

## Advertising and the Birth of Post-Communist Romania (1989–1991)

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**T**HE COMMUNIST regime in Romania was forcibly imposed by the Soviet armies, without forgetting that those who took advantage of it contributed to its installation and maintenance, driven by the myth of equality, the opportunity of advancement and the mirage of power. The years 1947–1989 were an era of mystification, dissimulation and propaganda. The press, a phenomenon of modernity, was proof in this regard. The Communist Party violently assumed full control over the mass media, and press articles were mechanically generated following a rigid structure devised by Central Committee activists.<sup>1</sup> Advertising, present in Romanian media history since its appearance in the first half of the nineteenth century, disappeared or became a derisory phenomenon with the installation of the communist regime, when the market economy—basically, the driving force behind advertising—disappeared. If we open a newspaper from the 1980s, *Scînteia* (The spark) for example, we will find

that what had traditionally accompanied the history of the press, advertising, is almost completely absent. Consistently, the only advertisement product was “party politics.” The 1980s meant the beginning of the end for the Ceaușescu regime. Determined to clear the foreign debt, Nicolae Ceaușescu sold everything that could be sold on the international market, from chemical and light industry products to food products and especially agricultural produce. Citizens ran out of food, the rush for foodstuffs became the main problem for Romanians. Domestic appliances, television sets, video players, refrigerators, clothes irons, electric radiators, etc. and especially food were traded underground, concealed from the state. The automotive industry was not to be promoted, Romanians being invited to wait 4–5 years to be able to buy a Dacia, the Romanian version of the French Renault, or an Olcit, a Citroën knock-off. Consequently, the only advertisement that could be found in those years was the tourist resort holiday offer. Beyond the advertising being done, this was among the few things through which the regime could still show it cared about the working people, who were invited to treat themselves, to pleasantly spend their holidays. In this sense, we observe increased attention to promote resorts like Sângerz-Băi, Eforie Nord, Mangalia, Tușnad, Sovata, Călimănești-Căciulata, Predeal or Neptun.

Against this background of general dissatisfaction, hunger and cold in the homes, the regime’s disintegration occurred in 1989, eliminating the power of the Communist Party.<sup>2</sup> Among the hypotheses circulated regarding the fall of the communist regime in Romania, in addition to the Romanians’ general dissatisfaction, the historian Jean-François Soulet suggests the thesis of a plot set up by high-ranking party members. The plot was actively supported by the KGB and passively by the CIA.<sup>3</sup> It must be said that the December events were the last act of the liquidation of communism in the European countries that had been part of the Soviet bloc.<sup>4</sup>

The new leader, Ion Iliescu—who was widely reputed to have been Gorbachev’s university colleague, a model apparatchik, former minister of youth fallen into disgrace—was not intent on offering Romanians too many chances to open their society towards a market economy. However, the Romanians experienced the events of December 1989 euphorically. Changes were slow: peasants were given back some of the land lost through collectivization, but only within the limit of 10 hectares. For industry, the new law allowed the establishment of private enterprises with 20 workers. Foreign capital was not enthusiastically received, the slogan “We are not selling our country” being popular in the early 1990s. However, Romania began to gradually make its way towards a market economy. In terms of education, dozens of universities sprang up overnight, established as commercial enterprises. Over time, subject to academic accreditation, some have disappeared. The opening towards the market economy and

competition produced important changes in the mass media and the advertising phenomenon reappeared.

In just a few days after the fall of the Ceaușescu regime, the Romanian press underwent a radical, almost unimaginable change. The contributors to the post-December press were those who, until 22 December, had competed in praising the regime. Timidly, drawing on the Western experience, newspapers and magazines in Romania opened up to the advertising phenomenon.

As the country was forced to abandon protectionist barriers, foreign companies entered the Romanian market. After decades of abstinence, Romanians became the consumers of foreign products, from food products (soft drinks) to Western industrial goods (cars, watches, washing machines). As these were still largely unaffordable, Romanians ended up settling for knock-offs and second-hand products, from television sets to cassette or record players. As a result, except for a few new companies, newspaper pages abounded in offers proposed by ad hoc companies importing second-hand Western products. Thus, in the pages of the newspaper *Adevărul* (The truth), no. 2 of 26 December 1989, the readers are informed that starting from that day, on the shelves of grocery stores they can find imported foods that they have not consumed for years, such as oranges, coffee, canned meat, fruits, soft drinks, juices, and meat. Moreover, the readers are informed that “the Capital’s shops provide the entire daily consumption needs of the population for bread, milk, meat products, potatoes, onions, apples.”

**A**DVERTISING EXPERIENCED a spectacular evolution in the pages of Romanian newspapers in 1990.<sup>5</sup> If in the first part of the year the advertising section was dominated by ads for imported or domestic products (automatic washing machines, vacuum cleaners), in the second half of the year we notice the appearance of ads for Western products such as Toyota cars, IBM computers or Kodak cameras.

After the fall of the Berlin Wall, as requested by the business environment, advertising agencies rushed to Central and Eastern Europe. General Electric, Colgate, Procter & Gamble, Unilever and R. J. Reynolds Tobacco Company were clients wishing for a new territory.<sup>6</sup> The demise of socialism brought millions of potential consumers into the world—almost 40 million in Poland, about 20 million in Romania, some of whom had been dreaming of Western products for years. Philip Morris and Gillette had been probing the region for more than a decade. McDonald’s opened its first branch in Hungary in 1989 and so did Ikea. Advertising promised individuals the chance of a new life: *Cigarettes, perfumed soap, expensive toothpaste, cheap furniture and glamorous sex: welcome to the free world!*

Indisputably, many phenomena reflect the changes that took place in Romanian society after 1989. Among them was advertising, which gradually shaped a new public consciousness among Romanians, with profound long-term changes at the level of the collective mentality.<sup>7</sup>

In the central press, there is an increase in the space dedicated to advertisements, from half a page, as was the case with the first issues of the newspaper *Adevărul*, up to two or three pages dedicated to advertising texts in the second half of the year, which proves an increased interest in the advertising phenomenon, implicitly in products accessible to Romanians. At the level of the consumers' psychographic profile, Romanians experience a rapid metamorphosis, expressed through a non-selective assumption of the Western model of civilization.

Identifying capitalism with well-being, prosperity and financial comfort, Romanians see in the mirage of the Romanian Lottery the possibility of enrichment. As a result, among the most common advertisements in the first year are those promoting lottery draws. National lottery ads stand out for their presence in the newspaper's pages throughout the year, being consistently promoted. Moreover, we witness a diversity in terms of the advertising message, but also in terms of graphic representation. Thus, lottery advertisements resort to elements such as the shamrock—the symbol of luck, or the Dacia car—a public symbol of social standing for Romanians, accompanied by messages with a strong impact for a society in transition: “money prizes and trips abroad are awarded,” “do you want lots of money?,” “do you want to watch TV programs in color?,” “do you want to travel in a new Dacia 1300 automobile?” The answer: “Only those who don't play don't win!”<sup>8</sup>

For many individuals, the Romanian Lottery represents the chance for overnight enrichment or to obtain goods to which they have not had access until recently. Against this background, pyramid schemes develop in Romanian society, accepted indiscriminately by Romanians, associated with the miracle of enrichment, foreshadowing the Caritas phenomenon (a Ponzi scheme) from the mid-1990s (1992–1994).

The Romanian media allocates increased space to advertising, primarily for domestic products, trying to create consumers on the domestic market, especially as, following the fall of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (Comcon) and of many external outlet markets for Romanian products, the economy is gradually reconverting to domestic consumption. Advertising becomes more frequent, occupying more space on newspapers pages, such as in *Adevărul*, the old *Scînteia*, partly in *România liberă* (Free Romania), newspapers that highlight the contrasts between the two Romanias.

Advertising promoters also quickly discover the impact of the visual image, through television. In the 1990s the Romanian television screen is dominated

by ads for Pepsi, Adidas Torsion, Aquafresh or Bonibon, products identified with the very idea of capitalism and prosperity, at the time emblematic products of a market economy open to competition.

The Romanian Lottery continues to be consistent in its media promotion. If in the first year after the revolution lottery advertisements focused primarily on prizes consisting of Dacia automobiles, 1991 brings with it new incentives for the Romanians, consisting of trips to Turkey, Greece and Great Britain. The three destinations are advertised throughout the year. Regarding the advertisement texts, expressions and words are still used to augment the Romanians' interest in the lottery and at the same time the hope of getting rich overnight (*Fortune smiles on you*,<sup>9</sup> *Big chances of winning*,<sup>10</sup> *Limited special issue*,<sup>11</sup> *Multiple draw*,<sup>12</sup> *Exceptional draw*<sup>13</sup>). We also note a new trend towards promoting women's images in lottery advertisements. In most advertisements, with two exceptions, we find the physiognomy of a woman, difficult to identify in terms of age, but charming, content, fulfilled. This trend was first noted in America, in the early 1900s, as observed by the authors of the book *A History of Advertising*: "Women were still mainly portrayed as objects of desire."<sup>14</sup> Indeed, women's images were associated with the concept of desire, with sexuality, forbidden elements during the communist regime, which, correlated with great earnings and benefiting from frequent exposure in the print media, awakened the Romanians' interest in this phenomenon. 1991 highlights the advertisers' tendency to use increased sexuality/sex-appeal in the process of consumer persuasion (manipulation). This strategy can be observed in the Romanian Lottery ads as well as in those promoting the Star<sup>15</sup> stores, which feature a flirting sequence, or even in foreign brands ads, as in the case of the Casio company.<sup>16</sup>

1991 also sees increased interest in advertising on the part of the automotive industry. Appearing in the second half of the 1990s, car advertisements aimed to reach and behaviorally stimulate an audience of light users, compensating for the car shortage on the Romanian market during the communist era. In this sense, we encounter the promotion of the second-hand concept, involving foreign automobiles. Eurial Romania is one of the companies offering imported cars (Peugeot, Hyundai or Lada), in 1991 choosing to promote its offer in the *Adevărul* newspaper.<sup>17</sup>

In terms of competition, there is a counteroffensive from the German car brands Mercedes and Opel. They enter the Romanian market with an approach similar to but at the same time different from the one proposed by Dacia, offering the automobiles' reliability as a guarantee in the purchase decision of the Romanian consumer. From a psychographic point of view, the two German brands target a different audience and migrate towards the *societally conscious* or *achiever* category. The target audience considered by the two German brands consists of

prosperous, mature, middle-aged individuals with leadership qualities (both at work and among friends). Moreover, in this category we also find those newly enriched after the revolution, as well as the Dacia owners with an above-average social status, already familiar with the flaws of the Romanian automobiles and who, benefiting from a corresponding budget, have higher expectations of their future cars. Both Opel and Mercedes seek to take advantage of this competitive advantage and, furthermore, even accentuate it, relying on the quality principle in the promotion process. If for Mercedes the safety granted by the brand's automobiles is conveyed by the Mercedes-Benz campaign slogan, *Your Lucky Star on all roads*,<sup>18</sup> in the case of the other manufacturer, Opel, this feeling is induced by the generous warranty offered by the manufacturer: *Warranty for the engine and mechanical parts—12 months without mileage limit, for the body—6 years, for the battery—3 years*.<sup>19</sup> In addition, Opel presents itself as both reliable and economical, also guaranteeing a 4.4 liter consumption for Diesel engines.

We are also beginning to see in newspapers subjects considered taboo not long ago. For example, in the newspaper *Adevărul*, issue of 27–28 July 1991, an entire page is dedicated to the promotion of Bucharest night clubs.<sup>20</sup>

Among the most intuitive companies that knew how to use sexuality in a product's effective promotion is Insieme, a deodorant brand aimed at the female audience. However, the great merit goes to a pioneer of advertising in Romania, the ROM-KU advertising agency. The Insieme campaign seems to highly resemble the positioning of another deodorant brand aimed at men, Axe. For both products, the public is enticed with the prospect of gaining sex appeal and popularity with the opposite sex by using the deodorant. The campaign's slogan *He will love you more... with Sempre Insieme*<sup>21</sup> introduces another differentiation indicator in human interaction. The target audience had just emerged from a restrictive regime, during which the process of forming a relationship was supported by physical appearance, native features, education, social standing, or one's position in the Party. Insieme offers a new utility to the deodorant, beyond aspects related to hygiene, namely the acquisition of special charm, of sex-appeal.

Moreover, Insieme apparently does not only focus on young women and teenagers who want to become much more attractive. The campaigns also aim to reach those who feel isolated and lonely. This category is addressed differently: *Are friends avoiding you? Buy... Sempre Insieme*.<sup>22</sup> The advertisement's title is one of personal interest, identifying a frequent problem: *Your friends are avoiding you*. Once it is identified, the remedy is also presented in the form of a call to action: *Buy... Sempre Insieme*.

Another strong actor, this time from the clothing industry, the American jeans manufacturer Levi Strauss, makes its appearance on the Romanian market, showing up in the pages of the *Adevărul* newspaper in 1991. Compared

to its direct competitor, The Golden Rifle, Levi's prefers a different approach. The first elements that can be identified in the company's strategy appeal to the notoriety and authenticity of the product at the global level. The slogan *Everyone knows it, everyone recognizes it*<sup>23</sup> instills in the Romanian consumer the impression of a product that enjoys recognition on foreign markets and among jeans lovers. Furthermore, the slogan *The true blue jeans are Levi's*<sup>24</sup> expresses the fact that Levi Strauss is the only authentic jeans brand in the category. Compared to the other manufacturer, Levi's aims to get closer to the Romanian public with messages in Romanian. As can be seen in the case of other products entering the post-1989 market in Romania, Levi Strauss uses the label of an American product, from San Francisco, California, to outclass its direct competitor. At the same time, there is a difference in target audience between the two companies' campaigns. If from The Golden Rifle advertisements we learn that the products are only available in Bucharest, at 170 Știrbei Vodă St., in the case of Levi's the company's objectives also target the public across the country. The focus is especially on the Transylvanian cities of Brașov and Târgu Mureș.<sup>25</sup> In its attempts, the Levi Strauss company approaches the Transylvanian public through distinct campaigns: *Levi's loves Transylvania*<sup>26</sup> (the campaign that informs the Târgu Mureș public about the availability of Levi's products in the Luxor Galleries) or *Levi's climbs the mountain* (the campaign that announces the organization of an exhibition with the brand's products, in the largest department store in Brașov).<sup>27</sup> Both campaigns addressed to the Transylvanian public also contain a promotional component, aimed at augmenting the target audience's interest, using a FOMO (fear of missing out) type strategy: *The first 50 buyers of 501 blue jeans will receive a Levi's t-shirt as a gift from the company*. This form of address, identifying the audience specific to a region, is frequently encountered in Romanian advertising between 1990 and 1996. Undoubtedly, companies, through advertising agencies, took into account certain cultural or simply mentality differences.

New alternatives were offered to tobacco users, beginning with 1991. Blend 22, BT or Assos are the most aggressive players on the market. In this sense, a market positioning that attracts our attention, referring to the advertising text in printed format, belongs to the Assos product, promoted under the slogan *Assos International—It is the best quality cigarette!*<sup>28</sup> Even more, for an even more incisive approach, Assos proclaims itself to be “the favorite cigarette in Romania,”<sup>29</sup> a product offered to the public for “purchase at the price practiced on the Romanian market!”<sup>30</sup> used as a price point differentiator.

Through advertisements, companies gradually target comfort. Panasonic chooses to present itself “as the largest and most renowned electronics company.” Its advertisements stand out both iconographically and textually. The Sony

company introduces another product or, better said, a new behavior already adopted in civilized societies and, implicitly, also proposed to the domestic market. Featuring a pleasant-looking young lady with a pair of headphones in her ears, the ad proves to be a reflection of capitalism, where the Walkman and music players are integrated into leisure activities (jogging, at the beach, camping). In American society, especially, this is an element that increases likability and contributes to a ‘cool’ appearance, a strategy often adopted by dignitaries and very well captured by the Hollywood movies of the 1990s.<sup>31</sup>

**T**HE IT & software field turns out to be the greatest winner in the early 1990s. Among the companies most interested in promotion, we mention names such as Logic, Standard Commercial, ICE Felix, Innovator Computer, Microcomputer, RomSoft, Computerland, Logic, Laser, Luxemburger Computer, Ciel, A-Tronic, or IBM. Practically, we are witnessing a sharp increase in terms of private IT courses, the recruitment of specialized workforce in the field, as well as many advertisements aimed at increasing the Romanians’ appetite for purchasing computers. We even come to the point where the advertising section is predominantly dominated, in some issues of the newspaper, by IT advertisements. Certainly, as we have observed in our analysis so far, like in other areas, here as well we can identify companies that prove to be more inspired in the approach to advertising, such as IBM. Another example is A-Tronic Computer, a company that advertises a quality Californian product (“Quality from California”).<sup>32</sup>

The differentiator represented by the value of products and services can also be seen in the strategy adopted by Innovator Computer, which presents itself with “professionalism and quality,” and which proposes a range of personal computers, in this case of Dutch origin.<sup>33</sup> A downright visionary communication strategy belongs to Luxemburger Computer; through the campaign slogan *Your second brain*, the company seems to anticipate the role that the computer would represent in the twenty-first century individual’s life.<sup>34</sup> The new wave, represented by the IT field, was supported at the beginning of the 1990s through various IT courses offered to Romanians. We mention, in this sense, the Informatics Research Institute<sup>35</sup> or the CENTROCOOP Commercial Company, announcing “the opening of the first computer-assisted learning center.” In the CENTROCOOP advertisement we see new jobs or specializations offered to Romanians, which had been less common or almost never found in the communist era. Among these we mention specializations such as marketing, management or those in the IT sphere (introduction to the Pascal programming language, introduction to data processing). We also find foreign language courses (English, French, German, Italian or Spanish), both for beginners and advanced students,



all the way to business English courses. Although the CENTROCOOP ad promotes specializations in several fields, the ad's *Computer School* title seems to include the specialization with the greatest impact on the reader, a sign that the IT field is among the fields of great interest for Romanians.

We cannot omit from our analysis another company active in the Romanian advertising industry, the Japanese brand Casio. Navigating through early 1990s newspaper pages, we notice a visible improvement in advertisements, which distinguish themselves both graphically and textually. The Japanese manufacturer insists in most of the advertisements featured in the daily *Adevărul* on placing the advertising text in the upper part of the page. A simplification of the interaction with the public is therefore desired and, at the same time, the aim is to highlight the Casio ads in the advertising section. The element of surprise that we identify in Casio's campaigns is represented by the introduction to the market and the association of the manufacturer with the concept of a "smart device or all-in-one device."

Certainly, they cannot compare with the performance that smartphones reached in the year 2023, but through their functions Casio devices represented an effective solution for a certain social group. This category is very well represented in the company's advertisements, which focus on the company's target audience in the most obvious way. We refer, in this sense, to a consumer, firstly, with a higher income, from the category of businessmen or corporate executives (a category still growing in post-communist Romania). The consumers' profile includes male as well as female characters, adopting a business look, wearing a suit. And to convince us of its target audience, the Japanese company positions itself as a partner of success and, implicitly, of successful individuals. We infer the size of the smart device from the advertising texts, which come with the promise of simplifying consumers' lives and giving them multiple possibilities by using Casio devices, introducing the concept of all-in-one device: *6 libraries of built-in scientific functions*.<sup>36</sup>

It is generally assumed that advertising influences us to the extent that we allow ourselves to be manipulated, a fact also highlighted in the case of the press.<sup>37</sup> But as Robert Heath points out, this is an assumption generated by the premise that advertising works by persuasion, "associated with others (typically our parents) trying to argue us into doing something that we don't want to do."<sup>38</sup> But, according to the quoted author, which we will use further on to detail the mechanisms of the impact of advertising, an alternative way in which advertising operates is what is called *subconscious seduction*. Heath described the traditional model of persuasion, showing that often even those who work in advertising are not always aware of how advertising influences us.<sup>39</sup> The common view is that

it conveys a sort of persuasive information, which in turn makes us take action and make a rational decision about what we want to buy. Based on psychologist Walter Dill Scott's research, Heath believes that advertising is particularly capable of subconsciously manipulating the minds of consumers.<sup>40</sup> Therefore, Heath considers that we generally do not pay attention to advertising, we ignore it, assuming that it has no effect on us, but our minds make everything much more complicated than we would expect, over time registering changes at the mental level.

**T**WO FAMOUS authors, Francis Fukuyama and Samuel P. Huntington, formulated different diagnoses for the world of the 1990s. Fukuyama, in his work *The End of History and the Last Man*,<sup>41</sup> published in 1992, notes the unification of mankind around the Western model of civilization. With the fall of communism in the USSR and Eastern Europe, communist ideology has proven to be nonfunctional, and a triumph of liberal democracy occurred. In contrast, Huntington in *The Clash of Civilizations*, published in 1996, believes that Westernization is impossible, the planet being divided into several civilizations, whose relations are potentially conflictual.<sup>42</sup> If we refer to the history of the Romanians, according to literary critic E. Lovinescu (1881–1943), modern society in the Old Kingdom was born by imitating Western culture and civilization, superior to the Eastern one.<sup>43</sup> At the beginning, the imitation was complete, superficial and lacking in selectivity, but then, as it matured, it turned into the adaptation of everything that was consciously considered necessary and superior, a stage that, in Lovinescu's opinion, Romania reached at the beginning of the interwar period. Taking on the Western model of civilization, Lovinescu defined it as synchronism, which was not a simple imitation, but rather an integration. In response, Nichifor Crainic (1889–1972), a supporter of traditional forms, believed that Westernization meant the moral and spiritual decay of the Romanian people, that Romanians must develop in keeping with the Orthodox traditions.<sup>44</sup> Perhaps, in both Fukuyama's and Lovinescu's assessment, it must be accepted that the truth lies in the middle.

Earth has become too small for a civilization to isolate itself. The realities of the last two decades, in the "Internet Era," fully demonstrate this communication and transfer of elements of culture and civilization. It is difficult to accept the idea that the transfer of technology is not also doubled by cultural transfers, which are also reflected on the mental plane.

In science, Thomas S. Kuhn called these transformations "paradigm shifts," the examples given including the transition from Newtonian physics to Einstein's relativistic perspective and the "cognitive revolution," which replaced

behaviorist perspectives on human behavior. Attempting to apply Kuhn's theory to the realities of Romania and the East, we must accept that after 1989 there was a real crisis of the old system, a well-known fact, which determined a paradigm shift, subsequently accelerating the changes. The media phenomenon and advertising are eloquent from this perspective, as they provided Romanians with a new horizon of expectation, they shaped the taste towards comfort and well-being, for a new quality of life, for travel, for business, for quick profit and enrichment, for another cultural model, for other movies, for a different fashion, for a different diet, for other television sets, cars, etc. At first sight these elements are related to the material aspects of the human universe, to technology, but they anticipate the birth of a new culture. Romania did not metamorphose overnight, by eliminating Ceaușescu and banning the Romanian Communist Party. However, the Romanians who were children in the 1980s no longer think like their parents, and this began to be noticed in the 1990s. In post-1989 Romania, new institutions were created, but experience shows us that wellbeing is the product of institutions and that, in turn, institutions reflect individual and group values. According to Michael Potter, referring to companies, values are key, because they order what is important. In other words, regardless of intentions and plans, values transform the lives of individuals and communities.

In recent years, as Jean-Noël Jeanneney notes, in scholarly debates, opinion polls and special magazine issues, questions are increasingly being asked about the supposedly negative influence of the audiovisual media on democracy's functioning in modern societies.<sup>45</sup> This goes so far as to raise the question of the loss of national identity, through the way the media can manipulate people's consciousness. Advertising is today, partly, a media phenomenon. However, starting from this premise, we can easily accept that advertising has enormously shaped the psycho-social profile of Romanians. It's just that history helps us to be objective: similar phenomena happen all over the world, companies from the West or from Asia, but especially the American ones, conquer the world market, other countries' domestic market, through their effective means of influence. Post-communist Romania was nothing but a part of a larger phenomenon, as illustrated by the early years of post-communist Romanian history. □

## Notes

1. See Eugen Denize, *Propaganda comunistă în România (1948–1953)*, 2<sup>nd</sup> enl. edition (Târgoviște: Cetatea de Scaun, 2011).
2. Adam Burakowski, "Romania—A Bloody December," in Adam Burakowski, Aleksander Gubrynowicz, and Paweł Ukielski, *1989: The Autumn of Nations* (War-

saw: Natolin European Centre; European Network Remembrance and Solidarity, 2020), 585–652.

3. Jean-François Soulet, *Histoire de l'Europe de l'Est: De la Seconde Guerre mondiale à nos jours*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition (Paris: Armand Colin, 2011).
4. Adam Burakowski, *Dictatura lui Ceaușescu 1965–1989: Geniul Carpaților*, translated by Vasile Moga, foreword by Stejărel Olaru (Iași: Polirom, 2011), 376.
5. See Corneliu Cezar Sigmirean, *La început a fost cuvântul: Publicitatea în România postcomunistă 1990–1995* (Cluj-Napoca: Argonaut; Limes, 2020).
6. Mark Tungate, *Adland: A Global History of Advertising* (London–Philadelphia: Kogan Page, 2007), 249.
7. For the history of advertising in the Romanian press see: Marian Petcu, *O istorie ilustrată a publicității românești* (Bucharest: Tritonic, 2002); id., *Istoria jurnalismului și a publicității în România* (Iași: Polirom, 2007); Dorin Popa, *Comunicare și publicitate* (Bucharest: Tritonic, 2005); Costin Popescu, *Publicitatea: O estetică a persuasiunii* (Bucharest: Editura Universității din București, 2005).
8. *Adevărul* (Bucharest) 2, 308 (4 January 1991): 4.
9. *Adevărul* 2, 344 (23–24 February 1991): 4.
10. *Adevărul* 2, 349 (2–3 March 1991): 4.
11. *Adevărul* 2, 427 (22–23 June 1991): 5.
12. *Adevărul* 2, 355 (12 March 1991): 4.
13. *Adevărul* 2, 342 (21 February 1991): 7.
14. Stéphane Pincas and Marc Loiseau, *A History of Advertising*, foreword by Maurice Lévy (Cologne: Taschen, 2008), 26.
15. *Adevărul* 2, 496 (27 September 1991): 5.
16. *Adevărul* 2, 494 (25 September 1991): 4.
17. *Adevărul* 2, 338 (15 February 1991): 3.
18. *Adevărul* 2, 359 (16–17 March 1991): 5.
19. *Adevărul* 2, 555 (21–22 December 1991): 4.
20. *Adevărul* 2, 452 (27–28 July 1991): 3.
21. *Adevărul* 2, 551 (17 December 1991): 4.
22. *Adevărul* 2, 548 (10 December 1991): 3.
23. *Adevărul* 2, 328 (1 February 1991): 6.
24. *Adevărul* 2, 328 (1 February 1991): 6.
25. *Adevărul* 2, 484 (11 September 1991): 5.
26. *Adevărul* 2, 486 (13 September 1991): 4.
27. *Adevărul* 2, 453 (30 July 1991): 5.
28. *Adevărul* 2, 419 (12 June 1991): 4.
29. *Adevărul* 2, 419 (12 June 1991): 4.
30. *Adevărul* 2, 419 (12 June 1991): 4.
31. *Adevărul* 2, 552 (18 December 1991): 7.
32. *Adevărul* 2, 506 (11 October 1991): 7.
33. *Adevărul* 2, 401 (17 May 1991): 4.
34. *Adevărul* 2, 484 (12 September 1991): 4.
35. *Adevărul* 2, 301 (3 May 1991): 4.

36. *Adevărul* 2, 501 (4 October 1991): 4.
37. Delia Balaban, *Comunicare mediatică* (Bucharest: Tritonic, 2009), 91. See also Alex Muchielli, *L'Art d'influencer: Analyse des techniques de manipulation* (Paris: Armand Colin, 2009).
38. Robert Heath, *Seducing the Subconscious: The Psychology of Emotional Influence in Advertising* (Malden, MA–Oxford–Chichester, West Sussex: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012), IX.
39. Heath, 6.
40. Heath, 7.
41. Francis Fukuyama, *The End of the History and the Last Man* (New York: Free Press, 1992).
42. Samuel P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1996).
43. See E. Lovinescu, *Istoria civilizației române moderne*, 3 vols. (Bucharest: Ancora, 1924).
44. Nichifor Crainic, *Ortodoxie și etnocrație, cu o anexă: Programul statului etnocratic* (Bucharest: Cugetarea, 1940).
45. Jean-Noël Jeanneney, *Une histoire des médias des origines à nos jours* (Paris: Seuil, 1990).

## **Abstract**

### Advertising and the Birth of Post-Communist Romania (1989–1991)

A new historical period began in Romania after the events of December 1989 and foreign capital, with all its advertising arsenal, penetrated the Romanian economy despite the reluctance showed by the regime installed in Bucharest. Both the press itself and press advertising experience a radical metamorphosis, shifting overnight to a new ideological register. Gradually, advertising becomes professional, it becomes a business and, at the same time, an intermediary in the penetration of new products into the consciousness of Romanians. The persuasive force of advertising shapes new aspirations and participates in the creation of a new mentality. Starting from Thomas S. Kuhn's research dedicated to the "paradigm shift," we can ascertain that Romania has undergone very important changes in a relatively short time. This was not only on account of advertising, but advertising contributed to the change of Romania through the power of the "seduction of the subconscious."

## **Keywords**

post-communist Romania, market economy, advertising, foreign companies, publicity, mentality shift