen Gesellschaft für Internationalen Jugendaustausch) escaped from the hotel where they were staying, in the small Bavarian city of Füssen, and demanded political asylum. The German media reported that it was the third group of Romanian youth visiting Füssen, and that there were at least 10 people in each of the first two groups who had also decided to remain in the West[58].

The authorities were exceptionally cautious in allowing the students, researchers, and professors to travel to West Germany for longer periods, for example, in the framework of a scholarship or a fellowship. The Eastern European authorities wished to decide themselves, without any involvement of the funding institution (most often, the DAAD or the Humboldt Foundation), on who were the persons allowed to be sent to specialize or study abroad. They supported people with a certain political profile, mainly those loyal to the communist regime or party members, and, in some cases, secret police informants. In Romania, for example, the future invited scholars and fellows had to obtain permision from the Communist Party, as well as from the Securitate, in order to be granted the exit permits[59]. Moreover, the personal connections of the applicants seemed to weigh more than their professional profile and their qualifications. The Germans denounced several cases of corruption and nepotism[60]. This led to a hybrid application system: there were both so-called „direct applications" for a German fellowship and „indirect applications", the latter being arranged by the scientific institutions and the universities from the communist countries. The consequences of this system were paradoxical: the applicants supported by their states had much less success in getting a fellowship, since their advantage was not their professional qualification and expertise, but rather their prior po-

[57] *PAAA Berlin*, AV Neues Amt/Bukarest, File no. 13316, February 10, 1970.
[58] *Münchner Merkur*, 28.08.1969, apud *PAAA Berlin*, AV Neues Amt, Folder B 94, File no. 575.
[59] Irina Nastasă-Matei, „Academic Migration," 153.
[60] *PAAA Berlin*, AV Neues Amt, Folder B 94, File no. 498, November 13, 1969; *PAAA Berlin*, AV Neues Amt/Bukarest, File no. 13328, January 20, 1970.

litical conduct and their connections. The direct applicants were more likely to receive an invitation to pursue their study and research in West Germany, but they were frequently refused the exit visa by their own states. The reasons for this refusal could be manifold: it could happen for political reasons, such as „unhealthy origin", lack of loyalty or suspect political activity before the end of World War II. It could also occur due to the applicant's choosing of what was perceived to be an unimportant field of research, or simply due to a person's bypassing the formalities and submitting a direct application (the submission itself was problematic, since the papers had to be smuggled out of the country)[61]. The fact that many scholars did not return was also a factor hampering a more intensive collaboration of this type.

The Humboldt fellowships for Eastern Europe during the Cold War

The Alexander von Humboldt Foundation was – and still is – the most important and lasting German foundation supporting research and international exchange in virtually every field of theoretical study. Its long history developed in three stages. Between 1860 and 1923 it was devoted to supporting research abroad exclusively for German scholars. After being re-established in 1925, it shifted its focus to supporting mostly foreign scholars who undertook research in Germany, but it was dissolved in 1945 due to the disintegration of Nazi Germany and also because of the role it had played in the Nazi propaganda apparatus[62]. After 1953, it was recreated in West Germany with the purpose of fostering and supporting scientific and technological development, international academic exchanges, and the FRG's cultural diplomacy.

From 1953 onward, the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation offered very generous and prestigious fellowships to postdoctoral researchers and to established academics and scientists. The funds came mainly from federal sources, i.e., the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Education. Only a very small percentage of the budget came from private donations. The organization and functioning of the Foundation are politically independent; the institution enjoys administrative autonomy and uses a series of independent commissions

[61] Irina Nastasă-Matei, „Academic Migration," 152. See, for example: *PAAA*, AV Neues Amt, Folder Bukarest, File no. 13328, 20 January 1970; File no. 13348, 21 February 1972; File no. 13348, 19 March 1972; File no. 13353, 24 March 1976.

[62] See Holger Impekoven, *Die Alexander von Humboldt-Stiftung und das Ausländerstudium in Deutschland 1925-1945. Von der „geräuschlosen Propaganda" zur Ausbildung der „geistigen Wehr" des „Neuen Europa"* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck&Ruprecht Verlag & Bonn University Press, 2013).

for the scientific assessment and analysis of the applications. The criteria for granting the fellowships are based on academic excellence and do not take into account any quotas.

Although the Foundation is politically independent, the distribution of fellowships usually reflected the various developments in international relations and the shifting orientation of Germany's foreign policy. A strong German influence and good diplomatic relations with a certain country meant that a high number of applications were submitted from that country, which led to a high number of fellowships awarded. First, the potential fellows needed to become familiar with the Foundation's offers; second, they had to be able to send their applications, and, in case of success, to be able to travel to the FRG; and third, the Foundation should have been able to respond financially to the increasing rate of demand by requesting more funding from the government, in order to maintain its success rate. Consequently, the Foundation's budget increased constantly: there were 1502 fellowships awarded between 1953 and 1963. The number almost doubled between 1964 and 1973 (growing to 2948 fellowships), doubling again during the next decade, with 4567 fellowships awarded between 1974 and 1983 (see Table I). The number of applications received also went up proportionally, so that the overall success rate increased only slightly.

Since the Foundation was involved from the beginning in developing the framework for the academic relations with Eastern Europe – as shown above, it was an important actor in establishing university partnerships between the FRG and the countries of the Eastern bloc - it was only natural that Humboldt fellowships would be also awarded to people from this region. Scholars from Yugoslavia could benefit from this opportunity from the very beginning. Two Humboldt fellowships were offered to two Yugoslav academics in 1954.[63] This was possible only in the context of Tito's neutrality policy pursued after 1948 and due to Yugoslavia's good relations with the FRG. The collaboration with the other socialist countries began somewhat later. Although there were very few applications from Poland and Hungary, enjoying the unusually high success rate of over 60%, only from the mid 1960s one can speak about a consistent access of people from Eastern Europe to this academic opportunity. This coincides with the establishment of economic and political relations between the FRG and the states of the Eastern bloc, which was followed by the development of academic links, as described above. Only in a more formalized context, and only after the Foundation had secured the collaboration of the socialist governments, could candidates from Eastern Europe more easily apply and, if successful, travel to West Germany.

[63] Humboldt Stiftung, *Alexander-von-Humboldt Stiftung 1953-1983* (Bonn, 1983), 123.

In what follows, the reports and statistics put together by the Foundation itself are the main sources for determining the number of fellowships awarded to people from Eastern Europe and the evolution of the relations with each of the socialist countries. These reports and statistics were published annually, but also at the end of each decade of the Foundation's reestablishment in 1953. I used mostly the report drawn up in 1993, since it comprised the entire period on which my article focuses. I also consulted the report from 1983, which offered plenty of details regarding the specific countries of origin of the fellows.

These statistics show clearly that the fellows from the Eastern bloc made up an important percentage among the recipients of the Humboldt fellowships, particularly starting with the second decade of the Foundation's reestablishment, from 1964 onward (see Table 1). Not only was the number of applications from this region high, but so was their success rate. In some periods, the success rate was above 40%, which was much higher than the similar rate for people coming from established Western academic milieus. This fact highlights, once again, the FRG's – and the Foundation's – aim to support people from that region. Among the top 10 countries sending the most fellows to the Foundation between 1953 and 1989, three were Eastern European (Poland in 4th place, Yugoslavia in 5th and Czechoslovakia in 7th place)[64].

The statistics also reflect the fluctuations regarding the number of Humboldt fellows from specific Eastern European countries. This can be directly linked to internal political developments in particular countries, to various changes in the balance of international relations during the Cold War, as well as to the evolution of each country's relations with the FRG. This shows that the political factor had a decisive impact on the number of applications, and on the success rate. Although it was less obvious from the statistics, the reports also highlighted the actual ability of East European scholars to visit West Germany. The political implications were fully acknowledged by the Foundation's officials in later reports:

> *"The Foundation is politically neutral. It sponsored scholars from Central and Eastern Europe long before the establishment of diplomatic relations: from (the former) Yugoslavia – since 1954, from Poland and Hungary since 1959, from Bulgaria since 1964, from (the former) Czechoslovakia since 1965, from Romania since 1966 and from the (former) Soviet Union since 1970. About 2,500 scholars from Central and Eastern Europe had been sponsored by 1989, which amounts to one fifth of all Humboldtians invited by that time.*

[64] Kurt-Jürgen Maaß, *Bridges for Research. Range and Impact of the Humboldt Foundation* (Berlin: Alexander von Humboldt Foundation, 1989), 36.

However, academic exchanges were frequently influenced by political events. During the "Prague Spring," in the late 1960s, Czechoslovakia was at the top of the Humboldt Foundation's sponsorship statistics for two years. After that, this number quickly dropped to zero. At the beginning of the 1970s, during the "period of relaxation", many scholars from Romania came to Germany, but almost none arrived during the subsequent political "cold war". By 1988, only 76 research fellowships had been granted to scholars from the former Soviet Union"[65].

Table 1: Humboldt fellows from various countries, 1953-1993[66]

Country	1953-1963			1964-1973			1974-1983			1984-1993		
	A	B	%	A	B	%	A	B	%	A	B	%
Romania	-	-	-	472	164	34,7	177	49	27,7	181	38	21
Bulgaria	1	-	-	305	111	36,4	236	74	31,4	447	86	19,2
Czechoslovakia	1	-	-	734	283	38,6	64	28	43,8	76	27	35,5
Czechoslovak Republic										217	63	29
Poland	13	8	61,5	286	118	41,3	1176	434	36,9	1898	400	21,1
USSR	-	-	-	5	2	40	78	48	61,5	10	7	70
Russia	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1057	345	32,6
Hungary	26	17	65,4	134	57	42,5	211	93	44,1	411	175	42,6
Yugoslavia	260	88	33,8	642	178	27,7	254	76	29,9	260	54	20,8
France	65	19	29,2	111	44	39,6	158	72	45,6	392	189	48,2
Great Britain	72	35	34,7	226	95	42	369	173	46,9	300	152	50,7
USA	168	50	29,8	764	280	36,6	1302	674	51,8	1136	594	52,3
Egypt	264	68	25,8	484	103	21,3	487	88	18,1	339	41	12,1
India	567	121	21,3	774	177	22,9	2256	450	19,9	1724	272	15,8
China	-	-	-	-	-	-	546	172	31,5	1149	323	28,1
Taiwan	69	16	23,2	76	15	19,7	75	27	36	49	10	20,4
Japan	520	247	47,5	1003	433	43,2	1281	593	48,7	921	438	47,6
Argentina	178	65	36,5	142	48	33,8	161	60	37,3	171	69	40,4
Total	**4746**	**1502**	**31,6**	**8860**	**2948**	**33,3**	**12632**	**4567**	**36,2**	**15456**	**4897**	**31,7**

A – Number of applications
B – Number of fellowships awarded
% - Success rate

Yugoslavia was very well represented among the recipients of the Humboldt fellowships. Its collaboration with the Foundation started already in 1954 and intensified from 1960 onward. In 1959, for example, 2% of the total Humboldt

[65] "New programme initiatives for the promotion of research in Central and Eastern Europe", in Alexander-von-Humboldt Stiftung / Foundation, *Jahresbericht / Annual Report 2000*, 14.

[66] Humboldt Stiftung, *Alexander-von-Humboldt Stiftung 1953-1993. 40 Jahre im Dienst von Wissenschaft und Forschung*, 279-283.

fellows came from Yugoslavia (3 people), while in 1960 and 1961 over 8% (11, and, respectively, 16 fellows were of Yugoslav origin. By 1962, this number increased to 12.3% (22 fellows). The tendency remained similar throughout the 1960s: between 20 and 30 Yugoslav fellows were admitted each year, representing around 10%, or higher, of the total number of fellowship recipients. The numbers started to drop slowly in the 1970s (amounting to 5-10 fellows per year, with a maximum of 15 in 1971, i.e., 1-3% of the total) and decreased dramatically in the 1980s, to just a few Yugoslav fellows per year (around 1%). The reason for this decrease is not clear, but it might have been caused by the economic crisis unfolding during that era, which had hit Yugoslavia particularly hard.

From among the Yugoslav recipients, 53% were working in the field of natural sciences (mostly medicine, with some also working in chemistry and pharmacy). 35% were specialized in the humanities, and 12% were engineers. Especially surprising is the significant number of Yugoslav scholars coming to West Germany who specialized in the humanities. Their proportion was much higher than the average percentage. Among these scholars, the majority was studying philosophy (apparently, a long-standing tradition). Many of them were pursuing careers in law, letters, German studies and other foreign languages[67]. Most of the Yugoslav Humboldt fellows were tenured at institutions based in three important Yugoslav academic centers: Zagreb, Belgrade, and Ljubljana[68].

Poland was generally very close to Germany and to German culture. Traditionally, the modern Polish elite had been educated at German institutions of higher education. The 20th century was no exception in this respect: up until Word War II, Polish students, for example, made up the largest group of foreign students at German universities. The events of World War II, however, put a major strain on the Polish-German relations. Poland's collaboration with West Germany proved to be very difficult in the first postwar decades, intensifying only after 1970.

The number of Polish Humboldt fellows was relatively small (corresponding to a small number of applications) up until 1971. It amounted to 1-2 fellows a year in the early 1960s, growing to 5-9 fellows per year between 1964 and 1971. Then, their number started to increase significantly, to about 30, 40, and even 50 Polish fellows per year during the next decades. In some cases, Polish academics received more than 10% of the total number of fellowships awarded. This fact made Polish scholars one of the most well represented groups of recipients. They were surpassed only by academics from countries such as Japan,

[67] Humboldt Stiftung, *Alexander-von-Humboldt Stiftung 1953-1983*, 122-123.
[68] Maaß, *Bridges for Research*, 38.

India and the US, which were the Foundation's closest collaborators. Poland thus was the most broadly represented socialist country in the overall activity of the Humboldt Foundation.

Most of the Polish fellows were working in technical fields (engineers amounted to 20%). Many others were active in the medical field (14%), chemistry/pharmacy (11%), physics, and astrophysics (10%)[69]. The number of scholars from the humanities who received (and were able to accept) these grants was surprisingly high: 1/3 of the Polish Humboldt fellows during the Cold War were researching, while in West Germany, in the fields of history and law. This trend was atypical for the socialist countries which, in general, preferred to benefit technologically and scientifically from the more developed knowledge available in the West. Probably, the long-shared history between the two countries especially contributed to the unusually high number of Polish historians who had received the support of the Foundation. Most of the Polish Humboldt fellows were employed at universities and research institutes in Warsaw, Cracow, and Poznan[70].

The access of the Hungarian scholars to Humboldt fellowships was one of the broadest among the countries of the Warsaw Pact. The first Hungarian received a fellowship and could travel to West Germany as soon as 1960. 43 Hungarian academics were able to apply between 1960 and 1963, while their success rate was particularly high: 65.4% were accepted (see Table I). In fact, Hungary had one of the highest success rates of the Humboldt fellowships, averaging at about 45% throughout the period of the Cold War. The Foundation could also freely collaborate with the Hungarian government. This collaboration reached an impressive level, so that, starting from 1982, Hungarian state institutions ceased to be directly involved in the selection of candidates. All applications received by the Foundation from Hungary were so-called "direct applications". Almost 1/3 of the Hungarian fellows worked in the field of medicine, with many also conducting research in chemistry/pharmacy and biology. Only a minority of the Hungarian fellowship recipients were engineers or worked in technical fields. Very few successful Hungarian candidates were coming from the humanities (mostly from the field of law)[71].

The Foundation's relations with the Bulgarian fellows followed the same pattern as in the case of most East European countries. The first Bulgarian scholars came to West Germany in the mid-1960s. Their numbers increased

[69] Humboldt Stiftung, *Alexander-von-Humboldt Stiftung 1953-1983*, 130-131.
[70] Maaß, *Bridges for Research*, 38.
[71] Humboldt Stiftung, *Alexander-von-Humboldt Stiftung 1953-1983*, 142-143.

year by year until the mid-1970s, when the figures started to drop. Throughout the 1970s, their presence was, on average, of almost 10 fellows/year, which amounted to just under 3% of the total number of fellows. Also, in the case of the Bulgarians, the majority of fellows took up fellowships in fields belonging to the natural sciences (73%), mostly medicine and chemistry/pharmacy; 19% were engineers, and only 8% were scholars from the humanities (mostly philosophers, linguists, and artists)[72].

Similarly to Bulgaria, Romania developed rather late a stable connection with the Humboldt Foundation. The first two Romanian fellows arrived to West Germany in 1966. They did not apply for the fellowship, but were invited instead[73], which shows even more clearly the Foundation's interest in also supporting scholars from this country. This practice of inviting the fellows directly was something exceptional. It only happened during the initial period of the cooperation. Later on, the candidates had to submit regular applications, like all the other potential fellows, even when aiming for a second fellowship (i.e., as repeatedly invited scholars).

Throughout the next few years, the number of Romanian fellowship recipients witnessed a continuous growth, up to a maximum of 38 fellows in 1970. This made the group of Romanian fellows the biggest national cohort that year (they represented 13% of the total number of fellowship recipients). Subsequently, their number started to sink as quickly as it had grown. By 1975, there were only 9 Romanian Humboldt fellows in West Germany, a number which dropped to 5 in 1977 and 2-4 per year during the following decade[74]. Most of the Romanian fellows, around 60%, were scholars specializing in natural sciences – physics, mathematics, biology. About 20% were engineers, and the remaining 20% were specialists in the humanities – German studies, history and philosophy[75].

1964 was the year when the first Czechoslovak Humboldt fellows arrived to West Germany. The links of the Humboldt Foundation with this country were completely dependent on the international political events and context. Thus, if in 1964 only five Czechoslovak scholars received Humboldt fellowships, in 1965 there were already 22 recipients. During each of the three consecutive years, 1967, 1968 and 1969, the Czechoslovak group constituted around 25% of the total number of people receiving the fellowships awarded by the Foun-

[72] Humboldt Stiftung, *Alexander-von-Humboldt Stiftung 1953-1983*, 102-103.
[73] *PAAA Berlin*, AV Neues Amt/Bukarest, File no. 13350.
[74] Irina Nastasă-Matei, „Academic Migration," 148-154.
[75] Humboldt Stiftung, *Alexander-von-Humboldt Stiftung 1953-1983*, 132-133.

dation in those years (there were 64 Czechoslovak fellows in 1967, 75 in 1968, and 63 in 1969). This trend coincided with the Prague Spring and marked the liberalization period in the country, during which the Czechoslovaks could apply freely and consequently leave the country. It also showed West Germany's interest in and the Foundation's willingness to provide significant support in order to encourage this democratization process. However, following the Soviet invasion and the reversing of Dubček's reforms, the number of Czechoslovak fellows decreased sharply, to 5 in 1971 and then to only one/year or none during the following decade. The 1980s saw a somewhat better representation of the Czechoslovak scholars, but their number amounted only to several fellows (5-8/year, making up 1-2% of the total number of fellows).

About 70% of the Czechoslovak Humboldt fellows during the Cold War were conducting research in the field of natural sciences (mostly in medicine, chemistry/pharmacy and biology), with many also specializing in agriculture and forestry. 24% of the fellows were scholars in the field of humanities, which was above average. Among them most were historians. Only a handful of fellows were engineers (6%)[76]. Most of the Czechoslovak fellows came from Prague and Bratislava[77].

Unlike its political allies, who managed, especially after the mid 1960s, to develop a significant degree of academic collaboration with the FRG, the Soviet Union was in a very different situation. In spite of the "Moscow Treaty" signed in 1970 and the subsequent agreement regarding the cultural collaboration between the two states, concluded in 1972, the presence of Soviet scholars in West Germany was very restricted and limited throughout the whole period of the Cold War. There were in fact so few Humboldt fellows from the USSR, that the reports of the Foundation do not even provide an analysis regarding the relations with that country, contrary to the case of the other socialist countries from Eastern Europe. Between 1953 and 1991, only 93 scholars from the USSR were able to apply for a Humboldt fellowship, and only 57 received it (see Table 1). Moreover, among the 48 scholars that received it in the decade 1974-1983, only 36 were able to actually travel to West Germany[78]. Consequently, among the 38 Soviet fellows accepted between 1963 and 1983, 11 pursued research in the field of physics; 9 - in biology; 4 – in each of the following fields: history, mathematics and chemistry-pharmacy; 2 – in geology; and one in each of the following disciplines: literature, sociology, mechanics, and electro-technics[79].

[76] Humboldt Stiftung, *Alexander-von-Humboldt Stiftung 1953-1983*, 138-139.
[77] Maaß, *Bridges for Research*, 39.
[78] Humboldt Stiftung, *Alexander-von-Humboldt Stiftung 1953-1983*, 87.
[79] Humboldt Stiftung, *Alexander-von-Humboldt Stiftung 1953-1983*, 81-82.

Conclusion

The Alexander von Humboldt Foundation was very successful in its efforts to increase international academic cooperation and to promote science and knowledge, even during complicated times like the period of the Cold War. This article argues that, in spite of granting the fellowships on the basis of the quality of scholars and applications and in spite of the lack of quotas, the awarding of fellowships to people from the states of the Soviet bloc depended on the political relations between West Germany and these countries, on various developments in their domestic policy, as well as on the events occuring on the international arena. Consequently, the Foundation supported West Germany's East-oriented foreign policy (Ostpolitik) by awarding, since the late 1960s, many fellowships to scholars originating from this region. One can also notice a correlation between some communist countries' struggle to become more autonomous from the USSR, and the increased support of the Humboldt Foundation for scholars from these specific countries. Two relevant examples in this respect are the cases of Czechoslovakia around the time of the „Prague Spring" and Romania during the first years following Ceaușescu's rise to power. One can also notice the decrease in the number of Humboldt fellows from East European countries, once their regimes evolved towards a more authoritarian model and preferred to pursue more distant relations with the West.

The presence of scholars from the Eastern bloc in West Germany during the Cold War most probably played a significant role not only in their professional development, but also in the shaping of their political values. My findings indicate that, although not explicitly, the Foundation's officials were sensitive and open to this possibility. A Foundation's report from 2000 confirms this hypothesis:

> *„Worthy of special mention is the fact that many Humboldtians sponsored under a fellowship programme at universities and research institutions in Germany during the Cold War now hold leading positions in government, the legislatures and the judiciary and contribute substantially to the shaping of the democratization process in Central and Eastern Europe. The Foundation's sponsorship programmes are not designed primarily to produce leading politicians. But it has been proven that science, which is essentially international and open, constitutes the medium through which a disproportionately large number of the members of the new elite are recruited"*[80].

This article leaves plenty of open questions, including: the professional and political profile of the Humboldt fellows from Eastern Europe; the conditions

[80] „New programme initiatives for the promotion of research in Central and Eastern Europe", in Alexander-von-Humboldt Stiftung / Foundation, *Jahresbericht / Annual Report 2000*, 16.

under which they were allowed to travel and carry out research in the West; their surveillance and control by the secret police in their countries of origin (or even their collaboration with the communist secret services); the data stored in the files of these secret services concerning these scholars; and, finally, the impact that the Alexander von Humboldt fellowships had on the countries of the Soviet bloc. All these questions will hopefully be addressed and answered by further research on this fascinating topic.

Rezumat:

Fundația Alexander von Humboldt a fost reînființată în Republica Federală Germania în 1953, cu scopul de a reafirma rolul de mare putere culturală a Germaniei și de a-i marca locul pe scena internațională. Fundația a acordat burse prestigioase cercetătorilor din străinătate, criteriile fiind excelența academică și lipsa oricărei cote. Inițial sporadică, relația Fundației cu țările din Europa de Est a început să se dezvolte către sfârșitul anilor 1960, în ciuda sistemelor politice diferite ale celor două blocuri. Acest lucru s-a întâmplat în contextul noii politici externe a RFG, orientată către Europa de Est (Ostpolitik), și s-a datorat, printre altele, și unei mai mari deschideri a țărilor socialiste către Occident. Relația a fost însă marcată de tensiuni, căci interesele politice au dominat obiectivele culturale sau academice. Articolul abordează tematica bursierilor Humboldt din Europa de Est în timpul Războiului Rece, concentrându-se, dintr-o perspectivă comparativă, pe aspectul cantitativ, precum și pe dinamica politică care a determinat prezența acestor bursieri est-europeni în Germania de Vest.

Cuvinte-cheie: Germania de Vest, blocul sovietic, Războiul Rece, relații academice, bursele Humboldt.

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Maria BUCUR, *Eroi şi victime: România şi memoria celor două războaie mondiale*, Traducere de Roxana Cazan, Ioan Bucur şi Dan Bălănescu, Iaşi, Polirom, 2019, 357 pp.

Fără a exagera, putem afirma că publicarea în limba română a volumului Mariei Bucur despre comemorarea celor două conflagraţii mondiale în România, la zece ani după apariţia versiunii originale în engleză, este un adevărat eveniment editorial. Editura Polirom face accesibilă acum publicului românesc o carte izvorâtă, iniţial, dintr-o dublă nelinişte cognitivă pe care autorul nu ezită să o analizeze pe larg şi care rămâne extrem de relevantă şi la sfârşitul celui de-al doilea deceniu al secolului XXI. În primul rând, *asimetria memoriei* dintre Estul şi Vestul Europei, care încă face imposibilă articularea unei memorii europene comune a războaielor mondiale, nu a dispărut deloc, intensificându-se chiar pe anumite paliere, o dată cu investiţiile majore în sfera *politicii memoriei* şi cu accentuarea tendinţei unor state central-europene, mai ales a Poloniei şi Ungariei, de a se disocia în mod conştient şi, uneori radical, de încercările de a construi un consens mnemonic la nivelul Uniunii Europene. Întrebarea dacă este fezabilă – sau măcar dezirabilă – o memorie / reamintire „neantagonic[ă] local[ă] şi continental[ă]" (34) a violenţei produse şi exercitate de către cele două războaie mondiale, la multiple niveluri, o memorie care ar fi acceptată şi împărtăşită de ambele părţi ale continentului, rămâne în continuare deschisă, iar soluţiile propuse până acum par, de cele mai multe ori, utopice. În cazul României, comemorările oficiale recente ale centenarului Primului Război Mondial şi ale Marii Uniri din 1918 au fost, pe de o parte, un cadru propice pentru apariţia unor valoroase contribuţii istoriografice care propun o regândire şi reevaluare critică a experienţei războiului, precum şi o abandonare a naraţiunilor oficiale domi-

nante în favoarea unei perspective mult mai nuanțate și atente la dimensiunea socială și la experiențele cotidiene. Pe de altă parte, aceste ceremonii nu au făcut decât să perpetueze și chiar să consolideze multe clișee și locuri comune ale discursului naționalist identificate de Maria Bucur în cercetarea sa.

În al doilea rând, rememorarea diferită a războaielor mondiale în cazul statelor din Europa Centrală și Balcani, aflându-se adeseori în contrast flagrant cu narațiunea dominantă formulată, de regulă, în Occident, nu se explică doar prin persistența și reproducerea unor ierarhii ale eroismului și victimizării sprijinite sau elaborate la nivel oficial, în cheie naționalistă. Așa cum demonstrează în mod convingător autorul, schema explicativă care privilegiază rolul naționalismului, deși necesară, nu este și suficientă pentru a înțelege dinamica specifică a riturilor și discursurilor comemorative din regiune. Acestea din urmă se dovedesc, de fapt, mult mai puțin monolitice și mult mai eterogene decât ar sugera o investigare superficială a edificiilor monumentale sau a limbajului din sursele oficiale. Un merit incontestabil al cărții este accentuarea „disjuncției" dintre eforturile statului de a crea o viziune coerentă a trecutului și ipostazele locale ale comemorării: „memoria e *întotdeauna* locală" (21). Maria Bucur evită însă să cadă în capcana contrapunerii și antagonismului dintre memoria oficială și cea a comunităților locale sau a indivizilor afectați de trauma războiului. Este vorba, mai curând, de o „deconectare" între cele două dimensiuni mnemonice, deconectare „care nu ar trebui interpretată întotdeauna ca o rezistență" (22). Acest argument mi se pare crucial, deoarece complică și problematizează relația dintre tendințele centralizatoare și omogenizatoare ale statului-națiune și versiunile locale ale plângerii, reamintirii și transmiterii memoriei comunitare. Aceste versiuni vernaculare ale memoriei se inspiră deseori din particularitățile etno-sociale și culturale din teren, mai ales în ceea ce privește reprezentările legate de cultul morților și înveșnicirea memoriei lor într-un mod inteligibil și recognoscibil pentru comunitate. Dincolo de atenția acordată multi-etnicității și caracterului multi-confesional al statului român pe parcursul secolului XX, trăsături adesea minimalizate sau ignorate în mod voit de istoriografia română, autorul sugerează că practicile comemorative locale și centrale se aflau într-un proces complex de negociere și reinterpretare reciprocă. Astfel, „cunoașterea locală" (*local knowledge*) despre care vorbește James C. Scott este recuperată în calitatea sa de partener (fie și inegal) în cadrul dialogului constant cu semnalele și instrucțiunile venite de la centru. Într-un fel, ierarhia centru-periferie este inversată în mod conștient (și creativ) de către autor, iar ritualurile și practicile considerate de obicei invizibile și marginale devin centrale în economia volumului.

Această abordare esențialmente antropologică a memoriei locale este însoțită și potențată, la nivel conceptual, de alte două elemente importante. Mai

întâi, Bucur se distanțează tranșant de conceptul de „memorie colectivă", încă dominant în domeniul studiilor memoriei (*memory studies*). Fără a contesta relevanța contribuțiilor de pionierat ale unor autori precum Maurice Halbwachs sau Pierre Nora, lucrarea respinge valoarea analitică a noțiunii respective, percepând memoria colectivă mai curând drept „o metaforă a procesului amintirii în context social" (27), și nu ca un fenomen real care ar putea fi descris și definit. Autorul preferă, în schimb, termenul de „memorie socială", care pune accent pe conceptul de identificare și reflectă, în special, nivelul intermediar al (co)memorării, reprezentat de „comunitatea în care o persoană își modelează propriile memorii formatoare" (27). Pe lângă această inovație metodologică importantă, o altă noțiune fundamentală pentru Bucur este conceptul de „postmemorie", preluat de la Marianne Hirsch și aplicat pentru prima oară cazului românesc. Postmemoria, adică „amintirea un[ui] eveniment la care nu ai participat", este o componentă indispensabilă a transmiterii și înțelegerii experiențelor traumatice la nivel comunitar, prin „identificarea unui membru al unei generații care nu a trăit un anume eveniment cu acel eveniment" (28-29). Deși acest concept este de obicei asociat cu studierea Holocaustului, referindu-se inițial la sindromul post-traumatic al descendenților supraviețuitorilor, același fenomen de interiorizare trans-generațională a unor experiențe-limită este identificat și descris de Bucur în cazul contra-memoriilor perioadei celui de-al Doilea Război Mondial. Post-memoria devine astfel un element constitutiv al politicii și discursurilor comemorative atât la nivel privat – mai ales în perioada dictaturii comuniste – cât și la nivelul discursurilor și practicilor publice ale memoriei, în perioada post-comunistă, când diverse grupuri de actori mnemonici (*memorians*) contestă sau încearcă să influențeze viziunile oficiale articulate la nivel guvernamental (contaminate și ele, la rândul lor, de diverse moșteniri ale ritualurilor comemorative din trecut și de post-memorii concurente).

Cartea este structurată în șapte capitole care construiesc o panoramă complexă și detaliată a politicilor și discursurilor comemorative pe teritoriul României pe parcursul secolului XX, fiind împărțită în două părți relativ inegale. Axându-se pe experiența și amintirea celor două războaie mondiale, analiza începe cu o descriere sintetică a contextului general al practicilor comemorative existente înainte de 1914, atât la nivel popular / cotidian, cât și în sfera reprezentărilor oficiale. Autorul se referă și la diversele moșteniri imperiale care și-au lăsat amprenta asupra regiunilor integrate, începând din decembrie 1918, în România Mare. Clivajele, care vor persista atât în perioada interbelică, cât și după aceea, se evidențiază pe mai multe planuri – religios, etnic, social, rural / urban, dar și al specificului de gen (despre care vom vorbi mai jos). În următoarele trei capitole, Bucur se axează pe evoluțiile memoriei și comemorării Marelui Răz-

boi în perioada interbelică. Ea descrie, mai întâi, ritualurile de înmormântare și amintire a morților practicate de comunitățile locale, acordând prioritate (cronologică și substanțială) acestor ceremonii comunitare față de politicile oficiale. Autorul încearcă să demonstreze nu atât eșecul total al statului de a-și impune viziunea *de sus*, asupra majorității locuitorilor României de atunci (deși ineficiența statului român este, pe bună dreptate, un laitmotiv al argumentului cărții), cât, mai ales, faptul că statul a rămas *în urma* comunităților în articularea unei politici coerente a memoriei. Astfel, autoritățile au trebuit să își adapteze sau modeleze mesajul în raport cu realitățile locale, în pofida tendinței permanente a statului spre exclusivism etnic și religios, care suprima sau ignora vocile minorităților. Următorul capitol se ocupă de latura autobiografică, memorialistică și literară a memoriei războiului, reprezentând o primă încercare de a sistematiza comemorarea eroismului, traumelor și violenței asociate conflagrației mondiale „prin cuvinte". Dincolo de recuperarea vocilor unor observatori până atunci ignorați în istoriografie (inclusiv ale unor soldați de rând sau ale femeilor), Bucur reușește să propună o privire proaspătă și asupra unor interpretări memorialistice și artistice bine cunoscute ale războiului, datorate, printre alții, mareșalului Averescu, lui Liviu Rebreanu sau lui Camil Petrescu. Mai mult, acest capitol sincronizează analiza ipostazelor memorialistice și literare ale cazului românesc cu perspectivele similare din istoriografia occidentală, detașându-se explicit de interpretările naționaliste sau „excepționaliste" anterioare. Capitolul patru este dedicat analizei politicii oficiale a comemorării în România interbelică, concentrându-se mai ales pe complexele monumentale (în primul rând, Memorialul de la Mărășești și Mormântul Soldatului Necunoscut) și pe ceremoniile și sărbătorile oficiale inițiate de guvern în colaborare cu instituția *Cultului Eroilor*, principala organizație însărcinată să coordoneze eforturile de comemorare la nivel oficial. Această perioadă era caracterizată, în opinia autorului, mai curând de „dialoguri și conflicte" decât de impunerea unei viziuni monologice și monolitice a memoriei războiului. De fapt, până și spațiul oficial al rememorării era permanent contestat și dominat de rivalitățile dintre diverși actanți politici și militari, iar „reprezentarea națiunii ca un întreg superior abstract" (155) era mereu subminată și pusă la îndoială de practicile alternative locale. Eforturile de a crea o „memorie națională" unificată a războiului s-au soldat, astfel, cu un semi-eșec, reflectând de fapt insuccesele proiectului de *nation-building* al României Mari.

A doua parte a cărții, constituită din ultimele trei capitole, complică și mai mult această poveste a negocierii, dialogului și confruntării dintre modurile oficiale de comemorare a războaielor și ipostazele locale ale reamintirii. Statul ocupă o poziție mult mai centrală în aceste procese după instaurarea dictatu-

rii antonesciene, urmată de preluarea puterii de către comuniști. Spațiul pentru articularea unor viziuni locale, comunitare sau individuale alternative este mai restrâns decât în perioada anterioară, deși aceste variante alternative nu dispar cu totul, fiind constrânse să se retragă în contexte private și adesea clandestine. Capitolul cinci este dedicat rolului propagandei și ideologiei de stat în evoluția politicii comemorative între 1940 și 1989, abordând (explicit sau nu) problema continuităților și rupturilor în construirea reprezentărilor memoriei oficiale. Deși firul narativ urmează, în mod cumva previzibil, traiectoria evoluției politice a României din acea jumătate de secol, „de la cruciada împotriva bolșevismului la cultul personalității lui Ceaușescu" (156), imaginea finală este departe de a fi univocă. Bucur arată, de exemplu, cum narațiunile victimizării colective devin fundamentale pentru regimurile autoritare care se succed în România după 1938, fiind indisolubil legate de definirea eroilor și a patriotismului oficial. De asemenea, rolul elementelor naționaliste în aceste reprezentări generate de stat (și nu numai) pare să fi fost chiar mai evident decât se crede în mod curent, revenind în prim plan deja către mijlocul anilor 1950, după scurta perioadă de subordonare a comemorărilor oficiale față de modelul stalinist sovietic. Paroxismul național-comunist al glorificării eroismului națiunii, atins în ultimele decenii ale regimului ceaușist (inclusiv prin reabilitarea parțială a memoriei Primului Război Mondial și a mareșalului Antonescu), este prezentat drept un rezultat logic al acestor tendințe, accentuate de caracterul teleologic al istoriei naționale care culmina în „Epoca de Aur". Victimizarea (sau, în termenii autorului, „victimologia") selectivă era un element definitoriu al acestor strategii memoriale. Aceeași impresie se degajă și din următorul capitol, care analizează și deconstruiește „mitologiile contra-memoriei anticomuniste" (203). Fiind formulate în opoziție explicită față de discursul oficial, aceste „contra-memorii" erau, în fond, ireconciliabile, iar rezistența față de regim din care se inspirau și pe care o proiectau în mediile familiale și comunitare era motivată de impulsuri și experiențe care nu se puteau subsuma vreunui numitor comun. În consecință, „contra-memoriile" și adevărurile pe care le propagau nu puteau fi decât fragmentare, fracturate, antagonice și conflictuale, fie că este vorba de comunitățile „minoritare" devenite victime ale genocidului sau stigmatizării colective, de civilii persecutați sau de ostașii români care luptaseră pe frontul sovietic și care se simțeau excluși din ceremoniile oficiale de comemorare. În fine, capitolul șapte se axează pe conceptele de „postmemorie" și „postcomunism", încercând să analizeze evoluția sinuoasă a regândirii memoriei războaielor după Revoluția din 1989. Imaginea finală a acestor procese, aflată în plină transformare, se prezintă drept un *puzzle* complex, conținând elemente de revizionism, reabilitare a „contra-memoriilor" clandestine, reinstaurare a unor ritualuri și ce-

remonii avându-și originea în perioada interbelică, reminiscențe și ecouri ale național-comunismului și asumare a vinovăției și responsabilității colective la nivel oficial și în discursul unor intelectuali publici. Chiar dacă în ultimul deceniu, ulterior publicării versiunii engleze a cărții, s-au făcut progrese solide în acest ultim domeniu, victimizarea selectivă și, mai important, disjuncția dintre amintirile personale / locale și discursul oficial rămân la fel de evidente precum fuseseră pe parcursul întregului secol XX.

Pe lângă clarificarea dinamicii schimbătoare a definiției *eroilor* și *victimelor* în context românesc, cartea Mariei Bucur deschide alte câteva perspective incitante de cercetare, la nivel regional și european. În primul rând, este vorba despre relevanța cazului românesc (și a tabloului est-european, în general) pentru problematica memoriei războaielor din secolul XX pe întregul continent. Mai ales în cazul primei conflagrații mondiale, frontul de est a fost multă vreme neglijat și marginalizat, reflectând fenomenul *asimetriei mnemonice* pe care l-am menționat la început. Deși balanța istoriografică s-a reechilibrat parțial în ultimii ani, nu se poate vorbi încă despre dispariția acestei discrepanțe cognitive. Abordarea Mariei Bucur se încadrează perfect în tendința recentă de a reinterpreta semnificația Europei Centrale și de Est în cadrul analizelor privind rolul războaielor mondiale drept catalizatori ai violenței în masă, modernității și intervenționismului statal pe continent. Nu putem decât subscrie la argumentul autorului că, în cazul istoriei culturale, „experiența unei țări presupus marginale precum România ... poate reprezenta un exemplu important pentru istoria Europei moderne" (21).

În al doilea rând, Bucur este extrem de atentă și sensibilă la aspectele legate de gen și de rolul femeilor în producerea, articularea și rememorarea practicilor culturale și sociale ale memoriei comunitare, personale și oficiale. Atât la nivelul reprezentării, cât și al trăirii efective a unor experiențe-limită caracteristice războiului (întâi de toate, a violenței sexuale), recuperarea „vocilor feminine" apare drept o prioritate și necesitate incontestabilă. Mai mult, autorul atrage atenția asupra disonanței flagrante dintre rolul *practic* al femeilor în activitățile și reprezentările socio-culturale specifice cultului morților și ritualurilor funerare, pe de o parte, și *invizibilitatea* acestora în cadrul ceremoniilor oficiale, axate pe o interpretare masculinizată a eroismului și victimizării, pe de alta. Așa cum s-a întâmplat și în cazul unor minorități etnice și religioase, rolul femeilor a fost reprezentat fie ca unul auxiliar și marginal (infirmiere pe front și în spitale), fie ca unul eroic excepțional (regina Maria, Ecaterina Teodoroiu), fie ca unul de victimă colaterală (această victimizare fiind însă mai puțin relevantă decât suferințele și victimizarea soldaților de pe front). Toate aceste reprezentări accentuau ierarhiile și omisiunile inerente procesului de memorializare și comemorare.

În al treilea rând, autorul subliniază și o altă omisiune fundamentală, provenită dintr-o *rememorare și uitare selectivă* a experienței războiului românesc: manipularea, minimalizarea sau chiar negarea memoriei Holocaustului ca parte integrantă a războiului, atât la nivel oficial, cât și în cazul „contra-memoriilor" alternative. Bucur afirmă, pe bună dreptate, că Holocaustul pe teritoriul controlat de trupele române (în Basarabia și Transnistria) nu se potrivea deloc cu narațiunea victimizatoare construită după război de statul comunist sau cu viziunile eroizante ale rezistenței și patriotismului articulate de anumite grupuri anti-comuniste. Caracterul deloc inocent al acestei suprimări și omisiuni mnemonice este demonstrat convingător de Bucur prin contrastul cu reprezentarea masacrelor și persecuțiilor evreilor din Transilvania de Nord guvernată de maghiari, evenimente care s-au bucurat de recunoaștere oficială sub regimul lui Ceaușescu. Ignorarea memoriei Holocaustului în perioada post-comunistă este legată și de „competiția victimologică" specifică dintre atrocitățile comise de civilii și militarii români împotriva evreilor și cele de care se făceau vinovați comuniștii după război. Bucur are dreptate atunci când accentuează caracterul variat și inegal al memoriei *semnificative* despre război în cazul diferitelor comunități sau grupuri afectate de conflagrație. Aceste diferențe fundamentale se reflectă până și în periodizările diferite ale războiului, oscilând între cele „înguste" (iunie 1941 – octombrie 1944) și cele extrem de largi (1940 – 1953) (205-209). Sesizarea acestei multiplicități a memoriilor personale și oficiale este o contribuție fundamentală a autorului. Este indubitabil că aceste omisiuni și „tăceri" ale discursului comemorativ rămân un impediment major pentru construirea unei politici a memoriei mai echilibrate și mai incluzive în România post-comunistă.

Cercetarea Mariei Bucur este extrem de solidă și bine documentată, folosind o mare varietate de surse. Pe lângă materialele de arhivă și presa periodică, autorul recurge la date etnografice, relatări memorialistice sau interviuri. De asemenea, sunt investigate ceremoniile oficiale de comemorare (inclusiv prin observație directă pe teren), complexele monumentale și, pentru prima dată în mod sistematic, sursele de natură literară sau vizuală (romane, filme etc.). Această abordare îi permite autorului să releve anumite fațete mai puțin vizibile sau necunoscute ale relației complexe dintre identitate (sau, mai curând, identificare) și memorie. Ca urmare, se creionează o imagine cuprinzătoare a elaborării „canonului" memoriei naționale și a interacțiunii acestuia cu versiunile locale, vernaculare sau alternative ale amintirii războaielor secolului XX. Analiza Mariei Bucur evidențiază faptul că aceste războaie reprezintă, simultan, evenimente fondatoare pentru diversele versiuni ale proiectului românesc de construcție națională și, totodată, câmpul unor contestări și confruntări acerbe cauzate de

tensiuni etnice, religioase, sociale și intercomunitare. Evident, volumul are și unele lacune. Există o oarecare discrepanță între cercetarea extrem de detaliată și inovatoare din prima parte a cărții, dedicată memoriei Primului Război Mondial, și analiza mai concisă, chiar lapidară uneori, a perioadei comuniste (în special în capitolul cinci), care se bazează pe un număr mai restrâns de surse mai puțin variate și nu cuprinde toate componentele relevante ale discursului memorial oficial. Un alt aspect insuficient dezvoltat în lucrare este dimensiunea comparativă explicită a studiului. Chiar dacă autorul își exprimă în repetate rânduri intenția de a plasa cazul românesc într-un context regional, est-european, mai larg, și chiar face acest lucru în mod destul de convingător la nivel istoriografic, partea substanțială a cărții nu se referă decât sporadic și foarte scurt la exemplul altor state din regiune (în speță, Bulgaria, Serbia [63], Ungaria sau Cehoslovacia [188]). O analiză mai extinsă a paralelelor și diferențelor dintre evoluțiile românești și cele din statele limitrofe ar fi constituit, cred, un avantaj esențial pentru argumentarea Mariei Bucur. Această observație se referă, mai ales, la modul în care politicile memoriale oficiale „rezonau" la nivelul maselor și la legătura dintre scenariile comemorative și eforturile elitelor politice de a-și consolida legitimitatea. În plus, relevanța cazului românesc pentru relația fluctuantă a eroismului și victimizării pe întregul continent european rămâne mai curând declarată decât dezvoltată pe larg, lăsându-i cititorului sarcina de a descifra „printre rânduri" manifestările concrete ale (de)sincronizării traiectoriei discursurilor și practicilor memoriale românești față de cele occidentale.

În pofida acestor mici observații, cartea Mariei Bucur este o contribuție fundamentală și esențială în domeniul studiilor memoriei și al istoriei culturale a României în secolul XX. Memoria rămâne un teren privilegiat de formulare, contestare, modificare și adaptare a strategiilor și discursurilor politice și identitare în lumea modernă, fie că este vorba de indivizi, comunități sau state. Acest volum reușește să prezinte, în mod admirabil, povestea interacțiunii acestor trei dimensiuni ale comemorării eroilor și victimelor într-o Românie dominată de succesele, sincopele și incertitudinile unui proiect sinuos, inegal, uneori tragic și mereu contestat de construire a statului și națiunii de-a lungul ultimului secol.

Andrei CUȘCO

Dorina ROȘCA, ***Le grand tournant de la société moldave. « Intellectuels » et capital social dans la transformation post-socialiste,*** **Paris: Presses de l'Inalco, 2019, p 359.**

Cartea Dorinei Roșca propune un studiu de sociologie (istorică și economică) a *intelectualilor* în Republica Moldova în epoca socialistă târzie și în perioada de „transformare sistemică" de după 1990. Lucrarea se sprijină pe date calitative (interviuri aprofundate cu 21 de subiecți) și date cantitative (o anchetă prin chestionar cu 128 de subiecți), realizate de autoare în 2007-2008. Potrivit ipotezei de bază, pe care autoarea o urmărește pe parcursul lucrării, *capitalul social* (de tip politic și de tip relațional) a jucat un rol important în afirmarea, supraviețuirea socio-economică și reconvertirea socio-profesională a intelectualilor moldoveni, înainte și după 1991.

Definiția capitalului social dată de Pierre Bourdieu (și de alții: Mark Granovetter, Nan Lin ș.a.) pune accentul mai ales pe dimensiunea relațională a acestuia. Altfel zis, numărul și calitatea relațiilor sociale pe care le are o persoană constituie capitalul său social. În elaborarea lui Bourdieu, capitalul social se află în relație de interdependență cu alte tipuri de capital – economic, cultural, simbolic. Pe lângă acestea, mai ales în contextul socialist și post-socialist, relațiile instituționale ale unui individ au avut o importanță aparte. Acestea reflectă, în context sovietic, un capital social de tip politic. Totodată, volumul și calitatea capitalului social reflectă inegalitățile structurale între grupuri și persoane. Unul din argumentele forte ale lucrării este că capitalul social acumulat, utilizat și tranzacționat de intelectualii moldoveni în perioada sovietică și după 1990 este elementul social ce asigură continuitate între perioada sovietică și perioada „tranziției" post-socialiste.

Lucrarea Dorinei Roșca se focalizează pe un anumit grup social, cel al intelectualilor. Funcționalitatea specifică a acestui grup în sistemul sovietic este

definită și formată prin două elemente-cheie: diploma de studii și o activitate profesională non-manuală. În accepțiunea sovietică a termenului, intelectualii (sau *inteligheția*) sunt angajați non-manuali din două tipuri de organizații: organizațiile comerciale (administratori, contabili) și organizațiile non-comerciale (spitalele, școlile, instituțiile culturale). La acestea poate fi adăugată o dimensiune transversală: funcțiile administrative. Ghilimelele puse de autoare *intelectualilor* în această lucrare sunt deci motivate de specificul sovietic al termenului. Pentru a scoate în evidență semnificația termenului de intelectual în context sovietic, autoarea îl distinge prin contrast cu definiția intelectualului ce-și trage originea în istoria acestui concept în Franța sfârșitului de secol 19, în contextul „afacerii Dreyfus" în care intelectualul se afirmă drept o autoritate simbolică în opoziție cu câmpul puterii. În contrast cu această definiție, intelectualul sovietic nu este deloc un agent de autonomizare, ci un element constituent al câmpului puterii și al „aparatului ideologic de stat" (L. Althusser). Deși explicabile, ghilimelele puse termenului de intelectual (sovietic) introduc o notă polemică și o poziție normativă, potrivit căreia intelectualul (autentic) ar fi prin definiție autonom față de câmpul puterii. Este oare aceasta singura definiție valabilă în modernitate sau mai exact în modernitatea, sau mai exact modernitățile, secolelor 19 și 20? O incursiune „arheologică" în ideea și misiunea intelectualilor în gândirea comunistă – la gânditorii austromarxiști, dar și R. Luxemburg, A. Gramsci, V. Lenin și alții – ar fi poate mai lămuritoare, în contextul unei istorii a intelectualilor în Europa de est și în special în Rusia.

Cartea Dorinei Roșca este și un studiu de sociologie economică, în spiritul și pe baza conceptelor lui Karl Polanyi și Mark Granovetter (1973, 1985), potrivit cărora procesele economice sunt inseparabile de evoluțiile sociale. Lucrarea argumentează importanța capitalului social într-o „economie de penurie" (Janos Kornai) și într-un „regim de reciprocitate", bazat pe solidarități orizontale (K. Polanyi). Lucrarea Dorinei Roșca studiază relațiile de suport social informal în socialism și în post-socialism, în continuarea studiilor Alenei Ledeneva și a altora. Mai mult, rețeaua de suport social a constituit pentru intelectualii moldoveni un element central nu doar în tacticile de supraviețuire socio-economică, dar și în strategiile de reconversiune socio-profesională a intelectualilor, în contextul transformării sistemice – sociale, economice, politice – în perioada sovietică târzie și în post-socialism.

Una din contribuțiile remarcabile ale lucrării rezidă în explorarea dimensiunii istorice care contextualizează și dă sens obiectului cercetat. Astfel, sunt analizate procesele sociale la scară largă influențate de transformările politice în perioada comunistă „tradițională" (1940-1985) și în socialismul „reformator" (1985-1991), precum exodul intelectualilor în 1940 și 1944, sistemul

de educație de masă și evoluția coeficientului de alfabetizare și școlarizare și tendințele de mobilitate socială structurală. Sunt examinate de asemenea anumite particularități culturale, cum ar fi evoluția proporției grupurilor etno-lingvistice printre elitele administrative. Lucrarea observă, de exemplu, numărul ridicat al administratorilor de toate rangurile de origine „alogenă" față de „autohtoni". Aici, remarcăm în trecere că cititorul poate avea uneori impresia unei forme de etnicizare teoretică. Lucrarea pare să confere factorului etnic o relevanță disproporționată, ce lasă în umbră factorii sociali propriu-ziși. Diferențele distribuției pe criteriu etnic ascund adeseori categorii sociale, într-un context pe care autoarea îl explică foarte bine, acela de penurie a specialiștilor la toate nivelele, în contextul ruralității copleșitoare, al nivelului scăzut de alfabetizare și școlarizare și al exodului intelectualilor, în Moldova sovietică, spre deosebire de unele republici sovietice, dar și în asemănare cu altele. De altfel, autoarea notează că diploma de studii și statutul atenuează în percepția subiecților relevanța apartenenței etnice. De asemenea, categoriile de „indigen" și „alogen", utilizate de autoare, nu sunt lipsite de ambiguitate. Basarabia nu a fost omogenă din punct de vedere etnic nici înainte de 1940, nici după acest an. Datele produse de statul sovietic – un regim politic care etnicizează grupurile sociale – ar trebui, deci, considerate cu precauție și discernământ.

În contextul unui regim care tindea la o societate fără clase, cartea abordează contradicțiile și aporiile discursului ideologic sovietic, studiind geneza și modul de trai al *intelectualilor*, „noul" grup social, strâmtorat de cele două clase considerate dominante ale muncitorilor și țăranilor. Creșterea numărului și proporției intelectualilor de la 9,8% în 1959 la 22,8% în 1985 arată importanța acordată acestui grup în sistemul sovietic. Devalorizarea intelectualilor în „capitalismul moldovenesc" post-1990 este o dovadă a regresului social și uman marcat de perioada post-socialistă, pe fundalul crizelor economice endemice, al scăderii drastice a cheltuielilor publice în domeniul social, al falimentării întreprinderilor, al dispariției instituțiilor culturale și de sănătate și, în final, al separării Transnistriei (această „amputare economică", după cum o califică autoarea).

Fragmentele din interviurile aprofundate cu cele 21 de persoane anchetate ilustrează cu prisosință suferința și adesea sentimentul de umilință care au însoțit procesul masiv de mobilitate socială descendentă în anii ce au urmat căderii URSS. Transformarea sistemică demarată la începutul anilor 1990 (dar pregătită deja în anii perestroikăi) au determinat, în cazul intelectualilor moldoveni, strategii mai mult sau mai puțin reușite de acomodare prin reprofesionalizare și/sau migrație. Dar cartea scoate în valoare și cazuri reușite de acomodare socio-economică grație capitalului social acumulat în perioada precedentă

și capacității individuale de acomodare la noua *doxa* ideologică (naționalismul etnic și doctrina economică liberală).

Transformarea post-socialistă este recadrată și re-examinată în cartea Dorinei Roșca în mod critic, în răspăr cu numeroasele studii de „tranzitologie" cu caracter normativ și teleologic și în consens cu modelele de analiză critică a „transformării sistemice" post-socialiste. Cartea retrasează direcțiile „tranziției", discutate la începutul anilor 1990 de clasa politică reînnoită a Republicii Moldova, divizată între „conservatori" și „reformatori" și dominată simbolic în anii de cotitură 1990-91 de cei din urmă – reprezentanți ai Frontului popular din Moldova și aripa reformatoare a Partidului Comunist. Aplicarea deficientă a celor trei procese impuse prin „consensul de la Washington" (liberalizare, privatizare, stabilizare) de către decidenții moldoveni a condus la o sărăcire drastică a populației și la o bulversare socio-profesională pentru un segment important al populației, inclusiv al „intelectualilor", în funcție de strategiile de adaptare aplicate, prin utilizarea capitalului social, fie acesta de tip politic sau relațional. Apariția sectorului non-guvernamental în anii 2000, prin crearea și finanțarea de către organismele finanțatoare internaționale a unui număr tot mai mare de organizații non-profit în domeniul educației, al culturii și al drepturilor omului au însemnat un colac de salvare economică, dar și o filieră de reconversiune socio-profesională și ideologică pentru o pătură însemnată de intelectuali, rătăciți în deriva tranziției.

Valoarea neprețuită și uzajul judicios al interviurilor, dar și al datelor anchetei cantitative, conferă autenticitate și pertinență lucrării. Analiza surselor calitative și cantitative, contextualizate istoric și analizate în lumina unui corpus teoretic bogat, ne ajută să surprindem dinamica istorică și substanța biografică a proceselor de transformare la scară largă care au avut loc în Republica Moldova, alături de alte țări și regiuni post-socialiste. În sfârșit, lucrarea este scrisă într-un limbaj accesibil și este, prin urmare, recomandată tuturor celor interesați de istoria socială a Republicii Moldova în lunga sa transformare post-socialistă.

Petru NEGURĂ

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