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# L'antisémitisme en Roumanie dans l'entre- deux-guerres et la réaction politique des Juifs

CAROL IANCU

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*Dans la Grande Roumanie, l'antisémitisme devint le vecteur du nationalisme roumain, en raison de l'irritant contexte d'une palette variée des minorités nationales cherchant à garder leur individualité.*

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## 1. Introduction

L'HISTOIRE DES Juifs en Roumanie a été marquée par un long combat en vue de l'accession à la citoyenneté roumaine, aussi bien à l'intérieur du pays qu'à l'étranger.<sup>1</sup> En fait les Juifs roumains ont été les derniers en Europe à se voir octroyer, seulement à la fin de la Grande Guerre, en 1919, l'égalité civile et politique, imposée par le Traité des minorités de Paris.<sup>2</sup>

Après l'émancipation, loin de faiblir, comme on aurait été en droit de s'y attendre, l'antisémitisme ne fit qu'augmenter après la Première Guerre mondiale. Dans le présent article, nous proposons d'évoquer, dans une perspective chronologique, les manifestations antisémites et la réaction politique des Juifs.

Les deux décennies qui séparent la Conférence de paix de Paris de la Deuxième Guerre mondiale, ont été dans l'histoire du pays une période-clé où,

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malgré les difficultés, l'État a réussi pour une large part à unifier ses éléments disparates. Le doublement de la superficie (de 130.177 km<sup>2</sup> en 1913 à 295.049 km<sup>2</sup> en 1920) et de la population (de 7.160.177 habitants en 1912 à environ 15.541.000 en 1920), le rattachement de la Bessarabie, de la Transylvanie et de la Bucovine à la « mère-patrie », ont transformé la nouvelle Roumanie dans un État aux nationalités multiples et, si les Roumains constituaient l'élément majoritaire, près de 30 % de la population étaient des allogènes. Ces mutations ont affecté la judaïcité roumaine : aux environ 240.000 Juifs de l'Ancien Royaume (*Vechiul Regat*) s'ajoutèrent près d'un demi-million de Juifs des nouveaux territoires. Selon le recensement de 1930, après les Magyars et les Allemands, les Juifs étaient, par leur importance numérique, la troisième minorité, comptant 728.115 (4 %) âmes d'après le critère de nationalité et 756.030 (4,2 %) d'après celui de la religion, dont 264.038 dans l'Ancien Royaume, 206.958 en Bessarabie, 192.833 en Transylvanie et 93.101 en Bucovine.<sup>3</sup> Entre ces quatre composantes de la judaïcité dans la Grande Roumanie, il y avait de fortes disparités du point de vue socio-économique, linguistique, culturel et même religieux. Entre les Juifs achkénazes et séfarades de l'Ancien Royaume et les Juifs achkénazes des nouveaux territoires, les Juifs « russes » de Bessarabie, les Juifs « allemands » de Bucovine et partiellement de Transylvanie, et les Juifs « hongrois » de cette dernière province, il existait pourtant un important élément d'unité : la pression antisémite. Le phénomène antisémite fut permanent dans l'entre-deux-guerres et se manifesta différemment dans les périodes 1919-1933 et 1934-1939. La première fut marquée par l'octroi des droits de citoyen inscrits dans la Constitution de 1923, mais aussi de leur mise en question par la Loi Mârzescu (1924) et par divers projets législatifs, ainsi que par des troubles antijuifs provoqués surtout par des étudiants ; la seconde par le retour à une législation antisémite et, finalement, par le retrait sur une large échelle de la citoyenneté aux Juifs.

## 2. L'antisémitisme dans la période 1919-1933

### a) La reconnaissance de la citoyenneté et sa mise en question par la Loi Mârzescu (1924)

**L'**ARTICLE 7 du Traité des minorités signé dans la capitale française le 9 décembre 1919, par le représentant du gouvernement roumain, règle explicitement non seulement le statut des Juifs indigènes du *Regat*, enfin reconnus comme citoyens roumains, mais aussi celui des Juifs des nouveaux territoires :

*La Roumanie s'engage à reconnaître comme ressortissants roumains, de plein droit et sans aucune formalité, les Juifs habitant tous les territoires de la Roumanie et ne pouvant se prévaloir d'aucune autre nationalité.<sup>4</sup>*

En fait, les différents traités de paix avaient déjà conféré la citoyenneté roumaine aux Juifs de Bucovine, de Transylvanie et de Bessarabie, dans les mêmes conditions qu'aux autres habitants appartenant à d'autres confessions religieuses, dans les actes d'union des trois provinces : le Traité de Saint-Germain du 10 septembre 1919, art. 70 et suivants ; le Traité de Trianon du 4 juin 1920, art. 61 et suivants ; le Traité concernant la Bessarabie du 28 octobre 1920, art. 4 et suivants.

Bien que le Traité des minorités contenant l'article 7 ait fini par être ratifié par une loi publiée au *Monitorul Oficial* le 26 septembre 1920, pour les autorités roumaines le seul document qui fixait le statut des Juifs était le deuxième décret-loi Brătianu du 22 mai 1919. Il en résulta qu'en 1922, environ 33 % des Juifs de l'Ancien Royaume étaient encore démunis des droits de citoyens. Dans ces conditions, seule l'inscription de l'égalité civique dans la charte fondamentale du pays – réclamée d'ailleurs aussi par les traités de paix –, pouvait offrir une solution juridique définitive. Avec beaucoup de difficultés, les parlementaires et ministres roumains ont donné leur accord pour ce principe, mais ont refusé l'émancipation collective prévue par l'article 7 du Traité des minorités. En même temps, ils ont essayé – sans toutefois réussir, en raison d'une résistance coriace des parlementaires juifs – à l'occasion du vote de la nouvelle Constitution du 28 mars 1923 –, d'obtenir l'annulation de la citoyenneté collective reconnue aux Juifs des provinces rattachées. Le texte définitif de l'article 133 (il y a eu plusieurs rédactions) de cette nouvelle Constitution ratifia l'ensemble des décrets-lois de naturalisation individuelle et ouvrait la naturalisation – par la prolongation du terme imposé par le décret-loi Brătianu du 22 mai 1919 – à tous les Juifs qui en étaient encore privés.

La question de la citoyenneté des habitants des provinces rattachées n'ayant pas fait l'objet d'un article spécifique dans la Constitution, le gouvernement promulgua, le 23 octobre 1923, un « Règlement pour l'application des dispositions des Traités de paix et leurs annexes concernant la constatation de l'acquisition et de la perte de la nationalité roumaine ». En violation des traités de paix qui reconnaissaient d'une façon automatique comme citoyens roumains les anciens sujets hongrois, autrichiens et russes, le Règlement introduisit des conditions restrictives. Pourtant ce Règlement n'a pas paru suffisant et, malgré les plaidoiries du député Adolphe Stern, fut votée, le 23 février 1924, la Loi sur l'acquisition et la perte de la nationalité roumaine, dénommée Loi Mârzescu, d'après le nom du ministre de la Justice. Cette loi composée de 70 articles, prévoyait

par les articles 56 et 64, et par le règlement d'application, l'instauration de commissions fonctionnant auprès de la Cour d'appel, qui devaient établir les listes des citoyens roumains. En raison des difficultés à présenter des preuves de leur *indigénat* (les registres des mairies étaient en général incomplets et un nombre considérable avait disparu pendant la guerre), auxquelles s'ajouta le mauvais vouloir des fonctionnaires mal payés par l'État, et qui monnayaient la délivrance de tout document administratif, des dizaines de milliers de Juifs des nouveaux territoires n'ont pas pu valoriser leurs droits à la citoyenneté roumaine. Le résultat des travaux des commissions chargées de la constatation de la nationalité roumaine (composées de membres hostiles aux Juifs, ou se trouvant sous l'influence d'associations nationalistes et antisémites) est édifiant : entre 16.000 (3.000 en Transylvanie, 5.000 en Bucovine et 8.000 en Bessarabie) et 20.000 familles juives<sup>5</sup> – selon deux estimations différentes, une statistique exacte n'a pas pu être faite –, englobant entre 80.000 et 100.000 personnes, ont perdu la citoyenneté roumaine, après avoir renoncé à leur sujétion d'origine dont elles auraient pu se prévaloir lors des annexions des nouvelles provinces. Ces nouveaux non-citoyens des nouvelles provinces (auxquels s'ajoutèrent encore quelques milliers de Juifs indigènes de l'Ancien Royaume qui avaient négligé de présenter les demandes de naturalisation dans les délais imposés) étaient exclus de la fonction publique et de toute une série de professions et emplois du secteur privé. Ils n'avaient pas le droit de domicile permanent dans une localité donnée, ni devenir des propriétaires terriens, tandis que leurs enfants, privés du droit à la gratuité de l'éducation scolaire, étaient exclus des écoles publiques ou reçus au compte-gouttes. Assimilés aux véritables étrangers, ils pouvaient être expulsés au bout d'un an, sauf permission spéciale, et se voyaient même dans l'impossibilité d'obtenir un passeport de voyage.

Malgré les nombreuses interventions des députés juifs (parmi lesquels Michael Landau et Wilhelm Filderman, qui ont réclamé constamment son abolition), la Loi Mârzescu fut maintenue jusqu'en 1938, lorsque le gouvernement Goga-Cuza introduisit une législation antisémite officielle. Par la Loi Mârzescu, quelque 100.000 hommes, femmes et enfants juifs sont restés en dehors de la cité, rejetés en marge de la société, à la merci de la politique arbitraire des autorités policières et administratives, générant ainsi la continuité et la permanence d'un problème juif institutionnel dans la Grande Roumanie de l'entre-deux-guerres.

## b) Les troubles antijuifs des étudiants, soutenus par les organisations d'extrême droite (1922-1933)

ENTRE 1922 et 1933, le pays ne cessa d'être agité par des troubles antijuifs récurrents, souvent sanglants, dont les auteurs furent avant tout des étudiants<sup>6</sup> et des lycéens, stimulés par les agissements et la propagande des organisations d'extrême-droite, La Ligue de Défense National-Chrétienne (*Liga Apărării Naționale Creștine*) (LANC), fondée par A. C. Cuza, la Légion de Archange Michaël, créée par son disciple, l'agitateur Corneliu Zelea Codreanu, devenue, en 1930, la célèbre et sinistre Garde de Fer. La première vague des émeutes antijuives des étudiants, eut lieu sous le gouvernement de Ion I. C. Brătianu (1922-1925). Elle commença en octobre 1922, à l'occasion des fêtes du couronnement du roi Ferdinand I et de la reine Marie dans la cité historique d'Alba Iulia. C'est pendant ces journées mémorables que des désordres antisémites éclatèrent à Iași à l'instigation du doyen de la Faculté de Droit A. C. Cuza qui dénonça les Juifs comme un « danger national ». Les troubles antisémites s'étendirent le même mois en Transylvanie, dans la ville de Cluj, où les étudiants chrétiens de la Faculté de Médecine, frappèrent et expulsèrent des cours leurs collègues juifs, avant d'étendre l'émeute à la ville. Des groupes d'étudiants arrachèrent les enseignes des boutiques juives, brisèrent les vitres de leurs maisons et aux cris de « À bas les Juifs ! En Palestine les Juifs », molestèrent les passants israélites. Le 28 novembre, au troisième jour de l'émeute, un millier d'étudiants se livrèrent à de nouvelles manifestations, s'attaquant à la Maison des étudiants juifs, à la rédaction et à l'imprimerie du journal juif de langue hongroise *Új Kelet* (Orient nouveau) qu'ils saccagèrent, blessant les rédacteurs et provoquant des dégâts de plusieurs millions de lei. La collection de cette gazette et tous les manuscrits furent brûlés sur la place publique, tandis que le mobilier et les outils de l'imprimerie furent jetés dans la rivière Someș. Le prétexte des incidents fut la restitution par les étudiants juifs à leur communauté du corps d'un coreligionnaire amené à l'Institut d'anatomie (les Juifs orthodoxes s'opposant à la dissection des cadavres). En fait, le véritable but du mouvement commencé dans la capitale de la Transylvanie et vite étendu aux autres centres universitaires du pays, fut l'exigence du *numerus clausus* pour supprimer la concurrence juive en médecine, ainsi que dans d'autres disciplines. Il est probable que la parution de ce slogan se fit sous l'influence d'une loi sur « la proportionnalité scolaire » votée en 1920 dans la Hongrie voisine. Le 10 décembre 1922, les délégués des étudiants des différents centres universitaires, réunis dans la capitale, proclamèrent la grève tant que leurs doléances et surtout l'introduction du *numerus clausus* ne seraient pas satisfaites. Ce jour devint une date mémorable dans l'histoire du mouvement antisémite estudiantin.

Mécontents des articles publiés par plusieurs organes de presse sur leurs comportements, plusieurs centaines d'étudiants bucarestois auxquels se joignirent divers perturbateurs, imitèrent les agissements de leurs confrères de Cluj, en défonçant les portes et les fenêtres des rédactions et des imprimeries des journaux *Adeverul* (La Vérité), *Dimineața* (Le Matin), *Mântuirea* (La Rédemption, quotidien sioniste), *Opinia* (L'Opinion), *Lumea* (Le Monde) en les mettant toutes à sac.

Le député Adolphe Stern, président de l'Union des Juifs indigènes (*Uniunea Evreilor Pământeni*, UEP), interpella le gouvernement, stigmatisant les désordres et mettant en cause les responsables de la propagande antisémite et en premier lieu les professeurs A. C. Cuza, Corneliu Șumuleanu, Nicolae C. Paulescu (auteur d'un odieux pamphlet raciste et antisémite<sup>7</sup>), Dragoș Protopopescu et Ion Zelea Codreanu.<sup>8</sup> L'UEP publia un manifeste dans lequel, tout en blâmant les excès antisémites, et en réclamant le jugement des responsables, mit en avant le patriotisme des Juifs :

*Au nom des milliers de parents, veuves et orphelins juifs de guerre dont les enfants, les maris et les pères, ont arrosé de leur sang les champs de bataille de Mărășești, Mărăști et Oituz ; au nom aussi de toute une population israélite, dont les sentiments patriotiques ne sauraient être mis en doute, l'Union des Juifs indigènes proteste avec amertume contre les excès antisémites commis à Huși, Bârlad, Botoșani, Iași, Cluj et Bucarest par des groupes d'étudiants et de professeurs, dont la culture intellectuelle aurait dû être une source de sentiments généreux et non point d'animosité et de haine.*<sup>9</sup>

Le journaliste Horia Carp dénonça le 17 décembre 1922 « la terreur antijuive » dans *Curierul israelit* (Le Courrier israélite), organe de l'UEP. La multiplication des incidents provoqua la fermeture de l'Université de Bucarest, tandis que les étudiants bucarestois firent un accueil enthousiaste au professeur A. C. Cuza lors de son arrivée dans la capitale. Conspué pour avoir fait appel à la discipline par les étudiants partisans de Cuza, le professeur N. Iorga donna sa démission après trente-trois ans d'enseignement.<sup>10</sup> Le climat de violence fut maintenu par des articles incendiaires publiés par le journal *Cuvântul studențesc* (Le mot des étudiants). C'est ainsi que le numéro du 7 août 1923, a répandu dans des centaines de milliers d'exemplaires un dessin infâme du prétendu crime rituel de Tiszaeszlár (1882) en Hongrie, qui aurait été commis par des Juifs.

Après la découverte du complot du jeune Corneliu Zelea Codreanu (fils de Ion Zelea Codreanu), visant l'assassinat de six ministres et de nombreuses personnalités israélites, les agitations se sont intensifiées à l'Université de Iași. Des désordres nouveaux ont éclaté dans la ville le 10 décembre 1923, lors du premier



anniversaire de la campagne en faveur du *numerus clausus*. Cette date fut commémorée par des services religieux dans des églises et par de nouvelles violences à l'encontre des étudiants juifs.

Les troubles antijuifs des étudiants se sont poursuivis sous le gouvernement d'Alexandru Averescu (1926-1927). Un crime antisémite commis à Cernăuți (le 10 novembre 1926, l'élève juif David Falik tué par l'élève roumain Nicolae Totu, acquitté ultérieurement par un tribunal de Câmpulung...) fut dénoncé au Parlement, par le député de Bucovine Mayer Ebner qui n'hésita pas à déclarer que les agitations antisémites se déroulaient avec l'assentiment des autorités.<sup>11</sup> Les désordres antijuifs continuèrent : deux cents étudiants rentrant d'un colloque tenu à Iași le 2 décembre 1926, se livrèrent dans plusieurs localités – Chișinău, Călărași, Edineți, Ungheni, Vaslui, Tecuci, Focșani – à des exactions contre la population juive.<sup>12</sup> Aux classiques molestations, bris de devantures de magasins, de vitres des maisons et synagogues, un procédé qui devait se généraliser ultérieurement par l'action des partisans de Cuza et de Codreanu, fut alors pratiqué : jeter les passagers juifs à bas des trains en marche. Le Comité des Délégations juives de Paris (organisation fondée dans la capitale française pendant la Conférence de la paix de 1919) envoya, le 17 janvier 1927, une pétition à la Société des Nations pour dénoncer « les actes de violence très fréquents dont les Juifs sont victimes dans ce pays [et qui] provoquent les plus grandes inquiétudes pour la vie de cette population ».<sup>13</sup> En France, la plus importante et puissante organisation juive, l'Alliance israélite universelle (AIU), s'adressa à Constantin Diamandy, l'ambassadeur de Roumanie, pour recommander au gouvernement roumain « de prendre des mesures efficaces pour mettre fin à un état de choses tel que la Roumanie passe actuellement pour le pays du monde où les israélites sont les plus malheureux ».<sup>14</sup>

Les désordres n'ont pas cessé et culminèrent avec les excès d'Oradea Mare et de Cluj, sous le gouvernement de Vintilă Brătianu (24 novembre 1927-10 novembre 1928). Avec l'appui financier du gouvernement, un congrès réunissant 5.000 étudiants (dont 700 filles) venus de toute la Roumanie s'ouvrit à Oradea Mare (ville à forte population juive et hongroise), le 2 décembre 1927, avec un ordre du jour antisémite : « la lutte contre les Juifs » et la question du *numerus clausus*. Dans les jours suivants, des groupes d'étudiants frappèrent les passants juifs, défoncèrent les devantures des boutiques qu'il pillèrent méthodiquement, commirent des agressions à l'encontre même de ceux qui leur avaient donné l'hospitalité (un millier d'étudiants avaient été hébergés par des Juifs), dévastèrent des synagogues, souillèrent, déchirèrent et brûlèrent sur la place publique des dizaines de rouleaux de la Torah, partie intégrante de la Bible chrétienne... Sur le chemin de retour, les étudiants arrêtaient les trains spéciaux mis à leur disposition, et renouvelèrent les actes de vandalisme à Cluj et dans d'autres localités

de Transylvanie. Ces excès, les plus graves depuis le début des agitations de 1922, eurent un large écho au Parlement (où les débats commencés le 6 décembre se poursuivirent deux semaines durant). Le discours le plus véhément fut celui du député Wilhelm Filderman, président de l'Union des Juifs Roumains (*Uniunea Evreilor Români*, UER) qui finit ainsi son long réquisitoire du 8 décembre 1927 :

*Je ne tiens pas à savoir qui vous punirez à l'avenir et il pourra se faire qu'à l'avenir aussi les Juifs soient les boucs-émissaires qui paieront. Je tiens à savoir ceci : Avez-vous puni oui ou non ? Si vous n'avez pas puni, c'est que vous ne voulez pas sévir. Je répéterai cette question jusqu'à ce que vous me répondiez quels sont les noms des subalternes auxquels vous avez donné l'ordre d'empêcher les troubles et qui ne les ont pas empêchés...*<sup>15</sup>

Au Sénat, son collègue Horia Carp, déclara deux jours plus tôt :

*Avec la destruction des magasins et la casse des vitrines nous étions habitués. Ce à quoi nous n'étions plus habitués, c'est la profanation de la Torah, qui reste le fondement de la morale et de l'amour du prochain. La civilisation s'appuie aujourd'hui encore sur le Décalogue. Et les Juifs ont vu comment fut détruite et profanée cette Torah. Cette chose Monsieur le Ministre [il s'agit de I. G. Duca, ministre de l'Intérieur] en dehors de ce qui s'est passé en Ukraine, cette profanation n'est plus connue depuis le Moyen Âge dans l'histoire des Juifs. C'est pour cela que j'ai affirmé au début de mon intervention que dans les 500-600 derniers ans nous n'avons pas vécu pareille tragédie.*<sup>16</sup>

L'Union des Juifs Roumains (UER) et d'autres organisations juives de Transylvanie ont adressé, le 16 décembre 1927, un « appel au peuple roumain » dans lequel étaient incriminés non seulement l'attitude du gouvernement de Vintilă Brătianu, mais l'ensemble de la politique des gouvernements précédents qui avaient favorisé l'antisémitisme. À l'étranger, les troubles antijuifs de Transylvanie eurent un grand retentissement. En France, les représentants de l'Alliance israélite universelle, Alfred Berl et Jacques Bigart, se présentèrent au ministère des Affaires étrangères et ont demandé une intervention auprès des autorités de Bucarest.<sup>17</sup> Toute une série d'organisations et communautés juives se sont adressées, en janvier et février 1928, à la Société des Nations pour lui demander d'intervenir auprès du gouvernement roumain afin de mettre un terme à la persécution des coreligionnaires roumains : Amalgamated Hungarian Roumanian Society of Naturalized Citizens de New York, la Communauté israélite d'Athènes, le grand rabbin de Genève Sigismond Balizer, le président de l'Union Universelle de la jeunesse juive de Tanger (Maroc) Haim Ribbi, la Commu-

nauté juive de Buenos Aires.<sup>18</sup> La Direction de la Section « Minorités » de la Société des Nations s'est contentée d'accuser réception des différentes pétitions et, prétextant leur caractère trop général, conclua qu'elles ne pouvaient donner lieu à une réaction diplomatique.

L'arrivée au pouvoir, le 10 novembre 1928 (il y restera jusqu'au 10 octobre 1930), de Iuliu Maniu, leader du Parti national paysan (*Partidul Național Țărănesc*, PNT), personnalité qui avait exprimé des opinions bienveillantes à l'égard des minorités, fut accueillie par l'opinion publique juive avec satisfaction et espoir. Pourtant, pendant la période 1928-1933 les troubles antijuifs ont continué, et les gouvernements nationaux-paysans ne se montrèrent pas plus sévères que leurs prédécesseurs libéraux ou populistes, à l'égard des professionnels de l'antisémitisme, Cuza, Codreanu et leurs partisans.

### 3. L'antisémitisme dans la période 1934-1939

**A**PRÈS L'ASSASSINAT du premier ministre I. G. Duca le 30 décembre 1933, par des membres de la Garde de Fer, un nouveau gouvernement libéral fut formé le 3 janvier 1934, sous la présidence de Gheorghe Tătărescu, qui restera au pouvoir, malgré de nombreux remaniements, jusqu'au 28 décembre 1938. Ces quatre années représentent une période cruciale dans l'histoire de l'Europe où l'on assiste à la consolidation des régimes nazi et fasciste en Allemagne et en Italie, et à l'ascension des mouvements d'extrême droite avec leur idéologie raciste dans la majorité des pays du vieux continent.

Une période cruciale aussi pour la Roumanie où sous l'influence du « cuzisme » et du « légionnarisme », le président du Conseil se fait très tôt le partisan d'une politique antisémite par le biais de la législation.

Certes, à l'égard de l'extrême-droite, l'attitude du gouvernement Tătărescu fut inégale, souvent ambiguë, passant de la répression à l'encouragement, avec une préférence pour les « chemises bleues » de Cuza au détriment des « chemises vertes » de Codreanu. Les rigueurs de l'état de siège fréquemment instauré empêchèrent pendant quelque temps la répétition des scènes de violences dans les rues, la destruction des imprimeries de journaux, les bris des vitrines des magasins, des vitres des maisons et lieux de culte, avec leur cortège de pillages et d'autres actes de vandalisme. Cependant, sous la pression d'une opinion publique de plus en plus réceptive à l'habile propagande fasciste et surtout nazie, le gouvernement s'appropriä les thèses racistes et antisémites de Cuza et Codreanu, auxquels se joignirent Alexandru Vaida Voevod et Octavian Goga, pour réclamer le *numerus clausus* et l'exclusion des Juifs et autres minoritaires de la fonction publique et des divers domaines de l'activité économique.

Des membres influents des deux partis politiques rivaux – libéral et national paysan – sont devenus des partisans convaincus des slogans antisémites suivants, « pour concurrencer l'extrême-droite sur son propre terrain » : « La Roumanie aux Roumains ! », « *Numerus valachicus !* », « La Révision de la citoyenneté ! », « La Promotion du travail national ! », « La nationalisation des villes ! », et même le « *Numerus nullus !* », réclamé ainsi par *Porunca Vremii* (Le Commandement du Temps) du 28 janvier 1935 :

*Le numerus clausus ne nous suffit plus. Il avait sa raison d'être dans les quinze dernières années durant lesquelles nos universités ont été ouvertes sans critère aux envahisseurs. Ce que nous demandons maintenant, c'est le numerus nullus dans la vie spirituelle, économique, professionnelle. Qu'aucun Juif ne soit plus admis dans les écoles ni toléré dans les métiers. Les positions que nous avons perdues ne seront reconquises par nous qu'au moyen de numerus nullus.*

À la Faculté de Médecine de la capitale, sur 160 candidats, furent admis quatre étudiants juifs seulement : aucun cependant ne put suivre les cours, ayant été brutalisés et empêchés par leurs collègues antisémites. La vie politique fut marquée par la « Loi pour l'emploi du personnel roumain dans les entreprises » du 16 juillet 1934 (le Règlement étant promulgué le 23 janvier 1934), d'après laquelle, 80 % des employés et 50 % des membres des Conseils d'administration devaient être des Roumains ethniques. En dehors des pétitions habituelles au roi et au gouvernement, l'UER a publié un manifeste énergique déclarant la loi anticonstitutionnelle, alertant les organisations juives occidentales qui, à leur tour s'adressèrent à leurs gouvernements respectifs, ainsi qu'aux diverses associations de défense des droits de l'homme. Wilhelm Filderman, le président de l'UER est parti en France où, accompagné de Narcisse Leven et Alfred Berl, représentants de l'AIU, rencontra, le 18 février 1935, les présidents de la Commission des Affaires étrangères du Sénat et de la Chambre des Députés, respectivement Henry Bérenger et Paul Bastid. Il leur fit un exposé oral sur la législation en cours dans son pays, tandis qu'un mémoire de la part de l'AIU, leur fut aussi remis. Le mémoire (rédigé en fait, par Filderman lui-même), où était dénoncée la discrimination dont les Juifs roumains faisaient l'objet, contenait aussi un appel au gouvernement français. Ce dernier était prié d'intervenir pour le respect des dispositions des traités de paix, pouvant maintenir ainsi son influence en Roumanie, tout en servant en même temps « la cause de l'humanité, qui est aussi celle de la paix ».<sup>19</sup>

Le président de l'AIU, Narcisse Leven, s'adressa aussi bien au gouvernement français qu'au ministre des Affaires étrangères roumain Nicolae Titulescu, par une missive du 22 janvier 1935, demandant que « le danger soit conjuré ».<sup>20</sup> De

même, l'AIU intervint auprès de la presse française : c'est ainsi que le *Journal des Débats* du 15 mars 1935, dans l'article « Le racisme hors d'Allemagne », dénonça l'idée raciste dans l'Allemande hitlérienne, et l'injustice dont les Juifs roumains venaient d'être victimes.

Malgré toutes les interventions, cette loi, promulguée avant même la législation nazie de Nuremberg (15 septembre 1935), resta en vigueur, et fut suivie par la campagne du *numerus proportionalis* et de l'exclusion des Juifs du barreau. La politique de « roumanisation » du gouvernement de Tătărescu fut concrétisée en 1937, par Valeriu Pop, le ministre de l'Industrie et du Commerce, auteur de 13 lois, décrets et règlements discriminatoires dans le domaine de l'enseignement supérieur, de l'enseignement professionnel, dans l'exercice des métiers, du commerce et de la banque.<sup>21</sup> Cette politique arriva au paroxysme avec la massive législation raciste du gouvernement Goga-Cuza (29 décembre 1937 – 10 février 1938), premier gouvernement pro-nazi en Roumanie et deuxième gouvernement antisémite en Europe. Pour contrer le nouvel « antisémitisme d'État », Filderman, bien informé, est parti à Paris, avant même la formation de ce nouveau gouvernement, mettant au courant de ses démarches Adrien Thierry, l'ambassadeur de France en Roumanie (en compagnie duquel il avait fait d'ailleurs le voyage Bucarest-Paris). Dans la capitale française, il prit contact avec le ministre des Affaires étrangères Yvon Delbos, et a pu rencontrer, accompagné d'un délégué de l'Alliance israélite universelle, le président du Conseil des ministres, Léon Blum.

Ce voyage ne fut pas infructueux : l'ambassadeur Thierry a fait part au roi Carol II du mécontentement du Quai d'Orsay. De même, Sir Reginald Hoare s'est entretenu avec Octavian Goga, lui exprimant l'inquiétude du gouvernement et de l'opinion publique de son pays, face à la politique antisémite officielle pratiquée en Roumanie. Suite aux nombreuses interventions de Filderman, et aux puissantes organisations juives occidentales, la Société des Nations a nommé un comité réunissant des délégués d'Iran, France et Grande-Bretagne pour étudier la question juive roumaine. En même temps, le ministre roumain des Affaires étrangères Istrate Micescu s'est vu contraint, le 27 janvier 1938, au cours d'une séance de la commission pour la protection des minorités, de faire des promesses liées au report des décrets antisémites. En fait, le gouvernement roumain, suivant l'exemple du gouvernement allemand, n'avait aucune considération pour la Société des Nations et, par la voix autorisée de A. C. Cuza, fit cette appréciation sur cette organisation internationale : « Je considère la Société des Nations comme un mort qui n'a pas encore été enterré. » L'avalanche des décrets antisémites du gouvernement Goga-Cuza a culminé avec le Décret-loi sur la révision de la citoyenneté (21 janvier 1938), qui a provoqué une puissante réaction de la part des Juifs qui, soutenus par le Conseil central des Juifs de Roumanie, présidé

par Wilhelm Filderman, ont déclenché une véritable « grève économique ». Par l'abstention de toutes opérations d'achat et de vente, par le retrait des dépôts des banques et la vente des actions, ils provoquèrent la chute de la Bourse. La paralysie de l'activité économique a eu pour conséquence la chute du gouvernement resté au pouvoir seulement 44 jours. Malgré quelques assouplissements, la politique antisémite fut poursuivie, surtout par l'application du Décret-loi sur la révision de la citoyenneté : entre 21 janvier 1938 et 15 septembre 1939, les droits de citoyen furent retirés à 225.222 personnes, 36,7 % des Juifs roumains. La chute de la Grande Roumanie en été 1940, le pogrom de Dorohoi (1<sup>er</sup> juillet), le Statut des Juifs (9 août) et les violences du nouveau régime légionnaire-fasciste d'Antonescu (instauré le 6 septembre) ouvrent la période tragique de la Shoah.

#### 4. Observations concernant la réaction politique des Juifs

**F**ACE À l'évolution de l'antisémitisme dans l'entre-deux-guerres, la réaction des Juifs ne fut pas unitaire, conforme à l'image hétérogène de leurs communautés. Pour s'y opposer et pour défendre leurs droits, un autre moyen, hormis la presse, est devenu accessible après l'octroi de la citoyenneté : le combat politique électoral. Trois possibilités s'ouvraient à eux : l'inscription dans un parti politique roumain dont ils acceptaient le programme ; la constitution, comme en Pologne, d'un parti juif ; la conclusion, sous l'égide d'une organisation représentative, des accords avec les partis politiques roumains et (ou) minoritaires.

La première solution proposée par le courant assimilationniste existait déjà parmi les Juifs de l'Ancien Royaume avant 1919. Ses thèses furent exposées par S. Muncel dans un essai intitulé *Les Juifs du pays au croisement des routes*.<sup>22</sup> L'auteur soutient que les Juifs ne constituent pas une nation, par conséquent il ne leur reste qu'une seule possibilité : devenir du point de vue national des Roumains !... Si les partisans de cet auteur furent très peu nombreux, ceci est dû avant tout à l'antisémitisme aggravé après l'émancipation et qui fut le principal obstacle à l'assimilation des Juifs. Un certain nombre de Juifs assimilationnistes dont les dirigeants se recrutèrent parmi les membres de l'Association des réservistes roumains de confession mosaïque du début du siècle, ont fondé une nouvelle organisation intitulée l'Association des Juifs roumains (*Asociația Evreilor Români*, AER). En 1921, à la veille des élections, AER a signé un pacte électoral avec le Parti du Peuple du général Averescu, mais aucun de ses can-

didats ne réussit à se faire élire et l'existence de cette nouvelle organisation fut éphémère.

Sur des positions tout à fait opposées se situaient les adeptes du courant national juif qui regardaient volontiers vers les nouvelles provinces, surtout la Bessarabie et la Bucovine, où le sionisme avait fait des progrès spectaculaires. Dans l'Ancien Royaume, le mouvement sioniste a connu, depuis la fin de la Grande Guerre, un nouvel essor : le siège de la Fédération sioniste fut transféré de Galatz à Bucarest, et parmi ceux qui lui ont apporté un nouveau souffle, il faut citer d'abord l'avocat Mișu Weismann, le médecin L. Mayersohn, le journaliste Moses Schwarzfeld et surtout l'industriel et écrivain A. L. Zissu. Ce dernier a fondé le premier et l'unique quotidien sioniste en langue roumaine, *Mântuirea* (La Rédemption), dont le premier numéro vit le jour le 22 janvier 1919. C'est là que furent publiées les revendications de la Fédération sioniste de Roumanie, ainsi résumées : « la reconnaissance de la nationalité juive en Roumanie, par l'octroi d'une complète autonomie politique, culturelle, religieuse ». Il faut citer encore Samuel Stern-Kohavi, rédacteur de l'hebdomadaire sioniste *Renașterea Noastră* (Notre Renaissance), I. Ludo et Theodor Loewenstein-Lavi, directeurs successifs de la revue officielle de la Fédération sioniste, l'hebdomadaire *Știri din lumea evreiască* (Nouvelles du monde juif), et divers collaborateurs de ces publications sionistes, parmi lesquels Leon Mizrahi, Idov Cohn, M. H. Bady. Le camp sioniste a été celui qui, dès le début de l'octroi de l'émancipation, a été le partisan le plus convaincu de la constitution d'un parti juif, un *desideratum* qui se réalisera seulement dix ans plus tard. Dès 1919, à la veille des élections parlementaires de cette année, A. L. Zissu appela de tous ses vœux une telle création :

*Lorsque les voix des Juifs seront accordées en masse à la cause de notre organisation, qui saura les utiliser comme il faut, nous représenterons – hormis quelques-uns de nos délégués élus, sur la base de la loi des élections, proportionnelle avec la représentation des minorités –, une valeur en plus, car nous serons en mesure d'appuyer un parti démocrate, qui pourra nous aider dans notre lutte. Dans leurs calculs politiques, les partis prendront en considération ce fait et éviteront de se joindre aux blocs antisémites, dans le désir de s'assurer les voix des représentants juifs. Le parti doit se créer immédiatement.*<sup>23</sup>

Dans son livre de souvenirs, le leader sioniste Michael Landau note que la presse roumaine a accueilli cet article « comme une action peu réfléchie de certains serfs qui, hier à peine se sont libérés [...], mais dans la communauté juive, l'émotion fut grande ».<sup>24</sup>

Entre les partisans de l'assimilation totale et le camp sioniste, se situait l'Union des Juifs Indigènes (*Uniunea Evreilor Pământeni*, UEP) dirigée par

Adolphe Stern, et après sa transformation en 1923, en l'Union des Juifs Roumains (*Uniunea Evreilor Români*, UER) par le réputé juriste Wilhelm Filderman. L'objectif essentiel de l'UER fut la conquête définitive des droits politiques et le combat contre l'antisémitisme. L'UER a gardé une attitude ambiguë concernant la reconnaissance des Juifs comme une « minorité nationale », préférant le terme de « *minorité ethnique et religieuse* ». Cette ambiguïté se retrouve chez les gouvernants roumains qui considéraient les Juifs du l'Ancien Royaume comme des Roumains de confession mosaïque, mais regardaient habituellement les Juifs de Transylvanie et de Bucovine comme une minorité nationale, pour les disloquer des blocs hongrois et allemand. Enfin, l'UER a refusé de se transformer en un parti politique, préférant les accords électoraux avec les partis roumains, mais rejetant ceux avec les partis des autres minorités nationales. Ainsi, à la veille de 1927, un accord fut conclu avec le Parti national libéral dirigé par Ion I. C. Brătianu, sur la base des revendications concernant le statut du culte mosaïque, des communautés juives et de leurs institutions scolaires. Trois des quatre candidats unionistes ont été élus pour la Chambre des députés : W. Filderman à Bucarest, H. Carp à Bălți et E. Iacoby à Cluj. Ce dernier accord a pu être signé grâce à l'intervention décisive d'un ami de Filderman, le docteur Blumenfeld-Scrutator, qui expliqua la tactique des cartels avec les partis de gouvernement, adoptée par l'UER, comme une politique délibérée pour mettre un obstacle à « l'antisémitisme d'en haut ». Il s'agit d'une politique ponctuelle qui était possible, selon lui, dans un pays où

*dans les masses populaires il n'existe pas de haine religieuse, ni l'antisémitisme généralisé et atavique ; dans un tel pays si l'on obtient que l'impulsion antisémite ne parte pas du centre, la vie tranquille de la population juive est alors assurée pour les trois-quarts. Par la pratique, pendant des années, des accords avec le gouvernement, les préfets, les maires, les juges, les gendarmes, les professeurs, etc., finiront par comprendre que le gouvernement ne veut pas l'antisémitisme ; l'on arrivera ainsi, petit à petit à déraciner de l'âme de la classe des fonctionnaires l'idée profondément ancrée que le Juif doit rester hors la loi.*<sup>25</sup>

Le système des accords avec les partis politiques de gouvernement est dénommé « politique saxonne » (*politica săsească*) d'après l'exemple de la minorité allemande saxonne de Transylvanie qui, en échange d'une certaine autonomie interne et certains avantages, offrait son appui à n'importe quel régime et gouvernement. Le même docteur Blumenfeld-Scrutator, adepte de la « politique saxonne », s'opposa par contre à la constitution d'un parti juif. Un tel parti, pensait-il, ne pouvait obtenir la réalisation de ses *désiderata*, étant donné qu'il n'y avait pas d'État juif pour les soutenir. Il provoquerait un schisme dans la communauté juive, où nombreux étaient ceux qui s'opposaient au nationalisme juif.



Les élections de 1928, ont creusé le fossé entre l'Union des Juifs Roumains (UER) et les sionistes des nouvelles provinces qui avaient soutenu le Parti national paysan, le grand vainqueur du scrutin. Les sionistes favorisés par leur alliance avec le PNT eurent quatre élus réunis dans un Club parlementaire juif : dr. Mayer Ebner, sénateur et les députés dr. Theodor Fischer, dr. Iosif Fischer et Michael Landau, originaire de Hârlău<sup>26</sup> et établi à Chişinău où il a dirigé le seul quotidien yiddish *Unzer Tsait* (Notre Temps) de l'entre-deux guerres, le secrétaire de ce club fut Mişu Benvenisti, le dirigeant du cercle *Renaşterea* (Renaissance), fondé en 1924, par d'anciens membres de l'association des étudiants sionistes *Hasmonea*. Ce cercle fut à l'origine de la création, en 1930, du Parti juif de l'Ancien Royaume (*Partidul Evreiesc din Regat*), transformé, suite à une grande conférence tenue le 4 mai 1931, à laquelle furent présents des délégués de toutes les provinces, dans le Parti juif de Roumanie (*Partidul Evreiesc din România*), dont l'objectif proclamé fut le combat pour obtenir de l'État roumain la reconnaissance – pour les Juifs – des droits des minorités nationales.<sup>27</sup> Au cours des élections de la même année, il obtint 64.193 voix (2,19 %) et cinq mandats. Afin que toutes les provinces fussent représentées au parlement, le Parti juif procéda à un « arrangement » : Mayer Ebner, président de la fraction parlementaire juive dans la précédente législature et Theodor Fischer, futur président du parti, cédèrent leur mandats à Sami (Shmuel) Singher de l'Ancien Royaume et à Michael Landau de Bessarabie. Ces derniers rejoignirent ainsi leurs collègues élus : Manfred Reifer et Max Diamant en Bucovine et Iosif Fischer en Transylvanie. Aux élections de juillet 1932, après la démission du gouvernement Iorga, le Parti juif obtint 67.582 voix (2,26 %) et toujours cinq députés, tous élus des nouvelles provinces : deux de Bessarabie (Mişu Weismann et Michael Landau), deux de Transylvanie (Iosif Fischer et Ernest Marton) et un de Bucovine (Mayer Ebner). Aux élections de décembre 1933, dans des conditions de terreur électorale exceptionnelle, le Parti juif n'obtint que 38.565 voix (1,29 %) et aucune place au Parlement. À partir de cette année, il n'y eut plus aucun parlementaire juif, exception faite du grand rabbin I. Niemirower, représentant du culte israélite au Sénat. D'autre part, avec la montée de l'antisémitisme, l'UER ne trouva plus (depuis 1932) aucun parti politique roumain susceptible de signer un accord avec elle. Cette nouvelle situation rapprocha les positions de l'UER et du Parti juif qui constituèrent, le 29 janvier 1936, le Conseil central des Juifs de Roumanie (*Consiliul Central al Evreilor din România*), présidé par Wilhelm Filderman, un front commun pour combattre ensemble l'antisémitisme devenu partie intégrante de la politique gouvernementale. L'isolement politique des Juifs grandit et se fit particulièrement sentir en 1937, aux dernières élections de la Roumanie de l'entre-deux-guerres. Aussi bien les libéraux que les nationaux-paysans qui signèrent même un « pacte de non-agression » avec Codreanu, le chef de la Garde

de Fer, refusèrent toute collaboration avec les Juifs. Un rapprochement avec les autres groupes minoritaires était tout à fait exclu : les Allemands connaissaient un processus de nazification prononcée et les Magyars avaient embrassé la politique antisémite officielle instaurée à Budapest (et les derniers « Juifs hongrois » de Transylvanie avaient quitté le Parti magyar<sup>28</sup>...). Cet isolement ne profita cependant pas au Parti juif qui espéra un appui massif de la part des Juifs, surtout après la création du Conseil central des Juifs de Roumanie. Ses attentes furent déçues, et il n'obtint que 43.681 voix (1,42 %) et aucun représentant au Parlement. Il est vrai qu'en 1937, la situation interne de la Roumanie était devenue critique... À la différence de la Pologne, les Juifs de Roumanie n'ont pas créé un Parti socialiste juif, et à la différence de la Hongrie, l'appui juif accordé aux socialistes ne fut important que dans les années 1920.

## 5. Conclusion

**L'**ANTISÉMITISME FUT un aspect essentiel de la société roumaine dans l'entre-deux-guerres et non un phénomène mineur et passager. La plupart de ses fondements idéologiques hérités du XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle – religieux, économiques, xénophobes – persistent après la Grande Guerre. Cependant, dans la Grande Roumanie, l'antisémitisme devint, selon nous, le vecteur du nationalisme roumain, en raison de l'irritant contexte d'une palette variée des minorités nationales cherchant à garder leur individualité. Dans les milieux nationalistes, les Juifs étaient perçus comme une entité étrangère, menaçant l'homogénéité du peuple roumain.

Pendant toute la période 1922-1933, les gouvernements au pouvoir ont affirmé à l'étranger la fidélité aux principes de la démocratie et la volonté de faire cesser les désordres antisémites. En fait, leur attitude a été plus que tolérante face aux agitations récurrentes des étudiants et de l'extrême-droite, tandis que les responsables des troubles et émeutes antijuives furent rarement et toujours légèrement punis. D'autre part, devant tenir compte des puissances occidentales et surtout la France, les gouvernements de Roumanie ont refusé, à la différence de la Hongrie voisine, d'instituer officiellement le *numerus clausus*. Celui-ci s'est cependant concrétisé dans les faits, par des violences permanentes à l'encontre des étudiants juifs, molestés et empêchés de suivre les cours, contraints de s'expatrier en grand nombre.<sup>29</sup>

Comment peut-on évaluer la réaction politique des Juifs dans la perspective de l'utilisation du droit de vote ? À partir de 1920, environ 160.000 jusqu'à 165.000 Juifs ont pu se présenter aux urnes et, en 1935, leur nombre s'éleva à 185.000.<sup>30</sup> L'hétérogénéité des Juifs de la Grande Roumanie, l'inexpérience

politique de ceux de l'Ancien Royaume récemment émancipés, explique pour une large part la dispersion des voix juives.<sup>31</sup> L'UER soutint pendant des années le Parti national libéral (PNL) malgré son antisémitisme « modéré », et sur ses listes furent élus nombre de députés et de sénateurs juifs. L'UER collabora aussi, quoique ponctuellement avec le Parti du Peuple du général Averescu, et même avec les nationaux-paysans. Le Parti juif, dont les sympathies se dirigèrent vers le Parti national paysan, n'a pas réussi à s'assurer la majorité des voix juives, obtenant seulement en 1931 et 1932 la moitié environ des voix des Juifs des territoires rattachés (l'apport des voix de ces derniers étant de 80 % et ceux de l'Ancien Royaume de seulement 20 %).

Dans les conditions particulières de corruption et de terreur électorale, les deux grandes organisations juives – l'UER et le Parti juif – n'ont réussi que partiellement à se faire entendre au Parlement. La « politique juive » de leurs représentants dans la Chambre des Députés et au Sénat s'est traduite cependant par la défense exemplaire des droits des Juifs, faisant en permanence référence aux engagements de la Roumanie à la Conférence de paix de Paris. Précisément ces droits, comme ceux des autres minorités du pays et des États voisins et que les différents traités de paix entendaient sauvegarder, ne pesèrent pas lourd dans la *politique nationale* de leurs gouvernements respectifs, surtout après 1933, après la montée du nazisme et du fascisme. En Roumanie, toute intervention et référence évoquant la nécessité de respecter les droits octroyés par la Conférence de la Paix, étaient perçues comme une ingérence intolérable dans les affaires intérieures du pays.



## Annexe

Lettre du Comité directeur de l'Alliance israélite de Paris  
à Constantin Diamandy, l'ambassadeur de Roumanie en France  
(3 février 1927)

Alliance Israélite Universelle  
45 rue La Bruyère

Paris, le 3 février 1927

Son Excellence Monsieur Diamandy, Ministre de Roumanie, Paris

Monsieur le Ministre,

Les violences dont les Juifs de Roumanie sont l'objet depuis plusieurs mois ont provoqué dans le monde israélite une émotion profonde et que nous avons le devoir de signaler au représentant de la Roumanie à Paris.

Nous n'entrerons pas dans le détail des incidents qui se sont déroulés dans nombre de localités, dans les Universités, dans les trains, dans la rue : ils vous sont connus. Les démentis qui y ont été apportés sont contredits par des faits incontestables. Le citoyen israélite roumain vit actuellement dans une constante inquiétude, sous une impression d'insécurité morale et matérielle ; ses droits de citoyen sont méconnus ; il ne se sent pas protégé contre les agissements des semeurs de haine, des organisateurs de violences. Journallement il arrive à Paris des étudiants qu'on a malmenés et forcés de quitter l'Université ; d'honorables commerçants, des ouvriers à qui l'existence est rendue intolérable.

De différents côtés, il a été suggéré d'adresser à la Société des Nations un appel en faveur de ces populations juives auxquelles le Traité de Paix signé par la Roumanie avec les Puissances alliées assure « pleine et entière protection de leur vie et de leur liberté » (article 2) et reconnaît « l'égalité des droits civils et politiques » (Art. 8).

Nous vous serions très reconnaissants, Monsieur le Ministre, de vouloir bien faire part au Gouvernement Royal de Bucarest des vives préoccupations que cause au judaïsme tout entier la grave situation présente des Juifs roumains et lui recommander de prendre des mesures efficaces pour mettre fin à un état de choses tel que la Roumanie passe actuellement pour le pays du monde où les israélites sont les plus malheureux.

Veuillez agréer, Monsieur le Ministre, l'assurance de notre profond respect.

Pour le Comité Central,  
Le Secrétaire Général  
(Signature) Jacques Bigart

SOURCE: Archives du ministère des Affaires étrangères, Bucarest, *Problema 33 (Chestiuni privitoare la evrei)*, vol. 5 (1927).

## Notes

1. Carol Iancu, « Lupta internațională pentru emanciparea evreilor din România. De la Congresul de la Paris (1856) la Tratatul minorităților (1919) », in *O sută de ani după Tratatul minorităților (1919). Aspecte din istoria și civilizația evreilor din România*, coord. Carol Iancu, avec la participation de Alin Popa, Bucarest, Editura Academiei Române, 2020, p. 53-80.
2. Carol Iancu, « Argument : Tratatul minorităților și statutul juridic al evreilor », in *O sută de ani după Tratatul minorităților (1919)*, vol. cit., p. XV-XXII.
3. Carol Iancu, *Les Juifs en Roumanie (1919-1938). De l'émancipation à la marginalisation*, préface de Pierre Guiral, postface de Gérard Nahon, Paris-Louvain, Editions Peeters, 1996, p. 57.
4. Carol Iancu, *Le Combat international pour l'émancipation des Juifs de Roumanie. Documents et témoignages*, vol. I (1913-1919), Tel Aviv, Centre Goldstein-Goren pour l'Histoire des Juifs de Roumanie, Institut de Recherche de la Diaspora, Université de Tel Aviv, 1994, p. 296 (Doc. n° 293).

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6. Cf. Lucian Nastasă (dir.), *Antisemitismul universitar în România (1919-1939). Mărturii documentare*, avec une préface de Carol Iancu, Cluj-Napoca, Editura Institutului pentru Studiarea Problemelor Minorităților Naționale, Kriterion, 2011.
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9. Archives Yad Vashem, Jérusalem, *Fonds Filderman* P6 n° 12.
10. Rapport de Sartiges, chargé d'Affaires de France à Bucarest au ministre des Affaires étrangères français, Archives du ministère des Affaires étrangères, Bucarest, Europe Z 576-4, f°198-199, r°-v°. Cf. aussi Carol Iancu, *Les Juifs de Roumanie et la solidarité internationale. Documents diplomatiques inédits (1919-1939)*, Montpellier, Université Paul Valéry – Montpellier III, 2006, p. 82-84.
11. *Les Archives juives* (Paris) a consacré un numéro special à cet événement (n°52, 30 décembre 1926).
12. Le Comité des Délégations juives de Paris adressa à la Société des Nations, le 17 janvier 1927, une pétition où était désavouée l'inaction des autorités roumaines devant ces excès. Voir Société des Nations, Minorités en Roumanie, *Pétition du Comité des Délégations juives*, Genève, 1927.
13. Archives du ministère des Affaires étrangères, Bucarest, *Problema 33 (Chestiuni pri-vitoare la evrei)*, vol. 5 (1927).
14. Voir l'Annexe où je reproduis le texte entier de cette lettre signée par Jacques Bigart, le secrétaire général de l'AIU.
15. *Monitorul Oficial* (Bucarest), 18 décembre 1927.
16. Horia Carp, *Discursuri parlamentare. Sesiunea Senatului Oct. 1927–Aprilie 1928*, Bucarest, Atelierele « Adeverul », 1928, p. 50.
17. Iancu, *Les Juifs de Roumanie et la solidarité internationale*, op. cit., p. 119 (Doc. n° 33).
18. *Ibid.*, p. 111-117 (du Doc. n° 22 et jusqu'au Doc. n° 31).
19. Cf. Iancu, *Les Juifs de Roumanie et la solidarité internationale*, op. cit., p. 140 (Doc. n° 48).
20. Archives de l'AIU, *Roumanie*, IX C59.
21. Cf. Iancu, *Les Juifs en Roumanie (1918-1938)*, op. cit., p. 299-301.
22. S. Muncel, *Evreii Țării la o năspântie*, Bucarest, Viața Românească, 1921.
23. *Mântuirea* (Bucarest), 16 novembre 1918.
24. Michael Landau, *O viață de luptă*, Tel Aviv, Bronfman & Cohen, 1971, p. 195.
25. Dr. Cl. Blumenfeld-Scrutator, *Greșeli în politica evreiască. Conferința ținută la Iași și București, în zilele de 2 și 6 februarie 1929*, avec une étude-préface de C. Stere, Bucarest, Atelierele « Adeverul », 1929, p. 45.
26. Michael Landau (1895-1976), blessé pendant la Grande Guerre, a étudié à la Faculté de Droit de Iași et fut avocat à Chișinău où il a dirigé les journaux yiddish *Der Id* et *Unser Zeit*. Député au Parlement roumain (1928-1934), dirigeant sioniste, membre du Parti juif, il a fait son *alya* en 1935, et fut fonctionnaire supérieur au Minis-

tère des Finances de l'État d'Israël. Voir Carol Iancu, *Evreii din Hârlău. Istoria unei comunități*, 2<sup>e</sup> édition, révisée et augmentée, préface d'Alexandru Zub et Avant Propos d'Alexandru-Florin Platon, Iași, Editura Universității « Alexandru Ioan Cuza », 2017, p. 217.

27. *Programul și statutele Partidului evreesc din România...*, Bucarest, s.n., 1934, p. 3-4.
28. Attila Gidó, « Transylvanian Jewish Loyalties in Interwar Romania », *Jewish Culture and History*, <https://doi.org/10.1080/1462169X.2021.1956784>.
29. Entre 1926 et 1940, 149 étudiants juifs originaires de 76 localités de Roumanie ont commencé leurs études à la Faculté de Médecine de Montpellier, leur nombre en 1933, s'éleva à 79 (10 % de l'ensemble des étudiants). Voir Carol Iancu, « Les Étudiants juifs étrangers à la Faculté de médecine de Montpellier, de la fin du XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle et jusqu'à la Deuxième Guerre mondiale », in Carol Iancu et Alexandru-Florin Platon (dir.), *Profesori și studenți evrei/Enseignants et étudiants juifs*, Iași, Editura Universității « Alexandru Ioan Cuza », 2012, p. 158.
30. Voir Bela Vago, « The Jewish Vote in Romania between the Two World Wars », *The Jewish Journal of Sociology*, vol. XIV, n° 2, 1972, p. 239.
31. Voir Raphael Vago, « Romanian Jewry during the Interwar Period », in *The Tragedy of Romanian Jewry*, éd. Randolph L. Braham, New York, Columbia University Press, 1994, p. 48.

## Abstract

### Antisemitism in Interwar Romania and the Political Reaction of the Jews

Antisemitism was a constant presence in interwar Romania, but took different forms during 1919–1933 and 1934–1939, respectively. The first period was marked by the granting of civil rights under the Constitution of 1923, but also by their questioning through the Mârzescu Law (1924) and various other legal bills, as well as by recurring anti-Jewish unrest provoked by the students, stimulated by the far right organizations and their ideologues. The second period was marked by the return to an anti-Jewish legislation, and, ultimately, by a large scale withdrawal of citizenship. This article provides a chronological overview of the anti-Semitic manifestations of these two periods, and of the political reaction of the Jews, particularly through electoral challenges. For as long as the Jewish population could have representatives in the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate, “Jewish politics” translated into an exemplary defense of its rights, in constant relation to the engagements undertaken by Romania at the Paris Peace Conference.

## Keywords

Mârzescu Law (1924), *numerus clausus*, student anti-Semitic unrest, Union of Romanian Jews, Jewish Party, parliamentary elections

# Blaga

MARTA PETREU

## Piously, on Race



*Lucian Blaga*  
(1895–1961)

### Marta Petreu

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### “I am an apolitical person”

**L**UCIAN BLAGA kept his distance from politics in his vast literary and philosophical work. He was not a politician, nor was he an intellectual fascinated by power games, seeking to influence them through critical or propaganda pieces or by joining a party and running for office. “In politics, I haven’t yet thrown in my lot with anybody, and I am reluctant to do so, at least for the time being,”<sup>21</sup> Blaga wrote to Sextil Pușcariu in 1931. Or: “He [Zevedei Barbu] knew me to be an apolitical person, or so I believe. I did not talk to him about politics,”<sup>22</sup> declared he on 29 November 1943 as a witness for the defense in the trial of Zevedei Barbu, his assistant at that time, tried in a military court under the charge of communist affiliation. Or: “In 1939 I returned to the home country. Both until and after that time I carried out no political activity whatsoever, and I was never the member of a political party. I devoted my life to literary and philosophical creation and

to my duty as a servant of my country,”<sup>3</sup> the philosopher claimed in an autobiography in 1958. [I am] “someone who stayed away from politics even in the past,”<sup>4</sup> as he mentioned in passing during a private conversation with a literary critic from the city of Timișoara, who visited him in the autumn of 1960 and whom he welcomed with great confidence—but everything he said to the man was immediately reported to the Securitate.

His lack of interest in politics was also noticed by one of his interviewers, in the autumn of 1934:

*[Octav Șuluțiu]: The intellectuals’ reluctance to engage in politics is increasingly perceived as something akin to treason. How do you see the relation between intellectuals and politics? Is there any compatibility between them and political involvement?*

*[Blaga]: The issue of the intellectual’s involvement in politics is a personal one. It all depends on one’s temperament. We cannot speak of a general attitude of intellectuals in regard to politics.*

*[Șuluțiu]: But in dictatorships, even if they are of the left, the intellectuals have been compelled to speak in support of the regime.*

*[Blaga]: This has to do with the primacy of the political dimension within all extremist trends. In equal measure within all of them. We cannot say that one protects culture and the intellectuals more than another. Generally speaking, however, the alleged political positioning of intellectuals in dictatorships is merely their passive regimentation, which allows them to work in peace and be left to their own devices.*

*[Șuluțiu’s comment:] As we can see, Lucian Blaga finds politics of little interest. He reluctantly answers the questions above. But his eyes sparkle and his expression becomes vibrant the instant I bring up philosophy.<sup>5</sup>*

Thus, Blaga showed no interest in politics and did not try—like other intellectuals of his time, such as Constantin Rădulescu-Motru, Mihai Ralea, Ion Petrovici, Nichifor Crainic, and others—to combine his creative activity with one that would grant him access to power. While other intellectuals were becoming ministers, directors, members of parliament, etc., Blaga was striving to become... a professor in Cluj, a dream he had been pursuing since 1919 and which he fulfilled only in the autumn of 1938. Until then, his tortuous career path saw him as: a journalist in Cluj (early 1920s); an unemployed person, living with his wife’s family in Lugoj (May 1924–late 1926), during which time he devised delightful ads for the dental office of his wife, Cornelia; then, from late 1926 to April 1939, a long stay abroad, in Warsaw, Prague, Bern, Vienna, filling positions “on the fringes of the diplomatic service,” as he put it in an essay,<sup>6</sup> serving successively as a press attaché, press secretary, and eventually—due



to King Carol II, who held him in some regard—as a diplomat in the full sense of the word, for he became an envoy extraordinary and minister plenipotentiary of Romania in Portugal (April 1938–March 1939).

In a way, his declared lack of interest in politics could simply indicate that he had had enough of it, because during his work in the various Romanian legations Blaga was officially tasked with monitoring the political situation in the host country, the manner in which Romanian political developments were covered in the press of the country in question, and then report back to the Romanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. His job was to write about the political situation in the host country, as reflected in the press and as revealed by his own numerous contacts; whenever he deemed it necessary, he provided explanations for the situation presented, so that his superiors in Romania could understand the matters without having to resort to additional documentation; similarly, he wrote briefs about the coverage of Romanian affairs in the country in question—and we know that Cornelia Blaga helped him with the latter. While working at the Romanian Legation in Vienna, he constantly reported on German national-socialism and its infiltration of Austrian politics. As the far-right movement gained momentum in Romania and began to generate events that were commented upon in the press of the country where Blaga was posted, he proceeded to write summaries of these articles. He was constantly informed on the political developments in the home country and also knew what was being said about Romania in the country where he worked; by the very nature of his profession, he was familiar with both A. C. Cuza's and the legionary movement, also understanding quite well what Italian fascism, national socialism, and communism stood for. Sent to Romania with clockwork regularity, Blaga's reports clearly demonstrate that he was quite knowledgeable when it came to all parties and political movements in Romania, the Legionary Movement included. His reports<sup>7</sup> are those of a diagnostician who identifies the presence of one phenomenon or another and neutrally informs Bucharest about it. Technical, neat, and precise, his reports and notes are therefore most impressive indeed. On the basis of those of his reports that were published,<sup>8</sup> we can conclude that, apart from proving Blaga's affection for his country and his impeccable credentials as a public servant, they give no indication whatsoever that their author sympathized in any way with one or another Romanian political party or movement, or with any European political ideology.

Given his lack of interest in the political-social life and (what I assume to be) his saturation when it came to politics, in his vast work Blaga devoted little if any space to such topics. He is one of the very few Romanian philosophers, or indeed one of the few Romanian authors, who wrote no critical pieces about the social and political world, no propaganda texts or materials in support of a

political project, and also did not personally devise a project or political program meant to “save,” organize, and bring happiness to a contemporaneous or future Romania. From this point of view, he was quite *clean*. His interests lay elsewhere, and he pursued them in the fields of philosophy and poetry.

It is highly unusual, therefore, that when in 1935 the periodical *Gândirea* (The Thought) devoted an entire issue to a subject matter that was, alas, highly topical in Europe at that time, namely, that of “race,” Blaga joined other authors and contributed a text on this particular issue.

### “On Race As a Style.” 1935

**T**ITLED “DESPRE rasă ca stil” (On race as a style), Blaga’s piece is truly wonderful. He sees race as a reality (this was the general perception at that time, and the philosopher in no way felt he was committing an act of heresy<sup>10</sup>), but a reality shaped by *stylistic factors*. The philosopher indicates that, although he has studied biology and kept up with the discoveries in the field, he doubts the fact that “the scientists who claim to have worked out, using *scientific* methods, the issue of the races in all its complexity” actually managed to produce any valid conclusions; in point of fact, he calls them “charlatans.” In his opinion,

*the issue of the races, in many of its aspects, is not a scientific one. There are aspects pertaining to it which a researcher can only approach and decide upon from the vantage point of metaphysics, morals, and aesthetics, that is, from the perspective of desiderata and values which far exceed the scope and the possible achievements of science.*

As scientists had compromised the issue by the very nature of their approach, Blaga suggested no more and no less than

*a request for a ban—let’s say, by way of an international convention—on the investigation of this issue, for at least another hundred years. Or, more precisely: let us ask science to confine itself to the matters that truly fall within its scope.*

This is not an anti-science attitude, for Blaga was also familiar with both the history of science and the science of his time, and was often inspired by them, but rather a philosopher’s attempt to correctly set out the problem of the *existing kinds of people*, so to speak. It must be said that Hitler’s Germany was claiming that all of its policies, the anti-Semitic ones included, were based on *science*. Ger-

many was allegedly resorting to the science of biology and presented its racist policies as the logically unavoidable application of scientific conclusions. The Soviet Union, the other type of totalitarianism (and the first one in chronological order), was doing the same thing; the only difference was that the Soviet discrimination against certain social classes was based on the laws of history as formulated by Marx and on Marxist political economy.<sup>11</sup> Before these first two totalitarian states, the Soviet Union and Hitler's Germany, no one had invoked "science" as a supreme instance, as the reason behind the allegedly scientific, and therefore "legitimate" and implacable," pursuit of murderous policies: the class struggle and the racial struggle. At that time, a number of more or less "scientific" discoveries led to conclusions and political measures that made the 20<sup>th</sup> century a bloodbath, the century of mass murder.

In keeping with his outlook on the human being—which, according to him, as a result of the ontological mutation was experiencing a distinct existence, as an entity that required metaphysics, morals, and aesthetics—Blaga transferred the problem from the realm of science to that "of desiderata and values," in other words, to the field of axiology. He suggested that "for the time being, we should see race as an unfathomable fact of nature, and discuss it the way we usually discuss a human reality within a universe of human values."

For him, "in the current understanding of the term, the word 'race' is nearly synonymous to 'biological style'." The philosopher contends that, in the fashion of cultural styles, there might be biological styles present with the human race. Therefore, he approaches race in terms of his philosophy, in terms of style, seeing it as a complex human reality that needs to be discussed "using those terms that are closest to our intuition and feelings," namely, those of "sensibility" and "human values." Blaga was quite acquainted with Houston Stewart Chamberlain's famous *Die Grundlagen des neunzehnten Jahrhunderts*<sup>12</sup> (The foundations of the nineteenth century) of 1899, and even quoted from it; however, instead of approaching race in biological terms, in the wake of Chamberlain, who was one of the theorists of anti-Semitic racism, he sets it on the spiritual plane of human values, as according to him that was the only approach likely to make the issue "intelligible." Contrary to Chamberlain, the axiological criteria he employs indicate that things like "racial purity" or the particular race of one population or another are of no consequence:

*In what follows I shall not be in the least concerned with the anthropological affiliation of the Sibiu shepherds to any particular "race," or with the "purity" of said race, and not even with the question whether the Romanians inhabiting other regions may or may not belong, from an anthropological point of view, to another race or mix of races.*

When asked about the reasons behind the excessive attention enjoyed by beautiful people, Aristotle retorted: “That . . . is a question fit for a blind man to ask.”<sup>13</sup> In a similar vein, Blaga argues that “the phenomenon of race, just like the phenomenon of style, is best understood if one positions himself right in front of it and points to it within its concrete universe and atmosphere.” The sight of a group of Jewish children, somewhere in northern Transylvania, and the image of the shepherds from the region of Sibiu delight him in equal measure:

*Years ago, as I was travelling across northern Transylvania, I had to spend the night in a Jewish village; I went to a dark and smoky inn. I was offered a room. In the morning, as I left my room, I stepped into a small square courtyard, lined with verandas. Perfectly framed in the center of this closed courtyard was a gazebo overgrown with vines. It was a splendid May morning. In the gazebo, set at a table, about half a dozen lads of the biblical age of 12, their hair red like the autumn leaves on the vines, with spiraling forelocks and with eyes more lively than those of squirrels. In the fresh air of this sunny morning, the children were having a heated discussion over a huge copy of the Old Testament which lay open on the table, exchanging glances and guttural retorts. So caught were they in their discussion that not a single one noticed me, even if I was right behind them. I stood there for a while, looking at these scions of patriarchs and muttered to myself, as a commentary on the whole picture, the word “race”!*

*Ours is a country of considerable human diversity, but I experienced this strong sense of being in the presence of the race only when coming into contact with our shepherds from Poiana Sibiului. In these proud shepherds we see the full manifestation of the physical and spiritual qualities specific to the Romanian Carpathian people, qualities which in other regions—on account of misery or of rather well-known historical circumstances—have remained in latent form, or failed to fully develop. These shepherds demonstrably approximate the average level that our race may reach. I can assume, however, that some time ago, going back maybe a century or two, the race of these shepherds was even more thriving than today. Since then there have been developments rather known to the doctors in the region, which most certainly triggered the unfortunate physical decline of this splendid lot. At any rate, this observation in no way changes my belief that the shepherds from Poiana Sibiului are one of the apices of the Romanian biological style.*

Blaga considered that the human groups called races deserved to be seen with respect, as the embodiment of the “styles” in which humankind exists: “In the presence of races, as vital and spiritual styles, one possessed of a flexible stylistic sensibility can experience states akin to piety, similar to those inspired by the original phenomena of nature,” contended the philosopher, also echoing the

vocabulary of Goethe. Still, he was aware of the risk that some theorists may “unfortunately” possess “a *rigid* stylistic sensibility,” in which case

*we witness the disgraceful and lumbering phenomenon that we call “racist messianism.” This phenomenon entails the glorification of the physical and spiritual values of a single race. Racist messianism is characterized by the belief that one specific human race possesses all the qualities that God intended to bestow upon humankind, and that all the other races share these qualities only partially or in a distorted or perverted manner.*

Racist messianism “of any kind has always been afflicted by a painful blindness to all the virtues of other races,” it openly or surreptitiously promotes “the spiritual, physical, and economic imperialism of a single race,” an attitude which “is completely unjustifiable.” And “[a] people struck by this spiritual blindness is unable to surpass itself and can only see itself.” In Blaga’s opinion, Chamberlain himself is a theorist affected by this spiritual blindness:

*This blindness I have just mentioned did not spare even some outstanding thinkers. When it comes to Huston Stewart Chamberlain, one of the favorite theorists of German national-socialism, who on more than one occasion has approached the issue of race as such in a rather fortunate perspective, our main objection concerns his much too rigid stylistic sensibility. This lack of flexibility has rendered him incapable of perceiving anything that does not bear the blond hallmark of Germanism.*

On the other hand, Blaga quite straightforwardly argued, “those Europeans willing to learn something, or to expand and nuance a bit their stylistic sensibility, are invited to read or at least leaf through Frobenius’s pieces on African cultures.” As we have seen above, in this article he referred to Jewishness, from the vantage point of his own philosophy of culture, pleading for a “quasi-religious respect” towards any form of human life and rejecting “racist messianism” as an act of blindness. The author’s conclusion points to *ecumenism* in regard to any human reality: “The sense of piety in regard to the phenomenon of races, the only feeling that can pave the way towards an *ecumenical* framework, compels us to be ourselves, under our stars, and to allow others to be themselves, under their own stars.”<sup>14</sup>

Blaga was therefore immune to the racist trend that gained momentum all over Europe in the 1930s and reached disturbing heights once Hitler became chancellor of Germany. On the contrary, by professing his *piety* in regard to all the peoples of the world, he openly challenged the racist and anti-Semitic

ideas of “one of the favorite theorists of German national socialism,” H. S. Chamberlain.

His quintessential “ecumenism” on the issue of races, nations, and peoples is also illustrated by the fact that when, in 1929, he contributed a presentation of the immediately contemporaneous Romanian literature to the Swiss periodical *Bund*, his list of representative authors—which featured the names of Tudor Arghezi, George Bacovia, Nichifor Crainic, Ion Pillat, Adrian Maniu, Ion Vinea, Tristan Tzara, Ion Barbu, Ștefan Nenițescu, Aron Cotruș, Perpessicius, Alexandru A. Philippide, Demostene Botez, Emil Isac, Vasile Voiculescu, I. M. Sadoveanu, Liviu Rebreanu, Emanoil Bucuța, Cezar Petrescu, F. Aderca, Gib I. Mihăescu, Ionel Teodoreanu, Mateiu I. Caragiale, Ion Călugăru, and Al. O. Teodoreanu<sup>15</sup>—was strictly based on the criterion of value, on their literary achievements in the Romanian language, disregarding any other considerations (ethnic, racial, etc.).

## Undersecretary of State in the Goga–Cuza Government. 1938

**T**HIS WAS Blaga’s stance on the issues of races, of Jewishness, and of the Romanian cultural identity in the 1920s and the 1930s. Interested exclusively in his own work, on the one hand, and on fulfilling his dream of becoming a professor at Cluj University, on the other, in late 1937 Blaga nevertheless found himself embroiled in politics.

The man responsible for this development was the king himself. Carol II appointed the philosopher to work as a technocrat without political affiliation in the Goga–Cuza government (29 December 1937–10 February 1938), a government that was the stopgap solution<sup>16</sup> chosen by the sovereign as no political party had managed to gain enough seats to form a government in the parliamentary elections of December 1937, while the Iron Guard had done quite well (getting 15.58% of the votes). For want of a better alternative and after much deliberation, the king turned to Octavian Goga, whom he otherwise despised: “I am therefore left with just one constitutional solution, namely, to resort to Goga and Cuza’s National Christians. Of course, it is an unfortunate solution, but it is the least unfortunate one.”<sup>17</sup> The king was counting on the fact that “Goga in particular, and also Cuza, are the sworn enemies of the Iron Guard and are determined to do anything to wipe them out.” The poet accepted to become prime minister “on the conditions set by me,” as Carol II happily recorded, alluding to the fact that some of the ministers had been appointed by the king

himself, for instance, some dissident members of the National Peasants' Party, intended to be a "democratic infiltration" into the government likely to forestall "certain fearsome excesses," or indeed anti-Semitism. In fact, this moderating element did not prevent the Goga–Cuza government from recasting the citizenship legislation,<sup>18</sup> that is, from adopting anti-Semitic laws, or from taking other measures that marked the beginning of state-sanctioned anti-Semitism, paved the way towards authoritarian/totalitarian regimes in Romania, and signaled the twilight of democracy. Most disturbing indeed is the fact that the king—whose mistress was Elena Lupescu, a beautiful lady of Jewish extraction—had factored in an anti-Semitic political shift from the very beginning:

*The first measure he wants to implement is to revise the status of the Jews, of those who fraudulently entered the Country after 1919; he wants to deprive them of citizenship. I believe that this will affect a very small minority, and it may in fact rid us of some ballast, which could be good for the time being.*<sup>19</sup>

The king also took into account the possible backlash from abroad. Happy to note that Foreign Minister Istrate Micescu was "the smartest of the lot," Carol pitied him for the challenging task ahead: "Given the violent attacks likely to come from Geneva, poor Micescu will have to carefully prepare his material and his explanations."<sup>20</sup>

It was this government, put together by the king after rather cynical-pragmatic calculations, that Blaga joined as an undersecretary of state in the Ministry of External Affairs.<sup>21</sup> He was not the member of a political party and had not run in the parliamentary elections. In early 1937 Blaga had been a press attaché in Bern, and in the second half of that year he had once again prepared his bid for a teaching position at King Ferdinand I University of Cluj, something he had coveted since 1919. In November 1937, the news that the long-awaited competitive selection had been cancelled<sup>22</sup> came as a serious blow. The month of December found him in Sibiu, living in the house of one of his brothers. It was there that he received the summons from Bucharest.

Two factors contributed to Blaga's appointment to this most unfortunate government. First and foremost, the king's newfound interest in his person, as seen during the philosopher's acceptance to the Romania Academy (5 June 1937), when the sovereign, in a remarkable speech, praised him as a representative of *their* generation (Blaga's and the king's) who was creating the "modern and living literature"<sup>23</sup> of Romania, of *His* country. Another most likely factor was the fact that Blaga was related to Veturia Goga, "a woman the likes of which appear once in a century," a he praised her in the novel *Luntrea lui Caron* (Charon's boat).

We can assume that, while surprised by this change of fortunes—just one year earlier, in December 1936, the then advisor of the Romanian Legation in Vienna was living in fear of unemployment<sup>24</sup>—Blaga was pleased and honored by the offer extended to him. But whatever the circumstances, realistically speaking Blaga was in no position to say no to the king, to whom he was indebted for the lavish praise given to him at the Academy, as honorary chairman of the institution, in June 1937. Also, while both the king and the prime minister were aware of the future anti-Semitic turn in Romanian state policy, because the initiative had been theirs, Blaga had little idea of what was to come. Thus, for a short while—as the government itself was quite short-lived, expiring after only forty-four days—he became undersecretary of state in the Foreign Ministry of the Goga–Cuza government. (Ilarie Voronca, one of Blaga’s coworkers at the Foreign Ministry, a Romanian citizen of Jewish origin, claimed to be ill and resigned his position on 30 January,<sup>25</sup> upon realizing the change in the official policy of the Romanian state with regard to its Jewish citizens.) This government included a few other Transylvanians, the historians Ioan Lupaș and Silviu Dragomir, and some academics, such as the philosopher Ion Petrovici and the professor of law Istrate Micescu, to whom Blaga was directly subordinated. “This failed government, condemned by history, was the most intellectual one in the history of Romania (a team of academics led by a poet!),”<sup>26</sup> wrote Lucian Boia.

Even if he was most likely honored to have received such an appointment, his time at the ministry was a rather unhappy one for Blaga,<sup>27</sup> who had little penchant for both the work and the workplace. He spent his time in Bucharest all alone, staying at a hotel, as if aware of the provisional nature of his new employment. His wife and daughter returned from Bern, where Blaga had previously worked, only in mid-January, and were staying at the Coroana Hotel in the city of Brașov, where they had some relatives, and Mrs. Blaga took frequent trips to Bucharest. An eyewitness who worked alongside Blaga in the ministry, his cousin Corneliu Blaga, described the long working hours of the newly minted undersecretary of state, who presently had little or no time for writing, as in the absence of Istrate Micescu (who had left for Geneva), he had been practically left in charge of the whole ministry. The philosopher was asking, in despair: “Tell me, when can I become once again a human being?”<sup>28</sup> that is, when would he be able to write again. Upon hearing of the fall of the government, Blaga exclaimed: “Uff, I’m finally out!”<sup>29</sup>

By appointing him to work as a technocrat in a government position, the king wanted to do Blaga a favor, but “Involuntarily, he caused him great harm,”<sup>30</sup> as indicated by the career diplomat Corneliu Blaga. Indeed, Blaga was most un-



happy during the time spent at the ministry, and after the introduction of the socialist regime in Romania his membership in this government led to constant political accusations against him.

In point of fact, the king did a lot more political favors to Blaga; after the fall of the Goga–Cuza government, he appointed him envoy extraordinary and minister plenipotentiary to Portugal (1 April 1938–1 April 1939), the only time when Blaga was well-paid. Then, after the philosopher requested to be allowed to return from Portugal, King Carol II personally appointed him,<sup>31</sup> alongside G. Enescu, M. Sadoveanu, Emil Racoviță, Iuliu Hațieganu, D. Gusti a.o., as a senator in the National Revival Front,<sup>32</sup> a position he held between June 1939 and the summer of 1940, when the king disbanded the Front (22 June 1940). In a way, even the teaching position at Cluj University—which Sextil Pușcariu had worked so hard to get for him, to the point of eventually devising a round-about way—had to do with the ministerial appointment that the philosopher had received from the king:

*Listen, is it true that I have been appointed as a professor in Cluj? After all that happened, it sounds more like a joke. How strange life can be! I had to become a minister twice, see a change in the law of universities and even in the Constitution, before I could become a “professor,”<sup>33</sup>*

exclaimed the newly-minted academic upon receiving his “summons” from the university.

Blaga was given the opportunity to show his feelings towards the king in the year 1940, when *Revista Fundațiilor Regale* (The Review of the Royal Foundations) published a celebratory issue on the ten-year anniversary of the restoration. The contributors to this issue were, in this order: Tudor Arghezi, Camil Petrescu, C. Rădulescu-Motru, Mihail Sadoveanu, Lucian Blaga, N. I. Herescu, Cezar Petrescu, G. Călinescu, Ion Marin Sadoveanu, Perpessicius, Al. O. Teodoreanu, Ionel Teodoreanu, Metropolitan Bishop Irineu, Nichifor Crainic, Andrei Rădulescu, General Paul Teodorescu, General Nic. Sc. Stoenescu, Colonel D. I. Cantea, Anton Golopenția, Iuliu Moldovan, Dr. P. Cazacu, Gr. Nandriș, Dr. C. Groșorean, N. D. Cornățeanu, N. Caranfil, Eugen Demetrescu, V. Vâlcovici, Emanoil Bucuța, Scarlat Lambrino, C. Daicoviciu, A. Oțetea, Tudor Vianu, G. M. Cantacuzino, Francisc Șirato, Mihail Sebastian, Vladimir Streinu, Pompiliu Constantinescu, Șerban Cioculescu, and Petru Comarnescu. Under the title “Renaștere sau creație?” (Renaissance or creation?), the philosopher praised the reign of Carol II for all the material and spiritual creations that it had made possible, without forgetting the urban construction projects

implemented during this period. Acknowledging that, in keeping with a European model, the king had introduced an authoritarian regime (“When the flaws and the dereliction of duty showed by politicians forced Him to introduce an authoritarian regime in His country...”), Blaga praised him from acting differently than the leaders of other countries. Thus, Blaga pointed out that the king showed no ambition to set the direction of culture, choosing instead the most praiseworthy path of supporting it:

*In a single field the King has decided that it is best to offer support rather than impose a program: in the field of creative culture. The boundless trust and the tacit praise given to the spontaneity and the freedom of the spirit are yet another proof of the fact that the King himself has realized that the Romanian people is truly experiencing a creative stage, rather than one of mere “revival” . . . There are several kinds of authoritarian regimes in Europe today. With one exception, all of them thought it necessary to also direct the quill of the poet and the thought of the thinker. Therefore, in all of these regimes, with the exception of one, the poet and the thinker are regimented and condemned to sterility. The exception is Romania.<sup>34</sup>*

## Petre Pandrea, the “Mediaș Group,” and Blaga. 1940

**B**LAGA NEVER revisited the ecumenical ideas on race—and implicitly on Jewishness—that he expounded in 1935. The books on the philosophy of culture and of values that he wrote after 1935 continue to follow this line of the utmost respect towards any culture and any people, towards any “race” on Earth. Whenever necessary, he proceeded in keeping with these axiological ideas and he never failed to intervene in tense and even dangerous political-legal situations in order to save lives. Thus, in the autumn of 1943 he became involved in the Sibiu trial of a communist group, in order to save Zevedei Barbu, charged with communist affiliation.<sup>35</sup> Also during the war, he quickly interceded in support of another communist, a student named I. D. Sîrbu,<sup>36</sup> who was facing a court-martial which, according to his own statement, could have sentenced him to death.

Another significant testimony in this regard comes from the writer and lawyer Petre Pandrea, who recounted how, in the autumn of 1940, Blaga helped save the lives of a group of communists and Jews from Mediaș, the so-called “Mediaș group,” who had Pandrea as their lawyer. This happened right after Blaga took up residence in Sibiu—he moved there as the entire university of Cluj had been forced to relocate following the Vienna Diktat—and immediately

following the establishment of the national-legionary regime, the whole episode being quite illustrative of the philosopher's attitude towards Jewishness.

*After the dictatorship of Antonescu and of the Legion was introduced in September 1940, arrests were made in the industrial town of Mediaș among the communist workers and the Israelite merchants. A Mediaș group of defendants was created, with 300 (three hundred) people facing death sentences. On the occasion of the Yom Kippur, they had raised money to help prison inmates. The lists in question had ended up in the hands of the secret police. Arrests. Torture. A trial. Any financing of a banned party was punishable by death. The Romanian Communist Party had been banned. Ergo, death sentences. The entire group in question was sent, in chains, to Sibiu, to face a court-martial chaired by a magistrate-colonel, an ambitious and somewhat hysterical aristocrat, a Phanariot price. . . . Without Lucian Blaga, nothing could have been done in Sibiu in the early stages.<sup>37</sup>*

Blaga, who “avoided chauvinism like the plague,”<sup>38</sup> quickly moved to help Pandrea and the 300 people of Mediaș whose lives were hanging in the balance.

*In Sibiu, with the serenity of an ancient philosopher, Lucian Blaga, professor, academician, and poet, immediately and unconditionally offered to help. Once I knocked on his door and managed to find my way to his heart, he accompanied me everywhere, for three days on end. It may seem simple and natural for him not to abandon his assistant in his time of need. But Lucian Blaga also offered his help to the 300 communists and Jews, my clients, at a time when communist and Jewish were synonymous to leper. He advised me on what to do. He guided me through the arcane local labyrinth, protecting my profession and my prestige against a potential judicial slaughter and striving to preserve untarnished our Romanian and rural humanity.<sup>39</sup>*

More precisely, the philosopher advised the lawyer to change the venue of the trial, as in Sibiu he was certainly doomed to fail. He purportedly told Pandrea: “If you have this trial in Sibiu, it will be a judicial slaughterhouse. The 300 defendants will be promptly tried and shot.”<sup>40</sup>

This tells a lot about the city of Sibiu, which had indeed become an academic center after the university had relocated there from Cluj, but had nevertheless kept its fundamental character as an Orthodox religious center, driven by the judgments and the prejudices of Orthodoxist ideology. Paying heed to this advice and having the trial moved to Craiova, where he managed to avoid a death sentence for the 300 member of the “Mediaș group,” Pandrea remained forever grateful to the “kind man who was Lucian Blaga.”

IN PHILOSOPHY and literature, in culture in the broadest sense, Blaga was exclusively interested in the value of the work, and never in the ethnic or racial origin of its authors. In everyday life, he took into account the supreme value, life, followed by freedom, the freedom of thought, rather than the political ideas or the origins of the one voicing them. When it came to the life and liberty of human beings, it mattered little if he was or was not personally acquainted with those he helped; thus, he guided Pandrea through the labyrinthine administration of Sibiu for the sake of 300 communists and Jews who were otherwise complete strangers to him, and a little while later he interceded, on his own, for people whom he knew and cherished, Zevedei Barbu and I. D. Sîrbu. From this point of view as well, and not only from that of his superlative work, Blaga remains one of the shining lights of the Romanian twentieth century. □

(Translated by BOGDAN ALDEA)

## Notes

1. Lucian Blaga to Sextil Pușcariu, May 1931, in *De amicitia: Lucian Blaga—Ion Breazu: Corespondență. Addenda: Ion Breazu, Note de jurnal*, devised and compiled by Mircea Curticeanu (Cluj: Biblioteca Apostrof, 1995), 165.
2. Lucian Blaga, “Proces-verbal de Depoziția unui martor,” 29 Nov. 1943, in Cornelia Blaga-Brediceanu, *Jurnale 1919, 1936–1939, 1939–1940, 1959–1960*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, edited by Dorli Blaga (Bucharest: Humanitas, 2016), 185–187.
3. Lucian Blaga, “Autobiografie pentru serviciul de cadre al Academiei,” Cluj, 29 Nov. 1958, the Dorli Blaga collection of Lucian Blaga Central University Library of Cluj-Napoca, in Mircea Popa, *Lucian Blaga: Perspective transilvane* (Cluj-Napoca: Școala Ardeleană, 2018), 19.
4. [Unnamed literary critic from Timișoara, Securitate informant], “Notă informativă privind pe Lucian Blaga,” 13 Sept. 1960, in Dorli Blaga and Ion Bălu, *Blaga supraviețuit de Securitate* (Cluj: Biblioteca Apostrof, 1999), 166.
5. Octav Șuluțiu, interview with Lucian Blaga, *Vremea* (Bucharest), 15 Sept. 1934, in *Dramaturgia românească în interviuri*, edited by Aurel Sasu and Mariana Vartic, vol. 1, A–C (Bucharest: Minerva, 1995), 223–224.
6. Lucian Blaga, “Nicolae Titulescu,” 1944, in *Izvoade* (Bucharest: Humanitas, 2002), 191.
7. Lucian Blaga, *Din activitatea diplomatică: Rapoarte, articole, scrisori, cereri, telegrame, anii 1927–1938*, 3 vols., edited by Pavel Țugui (Bucharest: Eminescu, 1995).
8. Pavel Țugui, who edited the three volumes that document Blaga’s diplomatic activity between 1927 and 1938, did not include “some pieces of information deprived of political or cultural interest, which for this reason were left aside. Their place is

marked by square brackets,” as he indicated in the “Editor’s Note” to Blaga, *Din activitatea diplomatică*, 1: 37.

9. See *Gândirea* (Bucharest) 14, 2 (Feb. 1935); the featured pieces on race are: Nichifor Crainic, “Rasă și religione,” Lucian Blaga, “Despre rasă ca stil,” Dr. D. Grigorescu, “Fundamentul biologic al rasei.”
10. The great contemporary biologist Ernst Mayr contended “that although there are certain genetic differences between races, there is no genetic evidence whatsoever to justify the uncomplimentary evaluation that members of one race have sometimes made of members of other races. There simply is no biological basis for racism. . . . Paradoxically, it is precisely because the human population is genetically and culturally so diverse that we need a principle of civil equality.” Ernst Mayr, “The Biology of Race and the Concept of Equality,” *Daedalus* 131, 1 (2002): 92, 93.
11. Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, new edition with added prefaces (San Diego–New York–London: A Harvest/HBJ Book, Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Publishers, 1973), the chapter “Ideology and Terror: A Novel Form of Government.”
12. Houston Stewart Chamberlain, *Die Grundlagen des neunzehnten Jahrhunderts*, 2 vols. (Munich: F. Bruckmann, 1899). In Romania, information about this book circulated as early as 1900, in *Noua revistă română* (New Romanian Review), the periodical edited by Rădulescu-Motru. See Marta Petreu, “De la lupta de rasă la lupta de clasă: C. Rădulescu-Motru,” in *De la Junimea la Noica: Studii de cultură românească* (Iași: Polirom, 2011).
13. Diogenes Laërtius, *Lives and Opinions of Eminent Philosophers*, literally translated by C. D. Yonge (London: Henri G. Bohn, 1853), 188.
14. Lucian Blaga, “Despre rasă ca stil,” *Gândirea* 14, 2 (Feb. 1935): 69–73.
15. Lucian Blaga, “Rumänische Nachkriegs Literatur,” *Der kleine Bund* (Bern) 19, 12 May 1929; see id., *Din activitatea diplomatică*, 1: 150–154.
16. The king was already planning his personal dictatorship, for which he had secured the assistance of Armand Călinescu. In what the Goga–Cuza government was concerned, Carol II wrote in his journal: “I am perfectly aware that a government with such manifest anti-Semitic elements would not last long, and then I will be free to take firmer measures that would release both the Country and me from the so unpatriotic tyranny of petty party interests.” See Carol II, *Între datorie și pasiune: Însemnări zilnice*, vol. 1 (1904–1939), edited by Marcel-Dumitru Ciucă and Narcis Dorin Ion (Bucharest: Silex, 1995), 234.
17. Ibid.
18. See *Monitorul oficial* (Bucharest) 106, 18 (22 Jan. 1938): 314–316.
19. Carol II, *Între datorie și pasiune*, 1: 235.
20. Ibid., 234–235.
21. The official name was the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. However, Carol II himself used “External” in his notes.
22. Blaga to Băncilă, Bern, 27 Nov. 1937, in *Vasile Băncilă–Lucian Blaga, Corespondență*, edited by Dora Mezdrea (Bucharest: Muzeul Literaturii Române; Brăila: Istros, Muzeul Brăilei, 2001), 82.

23. Carol II, “Cuvîntare rostită la recepțiunea în Academie a d-lui Lucian Blaga: Ședința de la 5 iunie 1937,” in *Cuvîntările Majestății Sale Regelui Carol II către Academia Română 1930–1940* (Bucharest: Monitorul Oficial, Imprimeria Națională, 1940).
24. A new ambassador, Alexandru Gurănescu, was dispatched to Vienna, and he was completely unwilling to work with Blaga. The solution was to have the philosopher transferred to Bern.
25. Ion Bălu, *Viața lui Lucian Blaga*, vol. 2 (*aprilie 1935–martie 1944*) (Bucharest: Libra, 1996), 171.
26. Lucian Boia, *Capcanele istoriei: Elita intelectuală românească între 1930 și 1950* (Bucharest: Humanitas, 2011), 102.
27. I. Opreșan, interview with Corneliu Blaga, 1 March 1987, in I. Opreșan, *Lucian Blaga printre contemporani: Dialoguri adnotate*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition (Bucharest: Saeculum, Vestala, 1995), 98–128; Corneliu Blaga, *Lucian Blaga necunoscut* (Alba Iulia: n.p., 1993), 30, 45, 52.
28. I. Opreșan, interview with Corneliu Blaga, 1 March 1987, in Opreșan, 109.
29. Corneliu Blaga, 243.
30. *Ibid.*, 45.
31. Boia, 135.
32. The National Revival Front was established at the initiative of the king following a suggestion received from an initiative group. As directed “from higher up,” Blaga was a member of this “initiative group.”
33. Blaga to Breazu, Lisbon, 14 Apr. 1938, in *De amicitia Lucian Blaga–Ion Breazu*, 296.
34. Lucian Blaga, “Renaștere sau creație?” *Revista Fundațiilor Regale* (Bucharest) 7, 6 (1 June 1940): 514.
35. For a detailed account, see Virgiliu Țărău, “Zevedei Barbu și mișcarea comunistă: Idealism și ilegalism,” in *Zevedei Barbu: Psiholog, sociolog și filosof român și englez*, edited by Daniela Maci and Michael Finkenthal (Bucharest: Tracus Arte, 2015), 64–121.
36. Ion D. Sîrbu, “L-am văzut pe Blaga plîngînd,” interview by Ion Jianu, 1989, in I. D. Sîrbu, *Atlet al mizeriei: În loc de autobiografie*, edited and afterword by Dumitru Velea (Petroșani: Editura Fundației Culturale “Ion D. Sîrbu,” 1994).
37. Petre Pandrea, *Turnul de ivoriu: Memorii*, foreword by Ștefan Dumitriu, edited and afterword by Nadia Marcu-Pandrea (Bucharest: Vremea XXI, 2004), 482. The trial is also mentioned, without specifics, in: Petre Pandrea, *Reeducarea de la Aiud*, edited by Nadia Marcu-Pandrea (Bucharest: Vremea, 2000), 543; *id.*, *Garda de Fier: Jurnal de filosofie politică: Memorii penitenciare*, edited by Nadia Marcu-Pandrea (Bucharest: Vremea, 2001), 164.
38. Pandrea, *Turnul de ivoriu*, 482.
39. *Ibid.*, 484.
40. *Ibid.*, 486.

**Abstract****Blaga: Piously, on Race**

The present study analyzes the attitude showed by Lucian Blaga (1895–1961) in the 1930s and early 1940s in regard to the racial theory so fashionable in Europe at that time. Blaga rejected Huston Stewart Chamberlain's position on races, based on a biological reasoning. By analogy with his own philosophy of culture, at that time still under development, he suggested that races should be approached as "biological styles" in which humankind manifests itself. He also contended that the issue of races should be separated from the biological sciences and discussed in the context of metaphysics, morals, aesthetics—that is, within the philosophy of values. He argued that racism was defined by obtuseness and intolerance, and should therefore be replaced by an *ecumenical* attitude in regard to all the *styles* in which humankind exists. This moral imperative "compels us to be ourselves, under our stars, and to allow others to be themselves, under their own stars." Blaga's ecumenical attitude towards the styles of humankind was confirmed in the autumn of 1940 when, during the national-legionary regime, he helped the lawyer Petre Pandrea rescue the "Mediaș group" of 300 communists and Jews who were facing a possible death sentence. This study also discusses Blaga's membership in the short-lived Goga–Cuza government (forty-four days, between 29 December 1937 and 10 February 1938), to which he had been appointed by King Carol II. Realistically speaking, the philosopher was in no position to refuse the appointment, as he was personally indebted to the king for the remarkable welcome extended to him on his acceptance into the Romanian Academy, in June of 1937.

**Keywords**

Blaga, racism, race as a biological style, Jewishness, Romanian literature, Huston Stewart Chamberlain, ecumenism, freedom, human values, Leo Frobenius, Goga–Cuza government, Carol II, state-sanctioned anti-Semitism, the "Mediaș group," Petre Pandrea

# Cultural and Political Interactions in Interwar Romania

MIHAELA GLIGOR

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*“The memory of these places of sadness, of suffering, but above all of great emotions, is spoiled by seeing them again. It’s better to leave certain things in peace, just the way they are in memory.”*

*Saul Steinberg*

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**I**N APRIL 1977, Elie Wiesel gave a lecture at Northwestern University. It was called “The Holocaust As Literary Inspiration.” In the Introduction, he said: “If the Greeks invented tragedy, the Romans the epistle, and Renaissance the sonnet, our generation invented a new literature, that of testimony.”<sup>1</sup> This kind of “witness literature” can be considered “*the* formative genre of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.”<sup>2</sup> There are many well-known and unbelievable stories of survival.<sup>3</sup> There are also many unknown stories. Some people had the strength to tell their story and became examples in the history books and characters in novels or movies. Others chose to live in silence, not saying a word about what had happened. Some stories are still hidden; some are beginning to come to light, including in Romania.

It is often said that the interwar Romanian society had a westernized intellectual elite, perfectly connected to what the culture of Western Europe meant at that time. Among the characteristics that defined the intellectual life of interwar Romania were dialogue and the desire to argue elegant-



ly, eruditely, critically, originally, with interlocutors from different fields of the humanities and/or sciences. Young intellectuals competed in organizing and holding conferences for both academia and the general public. Thus, several cultural associations appeared, and hosted conferences involving free discussions on topics of interest in those years. The Criterion Association<sup>4</sup> was the best known of all the intellectual groups of the young generation. “‘Criterion’ itself is not a word in Romanian,” as Cristina A. Bejan noticed:

*The Romanian is criteriu. Clearly the association chose the English version, with a cosmopolitan pretense, symbolically showing the association’s intention to reach beyond the Romanian language and traditionalist paradigm, in its effort to engage in global ideas but also in its effort to launch this project of “major culture” proportions.<sup>5</sup>*

Also, in Bejan’s opinion, “Criterionists must have been aware of the literary review T. S. Eliot edited, *The Criterion* (1922–1939).” Many intellectuals of the new generation became affiliated to this cultural association, sharing ideas and debating on subjects of interest. An important role in the success of the Criterion conferences was played by Mircea Eliade, who was seen both by his contemporaries and by the researchers of the interwar period as “the head of the ’27 generation.” Eliade began his academic career in 1933, in the middle of the second autumn session of the Criterion conferences, the month in which he held the conference on “Magic and the Origins of Music,”<sup>6</sup> just a few days after he had moved in with Nina Mareş (who would become his wife), and while still working on the novel *Întoarcerea din Rai* (Return from Paradise), which appeared in 1934. It was a real honor for him to be the assistant to the charming Professor Nae Ionescu (in fact the honorary assistant, as Nae Ionescu himself was an assistant to Professor Constantin Rădulescu-Motru) at the Department of Logic and Metaphysics of the University of Bucharest.

*For a while they [young intellectuals of interwar Bucharest] successfully balanced their social, cultural and intellectual activities and political convictions. . . . Despite its ultimate failure, the brief success of Criterion in the mid 1930s was a unique moment in Romania’s tumultuous interwar period.<sup>7</sup>*

Years later, while living in Paris, Eliade wrote in his *Journal*:

*If Criterion had had an instrument of expression other than the Romanian language, it would have been considered the most interesting precursor of the French Existentialism of today.<sup>8</sup>*

During the period when the Criterion Association was in full swing on the cultural scene of Bucharest, almost 11 percent of the city's population was represented by Jews. Most of them were artists, craftsmen, merchants, political leaders, bankers, doctors or architects. "The explosion of Jewish cultural and social organizations . . . demonstrates a certain organizational flexibility, a feature of civil society structures." The interactions between the Jews and other minorities with the Romanians were important and potentially indicative of tolerance and understanding. "Some features of the *kehillah* [community] were related to the dynamics of the Jewish world, while others were linked specifically to the Romanian cultural and political environment."<sup>9</sup>

Among those who managed to make a difference, some had a remarkable contribution to the art of the twentieth century, such as Saul Steinberg, Mircea Eliade's colleague at the philosophy courses held by Nae Ionescu at the University of Bucharest. "The story of Saul Steinberg (1914–1999), who later became one of America's favorite artists," is very interesting, and it has a very strong connection to "Palas Street of interwar Bucharest."<sup>10</sup> The Bucharest of his childhood was a vibrant mixture of people, cultures, languages, and religions. But the situation was to change rapidly, and in November 1933, at only 19 years of age, Saul Steinberg would leave Bucharest, a place where Jews "were usually more cosmopolitan, lured by what we could call the mirage of modern society they actually helped build."<sup>11</sup>

This increasingly anti-Semitic climate of Romania was something Saul Steinberg, among others, would remember all his life: "Anti-Semitism was one theme he did not fail to mention, as if it were an inseparable part of his native geography. He treated it with disgust."<sup>12</sup> The same description appears in many memoirs about those times. Here is just another one, from a Romanian Jewish student, Jacob Pesate:

*There was a native fascist party in Romania; it was the Iron Guard, and from a very small unit, it became a threat to democracy. They were going around in Nazi-style uniforms and they attacked meetings of the parties who were in power. So the Iron Guard was all over the place, in small numbers but active, aggressive and mimicking the German Nazis. The leaders were sent for training in Germany and they returned with programmes which were no different from *Mein Kampf* under Hitler.<sup>13</sup>*

On several occasions, the political discourse was transferred to the cultural and scientific areas. Identifying the deep roots of anti-Semitism in the political and cultural life of interwar Romania can provide a broad framework for under-

standing the actions of the elite of those times. Unfortunately, the effervescence of the interwar period also contains the sad story of a brilliant young generation which fell prey—intellectually—to the destructive passion of politics. Discovering the truth is crucial for two primordial reasons: we can have a complete image of the generation and we can solve the historical mystery of interwar Romania.

At the beginning of 1937, being part of the Iron Guard had come to represent for Mircea Eliade the true conclusion of his generation: “None of the revolutions that . . . took place were as completely under the sign of the spiritual as that of the Romanian youth . . . If it succeeds to the end . . . it will be the greatest revolution of the century.”<sup>14</sup> Eliade’s gesture and his attachment to such a movement would be followed by other intellectuals of his generation. Their search for philosophical, spiritual and political renewal directed them towards fascist doctrines, while their concentration on ethnic, nationalist, Romanian Orthodoxy led them to the legionary movement and anti-Semitism. The political components of the thinking of the elites of the 1927 generation can’t be isolated from culture, the philosophy of history, or the broad theme of nationalism. In fact, personal experiences as authentic facts, elements that often appeared in the discourse of the interwar intellectual generation, turned into a real deluge of verbal extremism and anti-Semitism. The suspicion against foreigners, justified by external dangers, was directed especially against the national minorities. The regime, unable to ensure the welfare of the country, sought a scapegoat and found one in the person of the Jew, the stranger within, who, in the opinion of the intellectuals and the middle class, was responsible for the poverty of the whole people.

However, beyond the Romanian cultural tradition, the anti-Semitic discourse was common in interwar Europe. More than that, many of the Romanian statements used in order to justify the preference for the anti-Semitic discourse were European. The confluences of ideas and the differentiations between the academic and the political levels in approaching the symbolism of anti-Semitism offer an important perspective on this subject and accentuate the role of elites in promoting these ideas (since the elite groups had access to latest studies and trends of the time). But, with all these external influences, the Romanian anti-Semitism and the far right movement had very important and unique elements. Anti-Semitism in interwar Romania was particularly violent. The Jews were considered an “inferior and degenerate race,” and were often blamed for the “alteration” of Romanian culture and for the nation’s socio-economic problems. As early as 1927, politicians such as Octavian Goga, among others, blamed the Jews for everything that was bad in the country and described them as “impure secretions of Galicia”<sup>15</sup> that threatened the very existence of the Romanian state. A. C. Cuza continued, in 1928, in the same direction and considered the Jews as

*a corrupt and degenerate nation, sterile, without land and which does not form a complete, productive social organism . . . thus living, from the beginning to the present day, superimposed on other nations, by exploiting their productive work, therefore as a parasitic nation.*<sup>16</sup>

Anti-Semitism was, as expected, a central element of the Iron Guard ideology. In 1937, Corneliu Zelea Codreanu wrote in his Circular no. 119: “The historical mission of our generation is to solve the Jewish problem.”<sup>17</sup> This was the goal of the entire generation, as Theodor Lavi commented in a 1981 letter to Mac Linscott Ricketts, Mircea Eliade’s American biographer:

*This generation actually created the Iron Guard—which was anti-political, but not a-political. It was against the political establishment, but it created a political leader, with a totalitarian, dictatorial structure, tyrannical, and according to the results of its short government, thirsty for blood (not only Jewish!).*<sup>18</sup>

Another path to the exclusion of the Jews from the local economy, and consequently from Romanian society, was soon to be found: denaturalization. In this respect,

*Decree Law no. 169 for the Revision of Romanian Citizenship (adopted by the Goga government on 21 January 1938), aimed at just that, by denaturalizing Jews who had become citizens “illegally” in the aftermath of World War I. As a result of this legal provision, 225,222 Jews, who had enjoyed political and civil emancipation for less than two decades, lost Romanian citizenship.*<sup>19</sup>

Anti-Semitism was not only directed against the Jews, but also against the “Judaization” of Romania, and especially against the politicians who had been corrupted by the Jews and allowed them to “take over” the country. It also glorified the spiritual struggle and the morality based on the mystical images of the Romanian Orthodox Church. The studies written by Radu Ioanid<sup>20</sup> and Carol Iancu,<sup>21</sup> among others, focus on these aspects. Writing about the legal status of the Jews in Romania, Radu Ioanid explains that “the roots of anti-Semitism in Romania, as in most of Eastern Europe, stretch deeply into history.”<sup>22</sup> He presents the main perspectives and concludes that “the legal underpinnings of tolerance would not long survive the arrival in power of the radical anti-Semitic right—represented by the minority Goga–Cuza cabinet of the National Christian Party—in December 1937.”<sup>23</sup>

In culture, as in all aspects of life, the symbolism of the interwar period gravitates between tolerance and intolerance. On the one hand, there are the examples of good coexistence provided by the Criterion conferences; on the other hand,

we have the later anti-Semitic outbursts, the violent demonstrations and crimes against the Jews, which occurred during the Legionary Rebellion of January 1941. Timothy Snyder expresses the same opinion:

*Romania's policy to deport and kill Jews began during the Second World War in connection to a trauma of lost lands. Romania did not lose statehood during the war, but it did lose state territory. Regaining that land would become the central political obsession in Bucharest.*<sup>24</sup>

Things deteriorated rapidly and eventually led to the terrible violence of 1941. Mihail Sebastian's *Journal* also captures this degradation and intolerance: "In the evening we gather early at home. With the shutters drawn and the telephone out of service, we have a growing sense of unease and anguish. What will happen to us? I hardly dare ask."<sup>25</sup> A few days later, Sebastian wrote about

*A decree of the Buzău mayor's office: Jews cannot move around between 8 p.m. and 7 a.m., do not have a right to enter cafés, are forbidden to visit one another, even if they are friends or relatives . . . So much for my wrong impression yesterday that the anti-Semitism tension is declining. Whenever I go into town, I come back feeling even more depressed than before.*<sup>26</sup>

Romania's policies regarding the Jewish problem would change according to different influences. In July 1941, Romanian troops joined the German army in attacking the Soviets. While recovering the previously lost territories, the troops killed a large number of Jews. As Snyder points out, "from the perspective of Bucharest, this anti-Jewish campaign was an attempt at the ethnic cleansing of one of several enemies of the Romanian state." But in 1942,

*Berlin wanted the remaining Jews under Romanian control sent to Auschwitz, but none were. Bucharest's refusal had to do with calculations of sovereignty. Romania was deporting and murdering Jews on the basis of its own reasoning and for its own purposes.*<sup>27</sup>

In this context, only a few young Romanian Jews managed to emigrate to France or Italy for studies or to find better jobs and thus saved their lives. Saul Steinberg was among them. First, in 1933, he traveled to Milan and applied to the Regio Politecnico to study architecture. In March 1940, Steinberg passed his exams at the Politecnico and received his diploma in architecture the following month. But the diploma is made out to "Saul Steinberg . . . of the Hebrew race."<sup>28</sup> Being a Jew was a problem everywhere in Europe of those years.

*In 1941, like many other Jews, Saul Steinberg had a short stay in one of the concentration camps (*campi di concentramento*) set up by Mussolini to hold illegals and undesirables. . . . On July 13, 1941, after two years of frustration and fear, endless troubles, and a very long and exhausting journey, Saul Steinberg arrived in the Dominican Republic. He was among the lucky ones: between December 1, 1940 and October 15, 1941, only 210 other foreign Jews managed to leave Italy.<sup>29</sup>*

From there, he arrived in New York on 1 July 1942. He would return to Romania only once, in 1944. It was the last time he set foot in his homeland. “The memory of these places of sadness, of suffering, but above all of great emotions, is spoiled by seeing them again. It’s better to leave certain things in peace, just the way they are in memory.”<sup>30</sup>

Exile has specific political connotations, for it presupposes the actions of the authorities toward those whom they banish, and the actions of those who, given the nature or the outcome of the political struggles in their country, either chose or were forced to leave. Whether imposed or voluntarily chosen, exile was a condition, a real location in the cultural, political, social and geographical spaces.

**M**ANY JEWISH intellectuals (of Romanian origin) immigrated to Palestine (later, Israel) and to other countries from the Western world, seeking freedom and a dignified life. Most of them founded, in the countries they adopted, numerous Romanian-language magazines (literary, political or ideological), as platforms for disseminating ideas about freedom of speech or their own tragic stories from interwar Romania. This is the case of Theodor Lavi, who studied psychology at the University of Bucharest, where he was a colleague of Mircea Eliade, and attended the courses of Professor Nae Ionescu. In 1934, Lavi obtained a doctorate in pedagogy. For many years he was the director of the Jewish school in Ploiești. In 1950, alongside other Zionist leaders, Lavi was arrested and spent five years in prison. He was released in 1955, and immigrated to Israel in 1957. He became a researcher at the Yad Vashem Institute in Jerusalem, and carried out a special activity in terms of recovering the history of the Jewish community in interwar Romania. Lavi was also an important witness in the Eichmann Trial. Between 1972 and 1977, Lavi edited the *Toladot* magazine, dedicated to the study of the history of Jews in Romania, which became famous after the publication, in its first issue, of what is known as the “Mircea Eliade File.” He was also the first director of the Center for Research on Romanian Jewry, founded in 1973 at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem.

The publication of the “Mircea Eliade File” quickly raised questions and generated heated discussions in intellectual circles, especially in Israel. If at first he

refused to explain himself, Eliade eventually tried to defend his reputation. In 1972, in a well-known letter to Professor Gershom Scholem of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Eliade recalled that “in the years 1938–1940 . . . I was ‘on the right’; I was in the ‘nationalist’ tradition of Eminescu, Maiorescu, Iorga.”<sup>31</sup>

This aspect of Eliade’s biography has been intensely studied and raised many questions.<sup>32</sup> In a letter to Theodor Lavi, in 1981, while documenting the book dedicated to Eliade (*Mircea Eliade: The Romanian Roots*<sup>33</sup>), Mac Linscott Ricketts informed his correspondent that

*A week ago I went to Chicago to visit Prof. Eliade, to tell him about my visit to Romania and to ask him questions. I asked him about his articles from **Buna Vestire** and he did not remember at first. When I spoke to him about one of these, “Why I Believe in the Victory of the Legionary Movement,” he exclaimed, “I never wrote that!”*

*He told me that the editor (Polihroniade?) asked him to write on that subject, but he refused; and then he saw the article in the newspaper! It was written by the editor. However, Eliade said he did not protest because he did not want to embarrass the editor, who was his friend. I do not know if you can accept this story, but I think it’s true.*

*He also told me that he never joined the Legion. When he was arrested in July 1938, he was asked to give up the Guard, but he refused because it meant that it belonged to him . . . which was not true. So he was locked up for 4 months.<sup>34</sup>*

Theodor Lavi’s answer was prompt, but he raised a delicate question, for which an explanation is still being sought:

*Regarding the statement of M. E. that Polihroniade would have written his articles on the legionaries—it might be true. However, would this legionary and fanatically anti-Semitic journalist have done such a thing had he not known M. E. to be close to the ideas expressed in the article?<sup>35</sup>*

It was just the beginning of a larger controversy. In his 1991 essay in *The New Republic*, called “Happy Guilt,”<sup>36</sup> Norman Manea, born in Bukovina,<sup>37</sup> also wrote on Mircea Eliade’s connection to the extreme right movement in the 1930s and 1940s. Manea rightly highlights the shocking contrast between Eliade’s violent fascist prejudices and “the free play and dreamy compassion of his writing.” The professor teaching the history of religion at the University of Chicago was difficult to reconcile with the champion of the Iron Guard. However, there were also reasons why Eliade might have been attracted to fascism. He believed in the

appearance of the sacred within the profane, seemingly secular modern world; fascism, he seems to have thought, could be a potential source of sacredness. When Manea's essay about Eliade's fascism was published in Romania in 1992, it sparked a campaign of hatred against Manea. Eliade, whose rehabilitation began during the latter half of the communist era, had become a hero. His critical stance toward the Romanian right-wing intellectuals opened the way to an active international debate about this still sensitive subject.

More recently, Professor Moshe Idel, in his book on Eliade, had the courage to make these statements:

*In my opinion, Eliade was indubitably a member of the Iron Guard and made legionary propaganda in 1937. However, since I see in the Guard not a fascist movement but an Orthodox ultranationalist one, there is no reason to see in Eliade a fascist in a specifically technical sense of this term.*<sup>38</sup>

In any case, after 1945, Eliade was clear in his disapproval of both Marxism and Fascism, but he avoided the details of his own past complicity.

Other important witnesses to what happened in interwar Romania are Wilhelm Filderman,<sup>39</sup> Simon Schaffer, and Isac Ludo.<sup>41</sup> Their correspondence is extremely important for the recovery of some important moments of Romanian interwar history. Many files and letters are still inaccessible, some were lost, but many have been recovered from archives (personal or institutional archives from Israel or other countries), and they complete, with success, the tumultuous history of those times.

In a letter dated 30 May 1973, George Rosiano<sup>42</sup> wrote to Simon Schaffer:

*Some aspects that took place behind the scenes of the Romanian political arena between the two world wars, and have been revealed only now, regarding us, the Jews who lived there, become a harsh indictment for those concerned. And this would be desirable for the Jews to understand when asked for material support for the publication of the *Toladot*.*<sup>43</sup>

The correspondence of the Jewish intellectuals of Romanian origin sheds new light on the elite's role in the rise of Romanian nationalism, and offers important details about their fall into history and exile and, essentially, about their intellectual or personal interactions on the delicate issue of (in)tolerance.

An important characteristic of the interwar period was, as Marius Turda observed, "the fixation on the nation." In many parts of the country, "sub-cultures were predominantly determined by the internal ethnic dynamic, multilingual-



ism, multi-confessionalism and interculturality.<sup>44</sup> All these elements can also be traced in the correspondence or in the memoirs that cover the interwar period. But, at the same time,

*The interwar period reflects the overlapping and tangled relations between Romania's ethnic communities, not only in terms of shared cultural and political history, but also in terms of common eugenic predicaments.*<sup>45</sup>

Marius Turda goes further and explains that

*Interwar Romania not only provides examples of well-articulated regional eugenic sub-cultures but, more importantly, of eugenic sub-cultures, such as the Romanian one, which ultimately became the dominant eugenic culture of the entire country.*<sup>46</sup>

Alongside the classical writings on interwar Romania,<sup>47</sup> some more recent studies have examined nation-building as a multi-faceted phenomenon.<sup>48</sup> These offer important details about the role of interwar ministries and parties in shaping cultural policy and political interactions in interwar Romania.

Many intellectuals of interwar Romania became important personalities in their field. Mircea Eliade is one of them.

*Historian of religions, Orientalist, ethnologist, sociologist, folklorist, essayist, short story writer, novelist, dramatist, memorialist—here are just a few of the multiple sides of his activity. And by all these, and many others, he changed, and continues to do so, the lives of those interested in his legacy.*<sup>49</sup>

Another one is Saul Steinberg.

*The shy boy from Palas Street transformed into the cosmopolitan intellectual who found inspiration from a wide variety of sources, such as architecture, maps, children's art, calligraphy, postcards, rubber stamps, and underground comics, and transformed all these into masterpieces. A Romanian by birth, restless by inclination, Saul Steinberg became a recognized artist around the world. His view of the world from Palas Street became *View of the World from 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue*, a correspondence between two sacred geographies that were synonymous with his life. Saul Steinberg lived a fabulous existence, and his legacy is more than impressive.*<sup>50</sup>

Members of the same generation, they both left Romania and pursued international careers in the humanities and the arts. However, their lives illustrate different characteristics of the cultural and political interactions in interwar Ro-

mania. One was deeply involved in the politics that forced the other to leave Romania. Two sides of the same story, their personal experiences, and the way they related to the events of Romania of those years, offer important perspectives on a particularly difficult period in the country's history, as well as on their own history.

The cultural and political interactions in interwar Romania are far from being fully deciphered. This paper offers an overview of some interactions, following the main cultural events and their most important participants. Further research will complete the portrait of a tormented time that changed the life of those who lived it.



## Notes

1. Elie Wiesel, "The Holocaust As Literary Inspiration," in *Dimensions of the Holocaust: Lectures at Northwestern University*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1990), 15.
2. Michael Bachmann, "Life, Writing, and Problems of Genre in Elie Wiesel and Imre Kertész," *Rocky Mountain Review* 63, 1 (2009): 79.
3. Among them, the well-known stories of two Nobel laureates: the Romanian-born Elie Wiesel (as remembered in *Night*), and Imre Kertész (as depicted in his trilogy: *Fatelessness*, *Fiasco*, and *Kaddish for an Unborn Child*).
4. Its full name, rarely used, was the Criterion Association for Art, Literature, and Philosophy, but it was commonly known as Criterion.
5. Cristina A. Bejan, *Intellectuals and Fascism in Interwar Romania: The Criterion Association* (N.p.: Palgrave Macmillan, 2019), 85, note 1.
6. Between 30 September and 17 December 1933, a series of conferences on "The Great Moments of Music" took place, with the participation of musicians and musicologists (among others, Dimitrie Cuclin and George Breazul). For his November conference, "Magic and the Origins of Music," Mircea Eliade appealed to several young musicians who exemplified, musically, his theories.
7. Bejan, 4.
8. Mircea Eliade, *Journal I 1945–1955*, translated by Mac Linscott Ricketts (Chicago–London: The University of Chicago Press, 1990), 38, entry of 1 November 1946.
9. Liviu Rotman, *The Romanian Kehillah: The Pulse, Character, and History of the Jewish Community in Romania*, translated by George Weiner, edited by Lenn Schramm (Tel Aviv: Goldstein-Goren Diaspora Research Center, Tel Aviv University, 2015), 99, 101.
10. Mihaela Gligor, "View of the World from Palas Street: The Dynamics of Cultural Memory in Saul Steinberg's Representation of Interwar Bucharest," in *Memories of Terror: Essays on Recent Histories*, edited by Mihaela Gligor (Frankfurt am Main: CEEOL Press, 2021), 151–153.

11. Oana Soare, "The Memory of a Hurt Identity: Bucharest's Jewish Sub-Culture between Fiction and Non-fiction," in *Identities In-Between in East-Central Europe*, edited by Jan Fellerer, Robert Pyrah, and Marius Turda (London: Routledge, 2019), 92–109.
12. Norman Manea, "Made in Romania," in Norman Manea, *The Fifth Impossibility: Essays on Exile and Language* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2012), 180.
13. See the declaration of Jacob Pesate in Lyn Smith, *Forgotten Voices of the Holocaust: True Stories of Survival—From Men, Women and Children Who Were There* (London: Ebury Press, 2006), 37.
14. Mircea Eliade, "O revoluție creștină," *Buna Vestire* (Bucharest) 1, 100 (27 June 1937): 3.
15. Octavian Goga, *Mustul care fierbe* (Bucharest: n.p., n.d. [1927]), 395–398.
16. A. C. Cuza, *Doctrina naționalistă creștină. Introducere: Cuzismul (Definiții, Teze, Antiteze, Sinteză)* (Iași: Tip. Coop. "Trecerea Munților Carpați," 1928), 12–17.
17. Corneliu Zelea Codreanu, *Circulări și manifeste* (Madrid: Colecția Omul Nou, 1951), 199.
18. Theodor Lavi to Mac Linscott Ricketts, letter of 10 December 1981, in *Theodor Lavi în corespondență*, edited by Mihaela Gligor and Miriam Caloianu (Cluj-Napoca: Presa Universitară Clujeană, 2012), 338.
19. Ștefan Cristian Ionescu, *Jewish Resistance to "Romanianization," 1940–44* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), 35.
20. Radu Ioanid, *The Holocaust in Romania: The Destruction of Jews and Gypsies Under the Antonescu Regime, 1940–1944*, with a foreword by Elie Wiesel, and a preface by Paul A. Shapiro (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 2000). In this volume, Radu Ioanid offers an accurate perspective on Romanian policies of racism, anti-Semitism, and Jewish extermination.
21. Carol Iancu, *Les Juifs en Roumanie (1919–1938): De l'émancipation à la marginalisation*, foreword by Pierre Guiral, afterword by Gérard Nahon, (Paris–Louvain: Peeters, 1996).
22. Ioanid, 4.
23. *Ibid.*, 13.
24. Timothy Snyder, *Black Earth: The Holocaust As History and Warning* (London: Vintage, Penguin Random House, 2016), 229.
25. Mihail Sebastian, *Journal 1935–1944*, translated by Patrick Camiller, with an introduction and notes by Radu Ioanid (London: Pimlico, 2003), 370. Entry of 22 June 1941.
26. *Ibid.*, 378. Entry of 9 July 1941.
27. Snyder, 232–233.
28. Mario Tedeschini Lalli, "Descent from Paradise: Saul Steinberg's Italian Years (1933–1941)," *Quest: Issues in Contemporary Jewish History: Journal of the Fondazione CDEC* 2 (October 2011): 333–334, accessed 15 March 2021, <https://www.quest-cdecjournal.it/descent-from-paradise-saul-steinbergs-italian-years-1933-1941/>.
29. Gligor, "View of the World from Palas Street," 159.
30. Saul Steinberg and Aldo Buzzzi, *Reflections and Shadows*, translated by John Shepley (New York: Random House, 2002), 41.

31. Mircea Eliade to Gershom Scholem, letter of 3 July 1972. See Mircea Eliade, *Europa, Asia, America... Corespondență*, vol. 3, R–Z, edited by Mircea Handoca (Bucharest: Humanitas, 2004), 131.
32. Among the most important studies on this subject are: Bryan S. Rennie, *Reconstructing Eliade: Making Sense of Religion*, foreword by Mac Linscott Ricketts (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1996); Florin Țurcanu, *Mircea Eliade: Le prisonnier de l'histoire*, foreword by Jacques Julliard (Paris: La Découverte, 2003); Daniel Dubuisson, *Twentieth Century Mythologies: Dumézil, Lévi-Strauss, Eliade*, foreword by Robert A. Segal, translated by Martha Cunningham (London–Oakville, CT: Equinox, 2006). See also some of my studies on this subject: *Mircea Eliade: Anii turburi: 1932–1938* (Bucharest: EuroPress Group, 2007); ed., *Mircea Eliade between History of Religions and the Fall into History* (Cluj-Napoca: Presa Universitară Clujeană, 2012); “The Ideology of the Archangel Michael Legion and Mircea Eliade’s Political Views in Interwar Romania,” *International Journal on Humanistic Ideology* 1, 1 (2008): 111–126; “Eliade’s Romanian Past: Religion and Politics,” *Theory in Action: Journal of the Transformative Studies Institute* 3, 1 (2010): 51–74. For a complete overview of Eliade’s correspondence to and from his Jewish friends, colleagues, etc., see Mihaela Gligor and Liviu Bordaș, eds., *Postlegomena la Felix Culpa: Mircea Eliade, evreii și antisemitismul*, 2 vols. (Cluj-Napoca: Presa Universitară Clujeană, 2012–2013).
33. Mac Linscott Ricketts, *Mircea Eliade: The Romanian Roots, 1907–1945*, 2 vols. (Boulder, CO: East European Monographs; New York: Columbia University Press, 1988).
34. Mac L. Ricketts to Theodor Lavi, letter of 7 November 1981, in *Theodor Lavi în corespondență*, 334.
35. Theodor Lavi to Mac L. Ricketts, letter of 1 December 1981, *ibid.*, 336.
36. Norman Manea, “Happy Guilt: Mircea Eliade, Fascism, and the Unhappy Fate of Romania,” *The New Republic*, 5 August 1991.
37. Norman Manea was deported as a child, in 1941, by the Romanian fascist authorities allied with Nazi Germany, to the concentration camp in Transnistria. He returned to Romania in 1945 with the surviving members of his family. He was forced into exile in 1986. Now he is a Professor Emeritus and Distinguished Writer in Residence at Bard College, in the USA.
38. Moshe Idel, *Mircea Eliade from Magic to Myth* (New York: Peter Lang, 2014), 257.
39. Wilhelm Filderman (1882–1963) was a lawyer and the leader of the Romanian-Jewish community between the two World Wars, during the Holocaust period, and in the years following World War II. He was also a representative of the Jews in the Romanian parliament. For more details see Wilhelm Filderman, *Memoirs & Diaries*, edited by Jean Ancel (Tel Aviv: Goldstein-Goren Diaspora Research Center, Tel Aviv University; Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, vol. 1, 1900–1940, 2004; vol. 2, 1940–1952, 2015).
40. Simon Idal Schafferman (Păstorescu) (1903–1991), journalist, was born in Botoșani. He spent his childhood in Brăila. At a relatively young age, he started to write for newspapers such as *Curierul*, *Expresul*, *Dunărea de Jos*, *Mesagerul*, *Tribuna porturilor*, *Gazeta Meseriașilor*, *Revista Plugarilor*, *Monitorul Brăilei*, and *Cotidianul*. In 1948

he moved to Bucharest, and continued to write for various newspapers. In 1963 Schafferman immigrated to Israel and became a contributor to several Romanian-language newspapers in Israel: *Viața Noastră*, *Mizug*, *Adevărul*, *Revista Mea*, *Facla Magazin*, all from Tel Aviv. He also contributed to *Toladot* and *Shevet Romania*. He was part of the group of researchers who, under the guidance of Theodor Lavi, developed the *Pinkas Ha-kehilot Romania* (*Encyclopedia of Jewish Communities in Romania*), published in Yad Vashem in 1968 and awarded the Israel Prize. He published the volume of essays and sketches *Drumuri fără întoarcere* (Roads of no return) (Jerusalem: n.p., 1979), as well as the monograph dedicated to Wilhelm Filderman: *Dr. W. Filderman: 50 de ani din istoria judaismului român* (Tel Aviv: n.p., 1986).

41. Born into a Jewish-Romanian family, Isac Ludo (1894–1973) was a Romanian writer and politician.
42. George Rosiano/Roșianu (1922–2013) was a journalist. In Romania he wrote for several newspapers, such as *Universul Sport*, *Viața*, *Tribuna Poporului*, and *Victoria*. In 1960 he left Romania and, after a year in Paris, he moved to the USA, where he wrote for *Micro Magazin* (between 1963 and 1997), and since 1997 for *Meridianul Românesc*.
43. George Rosiano to Simon Schafferman, letter of 30 May 1973, in *Intelectuali evrei și presa exilului românesc*, edited by Mihaela Gligor and Miriam Caloianu (Cluj-Napoca: Presa Universitară Clujeană, 2013), 77.
44. Marius Turda, “Romanian Eugenic Sub-Culture and the Allure of Biopolitics, 1918–1939,” *Acta Poloniae Historica* 114 (2016): 36. Many of Turda’s researches are dedicated to these topics. Marius Turda discussed the development of eugenics and biopolitics in early 1940s Romania in “Controlling the National Body: Ideas of Racial Purification in Romania, 1918–1944,” in *Health, Hygiene and Eugenics in Southeastern Europe to 1945*, edited by Christian Promitzer, Sevasti Trubeta, and Marius Turda (Budapest–New York: CEU Press, 2011), 325–350.
45. Turda, “Romanian Eugenic Sub-Culture,” 30. Marius Turda is not the only Romanian historian who analyses this subject. See also Vladimir Solonari, “In the Shadow of Ethnic Nationalism: Racial Science in Romania,” in *Racial Science in Hitler’s New Europe 1938–1945*, edited by Anton Weiss-Wendt and Rory Yeomans (Lincoln, NE: Nebraska University Press, 2013), 259–286.
46. Turda, “Romanian Eugenic Sub-Culture,” 34.
47. Especially the studies of Radu Ioanid, *The Sword of the Archangel: Fascist Ideology in Romania*, translated by Peter Heinegg (Boulder, CO: East European Monographs; New York: Columbia University Press, 1990); Irina Livezeanu, *Cultural Politics in Greater Romania: Regionalism, National Building & Ethnic Struggle, 1918–1930* (Ithaca, NY–London: Cornell University Press, 1995); Paul A. Schapiro, “Faith, Murder, Resurrection: The Iron Guard and the Romanian Orthodox Church,” in *Antisemitism, Christian Ambivalence, and the Holocaust*, edited by Kevin P. Spicer (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2007), 136–172.
48. Among them, Roland Clark, *Holy Legionary Youth: Fascist Activism in Interwar Romania* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2015); Diana Dumitru, *The State, Antisemitism, and Collaboration in the Holocaust: The Borderlands of Romania and*

*the Soviet Union* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2016); Florian Kühner-Wielach, "The Transylvanian Promise: Political Mobilisation, Unfulfilled Hope and the Rise of Authoritarianism in Interwar Romania," *European Review of History* 23, 4 (2016): 580–594; Constantin Iordachi and Blasco Sciarrino, "War Veterans, Demobilization and Political Activism: Greater Romania in Comparison," *Fascism: Journal of Comparative Fascist Studies* 6, 1 (2017): 75–117.

49. Mihaela Gligor, "Reading Between the Lines: The Importance of Eliade's Correspondence," *Theory in Action: Journal of the Transformative Studies Institute* 9, 3 (2016): 10–11.

50. Gligor, "View of the World from Palas Street," 166–167.

### **Abstract**

#### Cultural and Political Interactions in Interwar Romania

It is often said that the interwar Romanian society had a westernized intellectual elite, perfectly connected to what the culture of Western Europe meant at that time. Among the characteristics that defined the intellectual life of interwar Romania were dialogue and the desire to argue elegantly, eruditely, critically, originally, with interlocutors from different fields of humanities and/or sciences. Unfortunately, the effervescence of the interwar period also contains the sad story of a brilliant young generation which fell prey to the destructive passion of politics. Discovering the truth is crucial for two main reasons: we can have a complete image of the generation and we can solve the historical mystery of interwar Romania.

### **Keywords**

interwar Romania, (in)tolerance, anti-Semitism, intellectuals, cultural and political interactions

# A New Academic Year (1923–1924) A New Year of “Student Movements” in Cluj

MARIA GHITTA

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*“The youth, with their characteristic élan and impetuosity, wanted this constructive creation to come to fruition as fast as possible, but it would have been fatal to embark on unknown or very difficult roads.”*  
(Iacob Iacobovici)

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THE OPENING of the new academic year took place at the end of October 1923 and could not disregard what had happened previously at the University of Cluj and around it. The ceremony, which had once been an occasion for festive assessments and exhortations to new achievements, now had to remind the attendees of the serious disturbances that had marked the previous year. In the speeches they gave on that occasion, the former and current rectors referred, each in their own way, to the recent university experiences.

Although he had faced some of the most difficult moments as a result of the manifestation of the students’ youthful zeal, the former rector, Iacob Iacobovici, displayed a remarkable ability to use generalizing statements, completely avoiding personal notes or moralizing attitudes. Speaking about what had happened during his term in office, the renowned doctor and professor placed the events in the broader framework of the process of national construction following the Union:

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*The youth, with their characteristic élan and impetuosity, wanted this constructive creation to come to fruition as fast as possible, but it would have been fatal to embark on unknown or very difficult roads.<sup>1</sup>*

Moreover, he was tempted to see the manifestations of the youth as the symptom of a more general condition: “The sudden growth of the country has caused an acute crisis.”<sup>2</sup> A remarkable sociological observation, this statement outlines not only the intellectual, but also the human profile of the author. The former rector did not publicly quarrel with his recalcitrant students,<sup>3</sup> but was capable of performing a deeper and better analysis of the facts by contextualizing them. This was, of course, a nonconformist observation, but one that was all the more valuable in the postwar environment, in which temptations to mimetically celebrate the fulfillment of the national ideal rarely gave way to analytical thinking. The union had come not only as a glorious apotheosis, “bathed in the blood of heroes” and fulfilling the “dream of ages,” but also as a huge concrete task to solve so many economic, social, ethno-cultural disparities, etc. The University of Cluj was a place that highlighted these problems even more acutely.

Nicolae Bănescu, the new rector, a Byzantinologist and a professor at the Faculty of Letters and Philosophy, did not hesitate to call the previous academic year a year of crises, a year that had been out of the ordinary compared to the previous ones, a year in which the university had functioned according to a convention that was well understood by its members:

*Our university started from the beginning as a rather cohesive body and, thanks to the precious collaboration of its component elements, its powers have increased from one year to the next.*

By contrast, the previous year had broken “the unity of fruitful action.”<sup>4</sup> The University of Cluj was in danger of failing to carry out the great cultural-national project in Transylvania, paradoxically not because of external factors, of “enemies from outside,” but because of too much youthful nationalism, expressed with growing vehemence here. The new rector resumed his pedagogical exhortations, which had been reiterated so many times:

*The youth should be trained not in noisy sterile assemblies, not through conspiracies and revolutionary parodies, but quietly, in study rooms, which we would like to be as full of students as possible, in the company of library books, those secret counselors of wisdom.<sup>5</sup>*

Due to the holiday, the resumption of school had become a cause for concern. Would the new Romanian university in Cluj be able to return to the good path

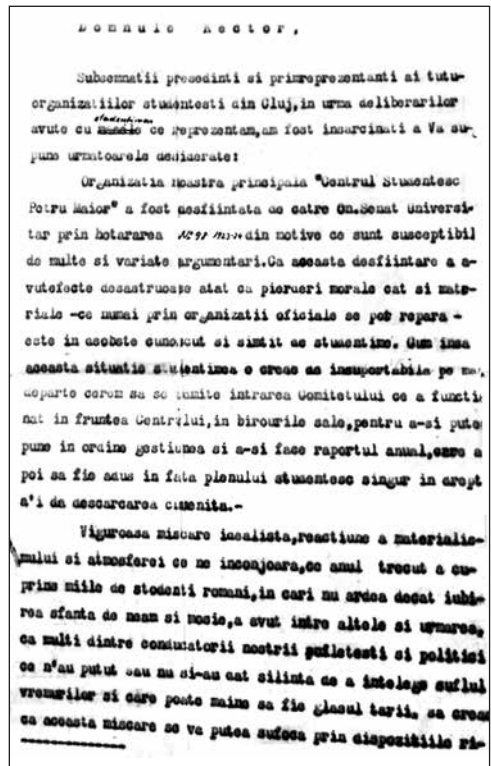


inaugurated just four years before? Or would it be derailed again, the following year, by youthful intransigence? The stakes of its good functioning were high, regardless of the political angle from which it was viewed. Its prestige and importance outweighed the obvious political disputes that never failed to break out. "Let's take a grateful look at the four years of work of those who, together, make up the University,"<sup>6</sup> as the opposition newspaper urged, while also mentioning the difficult postwar circumstances in which the university had been built so quickly and so successfully. Its scientific work and remarkable contribution to the "Romanianization of the spirit" were so obvious that a comparison "between what has been and what stands before us today fills us with justified confidence."<sup>7</sup> All that was left was for the young generation to understand the moment, to moderate its spirit of independence in favor of intergenerational collaboration. Hopes and exhortations were voiced, but fears were still lurking in their shadow.

The teaching activity started without any incidents in Cluj (unlike in Iași, where clashes between the students and the police were recorded during the opening of the academic year).<sup>8</sup> In fact, peace had not been embraced by the student leaders, who were seeking to regain their positions. Some of them wished to be reenrolled as students, as they had been expelled after the serious disturbances at the end of April, under the Senate decision taken at the beginning of May. Following their express requests,

*Boer from Medicine, Silaghi from Science, Bidian and Victor Nicolae from Law were reenrolled after they gave their word of honor to never again participate in disturbances against peace and order at the University.<sup>9</sup>*

Obviously, Ion I. Moța, a former leader of the students during the riots who had been expelled alongside them, was not among the re-admitted young



Lucian Blaga Central University Library  
of Cluj-Napoca, Petru Maior coll.,  
Ms. 5851 (Scrap paper register),  
Memorandum to the Rector, 17 Nov. 1923.

scholars. He was, at that time, imprisoned at Văcărești, following his participation in the plot that targeted several leaders of the Jewish community and several Romanian ministers considered “traitors.”

Even more important for the student association was the recovery of the Petru Maior Student Center, with everything it entailed: tradition, fame, and resources. A new memorandum to the rector tried to persuade him to reconsider a decision that had had “disastrous effects in terms of both moral and material losses.”<sup>10</sup> Without the verbal and conceptual virulence of the similar petition previously written by Moța (in which terms such as “illegal,” “fatal,” “unjust” were used to describe the university’s action against the Center), the new memorandum also considered the act to be questionable (“open to many and varied refutations”).<sup>11</sup>

Moreover, the opportunity was seized to apologize for the “vigorous idealist movement,” “which last year included thousands of Romanian students, in whom only the holy love of nation and homeland burned,” a love that was so little understood by “our leaders and politicians, who could not or did not try their best to understand the spirit of the times.”<sup>12</sup> What was supposed to be a plea to the relevant authorities increasingly proved to be a manifesto, a protest. The memorandum also attacked the “Regulation concerning Order and Discipline in the University,” “vulnerable to criticism in its entirety or in general and condemnable for the multitude of penalties,” since the Romanian students in Cluj, as well as in the whole country, “had not been consulted at all” when it had been drafted.<sup>13</sup> Those who were theoretically asked for something (help, guidance, approval) practically received a devastating criticism. They were directly reprimanded, while the final appeal was to “the soul” (theirs and “ours”):

*Through our voice, the students of Cluj ask you to give them the possibility to hold a plenary session, so that their soul may be made known to everyone as soon as possible. Convinced that our just wishes will resonate in the souls of your Lordships, we ask the Rector to receive the assurance of our highest respect.*<sup>14</sup>

The signatories presented themselves as presidents and first representatives of all student organizations in Cluj. At their head was Emil Pascu, who, as vice president, provided a kind of interim leadership of the student organization. The text was also endorsed by older members of the former committee of the Petru Maior Center, such as Victor Șuiaga or Gheorghe Ionescu, but also by new members: Felician Zăciu (from the Faculty of Law), Ioan Săroiu (from the Faculty of Medicine), Ion Muntean, Valer Moldovan etc.

It may be assumed that such a memorandum did not make a good impression on Rector Nicolae Bănescu. According to one of those sent to personally

### Proces verbal

Luat la cunoaștere intimă a Comitetului Centrului Stud. Petru  
Maior "ținută în ziua de 2/III. 1923.

Prezenti: Arica, Breazu, Buta, Gavril, Săraș, Păcur  
Chirca, Rotaru, Pascu.

D. Arica: deschide ședința la ora 9. seara. -  
D. Săraș: La delegația primită dala Do. nu am prezentat cu D.  
Pascu la D. Rector în chestiunea admiterii unei  
ședințe. Or. D. Rector a refuzat, prin un mod cate-  
goric această ordine, zicând că nu vrea să mai aude  
de existența Centrului Stud. Petru Maior. Comitetul  
actual al Centrului își va face raportul - după ce  
și-a ridicat actele necesare din localul Centru-  
lui și le va depune la Secretariatul Universității -  
care îl va depune la Rectorat care oșigură îl  
va absolve, iar o ordine va admite atunci când  
dărușul va afla de bine. -

Lucian Blaga Central University Library of Cluj-Napoca,  
Petru Maior coll., Ms. 5993, doc. 14/3 Dec. 1923.

present him with the students' request, "The rector categorically refused this meeting, saying that he did not want to hear about the existence of the Petru Maior Center, and that he would accept a meeting when the news was better."<sup>15</sup> His counter-proposal concerning the end of the current committee's mandate was for the latter to draft their report on the basis of the necessary documents that could be picked up from the Center's headquarters, and to submit it to the university secretariat, which would then send it over to the rector "who will surely absolve them."<sup>16</sup>

The decision to suspend the functioning of the former committee was thus in the hands of the rector, and setting up a new committee was out of the question. The glorious time of the formation of the governing body of the Petru Maior Society by submitting candidacies that were subsequently validated in general elections (with the participation of a large number of students) seemed to have passed. The members of the Center—who were asking for a plenary meeting to renew their mandates—had not gone through what had been an ordinary election process until February 1923. As they wrote to Ioan Moța in Orăștie, in mid-December 1923, they had come to operate "undercover":

*We wish to inform you that, since our center is no longer operational, we are encountering difficulties in cashing the stipends, as our committee can only function clandestinely.*<sup>17</sup>

(Moța's father had asked them for information on the status of the receipts for several types of works he had done at the "Libertatea" printing house, from the

Romanian translation of the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, to printed pamphlets about the Congress in Iași or the dissolution of the Center.)

The rector tried everything in his power to separate the name Petru Maior from the “current student movement” and to oust this movement from the university. He no longer wanted a prestigious name to be associated with an increasingly problematic activity. On the other hand, the university aimed to protect its usual activity (teaching) from the intrusion of an increasingly politicized and troublesome organization. In short: he simply wanted the university to work! As one of the participants (by the name of Buta) explained at a “private meeting” held on 3 December:

*I believe that the rector is simply demanding the removal of the movement from the University . . . The student movement is linked to the Center and the rector fears that the student movement may resume its activity around the Center in the way it was conducted last year.*<sup>18</sup>

The Senate meeting held on 14 December 1923 reinforced this perception:

*Regarding the Student Center, it will be called the Cluj Student Center in the future. The old Petru Maior academic society will no longer be confused with the Student Center, but will resume its past activity, without involving the students. It will be a simple academic or cultural society.*<sup>19</sup>

Student activity outside the university did not take long to appear. 10 December marked one year since the beginning of the movement at the national level, and the students of Cluj were preparing to celebrate the moment, complying with the decisions of the Congress of Delegates in Iași, which had begun the process of canonizing the movement (or, in secular terms, of sanctifying it):

*In memory of 10 December 1922, when the Romanian students fought for the first time throughout the country to defend the nation from the danger of alienation and disintegration, and when the delegates of the national movement of all Romanian students met in Bucharest for the first time, taking the first important step in our holy struggle, this day is declared a student holiday. The presidents of the Centers will make sure that university classes and activities are suspended every year on this date.*<sup>20</sup>

Of course, the students in Cluj knew that their revolt had started almost two weeks earlier (27–28 November), but they had generously accepted the anniver-

sary to be held on a date of national significance and greater importance. The success of the movement was due to the solidarity expressed throughout the country, and a regional overtone was not desirable here. At the already mentioned “private meeting” (the one that took place on 3 December), the scenario of the day had already been outlined: “A memorial for the students killed in the war, a beautiful demonstration, and then a meeting to highlight the significance of this day.”<sup>21</sup>

As can be seen from the program of events, the first anniversary of the student movement actually combined the activity at the university with that outside it. The removal of the “movement” from the university, desired by the rector, was a simple desideratum as long as this very celebration began with the “suspension of classes and activities.” External (outdoor) activities included street demonstrations and student gatherings, as well as a religious service. Now part of the set of options for the students in Cluj, religious service was already available to the students in Iași. It would become, in time, an unavoidable ritual, which proved the unification of the “movement’s” means of expression.

On the eve of the anniversary, the students in Cluj received an additional gift: the conference delivered by the poet and politician Octavian Goga at the National Theater. He had supported the student cause in press articles. Now he did it in a festive setting, in the presence of a large audience and in a doctrinal setting. The conference was entitled “The National Idea” and made a connection with the past. According to Goga, the current young generation was creating a work similar to the one the poet himself had carried out more than two decades before, during his own student days, when he had struggled with the gloomy and hostile atmosphere of Budapest. It was then that the foundations had been laid for the *Luceafărul* (The Evening Star) magazine and for the generational success of 1918. Now, through the youth movement, achievements of the same great desideratum could be seen: the national idea. In it were placed the hopes of the present dominated by the foreign press, by a painting<sup>22</sup> and literature<sup>23</sup> that lacked “national specificity.” It was an opportunity for Goga to display his own doctrinal options in the field of art and society and to propel the student movement into the realm of ideas (in fact, ideologies!): “Your inspiration is from the normal work of our past, you are the national idea in marching progress, the new goal for tomorrow.”<sup>24</sup> The national idea had found not only a new form of expression, but also a new personification.

The conference had echoes in the local press, eager to convey the core messages: “Students represent the national idea in marching progress,” and “their movement is a prologue to the constructive work of tomorrow.”<sup>25</sup> These are formulas meant to be imprinted in the public perception and to ensure their collective validation. But, above all, they are phrases that caught on: the national

### **Aniversarea începutului mișcărilor studențești**

Ieri s'a împlinit anul de când s'au început mișcările studențești, o zi pe care studențimea a hotărât să o serbătorească. De dimineața deja mari grupuri de studenți s'au adunat în fața căminului, de unde în rânduri ordonate au plecat la biserică unde s'a oficiat un serviciu divin. Studențimea a plecat pe urmă în număr foarte mare prin Piața Unirii și str. Regina Maria în fața Teatrului, unde trebuia să vorbească mai mulți studenți. Abia a început însă să vorbească studentul Botez când apare odată prefectul poliției, dl Popoviciu și declară, că nu mai admite nici un cuvânt, întrucât intrarea nu a fost aprobată. Se naște o agitație foarte mare. Toată studențimea strigă, se agită și amenință cu un enorm scandal. Adunarea nu s'a putut continua și studențimea s'a hotărât să se retragă la Universitate pornind pe Calea Victoriei către Piața Unirii. Înaintea Lupoalcii studențimea se oprește din nou și cu toate protestele poliției se țin înfiăcărare cuvântării de către dnl Mica, Săroiu, Crășmaru, Crișan, Bota, Păcup, Munteanu. Pe urmă studențimea se împărșește în regală fără să se provoace vre-o disordine.

*Patria*, 12 Dec. 1923, p. 2.

The student demonstration that took place the next day (Monday, 10 December) was also seen somewhat differently by the opposing political camps. A divine service, a speech in front of the National Theater (delivered by the student Botez), a peaceful demonstration in the streets, patriotic songs, were all without problems for the newspaper *Înfrățirea* (The Brotherhood).<sup>27</sup> The newspaper *Patria* (The Country) viewed the events through a different lens:

*In the morning, large groups of students gathered in front of the dormitory, from where they walked in files to the church, where a divine service was officiated. The students then went in large numbers, through Unirii Square and Regina Maria Street, to the front of the Theater, where several students had to speak. However, hardly had the student Botez started talking when the police prefect, Mr. Popoviciu*

idea, the young generation, the march (movement) made up the new triad of social dynamism. What the students were doing was valuable and looked further towards a brighter future. How could one not appreciate them? As for the image that personified the national idea in marching progress, it had, of course, the endorsement of a poet; a poet who proved to be knowledgeable of the contemporary political trends, those that capitalized on the triumphant dynamics of the march.

This was also an opportunity for the newspaper that supported the government to attack the opposition, more precisely the “national party,” the only one that had not attended the big demonstration at the National Theater: that is, the party that “puts itself above public sentiment” and lacks the “national idea” (!)<sup>26</sup> Ironically, such an accusation was brought against the party that had long represented the national ideology of the Romanians in Transylvania. The very content of the national idea seemed to be changing.

*stated that he would not allow any more speeches, as the meeting had not been approved. There was a great deal of agitation. All the students shouted, got upset and threatened with a huge scandal. The assembly could not continue and the students decided to withdraw to the University.*<sup>28</sup>

The offensive of the *Patria* would intensify in the coming days. Seeking to take advantage of the moment by amplifying it, it used these events as a good opportunity to attack the government and... defend the student body.

*The youth, who were aware of their purpose, would have manifested in silence . . . The Liberal government has once again taken on the role of bullfighter, hurting and shaking the innocent bull . . . We cannot approve of the violent demonstrations, but at the same time we will not approve of equally violent reprisals.*<sup>29</sup>

The next day's editorial gloomily announced: "We are on the verge of another lost year for Romanian education," and for this "the students are not to blame," as the blame "falls on the government, which has waged a policy of complicity throughout the whole student movement."<sup>30</sup>

Ironically, as had once been the case with the press endorsing the Liberals—which soon received violent blows after chanting similar odes to the students—the turn of *Patria* would soon come. The much touted but improbable solidarity of the press guild was to be put to the test in Cluj during the same month (December 1923). The newspaper *Patria* was to organize the first general Congress of the Romanian press in the capital of Transylvania. Prepared as an event of utmost importance, the congress would also see the participation of newspapers that did not support the "student movement." This was enough to cause manifestations of extreme violence, which simply prevented the event from taking place and besmirched the reputation of the city: Cluj, a city of student devastations.<sup>31</sup>

More than a year had passed since the beginning of the student movement, and some of its characteristics continued to manifest themselves. The students seemed determined to continue their struggle, and the university authorities were trying their best to save the academic year by ousting the movement from the university. The initial student program was increasingly converted, with the help of various ideological friends, into a new nationalism. Sensing or just inferring the potential significance of the process, political actors (parties, personalities, media, etc.) positioned themselves in relation to this topic, in the (sometimes vain) hope of securing their own advantage.



## Notes

1. "Dare de seamă asupra anului 1922/23," *Anuarul Universității din Cluj anul școlar 1922/23* (Cluj: Imprimeria Dr. Bornemisa, 1924): 8–9.
2. Ibid.
3. A few months later, during the trial of the students accused of firing their revolvers at Professor Iacobovici's window, the professor, who had been called as a witness, stated that he did not know those who had fired, nor could he suspect who the culprits might be. The War Council of the 6<sup>th</sup> Army Corps, which heard the case (by virtue of the state of siege in the city), acquitted them of the charge of shooting at the rector's house, but sentenced them "to 15 days in prison for breaking the windows of the synagogue, but suspended the execution of the sentence." "Procesul studenților la Consiliul de Război," *Patria* (Cluj), 5 July 1924: 2.
4. "Cuvântarea inaugurală și raportul rectorului," *Anuarul Universității din Cluj pe anul școlar 1923–24* (Cluj: Institutul de Arte Grafice "Ardealul," 1925): 7.
5. Ibid., 35.
6. "Noul an universitar," *Patria*, 27 Oct. 1923: 1.
7. Ibid.
8. "Reîncep tulburările studențești," *Patria*, 4 Nov. 1923: 3.
9. Cluj County Branch of the National Archives, Universitatea din Cluj coll., "Ședințele Senatului Universitar," file 5, p. 17.
10. Lucian Blaga Central University Library of Cluj-Napoca, Petru Maior coll., Ms. 5851 (Scrap paper register), Memorandum to the Rector, 17 Nov. 1923.
11. Ibid.
12. Ibid.
13. Ibid.
14. Ibid.
15. Ibid., Ms. 5993, incoming posters, doc. 14, 3 Dec. 1923.
16. Ibid.
17. Ibid., Ms. 5851 (Scrap paper register), letter of 15 Dec. 1923.
18. Ibid., Ms. 5993, incoming posters, doc. 14.
19. Cluj County Branch of the National Archives, Universitatea din Cluj coll., "Ședințele Senatului Universitar," file 5, p. 32, meeting of 14 Dec. 1923.
20. Lucian Blaga Central University Library of Cluj-Napoca, Petru Maior coll., Ms. 5993, incoming posters, "Hotărârile Congresului de la Iași" (newspaper cutout).
21. Ibid., doc. 14.
22. Goga is disappointed that he no longer finds in paintings the faces of peasants, ox-carts, mountains and birches, "the mystery of Grigorescu," or the "Romanian shepherd" of Ștefan Luchian, "our flowers," "but canvases painted by foreign brushes, revealing an other-worldly vision." Even the names of the artists are "exotic": Octavian Goga, "Ideia Națională: Conferință în fața studenților universitari din Cluj," in *Mustul care fierbe* (Bucharest: n.p., n.d. [1927]), 34.



23. Nor is literature better, dominated by “a hybrid production,” “pages of diaphanous poetry, a strange literary psychosis with various exotic labels: Expressionism, Dadaism, Rabindranath-Tagorism...” “The known leitmotif of the earth is no longer used, the peasant has long since disappeared as a literary object, our fields have ceased speaking.” “I find the explanation simpler and more painful. There are guests, gentlemen, who, after gaining control of the press, also settle in literature.” Goga, 36–37. Of course, the debate about the “national specificity” in art in the interwar period is endless... It also led G. Călinescu to include a special chapter in *Istoria literaturii române de la origini până în prezent*, 2<sup>nd</sup> rev. and enl. edition, edited and prefaced by Al. Piru (Bucharest: Minerva, 1982), 973–976, and there are countless examples of references to this issue, including the important disputes between autochthonists and synchronists, between traditionalists and modernists. In most cases, the debate was not simply “literary”; it contained broader ideological implications, which could be channeled into the debate of nationalism v. anti-Semitism.
24. Goga, 39.
25. “Ideea Națională: Conferința Dlui Octavian Goga la Teatrul Național,” *Înfrățirea* (Cluj) 963, 10 Dec. 1923: 2.
26. “Ideea Națională și partidul național,” *Înfrățirea* 964, 12 Dec. 1923: 1.
27. “Manifestație studențească,” *Înfrățirea*, 12 Dec. 1923: 2.
28. “Aniversarea începutului mișcărilor studențești,” *Patria*, 12 Dec. 1923: 2.
29. “Conflicte studențești,” *Patria*, 14 Dec. 1923: 1.
30. “Din criză în criză,” *Patria*, 15 Dec. 1923: 1.
31. See Marian Petcu, “Istoria unui eșec: Congresul general al presei din România (Cluj, 1923),” *Revista română de istoria presei* (Bucharest) 6, 1 (11) (2012): 122–135.

## Abstract

### A New Academic Year (1923–1924): A New Year of “Student Movements” in Cluj

The paper presents the events that accompanied the start of the 1923–1924 academic year at Cluj University, in the aftermath of the violent student unrest of the previous year. The students seemed determined to continue their struggle, and the university authorities did their best to save the academic year by ousting the movement from the university. The initial student program was increasingly converted, with the help of various ideological friends, into a new nationalism. Reference is also made to the manner in which various parties, public personalities, or media outlets positioned themselves in relation to this topic.

## Keywords

University of Cluj, Petru Maior Student Center, nationalism, Octavian Goga

## 1821. Tudor Vladimirescu A Historiographical Topic Two Hundred Years Later

ALIN CIUPALĂ



THEODOR AMAN, *Tudor Vladimirescu* (1879), aquaforte and needle engraving, 18.5×11 cm

### Alin Ciupală

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**T**HIS YEAR, there will be two centuries since one of the more complicated events of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, for both national history as well as for that of Southeastern Europe, historically known as “The Revolution led by Tudor Vladimirescu.”

The copious amount of historiographical materials published so far<sup>1</sup> might leave one under the impression that everything has been said. Nothing could be farther from the truth, since we find ourselves far from the closing arguments of a debate that is still in dire need of new points of view, preferably devoid of ideological bias—be it Forty-eighter, Marxist, ultra-nationalist, post-modernist, etc. Professionally analyzing the sources—the local ones in regional context as well as the re-

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gional ones in a general European context—is the only way to contribute to a still challenging topic.

Between the years of 1948 and 1990, the subject at hand has been one of the favorite topics of the Romanian movie industry, bleeding into the public space as historical fiction, feature films, debates and conferences, public forum monuments, philatelic issues, deltiological series, medals, street names, public school and cultural center names.<sup>2</sup> The comics from the last page of the children's and teens' magazine *Cutezătorii* (The Daring), a splendid display of penmanship, were often inspired by this subject, because it was broadly tackled in the time's history handbooks. The classes in Modern History at various universities used to begin with this very moment, because it was the actual debut of modern history itself.<sup>3</sup> It's quite possible that some of the professors teaching those courses didn't believe that a historical era could begin on a specific day, seemingly under the precise cut of a scalpel, just like the former era could not end on the day before that. But the ideological requirements that a dictatorial regime had taken up and turned into a political agenda were far more pressing and untouched by the methodology of historical research.

Following the Romanian Revolution of December 1989, the entire matter fell into oblivion, faced indifference or became a mere mandatory academic topic, as it remains to this day. It was a somewhat natural reaction, because the excessive attention previously granted to it created the rather false impression that all points of view had been explored. Moreover, all of a sudden, numerous historiographical topics, forbidden under the communist regime, were coming to light and catching everyone's attention. The two causes overlapped, thus condemning our current topic on the long run. Will it ever catch the researchers' eye again?

Today, the 1821 Revolution, as well as other historiographical topics connected to historical events of paramount importance, such as the 1848 Revolution, the Union of the Romanian Principalities or the War of Independence, only remain in the pages of magazines published until thirty years ago, disregarded by researchers.

The situation is somewhat of a paradox, should we consider how difficult it is to find unpublished *primary sources* regarding the events that took place in Moldavia and Wallachia in 1821. Internal documents started being published as early as the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, an endeavor that went on well into the late eighties.<sup>4</sup> And we have had major contributions to relevant international documents, at least as far as the Western space is concerned.<sup>5</sup>

Far less known, although partially published,<sup>6</sup> are some Russian documents, especially the reports by Russian Colonel Pavel Liprandi, that ought to be re-

evaluated given their relevance and the information they provide, information often kept secret because it was at odds with the official historiographical thesis of the communist regime regarding the 1821 events. Future research of the Russian archives will undoubtedly unearth other documents from that era, drawn up by various authors from the Russian space, both official and private, who found themselves in the Romanian Principalities at that time.

Ottoman documents are all but absent, and the studies conducted so far<sup>7</sup> merely indicate the viewpoint of the suzerain power, instead of actually publishing the sources that outline it. The lack of these sources leaves a huge gap and, without filling it, we will not be able to clarify some essential issues.<sup>8</sup> If the internal documents are known, as well as the Western and partially even the Russian ones, those of the Ottomans remain in the shadows to this day, and publishing them ought to be a historiographical priority on the matter.

Another issue that caused the emergence of divergent viewpoints was the general classification of the event: a *rebellion* or a *revolution*? The answers provided between the mid-nineteenth century and the present time barely acknowledge the developments occurred during the event itself. The reference system was, more often than not, either ideological, or pertaining to Southeast European historiography. For instance, when Nicolae Bălcescu—the ideologist of the 1848 Revolution in the Principality of Wallachia—approached the events of 1821 and especially Tudor Vladimirescu,<sup>9</sup> he did so because he wanted to provide his contemporary compatriots with a role model, with a path, one that was relevant not necessarily for what Vladimirescu had accomplished, but for what the revolutionaries of 1848 wanted to achieve. Also, given the fact that the national divergence between some members of the Romanian nobility and the great Greek nobility in the late eighteenth century and early nineteenth century turned into a lasting historiographical confrontation between Romanian and Greek historians, the Romanian point of view could not sit below the Greek one. The Romanians needed to match the discourse regarding the Greek Revolution—and so they did, by creating one about a Romanian Revolution that took place in 1821.

In our opinion, an answer to this question should be somewhere in between. As far as the actual developments go, the event is closer to a rebellion. After all, the term mentioned in the sources of that time when referring to the event was *uprising*, which rather translates to unrest, rebellion, riot.<sup>10</sup> As for the aftermath, we can speak of a revolution because 1821 made the Ottoman Empire replace an entire regime, the Phanariote one, which had been introduced to the Principalities during the early eighteenth century for strategic reasons.

Historiography seems to minimize, if not completely disregard, the part played by the *Romanian patriotic nobility* in organizing and initiating the 1821

movement. The starting point was creating a clear national identity among the high noble families of Wallachia and Moldavia, as a consequence of the Enlightenment ideology that penetrated the entire Balkan Peninsula through the agency of Greek culture. Ironically enough, this particular culture, which in the Principalities was under the patronage of Phanariote princes, would create a ripple effect that would clash with the very Greek interests. The Enlightenment, in its more conservative, Southeast European form, engendered—among other things—the two nationalist branches (Greek and Romanian) that would come at violent odds in 1821. Some of the Wallachian high noblemen opposed the Greek national project aimed at subduing the Principalities, the *Megali Idea*. The love of country—which, for the time being, was only expressed by the noblemen—collided with another love of country: that of the Greek princes and noblemen. Moreover, eager to prove to the suzerains how determined they were to exert power again, after a century of sitting on the side, the nationalist Wallachian nobility took action, in an already tense situation where the Philiki Hetairia (Philikí Etaireía) had initiated the Greek revolution. They had to seize the opportunity to simultaneously express their solidarity with the Ottoman Empire and to reveal their own national project.

We must emphasize the fact that the high nobility in Wallachia, just like the one in Moldavia, was not on the same page as far as their allegiances went. We have one group—perhaps the most numerous one—unquestionably faithful to the Ottoman Empire, but weary towards any type of change, even one that would have led to the replacement of the Phanariote regime, a thing they desired, but had no intention of getting involved in actually achieving it. Another group, less numerous but far more determined, even braver one might say, also entirely loyal to the suzerain power, was becoming more and more outspoken: a resistance movement to the Phanariote regime, fueled by the sense of their own national identity. Yet another group, also not very large, had become faithful to the Greek national project and to the *Megali Idea*, and their affiliation to the Phanariote regime was based, aside from financial interests, on family ties achieved through Romanian-Phanariote marital alliances.<sup>11</sup> A fourth group, perhaps the thinnest, was harboring an ever-growing sense of fidelity towards the policy of the Russian Empire in the Principalities, and received significant support from the Russian Consulate in Bucharest. The latter would increase its influence following the 1829 Peace Treaty of Adrianople, when the Russian protectorate over the Principalities would become a principle of international law.

However, in this confrontation, the Romanian patriotic nobility were at a great disadvantage when it came to the Greeks: the lack of an army. In Bucharest, the Greeks had the prince's guards and the mercenary troops, not very numerous but enough to provide a military upper hand. The captains of these units, Bim-

bashi Sava (Savvas Fokianos), Iordache Olimpiotul (Giorgios Olympos), Ioan Farmache (Giannis Farmakis)—to mention just a few names—were known for their fidelity to the Hetairia, even though they were not all of Greek ethnicity.

**T**HESE ARE the circumstances under which Tudor Vladimirescu emerged. For the posterity, probably also due to his tragic demise, not just to the part he played in 1821, his biography underwent considerable alterations. Vladimirescu was one of the Pandours<sup>12</sup> who had fought in the Russian-Austrian-Ottoman wars in the second half of the eighteenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth century. Initially, the term was used for the Croatian irregular troops hired in the Habsburg Empire, and it reached the Romanian territory during the Austrian rule over Oltenia between the years 1718 and 1739.<sup>13</sup> The Pandours were countrymen from the region of Oltenia who, in exchange for their military service, were granted certain privileges, mostly fiscal. In time, especially during the second half of the eighteenth century, they mastered the art of warfare and fought as auxiliary troops alongside the Austrians and the Russians, against the Ottomans.

Tudor Vladimirescu was born in an Oltenian rural family, in a village with a name similar to his (Vladimiri) in the Gorj area. Being literate, he became the right hand man of great nobleman Ioan Glogoveanu, who appreciated his loyalty and promoted him to land bailiff (a sort of overseer for one of the family estates, called Cloșani). Glogoveanu's son Nicolae kept Vladimirescu in his service, and sent him to Vienna in order to sort things out with an inheritance left by the wife of his new employer, who had lost her life to disease.<sup>14</sup>

The Russian-Ottoman war fought between 1806 and 1812 brought a decisive turn, not just in the life of our hero, but also in his legacy. As the leader of a Pandour unit that operated alongside the Russian troops, the military conflict provided him with a chance to stand out. His military bravery would be rewarded in the name of the tsar, as he would be granted the Order of Saint Vladimir.

His contemporaries saw him as a brave officer, a great organizer, a master in all things pertaining to warfare, a charismatic, strong and spirited commander. Tudor Vladimirescu thus became a man of the sword rather than of the quill, a fighter rather than an ideologist.

Historiography, especially during the communist regime, made him into a defender of the exploited.<sup>15</sup> The thesis of class conflict found in the character of the 1821 hero a paramount example of a humble-born man who got involved in the fight against social injustice, an example of his kind being able to rise above the life of poverty of humiliation imposed upon them by the nobility. "The Demands of the Romanian People," the founding document of this theory,

was taken out of context, turned into absolutes, tacitly appended where certain things were merely sketched, and turned into a reference system.

However, a comparative analysis of all the proclamations to the people issued by Vladimirescu, from the very beginning of his action in Oltenia, throughout his journey to Bucharest and during his stay in the Wallachian capital, shows that the social agenda became more and more diluted, eventually fading away completely when he openly addressed the issue of mandatory taxes, which meant, first and foremost, preserving, rather than eliminating an established taxation system.

Moreover, his main counselor, the one closest to him, Bishop Ilarion of Argeş,<sup>16</sup> was harboring nationalist feelings rather than a desire for social change.

Was Tudor Vladimirescu an anti-Ottoman fighter? Definitely not, because, as proven by his letters to the pasha of Vidin, he identified himself as a loyal subject of the sultan and tried to clarify his actions in regard to the Ottoman Empire. No matter how hard it is to digest, in our opinion there is a strong possibility that one of Vladimirescu's allies was the suzerain power, because, between February and May of 1821, he was the only one who turned out to be a loyal supporter of the Ottoman interests north of the Danube. Besides, during the Ottoman military action in Wallachia, the empire directed an unusually fierce attack at the Hetairia troops, not at the Pandours. Neither Vladimirescu, nor the Romanian patriotic nobility questioned for a single moment the suzerainty of the Ottoman Empire over the Principality of Wallachia.

Was he an anti-Phanariote? Probably yes, considering that he had been introduced to the anti-Phanariote atmosphere of the patriotic nobility, whose members were openly against the Phanariote regime. But the complicated events of the year 1821 forced him to be cautious in terms of this agenda, especially since the power void that followed the death of Phanariote Prince Alexander Soutzos, the dismantlement of the Ruling Committee and the flight of the Romanian noblemen who had been involved in the plot at Braşov and Sibiu, all provided him with an extraordinary opportunity: becoming a leader.

The fighter was becoming more and more aware that the circumstances might give him a shot at the throne. He was in command of an army of approximately 5 to 6 thousand people, he had no direct opponents, the power was held by no one, and he had the determination required in order to take up this position. All he needed were the noblemen, the only ones able to give him the single thing he lacked: legitimacy.

Considering this context, Tudor Vladimirescu's relationship to the nobility becomes another essential issue. We believe that this relationship constantly evolved and changed as the power positions shifted. If, at the beginning, the patriotic nobility who wanted to see the Phanariote regime gone were the ones

who dictated terms and Vladimirescu the one who accepted them, the situation changed rather quickly. Eager to have a military force in Bucharest, capable to guarantee a victory against the Greek nobility, the plotters hired him to organize the Pandours, arm them and bring them to the capital. The money he got for it—the total amount is a matter of legend, augmented by the collective imagination of the posterity—was used to buy horses, weapons, and food.

In our opinion, the Padeș Proclamation, issued in early February of 1821, pinpoints the exact moment when a rift appeared between the nobility and Vladimirescu, the time when he started acting on his own, which compromised the initial plan, thus forcing the plotting noblemen to abort all initiative and flee to Transylvania. As he approached Bucharest, he tried to bring the noblemen back to his side, and his efforts multiplied after he entered the capital, because only the nobility could provide him with the legitimacy he needed in order to seize power. Just like Alexander Ypsilantis, who had also taken it upon himself to carry out an elaborate action, put together by the tsar's officials, when he had led his Hetairia troops in Moldavia, Vladimirescu found himself in an impossible situation. A good strategist, he understood the difficulty and cautiously withdrew to Cotroceni, then to Golești, in order to weather the consequences of the Ottoman military action.

The nobility felt the same, in the safety of the temporary self-exile in Transylvania. After all, the main difference between Vladimirescu and the nobility was the fact that the latter were no longer actively engaged, while the former continued to pursue what had become his own political agenda. The nobility was well aware of the fact that, due to the part they had played in conceiving a plan to overthrow the Phanariote regime by force, the sultan held them accountable, and the desire to save themselves superseded the desire to save the country.

The sudden assassination of the Pandours' commander by members of the Hetairia brings another issue to attention: Vladimirescu's relationship with the Hetairia.

The Philiki Hetairia had appeared in 1814 in Odessa<sup>17</sup> as a secret, revolutionary organization, aimed at liberating Greece from under the authority of the Ottoman Empire. Particularly active throughout the Balkan Peninsula, in the Romanian Principalities it had the protection of the Phanariote princes and the majority of the Greek nobility. The beginning of the Greek revolution, when General Alexander Ypsilantis led the Hetairia troops in Moldavia, and the anti-Ottoman uprising south of the Danube, brought Vladimirescu in close proximity of the Hetairia project.

The document that sealed the deal between himself, on one hand, and Hetairia captains Giannis Farmakis and Giorgios Olympios on the other, a document discovered in the Vienna archives as a copy made at the time, has completely



different interpretations in the Romanian and the Greek historiographies. While Romanian authors believe that the document depicts the free actions carried out by the Romanians and the Greeks in entirely particular and independent manners, Greek historiography interprets the paper as a recognition of Vladimirescu's subordination to the Hetairia. An impartial reading of this source does not really provide us with hard facts. It really cannot do so, because the deal was a secret and also a discreet one. We do not believe this particular, singular document, to hold the absolute value it has been vested with so far.

We believe this, too, to be connected to an ongoing development. The relationships between the two parties fluctuated at different paces, with different intensities, sometimes several times over the period of a single month. The two parties were never in a relationship of subordination, nor did they have a military or political collaboration; instead, they kept dancing around one another, trying to set the boundaries of their own fiefs. The Ottoman military intervention, aimed exclusively at the Hetairia troops in Wallachia and, then, in Moldavia, cleared the air once and for all.

Vladimirescu's assassination by Hetairia Captain Basilios Karavia, the one who had organized and led the massacre of the Ottoman community in Galați, at the end of May of 1821, increases the uncertainty. Also, it is difficult to explain how the Greeks managed to arrest him in the middle of the Pandour camp at Golești, in broad daylight, without anyone trying to do something to prevent it.

Greek historiography justifies Vladimirescu's sentence on account of the alleged treason on behalf of the Ottomans. There is not a single ounce of truth in such an allegation, since there had been no alliance to betray. In reality, it appears that the members of the Hetairia, Alexander Ypsilantis in particular, were interested in the money Vladimirescu had received from the plotting noblemen in order to organize the Pandours.

The action taken by the Hetairia in the Principalities gives cause for another topic that has been too little discussed, if not altogether ignored: the part played by the Russian Empire in supporting and organizing the events in the Romanian Principalities and in Southeastern Europe in 1821.

Historian Andrei Oțetea was the very first to propose,<sup>18</sup> with all due precautions, an evaluation of the part played by the Russian Empire. In our opinion, Russia's involvement in both the Greek revolution and the Balkan developments was decisive.

First of all, the Hetairia, a secret, revolutionary organization, couldn't have appeared on the territory of an autocratic empire without the tsar's blessing. The leader of the Hetairia was nobleman John Capodistrias (Ioannis Kapodistrias), foreign affairs minister of Tsar Alexander I, and one of the military commanders was Alexander Ipsilantis, a general in the Russian army. Russia was interested

in waging a new war on the Ottoman Empire, but it needed a pretext, for two reasons: on one hand, to prevent anyone from accusing it of breaching the 1815 Peace Treaty of Vienna, which had laid the ground for a new European order in the aftermath of the Napoleonic era, based upon keeping the status quo; on the other hand, because the Ottoman Empire had grown closer and closer to Great Britain, which had an interest in keeping the Straits neutral, thus providing the Ottomans with significant support.

The pretext had to come from the Hetairia; the latter, in alignment with Russia's strategic interests, had been tasked with organizing anti-Ottoman riots in continental Greece and in the Balkan Peninsula, in order to provide the Russian army with a pretext to defend the Orthodox Christians (i.e., Greeks) in these areas, should the Ottomans take military action.

The entire plan was compromised by the premature action taken by General Ypsilantis who, without the tsar's green light, crossed into Moldavia in early 1821. Pressured by Austrian Chancellor Metternich, who had been informed regarding the Russian plan, Emperor Alexander I stated, during a diplomatic meeting at Laybach, attended by those who had signed the Peace Treaty of 1815, that his armies would not intervene. The tsar's statement almost immediately triggered a fierce military reaction from the Ottoman Empire, which had received diplomatic assurances that the tsar would remain true to his word.

The events of 1821 deserve a fresh approach and perhaps the bicentennial anniversary would turn out to be the right time for it.



## Notes

1. Alin Ciupală, "Revoluția română de la 1821: Tudor Vladimirescu: Bibliografie generală," *Anuarul Institutului de Istorie "George Barițiu" din Cluj-Napoca* 47 (2008): 557–578.
2. We do not have an inventory of all these works, dealing under various forms and shapes with the "1821" topic, and especially with "Tudor Vladimirescu," but today every city in Romania has at least one street bearing this name.
3. Mircea T. Radu, "La Révolution de 1821—début de l'histoire moderne des Roumains," *Roumanie: Pages d'histoire* (Bucharest) 5, 2 (1980): 254–287.
4. See chapter "Izvoare," in Ciupală, 557–563.
5. For example: D. Găzdaru, "Una relazione manoscritta italiana sulla rivoluzione di Tudor Vladimirescu," *Diplomatarium Italicum* (Rome) 2 (1934): 240–273; Pavel Mocanu, "Revoluția de la 1821 în documente diplomatice portugheze," *Revista de istorie militană* (Bucharest) 2 (66) (2001): 33–36; Cornelia Alexandra Moraru, "Tudor Vladimirescu în documente italiene," *Tribuna* (Cluj-Napoca) 24, 25 (1980):

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6. Andrei Oțetea, lead editor, Nichita Adăniloiaie, Nestor Camariano, Sava Iancovici, Ioan Neacșu, and Alexandru Vianu, eds., *Documente privind istoria României: Răscoala din 1821* (Bucharest: Editura Academiei, 1959–1962), vol. 1, 422 pp., vol. 2, 407 pp., vol. 3, 551 pp., vol. 4, 331 pp., vol. 5, 626 pp.; Victor Papacostea, “Știri din presa rusă cu privire la tulburările revoluționare din 1821,” *Revista istorică română* (Bucharest) 11–12 (1941–1942): 308–313; Marian Stroia, “Corespondența Consulatului rus din București, o importantă sursă documentară în cunoașterea evenimentelor revoluționare de la 1821 în Principatele Române,” I, *Revista Arhivelor* (Bucharest) 74, 2 (1997): 164–194; II, *Revista Arhivelor* 75, 1–2 (1998): 81–116; Lucia Taftă, “Documente externe referitoare la anul revoluționar 1821 în sud-estul Europei: Jurnalul lui Grigorie Stroganov, ambasador al Rusiei la Poartă,” *Studii și materiale de istorie modernă* (Bucharest) 11 (1997): 171–205.
7. M. Guboglu, “Un mănunchi de documente turcești privind evenimentele din Țările Românești în jurul anului 1821,” *Revista Arhivelor* 1, 1 (1958): 234–256; H. D. Siruni, “Documente turcești referitoare la evenimentele din 1821–1822,” *Arhiva românească* (Bucharest) 4 (1940): 259–263; Valeriu Veliman, “Tudor Vladimirescu în documente turcești,” *Tribuna* 24, 25 (1980): 3; id., “Noi documente turcești privind evenimentele din 1821–1822,” *Revista Arhivelor* 65, 1–2 (2003): 202–220.
8. Such as the great delay in organizing the Ottoman military inroad north of the Danube in 1821 or the relationship the nobility and Tudor Vladimirescu had with the Ottoman authorities.
9. Nicolae Bălcescu, *Mersul revoluției în istoria românilor*, in *Opere*, vol. 2, *Scriseri istorice, politice și economice 1848–1852*, critical edition and notes by G. Zane and Elena G. Zane (Bucharest: Editura Academiei, 1982), 107–113; Mihai Chipereș, “Revoluția și revoluționarii,” in *Enciclopedia imaginariilor din România*, general editor Corin Braga, vol. 3, *Imaginar istoric*, edited by Sorin Mitu (Iași: Polirom, 2020), 290–291.
10. The term, of Slavic origin, was extended to the members of Tudor Vladimirescu’s movement. For its etymology, see A. de Cihac, *Dictionnaire d’étymologie daco-romane: Eléments slaves, magyars, turcs, grecs-moderne et albanais* (Frankfurt: Ludolphe St. Goar, 1879).

11. The son of a wealthy Greek noble family would marry the daughter of a Romanian noble family, never the other way around, because, by marriage, the Romanian girl brought her dowry in lands, while the Greek young man provided the political protection of his family. This was a win-win situation for both families. The lands were passed on within the Romanian noble families and the only way for the Greek families to gain possession of them was through marriage. Once the Phanariote regime was instated, the public positions were held, with very few exceptions, by Greek noblemen.
12. Vladimir Osiac, *Pandurii din Țara Românească* (Craiova: Scrisul Românesc, 1995).
13. Șerban Papacostea, *Oltenia sub stăpânirea austriacă (1718–1739)*, edited by Gheorghe Lazăr (Bucharest: Editura Enciclopedică, 1998).
14. Dan Berindei, *Revoluția română din 1821* (Bucharest: Editura Academiei Române, 1991), 54–55.
15. For example, Mircea T. Radu, *Tudor Vladimirescu și Revoluția din Țara Românească* (Craiova: Scrisul Românesc, 1978).
16. Mihai Rădulescu, “Prietenia și colaborarea patriotică dintre Tudor Vladimirescu și Ilarion al Argeșului în opere literare,” *Mitropolia Olteniei* (Craiova) 33, 10–12 (1981): 564–568; Nestor Vornicescu, “Despre activitatea episcopului Ilarion al Argeșului, sfetnicul lui Tudor Vladimirescu, din anii 1820 și 1821: Câteva date noi,” *Mitropolia Olteniei* 33, 1–3 (1981): 7–77; Spiridon Câdea, “Revoluția lui Tudor Vladimirescu și episcopul Ilarion al Argeșului,” *Mitropolia Ardealului* (Sibiu) 12, 8–9 (1967): 715–726.
17. N. Camariano, “Despre organizarea și activitatea Eteriei în Rusia înainte de răscoala din 1821,” *Studii și materiale de istorie modernă* 2 (1960): 73–103.
18. Andrei Oțetea, “Les Grandes Puissances et le mouvement hétéairiste dans les principautés roumaines,” *Balkan Studies* 7, 2 (1966): 379–394; id., *Tudor Vladimirescu și revoluția din 1821* (Bucharest: Editura Științifică, 1971).

## Abstract

### 1821. Tudor Vladimirescu: A Historiographical Topic Two Hundred Years Later

Following the excessive attention paid to this event during the communist period, nowadays the 1821 Revolution, as well as other historiographical topics connected to historical events of paramount importance, such as the 1848 Revolution, the Union of the Romanian Principalities or the War of Independence, only remain in the pages of magazines published until thirty years ago, being largely overlooked by researchers. The present paper analyzes the situation of the sources, national and international, dealing with this event, the debate concerning its precise nature—rebellion or revolution—as well as other potential avenues of research, from the involvement of the emerging patriotic nobility to the biography and the agenda of Tudor Vladimirescu himself.

## Keywords

Romanian revolution of 1821, Tudor Vladimirescu, Philiki Hetairia, Romanian Principalities

MELANIA-GABRIELA  
CIOT  
LUCIANA-MIRELA  
BUTIȘCĂ

# Idiosyncrasies of the European Leadership's Decision Regarding the European Green Deal

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*“Our leadership is not about self-serving propaganda. It is not about Europe First. It is about being the first to seriously answer the call when it matters.”*



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## **Introduction**

**T**HE IMPORTANCE of the decision-making process has increased significantly in recent years in several specialty areas, the psychological approach to this process offering new perspectives for understanding and explaining its complexity. Moreover, the implementation of foreign policy is conceptualized as a form of strategic and dialectical interaction between actors and the foreign policy environment, so that the success of any implementation of foreign policy depends not only on the clear definition of objectives and choice of instruments, but also on the interaction between the actor's strategy and the context in which it is positioned, or the actor's ability to adapt to unforeseen circumstances.<sup>1</sup>

A major question in the decision-making process is related to the direct influence of motivation in making a

decision or to the motivation that gives shape to behavior by processing information. Significant advances in research have been made showing how emotions influence choices. Some research suggests that people ignore the probability of success when under the influence of intense emotion.<sup>2</sup> Another research has focused on how emotions influence the perception of information.<sup>3</sup>

Foreign policy decisions are characterized by the stakes involved, high uncertainty and substantial risk.<sup>4</sup> This is where idiosyncrasies come into play—an important factor in foreign policy decisions. An actor may obtain a different result, depending on how the decision is made, and moreover, significant cognitive limitations distort information processing—some decisions are carefully calculated, while others are intuitive.<sup>5</sup>

Keller and Yang<sup>6</sup> mention four characteristics that guide the decision maker to the political context: accentuating the task or interpersonal relationships, and the need for power and faith in a person's ability to control events and self-monitoring. Leadership style analysis, also, helps us to understand why certain decisions are made by leaders.

This paper brings a new element into the study of international relations by analyzing idiosyncrasies that occur in decision-making at the individual level. The use of psychological methods in analyzing the foreign policy decision-making process proposes a necessary investigative pathway into the field of international relations. Decision-making in foreign policy is an important area of research because the way decisions are made can shape a possible choice. From this perspective, this paper aims to analyze the elements of subjectivity that influenced the decision makers involved in development of the European Green Deal and, at the same time, those who acted throughout the decision-making process, the political decision maker analyzed being the President of the European Commission, Ursula von der Leyen.

In this paper we opted for a qualitative analysis, in order to bring to light those novelty elements entailed by the proposed topic. The research started from the observation and analysis of the phenomena, so that later the results could be interpreted. It is an empirical approach based on the investigation of sources, such as the key documents adopted so far at national and European level, as well as of the idiosyncrasies operating on the implementation of the measures provided for in the EGD, also taking into account the dynamic changes operating in the decision-making process. Studies, reports of European and international institutions, as well as specialized volumes were also reviewed. In order to obtain relevant data regarding the object of the research, one of the techniques used has been discourse analysis, one of the “traditional” methods of qualitative research.<sup>7</sup> It has experienced impressive developments in the last decade.<sup>8</sup> The psychological approach to decision-making, through language study, will provide an iden-

tity to the decision maker, to the mental processes that occur, without ignoring the individual; his behavior will be contextualized.<sup>9</sup> This method has opened the way to the investigation of meanings and the way they are made. Every person, event or situation can be described in several manners, and taking into account the social context is the most important one.<sup>10</sup> As we have mentioned, the decision maker analyzed is the President of the European Commission, Ursula von der Leyen, and through discourse analysis (political/public speeches, media representations) we will identify the main elements of subjectivity which acted in the decision-making process. Another technique used is document analysis (*Political Guidelines for the Next European Commission 2019–2024*). Basically, in order to identify the main dimensions and characteristics of our study, through the analysis we will try to solve the problem of time retrieval.

This scientific approach aims to answer some research questions that we consider relevant to the chosen topic: Are there any elements of a political, cultural or social nature that have influenced the emergence of idiosyncrasies at the individual level, within the decision-making process? What kind of idiosyncrasies acted throughout the decision-making process?

Regarding the structure of the paper, in the first part we will focus on the social and educational elements and their impact on the political path of the decision maker. We will try to outline a system of beliefs, based on the identification of moral and social values: work, professionalism, responsibility, commitment, involvement, perseverance, dedication, evolution. Next, we will focus on the main idiosyncrasies that acted on Ursula von der Leyen's decisions. The research ends with the conclusions, which propose a discussion on the research results.

## Education and Political Career

**M**ARGARET HERMANN studied the personality characteristics of fifty-four prime ministers, claiming that factors such as leadership experience in foreign affairs, political style, political socialization and a broader view of the world must be taken into account in the decision-making process to truly understand how leaders conduct foreign policy.<sup>11</sup>

The foreign policy decision-making process may deepen the understanding of idiosyncrasies, motivations and perceptions that occur in making a decision, especially at the individual level. The elements of political, cultural or social nature can lead to the emergence of idiosyncrasies at the individual level in the decision-making process, and can also shape a decision.

Certainly, in the case of the analyzed political decision maker, we find these elements of influence, given the political path of Ursula von der Leyen. She is a

German politician, the first woman appointed minister of Defense in Germany (2013–2019), and since July 2019, the first woman who has been leading the European Commission. She is no stranger to the impact that such an important position can have on one's life. Her father, Ernst Albrecht, was a prominent politician in Germany and one of the first senior officials of the European Community. Later, Ernst Albrecht became minister of the Federal State of Lower Saxony. Ursula's mother was of German and American descent, had a doctorate, and actively encouraged her academic success. As a child, von der Leyen was enrolled in the European School, the institution where several children of community officials study in Brussels. In 1977 Ursula von der Leyen began her studies in economics at the University of Göttingen, but after a while she moved to Münster. Unfortunately, in those years the German terrorist group Red Army was committing assassinations against prominent politicians. To prevent a tragedy, her father sent her to London to protect her from a possible attack. There she studied at the School of Economics and Political Science under a false name, Rose Ladson, and she was protected by the Scotland Yard.<sup>12</sup> In 1980, Ursula von der Leyen decided to change her university career, refocusing on medicine at the Hanover School of Medicine, one of the best universities in Germany. In 1986, Ursula Albrecht married her colleague, Heiko von der Leyen, who belongs to an aristocratic family of silk industrialists. Heiko von der Leyen teaches medicine and is the executive director of a medical engineering company.<sup>13</sup>

In the late 1990s, Ursula von der Leyen chose to become involved in local politics in Hannover, as she had joined the Christian Democratic Union (CDU). From 1998 to 2002, Ursula von der Leyen was a member of the Department of Epidemiology, Social Medicine and Research of the Health System at the Medical College of Hannover. Due to her personal qualities and excellent family contacts, she quickly acquired new responsibilities, until she was appointed cabinet minister in the government of Lower Saxony in 2003. Ursula von der Leyen was part of a group set up by Angela Merkel with the aim of preparing a series of alternatives for the reform of the social system in Germany.<sup>14</sup>

In 2005, she left the local government and became minister of Seniors, Women and Youth in the German federal government. In this capacity, she introduced a law that allocated € 4.3 billion to the creation of new structures for childcare. She also introduced a paid parental leave, following the Scandinavian model, which grants two months for parents who make use of this benefit.<sup>15</sup>

In the post-2009 negotiations, the CDU/CSU party coalition was formed. Ursula von de Leyen was appointed minister of Labor and Social Affairs. During her tenure, she helped Angela Merkel bring the CDU to a central position in German politics. Ursula von der Leyen supported the increase in the number of kindergartens, the introduction of a quota for women in company



management positions, same-sex marriage, and a minimum wage across the country.<sup>16</sup>

In 2013, Ursula von der Leyen assumed the post of Defense minister. She was the first woman to be appointed minister of Defense in Germany. Ursula von der Leyen launched a € 100 million program to provide childcare for the soldiers' children. In addition, she managed to introduce regulations to match the movements of soldiers with school vacations. From her pro-European perspective, she argued that the creation of a European army would be a long-term objective. In 2015, she and her colleagues in France and Poland revitalized the cooperation agreement between the three EU member states that make up the so-called Weimar Triangle. Ursula von der Leyen served uninterruptedly as minister, in Angela Merkel's cabinet, since she assumed office in 2005.<sup>17</sup>

Following the European Parliament elections in May 2019, the European Council began the process of nominating who would be presented to Parliament to replace Jean-Claude Juncker as president of the European Commission. On July 2019, von der Leyen was proposed by the European Council as a candidate for the post of president of the European Commission. At the time of her nomination for president of the European Commission, von der Leyen was minister of Defense in Germany. This proposal came from the French President, Emmanuel Macron, according to the German newspaper *Die Welt*. Critics emerged immediately after the proposal, one of those who questioned the appointment being Jean-Claude Juncker himself, who said that the process of appointing of his successor had not been transparent and marked a violation of the practice of choosing someone according to the *Spitzenkandidat* procedure.

Speaking fluently in French, German and English in the speech and during the answers given to MEPS in a long four-hour session in Strasbourg, Ursula von der Leyen multiplied her chances of getting a minimum of 374 votes, while emphasizing the idea that “finally, a woman to run for president of the European Commission.” She focused on her priorities for the next five years, including the digital sector and the fight against climate change:

*If we do our job well, Europe by 2050 will be the first continent in the world neutral in terms of carbon emissions, will be a leading power in the digital field and it will remain the economy that has best managed to ensure the balance between the market and the social.*<sup>18</sup>

In order to impress and attract the attention of the deputies, she formulated her pleas and actions starting from the aspirations of the young people, emphasizing once again the fact that she is the mother of seven children, and therefore more familiar with the needs of future generations:

*For the generation of my children, Europe is a unique aspiration.*

*It is an aspiration of living in a natural and healthy continent. Of living in a society where you can be who you are, live where you like, love who you want and aim as high as you want.<sup>19</sup>*

Moreover, in trying to become the first woman to lead the European Commission, with full confidence, she sent a very clear message: “If elected, I will strengthen the links between people, nations and institutions. Between expectations and delivery. Between words and deeds.”<sup>20</sup>

Beyond the concrete measures proposed to build a pro-European majority around her, Ursula von der Leyen made multiple references to the common European history and the history of her family. She also said that whoever wanted to unite and strengthen Europe would find in her “a passionate fighter,” and anyone who wanted to weaken and divide Europe, moving it away from its values, would face a “hard opponent.”<sup>21</sup>

## **Idiosyncrasies and Their Influence in the Decision-Making Process**

**S**TUDYING THE decision-making process we can thus uncover the cognitive processes that lead to a decision, and “we enter the mind of leaders” who make decisions. We can also identify general behavioral patterns and individual decisions and can generate views on the leadership styles and personalities of leaders, which cannot be revealed through a systematic approach to foreign policy analysis.<sup>22</sup>

As we have mentioned, this scientific approach proposes an analysis of the elements of subjectivity that acted throughout the decision-making process on the political decision maker involved in the implementation of the European Green Deal, in our case, Ursula von der Leyen, president of the European Commission.

The European Green Deal is considered an extremely courageous project, which the Commission is undertaking. It is the first time that authorities discuss about the fight against climate change and the determination of climate neutrality, starting with such a package of measures. In order to enshrine in the legislation the proposals on the EGD, von der Leyen promised to present, within 100 days, the first “EU climate law,” which has in fact happened given the political ambition of the Commission President. Referring to the EGD, she said:

*I want Europe to strive for more by being the first climate-neutral continent . . .  
Becoming the world's first climate-neutral continent is the greatest challenge*

*and opportunity of our times. It involves taking decisive action now. We will need to invest in innovation and research, redesign our economy and update our industrial policy.*<sup>23</sup>

The Address on the State of the Union is a point of reference in the political life of the European Union. Held in September each year in front of the European Parliament, it offers the president of the Commission a chance to perform a radiography of how the Union has evolved since the last speech, but also to present the vision of the way forward by presenting the Commission's legislative priorities. Her first speech on the State of the Union was very concrete at some points. It should be noted that this speech was given in extraordinary conditions. The pandemic marked the first part of it. Since the beginning of the pandemic, more than 150,000 European citizens had lost their lives to the virus, an unprecedented quarantine in European history was in place in most Member States for months on end, and the European economy experienced the strongest decline since World War II. Von der Leyen emphasized the way in which Member States regained their unity and solidarity after the first wave of the pandemic.

The SARS-CoV-2 pandemic has seriously tested the global ability to cope with major emergencies. The economic impact is more severe than the effects of the last financial crisis, so Member States' budgets have been seriously put to the test. In this situation, what happens with European Green Deal? "The *coronavirus pandemic* has shaken Europe and the world to the core. What began with isolated cases quickly turned into an emergency that affects every country, region and person."<sup>24</sup> With the pandemic, the continuity of the European Green Deal has been called into question, several member states asking the von der Leyen Commission to redirect to health and the economy a substantial part of the € 1 billion that the European Union intends to allocate for the Green Deal. But in the context of the implications of the Covid-19 crisis Ursula von der Leyen said that under the recovery package most of the Pillar I funds would be spent on financing public investment and key reforms, aligned with European priorities, which include the transition to climate neutrality. And "the great majority of public health mobility, tourism and economic measures have been designed to address the immediate public health crisis directly."<sup>25</sup>

"The recovery plan proposed by the Commission is unprecedented in its design and ambition. The Commission's *recovery plan for Europe* will repair the damage and secure the future for the next generation."<sup>26</sup> And this is where Next-GenerationEU will make a real difference, 37% of NextGenerationEU being spent directly on European Green Deal objectives. According to the President of the European Commission

*[the recovery plan] also takes green financing to the next level.*

*We are world leaders in green finance and the largest issuer of green bonds worldwide. We are leading the way in developing a reliable EU Green Bond Standard.*

*And I can today announce that we will set a target of 30% of NextGeneration-EU's 750 billion euro to be raised through green bonds.<sup>27</sup>*

As we very well know, March was hardest hit by the Covid-19 crisis, but we can still see many activities related to the EGD carried out during this month, which may show the importance given to environmental issues by the officials in Brussels. The work on the Commission's strategic priorities has never stopped, in spite of the pandemic. During this time, the Commission presented a comprehensive new biodiversity strategy to bring nature back into our lives, and a farm to fork strategy for a fair, healthy and environmentally friendly food system. The two strategies are mutually reinforcing, bringing together nature, farmers, businesses and consumers to work towards a competitively sustainable future. Also, the European Commission adopted the EU's strategies for energy system integration and hydrogen.

*The latter addresses how to transform the potential of the decarbonisation of industry, transport, power generation and buildings across Europe into reality, through investments, regulation, market creation, and research and innovation. The work to achieve climate neutrality by 2050 continues.<sup>28</sup>*

As we have mentioned, the speech presents the main ambitions of the European Commission, which outlines the trajectory that the EU will take in the next period. Foreign policy decisions are influenced by many factors, and many variables need to be taken into account when making a decision. The role of idiosyncrasies emphasizes the importance of the psychological approach to the decision-making process. Factors such as the personality and beliefs of leaders, leadership style, emotions, images, cognitive consistency, the use of analogies, intelligence, combine to influence decision-making and the expected results. The presence of these personal or social factors that influence decision-making can lead to new approaches to decision-making.

Thompson, Neal, and Sinaceur organize the psychological factors (idiosyncrasies) that influence the decision-making process (those that occur during a negotiation) in four categories: cognitive, social, motivational, and emotional idiosyncrasies.<sup>29</sup> In the case of Ursula von der Leyen, we will try to frame the idiosyncrasies in the same pattern. Those four categories of idiosyncrasies that acted in the analyzed case are cognitive, social, motivational and emotional perception. This fact was highlighted by the analysis applied to the address on

the State of the Union of the president of the European Commission, but also by the document analysis, and exemplified with excerpts from the investigated sources.

Several types have been identified in the category of cognitive idiosyncrasies. First of all, *framing*. Bazerman, Magliozzi, and Neale (1985) consider that decision makers/negotiators who frame a situation positively, present a greater risk aversion than those framing the situation negatively.<sup>30</sup> If we were to refer to the whole speech of Ursula von der Leyen, we notice that the leitmotif was the “crisis,” the crisis seen as a chance for Europe to be the engine of transition: “*from this fragility towards a new vitality*.”<sup>31</sup> In fact, von der Leyen clearly supports this idea, through the statement she makes in her speech: “To emerge stronger [from the crisis] by *creating opportunities* for the world of tomorrow and *not just building contingencies* for the world of yesterday.”<sup>32</sup> Referring to the EGD, in this case we discover the *framing*. Discussing about the increase in emission reductions, she admits that:

*I recognise that this increase from 40 to 55 is too much for some, and not enough for others.*

*But our impact assessment clearly shows that our economy and industry can manage this.*<sup>33</sup>

Secondly, during the speech we find the *anchoring*. According to Whyte and Sebenius (1997), anchoring effects are as large for a group as they are for individuals, because groups tend to adopt the majority rule or the consensus.<sup>34</sup> Referring to the EGD, von der Leyen argues that although there are many challenges to meeting the proposed targets, a consensus has been reached to achieve them, both for Member States and civil society: “We have more young people pushing for change. We have more proof that what is good for the climate is good for business and is good for us all.”<sup>35</sup>

Thirdly, referring to *availability*, Northcraft and Neale (1987) argued that more concrete information affects the decision-making during a negotiation,<sup>36</sup> which is also found in the analyzed discourse:

*We looked in-depth at every sector to see how fast we could go and how to do it in a responsible, evidence-based way.*

*We held a wide public consultation and conducted an extensive impact assessment.*

*On this basis, the European Commission is proposing to increase the 2030 target for emission reduction to at least 55%.*<sup>37</sup>

Looking at *perceptual/cognitive frames*, according to Pinkley (1990), negotiators can have one of the three different cognitive frames: based on relationships, emotional-intellectual, and compromise-win.<sup>38</sup> In our case, we are talking about the *emotional-intellectual framework*, which can be found in the case of other measures taken by the analyzed leader, and less in the case of the EGD. Talking about worker protection, based on previous experience, she promises to support them in the labor market:

*When I took office, I vowed to create an instrument to protect workers and businesses from external shocks.*

*Because I knew from my experience as a minister for Labour and Social Affairs that these schemes work. They keep people in jobs, skills in companies and SMEs in business. These SMEs are the motor of our economy and will be the engine of our recovery.*<sup>39</sup>

Another category of idiosyncrasies refers to *verbal style*, as developed by Weintraub.<sup>40</sup> The advantage of such an analysis is that these verbal structures, such as imagery and complexity, are not handled consciously, like the semantic content. According to this author, people can be identified as belonging fully or partially to a certain style.<sup>41</sup> During the speech we encounter the *use of explanations* (because, therefore, since), which suggest rationalization, points of view that are justified, explained: “Carbon must have its price—because nature cannot pay the price anymore,”<sup>42</sup> “While emissions dropped 25% since 1990, our economy grew by more than 60%.”<sup>43</sup> The mission of the European Green Deal involves much more than cutting emissions. It is about achieving a systemic modernization across economy, society and industry. It is about building a stronger world to live in. According to von der Leyen

*Our current levels of consumption of raw materials, energy, water, food and land use are not sustainable.*

*We need to change how we treat nature, how we produce and consume, live and work, eat and heat, travel and transport.*<sup>44</sup>

Moreover, there are adverbs that emphasize a statement or add more authority, *adverbial intensifiers*: “We will form *high ambition coalitions* on issues such as digital ethics or fighting deforestation—and develop partnerships with all like-minded partners.”<sup>45</sup> Last but not least, we find *direct references*. Using these words indicates a friendly or engaging behavior, and those who make few references are seen as being shy or detached.<sup>46</sup> Thus, throughout the speech we find formulas such as “Honourable Members.”<sup>47</sup>

Taking a look at the way events are presented, we identify the *optimistic explanatory style*, von der Leyen being in the category of those who see positive events as being caused by internal, global, stable factors:

*We are on track to meet our ambitious Paris Agreement goals and 2030 targets. But we need to go further and faster if we are serious about climate neutrality in 2050.*

*We currently have a goal of 40% emissions reduction by 2030. But we have to be more ambitious. Carbon emissions must have a price. Every person and every sector will have to contribute,<sup>48</sup>*

and negative events caused by external, unstable, and specific factors:

*Today's world feels ever more unsettled. Existing powers are going down new paths alone. New powers are emerging and consolidating. Changes in climate, technology and demography are transforming our societies and way of life. This has left a feeling of unease and anxiety in many communities across Europe.<sup>49</sup>*

Von der Leyen sees the NextGenerationEU as a tool that helps us to get out of the pandemic, a tool that helps us

*shaping the world we want to live in.*

*A world served by an economy that cuts emissions, boosts competitiveness, reduces energy poverty, creates rewarding jobs and improves quality of life.*

*A world where we use digital technologies to build a healthier, greener society.*

*This can only be achieved if we all do it together and I will insist that recovery plans don't just bring us out the crisis but also help us propel Europe forward to the world of tomorrow.<sup>50</sup>*

The *idiosyncrasies of social perception* differ from the cognitive ones regarding the nature of the influence, which is centered on the perception of social objects, events and people.<sup>51</sup> In this category were identified idiosyncrasies focused on themselves and others, also exemplified with excerpts from the speeches given. A factor specific to the idiosyncrasies of social perceptions is *transparency* (focused on oneself and others). Keysar, Ginzler, and Bazerman (1995) think that the decision makers' tendency is to behave as if others knew their inner states.<sup>52</sup> Referring to von der Leyen, not only in the State of the Union Address, but also in other interviews, and even in her *Political Guidelines for the Next European Commission 2019–2024*, she speaks about transparency as a defining factor of her own work, but also of the institution she leads: "I believe this will make

the institution more agile and flexible, as well as more transparent in the way it works.”<sup>53</sup> If we refer to speech, the fact that it presents both facets of a problem denotes transparency:

*I am fully aware that many of our partners are far away from that . . . But for us, the 2030 target is ambitious, achievable, and beneficial for Europe. We can do it. We have already shown we can do it.*<sup>54</sup>

Regarding the *perspective approach (self-centered)*, according to Neale and Bazerman (1983) the decision makers with an open perspective will have greater success in creating integral arrangements than those with fewer perspectives.<sup>55</sup> We also identify this in the case of the analyzed statements. The way in which von der Leyen presents the trajectory that the European Commission will take shows precisely this openness of the leader to cooperate with all stakeholders:

*If elected, I will strengthen the links between people, nations and institutions. Between expectations and delivery. Between words and deeds. My Commission will listen to the people of Europe and be bold where it makes sense for us to act, leaving national, regional and local actors to deliver where they are best placed to do so.*<sup>56</sup>

Regarding *motivational idiosyncrasies*, two categories were identified, *cooperation* (future interactions, common guidelines) and *responsibility*. If we look at the chapter on cooperation, future interactions exist. According to Axelrod (2015), an indefinite time horizon creates incentives for cooperation.<sup>57</sup> An example would be the pandemic, and in this context the president of the Commission assures that there have been and will be interactions, in order to provide aid:

*The pandemic has simultaneously shown both the fragility of the global system and the importance of cooperation to tackle collective challenges. . . . Europe chooses to reach out.*

*Our leadership is not about self-serving propaganda. It is not about Europe First. It is about being the first to seriously answer the call when it matters.*<sup>58</sup>

Our generational challenges (both the green and the digital transitions) have become even more urgent now than they were before the crisis began.

*The time for the green transition is now. The investment wave that we are about to unleash will have the **European Green Deal** as its compass. Likewise, the coronavirus crisis and subsequent lockdowns have shown that access to **digital solutions** is essential for people and businesses alike—and that the lack thereof can turn into a source of new inequalities.*<sup>59</sup>



Looking globally, von der Leyen also spoke about the relationship with the great global powers, the United States and China: “We might not always agree with recent decisions by the White House. But we will always *cherish the transatlantic alliance*,”<sup>60</sup> about China, she indicated that, although the Asian state is a negotiating partner, it is also a “systemic rival.”<sup>61</sup>

With regard to the *common orientation*, it is clear that both in her speech and in her work program, the European leader is transposing initiatives from the civil society. An eloquent example would be the intervention of environmental activists, and in particular Greta Thunberg, who tries to influence the Commission’s activities, to “speed up” actions to combat climate change: “The EU must lead the way. You have the moral obligation to do so and you have a unique economic and political opportunity to become a real climate leader.”<sup>62</sup>

Von der Leyen clearly states in her work program that a common direction is needed, and that the wishes of European citizens must be put into practice:

*I have been inspired by the passion, conviction and energy of the millions of our young people making their voice heard on our streets and in our hearts. They are standing up for their future and it is our generational duty to deliver for them.*<sup>63</sup>

Beyond the implications of environmental activists, von der Leyen announces in her speech that, based on both public consultations and requests from representatives of SMES, she has decided that the target for reducing greenhouse gas emissions should be increased to at least 55% by 2030: “Just yesterday, 170 business leaders and investors—from SMES to some of the world’s biggest companies—wrote to me calling on Europe to set a target of at least 55%.”<sup>64</sup>

Von der Leyen considers herself *responsible* for the results of every action which the European Commission takes. As a result, in her speech and in other public appearances, she said that each legislative proposal is accompanied by a wide analysis of the impact that such a measure could have in one area or another. Regarding the Green Deal she explained that:

*Our impact assessment clearly shows that meeting this target would put the EU firmly on track for climate neutrality by 2050 and for meeting our Paris Agreement obligations.*<sup>65</sup>

Regarding the recovery plan proposed by the Commission, the NextGeneration-EU instrument should invest in lighthouse European projects with the biggest impact: hydrogen, renovation, and 1 million electric charging points. Von der Leyen claims that any plan is accompanied by extensive analyses:

*Allow me to explain how this could work:*

*Two weeks ago in Sweden, a unique fossil-free steel pilot began test operations. It will replace coal with hydrogen to produce clean steel.*

*This shows the potential of hydrogen to support our industry with a new, clean, license to operate.<sup>66</sup>*

*Emotional or affective* idiosyncrasies refer to the misperceptions of one person or more. These may, in turn, address more inconsistencies or connections between feelings and actions, feelings and reasoning, or feelings and different stages of negotiation.<sup>67</sup> Looking at emotional idiosyncrasies were identified both *positive* and *negative* emotions. Carnevale and Isen (1986)<sup>68</sup> argued that happy individuals exchange information more easily and can be creative in negotiations. In the case of positive emotion we discover joy, desire, hope, proud, optimism:

*It is the lesson behind it. About not allowing obstacles stand in your way, about not letting conventions hold you back, about seizing the moment.<sup>69</sup>*

*I am proud to live in Europe, in this open society of values and diversity.<sup>70</sup>*

In terms of *leadership style*, Ursula von der Leyen could be considered a *strategic leader*. The strategic leader faces constraints, but is open to information. This type of leader knows what she wants and seeks relevant information to achieve her goals. She is bold, but informed when it comes to quality in these ambitious aspirations. The president of the Commission has shown in many ways this leadership style by highlighting the values, vision and mission of the European Union—from restoring the values enshrined in the four freedoms, to the vision of a circular and fair economy, to the EU's role in stimulating health, encouraging sustainable investment and protecting human and social rights.

## Conclusions

IT CAN be seen that the elements of subjectivism, the idiosyncrasies, influence the choice of a certain solution to the existing problems. The categories of idiosyncrasies identified, but especially the beliefs and motivations, are those that outline the vision of the decider. It can be stated that Ursula von der Leyen is a good connoisseur of the realities in the field of international relations, which is probably due to the experience gained from the ministerial positions she held.

The course of the policies is shaped by the decisions of leaders. The actions undertaken in foreign policy decision-making can refer to the motivations, be-

liefs, intentions or calculations of the opponents. The foreign policy decision-making has models and theories that can help us understand how bias, error, uncertainty or internal policies may determine decisions. We can improve in this way the manner in which decisions are taken and, by applying different models in the analysis of the decisions, we can predict, more accurately, future actions and their consequence on the international stage. This is also true for the European Green Deal, its evolution being determined by the decisions taken by the president of the European Commission.

Following a multiplicity of topics, the EGD adopted a holistic approach, reaffirming the interconnection between challenges and the need for policy coherence. Through the European Green Deal, Europe puts sustainability at the center of its scientific, social or economic development, and this fact should be seen not as an idea, but as a solid opportunity to promote a new economic and social system.

Despite the pandemic, the measures regarding the EGD proposed in the work program of the president of the Commission (*Political Guidelines for the Next European Commission 2019–2024*), and moreover, reiterated in the State of the Union address will continue, the Commission's legislative priorities for the next period focusing on boosting the green transition. The Covid-19 pandemic reaffirmed the importance of investing in sustainable projects that strengthen economies, while having minimal impact on biodiversity and climate. We also need investments to help us achieve the goals set by the Green Deal. All consolidated financial assistance at European level is allocated for the period 2021–2027, so forecasts for the economic recovery outline a medium and long-term recovery. Also, the allocation will finance both health and medical efforts and economic recovery, but in compliance with the conditions imposed by the Green Deal.

This scientific approach has tried to provide answers to some research questions that we consider relevant to the proposed topic, namely: Are there elements of a political, cultural or social nature that have influenced the emergence of idiosyncrasies at the individual level in the decision-making process? What kind of idiosyncrasies operated during the whole decision-making process?

In the paper, both questions were answered in the affirmative. The political, cultural or social experience determined the appearance of idiosyncrasies in the case of the analyzed decision maker. Both in the analyzed speech and in her work program were found elements related to the previous experience of the decision maker, such as the guidelines in the social field (she served as minister of Labor and Social Affairs), the guidelines in the field of defense and security (being minister of Defense) or concerns about the health of European citizens (influenced by a medical career). In other words, all the elements in the internal and external environment influence her and influence the decisions that the decision maker

takes, from the professional to the everyday ones. Regarding the second question, in the case of Ursula von der Leyen, the four types of idiosyncrasies—cognitive, social perceptions, motivational, and emotional—could be found, each of them leaving a mark on the way in which the European leader outlined her work program. These are specific to the action(s) presented. It can be seen that their occurrence depends on the domestic or international context and on the action of other factors such as subjective ones, so in the case of other decisions it will be possible to outline either the same idiosyncrasies or more or fewer of them.

Knowing the types of idiosyncrasies and especially their identification at the level of the decision maker facilitates the anticipation of the solution that will be chosen, but also the shaping of an image of the strategies that will have to be approached.

As we begin to plan for a gradual return to work and intend to invest billions of euro to revive the economy, we should avoid returning to old, polluting habits. Instead, we should get out of the pandemic in a better situation. The climate crisis also exists during an epidemiological crisis, therefore, the response of the president of the European Commission seems to be in line with the environmental issue in the strategies built for post-pandemic economic restructuring. The integration of an environmental strategy in the rebirth of the post-pandemic European community, the integration of the EGD in the post-pandemic economic recovery programs, can be the method that will ensure the prosperity and sustainability of European states.

□

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## Abstract

### Idiosyncrasies of the European Leadership’s Decision Regarding the European Green Deal

The implementation of foreign policy is a form of strategic and dialectical interaction between actors and the foreign policy environment, the success of any implementation of foreign policy depending not only on clearly-defined objectives or the choice of instruments, but also on the interaction between the actor and the context in which the strategy is positioned or the actor’s ability to adapt to unforeseen circumstances. The way decisions are made can give one form or another to a possible choice. From this perspective, this paper aims to analyze the elements of subjectivity that influenced the decision makers involved in the design of the European Green Deal and, at the same time, those who acted throughout the decision-making process, the analyzed political decision maker being the President of the European Commission, Ursula von der Leyen. To this end, we have resorted to qualitative methodology instruments such as document analysis and discourse analysis. Foreign policy decisions are characterized by the stakes involved, high uncertainty and substantial risk. To decipher these actions, it is useful to know what is behind a decision, what drives the action and the event. This is where idiosyncrasies come into play—an important factor that acts in foreign policy decisions. An actor can come up with a different outcome depending on how the decision is made—some decisions are carefully calculated, while others are intuitive.

## Keywords

idiosyncrasies, leadership, foreign policy, decision-making process, European Green Deal

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# CONCERTATIO

## *Panta Rhei*

### An Application of the Constructal Law for a New Scientific Model of Religion

LAURA TEODORA  
DAVID  
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*“For a flow system to persist in time (to live) it must evolve freely such that it provides greater access to its currents.”*  
*(Adrian Bejan)*

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**W**HEN HERACLITUS stated that *panta rhei*, ‘everything flows’—or, at least, Simplicius of Cilicia assumed that it was the affirmation of Heraclitus—and considered *water* as *arche*, ‘the first principle,’ he was very close to a discovery that came more than twenty centuries after him. Heraclitus needed just a small additional step to think that not the *water*, but *the flow* itself is the *arche*. The first laws of thermodynamics were formulated only in the modern era (the 19<sup>th</sup> century); even more years had to pass until a physicist and professor at Duke University, Adrian Bejan discovered and developed the *constructal law* (in an article written in 1996 and published in 1997). In its initial form it stated that: “For a finite-size flow system to persist in time (to live) it must evolve such that it provides greater and greater access to the currents that flow through it” (Bejan 1997, 815).

It is a law of physics, which means it is applicable to the whole of nature; as the author explained: “This law sweeps



the entire mosaic of nature from inanimate rivers to animate designs, such as vascular tissues, locomotion, and social organization” (Bejan and Zane 2012, 9). Applications of the constructal law are still in progress. One of the developments, to the best of our knowledge only little attempted so far (see David 2016b, 93–107), is its application in probably one of the most randomized and delicate domains, because it has to do with the human beings, their most intimate beliefs, and their inner thoughts: religion.

The debate science vs. humanities (and religion as a particular case) is still in progress (see for example Haag, Peterson, and Spezio 2014). Yet, as Ioan P. Culianu (Couliano) himself pointed out more than 25 years ago, there is not much of a difference between them. Or between them and philosophy, or even literature. Albert Einstein had stated as early as 1937 (“Moral Decay”) that: “All religions, arts, and science are branches of the same tree” (Einstein 2015, 9). This because, continued Culianu, they are all “mind games played with ideas . . . entirely similar in nature and built according to the same binary principle” (Culianu 1992, 268). Bearing that in mind, and also the clarification of Culianu’s model that will follow in this article, an attempt to use a law of physics in the scientific study of religions would probably not appear so hazardous in the end.

## What is Religion? Some Approaches

**R**ELIGION SEEMS to be so well known and deeply entrenched in our society that it may appear not to need any definition. Nevertheless, it has changed over time. Actually, the *way we see* religion makes the difference. For example, Christianity now is certainly not seen as it was about twenty centuries ago, when it was only a Jewish sect among many other factions.

As Stausberg (2009, 12) unambiguously noticed:

*One can safely state that the discussions beginning in the 1980s have pulled the rug out from under any naïve realistic understanding of the term and the concept ‘religion’. It has become increasingly clear that (1) in scholarly discourse, ‘religion’ serves as an analytical category, a conceptual tool, a map used by scholars to navigate their discursive territory, (2) that the term has dramatically changed its semantic and pragmatic dimensions in the modern period, (3) that it is a contested term, and (4) that the term carries a large and largely also limiting and embarrassing (religious, ideological, political) baggage.*

Von Stuckrad expressed the same issues right at the beginning of his book:

*For some time now, the academic study of religion has experienced fundamental challenges. Although established as an independent discipline at European universities more than one hundred years ago, the academic study of religion is still wrestling with severe problems of identity and legitimization. The reasons . . . are also related to the fact that religion has played a very special role in the scientific, political, and cultural debates of the past two hundred and fifty years. . . . the concept of ‘religion’ is charged with difficulties that have thrown its study into contestation. . . . Given the ubiquitous presence of religion in the global cultural worlds of the twenty-first century, there should be no doubt that we need experts who are trained to scrutinize the history and present appearance of religion in a sound academic way. (Von Stuckrad 2014, 1)*

Many experts in religious studies have tried to define religion. A different and interesting tableau, almost poetical, presents some of these theories, organized according to the declaration of the author: “The differences among approaches to the theory of religion can often be discerned in the central metaphors and analogies they use” (Riesebrodt 2010, 47).

These central *metaphors*, and the people behind the theories, are: ‘religion as a divine gift of reason’ (e.g. Herbert of Cherbury, or Immanuel Kant); ‘religion as an experience of revelation’ (for instance, Rudolf Otto, Friedrich Schleiermacher, Gerardus van der Leeuw, Jakob Friedrich Fries, and Wilhelm Martin Leberecht de Wette); ‘religion as proto-science’ (for example, Edward Burnett Tylor, James George Frazer, and Pascal Boyer); ‘religion as projection’ (e.g. Ludwig Feuerbach, Karl Marx, and Sigmund Freud); ‘religion as affect’ (for example, Robert Ranulph Marett); ‘religion as a function of the brain’ (for instance, Andrew Newberg and Vilayanur S. Ramachandran); ‘religion as a sacralized society’ (e.g. Émile Durkheim, Thomas Luckmann, and Niklas Luhmann); ‘religion as an interest in salvation’ (for example, Max Weber and Pierre Bourdieu); ‘religion as a commodity’ (for instance, Rodney Stark).

## Religion in the View of Mircea Eliade

**O**F DIRECT interest for our article, one of the most famous scholars of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and at the same time probably one of the most controversial of all times, Mircea Eliade, whose role in the career of Ioan Petru Culianu was also pivotal, defined religion in this, rather regretful, way: “perhaps it is too late to search for another word, and ‘religion’ may still be a useful term provided we keep in mind that it does not necessarily imply the belief in God, gods, or ghosts, but refers to the experience of the sacred” (Eliade 1969, i).

For Mircea Eliade's point of view regarding religion, 'sacred' was most certainly the key term. All the other concepts in his theory orbit around the 'sacred': the hierophany is the revelation of the sacred, the archetypes are sacred structures or patterns, the myths tell a sacred story, the exit of the profane time operated by rituals happens in a sacred time; and so on. But what is 'sacred' in Eliade's perspective?

After analyzing Eliade's many books in the field of religion, Eliade's viewpoint can be briefly delineated in these terms: the concept of the 'sacred' evolved in two directions in Eliade's theory: Eliade's scientific view and Eliade's personal view.

The first one is what Eliade discovered about *homo religiosus*, and his way (of the religious man, not of Eliade) of seeing the sacred: that is, the scientific position. In this theory, the sacred is positioned in opposition to the profane. From the very beginning of his work as a historian of religion, Eliade (1992b, originally published in 1949), considered the sacred completely opposed to the profane, between the sacred and the profane existing an absolute dichotomy. But this is only the starting point, because the sacred is always manifested by something profane, and the sacred never manifests by and in itself, even if it is considered as something that *is* by excellence, the 'trans-personal', the 'transcendent', and at the same time a model, a pattern that institutes prototypes to be followed. Of the same importance, especially for our study, is the affirmation that this sacred-profane dialectics involves a selection.

This 'selection' is anyhow a tricky matter, since it is not the humans who choose what is sacred, but the sacred reveals itself to the human, and the latter can only discover the former. In this Eliade is certainly consistent with his youth role-model, van der Leeuw, but Eliade also made an affirmation about hierophany (which means literally: something that manifests the sacred), which is important for our research. It deserves a full quotation, not only of the French original, but also in its English translation. We should consider the hierophany "comme une manifestation du sacré dans l'univers mental de ceux qui l'ont reçu" (as the manifestation of the sacred in the mental world of those who received it). The English translation, originally, made in 1958, states: "as the manifestation of the sacred in the mental world of those who believe in it."

Obviously, it is not only a little different, but certainly even closer to what Eliade had in mind. This affirmation is supported by at least two arguments:

1. His main book, which was not titled 'A History of Religion' or 'Religions' but *A History of Religious Ideas (Histoire des croyances et des idées religieuses)*, confirmed that he is taking into consideration, and talking about, religious *ideas* and *beliefs*.

2. The second argument also coincides with Eliade's own vision. In this one "the 'sacred' is an element in the structure of consciousness, not a stage in the

history of consciousness” (Eliade 1969, i). One year earlier Eliade had noted the same thought in his *Journal*, in Romanian in original: “«sacru» este un element în *structura* conștiinței, nu un moment în *istoria* conștiinței” (Eliade 1993, 592, italics original).

Eliade, as many times in his theoretical work, does not fully explain—or define—his terms. But he illustrated his point of view in his fantastic prose:

—*Prin imaginație, repetă Antim tot mai bine dispus. Adică, în mintea noastră... Dar asta nu schimbă realitatea, ce se întâmplă cu adevărat în noi și în jurul nostru...*

—*Depinde ce înțelegi prin realitate, spuse. Pentru mine, realitatea este adevărul total, adică ceea ce ne este dat să cunoaștem numai după moarte. Dar arta, și în special teatrul, spectacolul, ne revelează acest adevăr în tot ce se întâmplă în jurul nostru, și mai ales în tot ce ne putem imagina că se întâmplă.* (Eliade 1992a, 48–49)

(—*Through imagination, repeated the increasingly jovial Antim. That is, in our mind... But this doesn't change the reality, what truly happens within us and around us...*

—*It depends on what you understand by reality, he said. For me, reality is the total truth, namely, what we get to know only after death. But art, and particularly theater, the spectacle, reveals to us this truth in all that happens around us, and even more, in all that we can imagine happening.*) (Our translation)

The sacred (what is truly real, the absolute truth) is deeply hidden in the structures of the human mind, which is Eliade's famous *camouflage*, thus rendering necessary a process of anamnesis (sometimes, mainly in his prose, acquired exactly throughout the show, the *spectacle*).

Now, if we replace “consciousness” with its more appropriate, clearer and obvious synonym, i.e. “human mind”—or, using Culianu's term, “mental space”—we realize that here the theory of Eliade opens the way for the hypothesis of Culianu. Henceforth it will be continued by Culianu's model. For a meticulous analysis of the term ‘sacred’, as well as of the ‘sacred-profane dialectics,’ and for other concepts and the correspondences of these concepts in Eliade's fantastic prose, see David (2015a, especially 35–47).

## Religion in the View of Ioan Petru Culianu

CULIANU'S SCIENTIFIC evolution was from a historical approach (mainly to Gnosticism and the Renaissance, with vast inroads and contributions to other fields of study such as the history of ideas, literary theory, or the philosophy of culture) to a cognitive interpretation of religion. He wanted to take forward Eliade's thoughts according to his own intuitions and, obviously, expertise. He also tried to unify his last studies with Einstein's theory of relativity or Mandelbrot's model of fractals, in order to find a new scientific explanation of religion, which could be universally accepted by academia.

His last *modus operandi*, which is a cognitive approach to religion, assumes the hypothesis that if different people start from the same premises, they will inevitably think out (at least in theory, as a possibility) all the consequences resulting from those premises. All these thoughts are parts of a logical system, which can be envisioned as ideally existing on its own. There are here two aspects one must take into consideration: first, human beings, and their minds, need time to process, think out and develop all—or some, depending on their choices—the potentialities of the system. Second, in its logical existence, all the ideas of the system are in synchrony, and the system can be imagined as a whole—in Culianu's terms, an 'ideal object.'

In other words, if conventionally religion was seen as a succession of events and doctrines, as old as humanity itself, Culianu sees it as a system, as the combination of these 'ideal objects.'

An *ideal object* is defined by Culianu (1992, 7) this way:

*ideal objects are systems operating in a logical dimension and cannot go beyond their (generally quite simple) premises. Systems are fractalic in nature, that is, they tend to produce solutions ad infinitum according to (simple) production rules. And they interact with each other in quite strange ways, forming other systems whose general pattern of uncanny complexity may be called history.*

Ideal objects are not made of any solid substances, but of ideas; they are run in time by human minds. Therefore, religion/s have their source in the human mind, and the transmission of religion/s is from one mind to another. Ideas travel together with people, and so do religious ideas. They started with people, and they will end with people.

Culianu's illustrations, in order to help the readers understand his revolutionary point of view, go from a simple one (the dichotomy soul/body), through one of medium complexity (the human versus the divine nature of Christ), to one of a very complex situation: the dualist gnosis.

Mathematically, the first one is very simple: if we take two pairs of opposites, for instance A & non A ( $|A$ ), and B & non B ( $|B$ ), there are only four logical combinations:

1. A-B
2. A- $|B$
3.  $|A$ -B
4.  $|A$ - $|B$

If we use the dichotomy soul/body instead of symbols and the premises are:

1. The soul preexists the body (A)
2. The soul does not preexist the body ( $|A$ )
3. The soul is created (B)
4. The soul is not created ( $|B$ )

Then the results are:

1. The soul is created and preexistent (A-B)—Hinduism, Platonism, some Gnostics and Origen.
2. The soul is created and does not preexist their bodies (A- $|B$ )—Orthodox Christians and St. Augustine.
3. The soul does not preexist the body, but it is created ( $|A$ -B)—Traducianism.
4. The soul does not preexist the body, and it is not individually created ( $|A$ - $|B$ )—North American populations and Averroes or Ibn Rushd (1126–1198), a master of Aristotelian and Islamic philosophy.

For the second example—the human versus the divine nature of Christ—see an image of the tree-like shape in David (2016a, 47). To the third example Culianu dedicated almost an entire book, *The Tree of Gnosis*, so it will be impossible to summarize it in an article. What can be done is to infer from Culianu’s writings, his last books and articles, Culianu’s definition of religion. In brief, it can be expressed as follows: “religion is a process started by the human mind and transmitted throughout time (i.e. our history) from one mind to another in a complex way, following a particular set of rules, perfectly logical” (see more in David 2015a, 24).

According to Culianu (1992, 268), religion is nothing more than a “game of mind.” Culianu had hoped that this understanding of religion per se would be eventually accepted by as many people as possible—religious or not—even if religion fundamentalists would not see it with good eyes. Even if the former still need confirmation, and it is a work in progress, he was most certainly right about the latter, as the apprehensive beginning of this century demonstrated.

## Constructal Law

**A**DRIAN BEJAN discovered and developed the *constructal law* starting with 1996. In its initial form it stated that: “For a finite-size flow system to persist in time (to live) it must evolve such that it provides greater and greater access to the currents that flow through it” (Bejan 1997, 815). In the following years, the theory extended its applications:

*Using the constructal law, we recognize that not only biological species but also technology and language, religion, education, and all the rest are flow systems that configure and reconfigure themselves so that the bodies that possess these designs (we, the cultured) move more easily on the globe.* (Bejan and Zane 2012, 199)

In one of his books, Adrian Bejan admitted:

*Twenty years after 1996, I would not change the constructal law except to insert in it the word “freedom,” because, although obvious, without freedom there is no change, and no evolution. I would now express the law in this way: “For a flow system to persist in time (to live) it must evolve freely such that it provides greater access to its currents.”* (Bejan 2016, 239)

It is only one word, and yet it is an important observation, and enhancement, as the next example will show.

As a concrete illustration, for an easier understanding of the application of constructal law in religious studies, this section will start with some data regarding religion, and in particular the Christian-Orthodox denomination (the major religion) in Romania, a country with a population (at the present time) of around 20 million.

At the last national census (2011), from a population of 20,121,641, 18,822,242 people declared that they have a religion, and from the total population, 16,307,004 declared themselves Christian-Orthodox (81.04% of the entire population). All the other religions taken together amount to 2,515,238 persons. Only 18,917 citizens declared themselves without religion, and 20,743 professed to be atheists (so, 39,660 in total, which is 0.18%). For 1,259,739 people the information is not available.

In 2002, out of 21,680,974 people, 18,817,975 (86.79%) declared themselves Christian-Orthodox. In 1992 the percentage of Christian-Orthodox believers had been approximately similar (around 86.80%) (Censuses of 2002 and 1992).

Imagine religion as a flow. This is not something completely new. For example, Tweed (2006, 54) assumed that: “Religions are confluences of organic-

cultural flows that intensify joy and confront suffering by drawing on human and suprahuman forces to make homes and cross boundaries.”

Figuratively, religion is a river flowing through our lives, within our society. Similar ideas were also expressed before, for example, by Atran (2002, 10–11):

*Think metaphorically of humankind’s evolutionary history as a landscape formed by different mountain ridges. Human experience that lies anywhere along this evolutionary landscape converges on more or less the same life paths, just as rain that falls anywhere in a mountain landscape converges toward a limited set of lakes or river valleys.*

In our case, Romanian society is the landscape. For about fifty years, the communist regime restricted or interdicted the access to religion, in some cases with dramatic consequences: mostly imprisonment, sometimes even death. It was like a dam blocking the flow of the river of religion (at least officially). After the fall of the communist regime in December 1989, this dam also cracked. The river streamed out, flooding the society. In terms of physics, we can say that what happened was *natural*. Certainly, it is natural that after the collapse of a dam all the collected water forces its way out. In our case, that of Christian-Orthodoxy, it flowed for ten years at around 86.80%–86.79% of the population. Then, it started to slow down: in 2011 it got to 81.04%.

In constructal terms, Christian-Orthodoxy will continue to reduce its ‘flooding.’ In order to verify this hypothesis the available data were introduced (table 1), and analyzed with a SPSS regression function. The resulted coefficients created the equation (E1), which allowed us to predict the percentage of Romanian Christian-Orthodox believers for 2025.

TABLE 1

Year	Total population	Christian-Orthodox	% Christian-Orthodox
1992	23,373,155	20,287,898	86.80
2002	21,680,974	18,817,975	86.79
2011	20,121,641	16,307,004	81.04
2025	18,772,912 (estim.)	N	P

SOURCES: [www.recensamantromania.ro/istoric/vizualizati-rezultate-rpl-1992-si-2002](http://www.recensamantromania.ro/istoric/vizualizati-rezultate-rpl-1992-si-2002); [www.recensamantromania.ro/rezultate-2](http://www.recensamantromania.ro/rezultate-2).

Available Data and

(E1:)  $P = -0.298Y + 680.53$

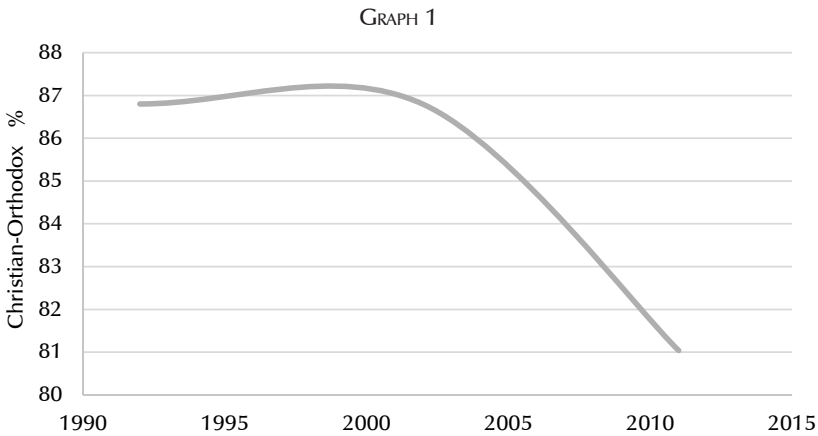
where P is the percentage of Christian-Orthodox people, and Y is the year.



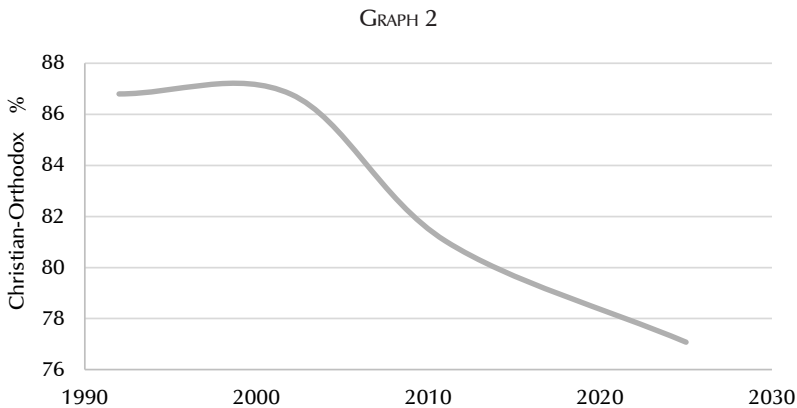
So, for the year 2025 the percentage of Christian-Orthodox believers will be  $P=77.08\%$  of the total population.

For 2025, the population of Romania is estimated at 18,772,912 persons. If we use this estimation, the number of Christian-Orthodox people will be  $N=14,470,160$  persons.

This prediction can be seen by comparing graph 1 (current situation of the percentage of Romanian Christian-Orthodox believers, 1992–2011) with the S-curve in graph 2 (estimated percentage of Romanian Christian-Orthodox believers, 1992–2025).



SOURCES: [www.recensamanromania.ro/istoric/vizualizati-rezultate-rpl-1992-si-2002](http://www.recensamanromania.ro/istoric/vizualizati-rezultate-rpl-1992-si-2002); [www.recensamanromania.ro/rezultate-2](http://www.recensamanromania.ro/rezultate-2).



SOURCES: [www.recensamanromania.ro/istoric/vizualizati-rezultate-rpl-1992-si-2002](http://www.recensamanromania.ro/istoric/vizualizati-rezultate-rpl-1992-si-2002); [www.recensamanromania.ro/rezultate-2](http://www.recensamanromania.ro/rezultate-2).

The above example is a visual illustration to facilitate understanding. But in order to apply a law of physics (i.e. the constructal law) to the general case of religion, we need a different manner of perceiving religion itself, other than the traditional one. There is such a model, provided by Ioan Petru Culianu. As previously stated, he observed that religion has an arborescent structure, and he undoubtedly demonstrated that in his field of expertise: Gnosticism (Culianu 1992, 15). Consequently, Culianu described religion as a computational process started by the human mind and transmitted in time from one mind to another. Originating in the same premises and following a simple set of rules, it can evolve into many variants (ibid. 18). He called this movement (which is actually a “flow”) *morpho-dynamics* (ibid.).

Now we have to figure out religion starting from Culianu’s definition of religion (David 2015b, 24) and complete it with the constructal law. Thus, religion is a *system* of flow of thoughts: starting from human mind according to a simple set of rules, and progressing in time from mind to mind, interacting and intersecting other systems of human society, like a river with other rivers; visually, as Culianu (1992) did in the case of Gnosis, it can be approximated as an arborescent structure, or even better as the combination of all kinds of “trees”: the forest. Its flow is governed by the constructal law, as it happens with any other design in nature. The flow systems are linked together; the small ones are part of the bigger ones, and so on.

*The constructal law teaches us to see all flow systems as components of a single organism, the entire globe, which evolves its design to enhance its flow. They are not competing against each other but working together.* (Bejan and Zane 2012, 178)

What Hegel thought of as thesis, antithesis and synthesis are actually branches of a tree: philosophical, religious or scientific tree, it does not matter, fundamentally they have all the same source, i.e. the human mind, and all are determined by the same law, i.e. the constructal law. Accordingly, there is a reason why in human society the extremes always collapse, because similarly to nature, the best (most efficient) way (design) is selected (survives). Even if it takes many years, as it happened in the case of communism in Romania, which took about 50 years to be defeated, one way or another the same will happen with other extremist organizations, because the constructal law dictates it.

*The constructal law also predicts that the rigid hierarchy will give way in time to a freely morphing hierarchy. This is why dictatorships are relatively short-lived and democracies have staying power.* (Bejan and Zane 2012, 158)

The constructal law, being a law of physics, “governs any system, any time, anywhere” (Bejan and Zane 2012, 9). In the religious domain, there is a particular demonstration made by the authors, on the hierarchical organization of the Church.

*The Catholic Church also has an immense, complex hierarchy, from the pope to cardinals, archbishops, and on down. But at the parish level, the local priest is the main channel at the top of the hierarchy that includes monks, nuns, altar boys, and worshippers.* (Bejan and Zane 2012, 159)

But, can the constructal law be used for religion per se, i.e. for religious ideas? Could it be the constituent of a new science of religion?

Starting from Culianu’s perspective, combined with the constructal law, we can delineate a new scientific model of religion (and also of other domains built from ideas, as Culianu intended: philosophy, science; he even mentioned literature), which will look more like an irregular *web* (a truly “www”), i.e. a *network*; we must update the image of a tree, or even a forest: for a tree (David 2016a, 47), once a branch is separated in two, the two resulting branches will not merge again; in its turn, the forest is made of individual trees: the network (of something = the ideas that flow) would be like a forest only if a forest is made of *interconnected* trees (which is not possible in nature), and not individual trees. So, the web is the best image.

In fig. 1 there is a basic representation of religion’s network, with the major religions and denominations. But when—maybe sometime in the not too distant future—all the available data is loaded in a computer program which will make all the possible connections between religious ideas, the image of religion’s network will appear to some extent similar to fig. 2, which is actually a human brain’s (neuronal network) image.

Adrian Bejan also realized the significance of the ‘network’ in some other fields:

*How do the streets and the air routes accommodate all these superimposed tree-shaped flows? By evolving into a superposition of trees, which is a grid, that is, a network.* (Bejan and Zane 2012, 195)

Most certainly, in the domain of ideas, the ‘network’ (of tree-shape flowing ideas) is the most appropriate representation.

In which way are ideas disseminated? Constructal law governs the diffusion:

*Like any other point-area flow in nature, a new idea spreads on the landscape in two ways, via two flow mechanisms:*

FIG. 1.

RELIGION'S NETWORK. MAIN DENOMINATIONS



FIG. 2.

NEURONAL NETWORK



SOURCE: <http://maxpixel.freegreatpicture.com/Network-Brain-Brain-Structure-Neurons-Brain-Cells-582054>.

1. fast, along pre-existing (established) channels of prior interest in what spreads, and
2. slow, perpendicularly to the lines, sweeping the interstices that fill the landscape. (Bejan and Lorente 2012, 804)

Consequently, the best model for representing religion is a network of flowing ideas. Another good and handy comparative image that can be easily found is the image of the World Wide Web, which can be described as a network of networks (see a very informative example of internet map: The Opte Project). Similarly, religion is the “www” of networks that are the human brains, and the religious ideas that start from them and flow through them.

Culianu sought a scientific theory on which to ground his own model. Mandelbrot’s theory of fractals sounded very appealing, yet Culianu’s model was wrong about the fractalic nature of religion. Culianu died (in 1991) before Bejan’s first publication of the constructal law (1997), so he did not know it and could not use it, but his own model facilitated the application of constructal law in religion. Today we are able to combine Culianu’s model with Bejan’s constructal law. Consequently, a new scientific approach to religion (but not limited to it) emerges, with endless and rich applications and developments.

Along these lines, a definition of religion based on *constructal law and Culianu's model* can be formulated in this way: religion is the system (= an ideal object) constituted by the networks of tree-like flowing ideas. In it (= the system), ideas flow freely (over time) from origin (= the human mind), through the network's "channels" (= also the human mind, or, to use Culianu's terms, 'mental space'); no matter how the ideas are communicated—orally, on paper, on the air (radio and TV), on nowadays computers or mobile phones, and so on to users (= religious people, or scholars, writers and so on)—, it (= the system) provides greater access to the flow of ideas.

In fewer words, the definition can be summarized as such: *Religion is an ideal object composed of networks of tree-shape interconnected ideas freely evolving and flowing throughout the human mental space.*

We shall name this new model the *Morpho-Constructal Theory* (in this particular case, *of Religion*). Philosophy, science, and literature have their well-established places in it, yet to be revealed.

□

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## Abstract

### *Panta Rhei*: An Application of the Constructal Law for a New Scientific Model of Religion

Is religion an *autonomous*, as Eliade considered, *system*, as Culianu stated? What is religion? Nowadays “religion” is a term so broad that it encompasses a lot, from one God to many deities, from old gods to the spiritual life of today, from ghosts to the sacred, from stones and trees to spirits, and so on. What is more, given that each and every one of us, inhabitants of this Earth, have our own understanding, misunderstanding, or non-understanding of religion, and regardless of the fact that many scientists, researchers and writers in/of this field tried, with varying degrees of success, to define religion, there is not a final or unanimous accepted definition of it. This study starts with the view on religion of the mentor of Ioan Petru Culianu, Mircea Eliade, and it continues from the point where Eliade’s view meets the perspective of Culianu, with a focus on *Culianu’s Model*, namely, his outlook on religion. Then this article turns towards the *constructal law* developed by the physicist Adrian Bejan, and its applications in the humanities, in general, and religion, in particular. The main purpose of this research is not just to describe and clarify these viewpoints, but to provide a new definition of religion, and (equally important, if not more so) to take forward the theory of Culianu with the use of the constructal law, to open the way for a new understanding of religion, i.e. for a new theory, a new scientific model of religion.

## Keywords

constructal law, Adrian Bejan, Mircea Eliade, Ioan Petru Culianu, Culianu’s Model, new definition of religion

**„Sieh da: er brennt feurig  
und brennt nicht aus“  
Die Vision des Mose (Ex 3)  
aus psychologisch-theologischer  
und historisch-exegetischer Sicht**

JOHANNES KLEIN



DIERIC BOUTS, *Moses und der brennende Dornbusch* (1465-1470), Philadelphia, Museum of Art

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**D**IE VISION, die aus Mose einen anderen Menschen macht, ist bestehend klar und einfach erzählt:

*Ein Engel Jhwhs erschien ihm in einer Flamme aus einem Sene-Busch<sup>1</sup> und er sah, sieh da der Sene-Busch brennt feurig und der Sene-Busch brennt nicht aus. Mose sprach: Das ist doch unmöglich! Ich will diese große Vision ansehen, warum der Sene-Busch nicht ausbrennt...*

In die Vision werden die Leserinnen und Leser mit hineingenommen. Mit der Aufforderung והנה – *sieh da*<sup>2</sup> werden sie aufgefordert mit zu sehen, wie der Sene-Busch feurig brennt und doch nicht ausbrennt. Das wird durch die Partizipform „brennend“ unterstrichen, die die Gleichzeitigkeit ausdrückt. Die Lesenden werden so angesprochen als ob sie die Vision direkt betrachten könnten. Dasselbe gilt für das Nachfolgende nicht mehr. Hier

werden wieder Verben im Waw-Imperfekt gebracht. Auf diese Weise erhält die Vision des Mose direkte Bedeutung für die Lesenden und Hörenden des Exodus-Buches. Im Unterschied zu dem folgenden Dialog zwischen Mose und Gott, den die Leser aus der Beobachterrolle wahrnehmen können.

Wenn also die Vision nicht nur von Mose, sondern auch von allen Lesenden und Hörenden der Geschichte direkt wahrgenommen wird, dann bleibt sie nicht mehr nur die Vision des Mose. Sie wird zur Vision der Lesenden und Hörenden, die sie vor ihrem inneren Auge imaginieren. Sie haben somit das Recht und die Aufgabe zu fragen, was diese Vision für sie selbst bedeutet. Insofern die Vision Teil von Traditionsliteratur ist, kommt noch eine andere Kategorie ins Spiel: die Visionen der Tradenten. Wenn im Folgenden also von der „Vision des Mose“ die Rede ist, sind also drei Visionen gemeint: die des literarischen Mose, die der Tradenten und die der Lesenden.

## Vision als Traum

**I**N Ex 3,2f kommt sowohl das Verb ראה als auch das Substantiv מראה vor, was das Erlebnis des Mose als Vision charakterisiert. Um die Ereignisse am Horeb deuten zu können, soll nun der Frage nachgegangen werden, was eine Vision ist und was für wissenschaftliche Hilfsmittel vorhanden sind, visionäre Erscheinungen zu verstehen. Es ist aufgefallen, dass in der Bibel „Träume, Visionen, bestimmte Traumzustände, die Erscheinung von Engeln und geistige Erfahrungen ausgesprochen von gleicher Art“<sup>3</sup> dargestellt werden. In Num 12,6-8 heißt es beispielsweise: „Ist jemand euer Prophet Jhwhs, werde ich mich ihm durch Vision zu erkennen geben oder im Traum zu ihm sprechen.“<sup>4</sup>

In Gen 46,2-4 und Sach 1,8 ist von nächtlichen Visionen die Rede, so dass eine exakte Unterscheidung von Traum und Vision schwer möglich ist.<sup>5</sup> Das ist nicht verwunderlich, da im gesamten Alten Orient Traum und Vision phänomenologisch eng beieinander liegen.<sup>6</sup>

So überraschend es zunächst klingen mag: Die Bibel steht – so John A. Sanford – „im Betrachten der Träume und Visionen als von gleichem Ursprung und Aufbau sowie von gleicher Bedeutung [...] auf solidem wissenschaftlichen Boden“.<sup>7</sup> Sanford versteht die Vision grundsätzlich als einen Traum, „den man in halb-bewusstem Zustand hat. Wenn das Unbewusste mit traumartigen Bildern oder Handlungen im Wachzustand in unser Bewußtsein einbricht, dann erleben wir eine Vision“.<sup>8</sup> Folgt man diesem Verständnis, erscheint es als angemessen, auch die Vision des Mose von der Traumforschung her zu beleuchten.



## Der Traum als Äußerungsmittel des Selbst

**N**ACH CARL Gustav Jung sind die Inhalte des Traums „Symbole des Selbst, die im Prozess der Individuation eine integrative Funktion spielen“.<sup>9</sup> Das Selbst, dem die Symbole entspringen, definiert Jung folgendermaßen:

*Intellektuell ist das Selbst nichts als ein psychologischer Begriff, eine Konstruktion, welche eine uns unerkennbare Wesenheit ausdrücken soll, die wir als solche nicht erfassen können, denn sie übersteigt unser Fassungsvermögen, wie schon aus ihrer Definition hervorgeht. Sie könnte ebenso wohl als ‚der Gott in uns‘ bezeichnet werden. Die Anfänge unseres ganzen seelischen Lebens scheinen unentwirrbar aus diesem Punkte zu entspringen, und alle höchsten und letzten Ziele scheinen auf ihn hinzulaufen. Dieses Paradoxon ist unausweichlich, wie immer, wenn wir etwas zu kennzeichnen versuchen, was jenseits des Vermögens unseres Verstandes liegt.<sup>10</sup>*

Vorsichtig bringt also Jung das Selbst, das sich im Traum äußert, mit Gott in Verbindung. Ähnlich andeutend formuliert auch Sanford:

*Unsere Träume sind die ‚Stimme‘ unseres psychischen Zentrums, das uns befähigt, nach Ganzheit zu streben. Es kann als versöhnend und christusähnlich bezeichnet werden. Erfahrungen mit ihm gehören zu den höchsten im menschlichen Leben; die Menschheit hat sie Erfahrungen mit Gott genannt.<sup>11</sup>*

Nüchterner versteht Christoph Morgenthaler das Selbst „als das gestaltende, gestaltete, sinnsuchende und sinnbegabte psychische Zentrum eines Menschen im Schnittbereich von Kultur, Gruppe und Person“.<sup>12</sup> Ähnlich formuliert auch Brigitte Dorst:

*Das Selbst wird als eine dem Ich übergeordnete psychische Instanz verstanden, die das Ich mit einschließt, aber darüber hinaus transpersonale Aspekte umfasst. Es ist der Umfang und die Mitte der Psyche in ihrer Gesamtheit. Das Selbst ist eine innere Steuerungs- oder auch Führungsinstanz, die unter den Bedingungen der Umwelt des Menschen die Entwicklung der Psyche bestimmt.*

*Auf dem Weg der Individuation geht es darum, wie das Ich sich zum Selbst in Beziehung setzt und die Impulse, die vom Selbst kommen, aufnimmt und umsetzt.<sup>13</sup>*

Es besteht also grundsätzlich Einigkeit darin, dass das Selbst, dem man im Traum begegnet, das psychische Zentrum darstellt. Viel mehr kann man wissenschaftlich nicht sagen, höchstens noch, dass dieses psychische Zentrum gelegentlich

mit Gott in Verbindung gebracht wird. In dem Moment, in dem Sanford dies ausdrücklich tut, bekennt er sich jedoch als Pfarrer:

*So spreche ich nun als einfacher Mensch und Pfarrer. Für mich ist es undenkbar, daß es keine absolute und letzte Wirklichkeit hinter dem innerseelischen Bild Gottes geben sollte. Das Gottesbild in unserer Seele, das Selbst, vermittelt Wille und Kraft des Schöpfers selbst. Durch unser Leben wird nicht nur der Sinn, an den ich glaube, zum Ausdruck gebracht, sondern auch jener Sinn, welcher der gesamten Schöpfung zugrunde liegt. Indem wir das Selbst in einer Art verwirklichen, die psychologisch faßbar ist, treten wir in Beziehung mit dem transzendenten Christus der Geschichte. Diese Behauptung kann ich natürlich nicht beweisen, denn unsere Wissenschaft ist noch nicht imstande, über die beobachtbaren Fakten dieses Lebens hinauszugehen. Aber ich möchte festhalten, daß jeder, der seine Träume kennt und von ihrer Wirkung ergriffen wurde, eine Andeutung vom Sinn und Zweck eines größeren fühlen wird, als er selbst ist. Diese Ansicht ist mein Glaube, der in mir lebt.<sup>14</sup>*

Dies ist nun tatsächlich eher ein Glaubensbekenntnis als Wissenschaft, und Theologie bewegt sich manchmal auf dem Grat zwischen beidem. Kommen wir jedoch jetzt zurück zur Interpretation Morgenthalers. Seiner Auffassung nach zeigt sich das dialektische Selbst im Traum.<sup>15</sup>

*Dieses Selbst wird geprägt von der Kultur, in der es lebt, von den Gruppen und Institutionen, an denen es durch Rollen vermittelt Anteil nimmt, und von den Strukturen seiner Persönlichkeit, wie sie sich aufgrund innerer und äußerer Kräfte im Laufe des Lebens verfestigen. Dieses Selbst ist also tiefverwurzelt in seiner geschichtlichen und biologischen Identität. Zugleich ist es aber nicht nur gestaltetes Selbst, es ist gestaltendes Selbst: Es eignet sich Tradition kritisch, produktiv und ironisch an; es überwindet die Grenzen seiner Prägungen poetisch; handelnd gestaltet es seine Lebenswelt. Dieses Selbst ist nicht, nach unserem grundlegend dialektischen Verständnis seiner Struktur – es wird. Es wird als dialektisches Selbst in einem vielfältigen Prozess der hexalogischen Bedeutungsbildung. Es wird, verwurzelt in der irdischen Wirklichkeit, berufen zum Reich Gottes.<sup>16</sup>*

Die Grenzen zwischen Theologie und Psychologie sollen nicht verwischt werden. Auf der einen Seite kann nicht nachgewiesen werden, dass der Heilige Geist in, mit und unter der Traumerfahrung wirkt, auf der anderen Seite scheint es Morgenthaler allerdings möglich, die Wirklichkeit des Träumers ‚im Geist‘ in den Blick zu fassen, d.h. unter Voraussetzungen zu thematisieren, „die es zumindest nicht unwahrscheinlich werden lassen, dass in menschlicher Wirk-

lichkeit der Geist am Werk ist, Hoffnung schafft, tröstet, erfreut, begabt, vielfältigt, befreit und eint<sup>17</sup>. Auf diese Weise sollen Theologie und Psychologie „ungetrennt und unvermischt, dialektisch aufeinander bezogen bleiben“<sup>18</sup>.

Nach Morgenthaler wirken auf das Selbst, das im religiösen Traum aktiv wird, vielfältige Faktoren ein. Das Selbst „verbindet Einflüsse der Herkunftsfamilie und der aktuellen engen Beziehungen, der Gesellschaft und ihrer Subsysteme (Recht, Wirtschaft usw.) insbesondere der religiösen Systeme im Nahbereich (Kirche, Gemeinde)“<sup>19</sup>. Dann formuliert er weiter:

*Träume scheinen dort anzusetzen, wo sowohl das Selbst des Träumenden wie die Institution vital betroffen sind. Träume packen nicht nur die heißen Eisen der individuellen Seele an; sie thematisieren auch das, was für das Bestehen eines sozialen Systems von grundlegender Bedeutung ist.*<sup>20</sup>

An diesem Punkt macht es Sinn, die gewonnenen Überlegungen auf ein Traumbeispiel anzuwenden. Morgenthaler beschreibt den Traum eines etwa 40-jährigen, verheirateten Theologen nach einigen Jahren Arbeit in seiner ersten Gemeinde, einer kleineren Landgemeinde:

*Vor mir liegt eine weite Landschaft, eben, ganz flach, wie ein gelbes Stoppelfeld. Im Hintergrund droht ein dunkler Gewitterhimmel, fast nachtschwarz. Das Feld leuchtet knallig gelb. Rechts steht die Kirche, daran angebaut das Pfarrhaus. Ein Blitz hat eingeschlagen. Die Kirche brennt lichterloh. Die Feuerwehr ist da – ich gehöre zu ihr –, die Wasserspritze ist angeschlossen, die Schläuche sind verschraubt, die Mannschaft steht neben und hinter mir. Ich sehe sie nicht, spüre sie nur. Ich frage mich: Wie lange geht das noch, bis Wasser kommt? Man sollte doch löschen, vorwärts machen. Wenn die Kirche brennt, brennt bald auch das Pfarrhaus. Dort wohnt die Familie. Das Feuer greift hinüber, wenn jetzt keine Grenzen gesetzt werden. In dieser Spannung berührt mich von rechts hinten eine Hand. Ich höre eine Stimme. Es ist die des Feuerwehrkommandanten. Sie sagt Lass es ruhig brennen. Ich erwache, erschüttert und erleichtert.*<sup>21</sup>

Der träumende Pfarrer deutete spontan seinen Traum: „Mein Pfarrerbild ist verbrannt in dieser Nacht... Ich kann so nicht mehr Pfarrer sein.“<sup>22</sup>

Er eignete sich diese Deutung an, was für ihn zum Befreiungserlebnis wurde. Er änderte seine Haltung als Pfarrer, ließ sich nicht mehr so stark von den Erwartungen anderer lenken und wechselte auch bald in eine Stadtgemeinde, wo er das falsche Selbst besser ablegen konnte, um das wahre Selbst zu leben, das sich im Traum gemeldet hatte.

An diesem Beispiel wird deutlich, wie nahe beieinander tatsächlich das Selbst und das Gottesbild liegen können. Aus wissenschaftlicher Perspektive war der Pfarrer seinem Selbst begegnet, ein gläubiger Mensch würde vielleicht dazu neigen, darin einen Ruf Gottes zu sehen. Wichtig ist jedoch auch die Beobachtung, die auch an diesem Traum aufgezeigt werden kann, dass ein solcher ausgesprochener Traum zum Traum anderer werden kann. Morgenthaler berichtet, selbst auch von dem Traum fasziniert gewesen zu sein und ihn weiter erzählt zu haben. Er erkannte dabei, dass der Traum zur bleibenden Frage an sein Pfarrersein und sein Kirchenbild wurde, dass er den Traum weiterträumte und selbst zum Feuerwehrhauptmann eines anderen Traums befördert wurde.<sup>23</sup> Dies feststellend folgert er, dass ein Traum nicht an seine ursprüngliche Situation gebunden ist, sondern sich als welterschließend auch für andere erweist.<sup>24</sup> Während dieses Prozesses ist es jedem, der mitträumt, vergönnt, dabei seinem Selbst zu begegnen, vielleicht auch seinem Gottesbild. Ich meinerseits gebe zu, dass mich dieser Traum auch beschäftigt hat, und dabei habe ich mich selbst auch ein wenig besser kennen gelernt. Vielleicht geht es dem einen oder der andern unter Ihnen bei der Begegnung mit diesem Traum ähnlich. Auch hier gibt es also drei Träume. Mit dem träumenden Pfarrer träumt der Schriftsteller Morgenthaler und der Lesende Klein mit.

## Die Vision des Mose als Traum

**A**PPLIZIEREN WIR diese Erkenntnisse auf die Vision, die von Mose erzählt wird, gibt es zunächst die Vision oder den Traum des literarischen Mose mit seiner Deutung als Dialog mit Gott, der von der Warte der Wissenschaft als Dialog mit seinem Selbst zu begreifen sein dürfte. Inwieweit dieser Traum auf einen historischen Mose zurückgeführt werden kann, ist hier nicht zu erörtern, fest steht jedoch, dass er zum Traum der Tradenten geworden ist, wer immer diese waren und auch immer aufs neue zum Traum der Leserinnen und Hörer wird, wer immer diese sind, insofern sie sich mit der Mosegestalt identifizieren und dabei sich selbst näher kennenlernen bzw. ihrem Selbst und vielleicht auch ihrem Gottesbild begegnen.

Bevor wir uns der Gestalt des Mose in diesem Sinne zuwenden, mag noch festgehalten werden, dass sich der Traum des literarischen Mose und der Traum des Pfarrers durch das Motiv des Brennens und der Erwartung des Verbrennens oder Ausbrennens ähnlich sind, jedoch an diesem Punkt geradezu entgegengesetzte Tendenzen aufweisen. Bei beiden Träumenden gibt es Anzeichen von Überforderung und mangelnder Zufriedenheit, aber während der Pfarrer letztlich aus der Vision der verbrennenden Kirche Hoffnung schöpft und sein Leben

in diesem Sinne neu gestaltet, entspringt der neu ansetzende Lebensweg des Mose gerade der Vision, dass der Sene-Busch *nicht* ausbrennt. Wenn nun beide, Pfarrer und Mose, im Traum von ihrem Selbst geleitet werden, dann macht das Selbst dem Pfarrer das Gefühl bewusst, dass sein Verhältnis zu seiner alten Gemeinde ausgebrannt ist, so dass er bald darauf sein Anstellungsverhältnis kündigt, während Mose bei der Betrachtung seines Selbst im Sene-Busch erlebt, wie er weiter für die Sache Gottes brennen kann, gerade ohne auszubrennen. Ich gestatte mir das Urteil nicht, dass der von Morgenthaler zitierte Pfarrer Vorzeichen eines Burnout hatte und vielleicht durch seinen Traum und den anschließenden Gemeindefwechsel einem solchen entgehen konnte, denn dafür ist die Beschreibung des Falls nicht ausführlich genug. Was man bei Mose jedoch bei den auf die Vision folgenden Erzählungen beobachten kann, sind periodisch auftretende seelische Erschöpfungszustände, die von Matthias Burisch<sup>25</sup> als Burnout diagnostiziert worden sind.

Aufgrund der Tatsache, dass einerseits die Burnout-Literatur Ausmaße des Uferlosen erreicht hat, andererseits es kein allgemein anerkanntes Krankheitsbild gibt,<sup>26</sup> das diesen Namen trägt, mag der Hinweis genügen, dass die Problematik, die heute gelegentlich mit Burnout umschrieben wird, durchaus auch bei Mose – beim literarischen wohl gemerkt – eine Rolle gespielt haben kann. Ob er sich in einem sehr frühen oder schon in einem späteren Stadium des Burnout befand, muss nicht im Einzelnen analysiert werden. Hier mag die These genügen, dass Mose im Sene-Busch sein Selbst wie in einem Spiegel sieht und dies ihm das Wunder mitteilt, dass die Sache weitergehen kann, für die er gebrannt hat, dass er nicht ausgebrannt ist, sondern weiter brennen kann. Vielleicht ist es nicht zufällig, dass Mose in seiner Vision einen Busch sieht. Zwar nicht den Büschen, aber immerhin deren nächsten Verwandten widmet Helmut Hark ein kleines Buch, in dem er schreibt:

*Die Bäume in unseren Träumen können uns wichtige Hinweise geben auf das innere seelische Befinden. An der Bildgestalt eines geträumten Baumes können wir die Schwierigkeiten des Träumers ablesen...*

*Mit der Diagnostik aufs engste verbunden ist die Selbsterkenntnis eines Menschen. Insbesondere Träume von Bäumen geben wichtige Hinweise zur Selbsterkenntnis. Der Baum als das wohl ursprünglichste Symbol unserer selbst wird von der Seele in den Träumen dazu verwendet, uns bewußt zu machen, wie es um uns steht...*

*Bäume weisen den Menschen über sich selbst hinaus auf das „Selbst“ als eine umfassende Ganzheit, zu der wir ein Leben lang unterwegs sind...*

*Dieses Selbst, die tiefste Quelle unserer Selbsterfahrung, kommt nicht einfach aus der Begegnung mit andern Menschen, sondern bedarf oft eines Symbols au-*

*ßerhalb der Menschen, um uns zugespült zu werden. In diesem Sinne spielen uns häufig Bäume in unseren Träumen ein Stück neues Leben zu.<sup>27</sup>*

Dies ist ein weiteres Argument, das die These untermauert, dass Mose sich selbst und die Schwierigkeiten, mit denen er konfrontiert ist, in dem Dornbusch wieder erkennt, und dabei auch die Lösung erlebt.

## **Mose brennt weiter für sein Volk und für die Gerechtigkeit**

**I**N DIESEM Zusammenhang ist zunächst die Frage zu klären, wofür der literarische Mose gebrannt hat, und wofür er weiter brennen wird. Nach der Erzählung Ex 2 war es der Gedanke, seinem Volk Gerechtigkeit zu verschaffen, wofür Mose heftig entbrannt war. So stark sogar, dass er weit über das Ziel geschossen hat. Im Eifer erschlug er einen Ägypter, der einen Israeliten zuvor geschlagen hatte. Mose musste daraufhin fliehen, d.h. er konnte vorerst für diese Sache nicht weiter brennen. War er also tatsächlich ausgebrannt? Sein Selbst sagt ihm etwas anderes. Es zeigt ihm, dass er weiter brennen kann. Wie er das macht, geht aus dem auf die Vision folgenden Dialog hervor. In diesem Dialog mit dem Selbst, oder wie es die Bibel auf religiöse Weise ausspricht, im Dialog mit Gott, wird einiges zu Tage befördert, was Mose gehindert hatte, weiter zu brennen.

Aus dem nicht ausbrennenden Sene-Busch spricht Gott – so der Erzähler, psychologisch gesehen das Selbst des Mose, hinter dem sich sein Gottesbild verbirgt. Mose wird darauf sofort mit seiner Angst konfrontiert, die ihn sein Angesicht verhüllen lässt. Aber dann werden seine Sehnsüchte angesprochen, die ihn früher zu übertriebenem Handeln und zum Ausbrennen veranlasst haben. Er hatte selbst Elend erlebt und wollte den Schwächeren Gerechtigkeit verschaffen. Da war er gescheitert, weil er zu weit gegangen war. Nun hört er, dass Gott das Elend gesehen hat, die Schmerzen des Volkes kennt, es retten und in ein gutes Land führen will. Psychologisch betrachtet bedeutet dies die Mobilisierung der Energien des Selbst, seinem verschütteten Drang nach Gerechtigkeit wieder Raum zu geben. Aber dann spiegelt sich im Dialog mit Gott noch das Auseinanderklaffen bzw. die narzisstische Spaltung zwischen dem Wunsch, für diese Mission auserwählt zu sein und der Angst, den dafür notwendigen Anforderungen nicht gewachsen zu sein. In der Sprache der Bibel stehen dem Auftrag Gottes, zum Pharao zu gehen und die Forderung nach Freigabe des Volkes auszusprechen, vier Einwände des Mose entgegen, deren Hintergrund sein Empfinden von Minderwertigkeit ist. Der erste Einwand betrifft direkt das Ich. Mose fragt:

„Wer bin ich?“ Gott begegnet diesem Einwand mit dem Schutz und der Stärkung des Ich: „Ich stehe dir zur Seite.“ Der zweite Einwand betrifft die Zuverlässigkeit des Ichschutzes: „Wer ist der Gott, der mich beauftragt hat? Wie heißt er?“ Die Antwort „Ich werde sein, der ich sein werde“ lässt den Gottesnamen anklingen, und will Mose verdeutlichen, dass er auch im Ungewissen seinen Weg finden wird. Gott wird dabei sein, auch wenn nicht alles im Voraus geklärt werden kann. Der dritte Einwand betrifft die Zweifel an Moses Glaubwürdigkeit. Da wird ihm ein extremes Mittel in die Hand gegeben: Wundermacht. Dies hat wahrscheinlich den Sinn, seine Minderwertigkeit durch Grandiosität zu kompensieren. Ein vierter und letzter Einwand betrifft seine rhetorischen Fähigkeiten. Die diesbezüglichen Minderwertigkeitsgefühle werden durch die Aussicht auf den Beistand seines Bruders Aaron beseitigt.

Interessant ist, dass Mose nach seinem Visionsempfang zu Jitro zurückkehrt, ihm sein Vorhaben mitteilt und von ihm den Segen empfängt (Ex 4,18). Letzterer markiert das Ende der Individuationsphase. Nach der Flucht in Ex 2 hatte Mose allmählich wieder zu sich gefunden. Zunächst eine neue Umgebung, danach die Heirat mit Zippora, dann die Vision und jetzt geht er seinen eigenen bzw. den von Gott bestimmten Weg.

Die Vision des Mose und der Dialog mit seinem Selbst sind nicht ein Ereignis, das ihn ein für allemal geheilt hätte. Mose kommt noch häufig in die Situation drohender Erschöpfungserrscheinungen, wo er am liebsten sagen würde: Ich kann nicht mehr, ich will nicht mehr. Er findet aber jedes Mal die notwendigen Ressourcen, in den Dialog mit dem Gottesbild in seinem Selbst einzutreten. Die Bibel formuliert das sogar als direkte Gespräche mit Gott. Beispiele für solche Gespräche, aus denen Mose göttliche Kraft schöpft, finden wir in einigen Erzählungen der Wüstenwanderung, wo davon die Rede ist, dass das Volk unzufrieden ist und murrte, worauf sich Mose verzweifelt zu Gott wendet (Ex 16-18; Num 11).

## Burnout-Theorien

**H**IER MÖCHTEN wir mit der Fallbeschreibung innehalten und die Vision des Mose in den Zusammenhang von Burnout-Theorien stellen. Traugott Ulrich Schall beschreibt das Phänomen des Burnouts anhand des Propheten Elia und nennt es „Eliasmüdigkeit“, die in sechs Stufen geheilt werden kann:

1. Ausruhen;
2. Erfahrung von Hilfe und Betreuung;

3. Zeitweilige Distanz zur Arbeit;
4. Korrektur der Gotteserfahrung;
5. Veränderung durch einen konkreten, überschaubaren und erfüllbaren Auftrag;
6. Erhalt eines Helfers und Nachfolgers.<sup>28</sup>

Appliziert man dieses Modell auf den literarischen Mose in der Annahme, dass er einen Burnout hatte, dann befindet sich Mose zu dem Zeitpunkt, an dem er den brennenden Sene-Busch sieht, inmitten seines Heilungsprozesses. Er hatte zu sehr für die Gerechtigkeit gebrannt, war zu weit gegangen, maßlos geworden<sup>29</sup> und hatte einen Menschen ermordet (Ex 2,12). Es gab keine andere Möglichkeit für ihn als zu fliehen (V15). Dadurch bekam er Distanz zur Arbeit, erfuhr Hilfe und Betreuung durch Jitro, durfte ausruhen, heiratete und gründete eine Familie (V16-22). Nach der Erleuchtung durch den brennenden Sene-Busch lernte er Gott aufs neue kennen, erfuhr seinen Namen (3,14) und erhielt den Auftrag, Israel aus Ägypten zu befreien, der durch zahlreiche nachfolgende Anweisungen immer wieder konkretisiert wurde (Ex 5-14). Dazu erhielt er auch einen Helfer in seinem Bruder Aaron und später in siebzig Armenpflegern (Num 11).

Unter der Überschrift „Achten auf die Engel“ behandelt Schall drei für die Heilung wesentliche Aspekte: Die Fähigkeit, die eigene Bedürftigkeit anzunehmen, die Bereitschaft, die Fürsorge eines anderen zu erfahren, und das Vertrauen und den Mut, sich auf einen Weg zu machen.<sup>30</sup> Dies erfährt Mose in der an die Vision anschließenden Begegnung mit Gott. Mose artikuliert hier in mehreren Schritten seine Bedürftigkeit, erfährt dabei die Fürsorge Gottes, der ihn mit übernatürlichen Fähigkeiten ausstattet, und ist schließlich bereit, sich auf den gefährlichen Weg zum Pharao zu machen.

Wichtigen Raum nimmt bei Schall die Distanz zur Arbeit ein. Sie kann schützen, die Arbeit als Misserfolg zu erleben, weil die Erwartungen bei gewonnener Distanz realistischer werden.<sup>31</sup> Dieses Kriterium wird teilweise auch von Mose erfüllt. Durch die Flucht aus Ägypten und die Heirat in Midian gewinnt er zunächst große Distanz zur ‚Arbeit‘ und begegnet Gott.<sup>32</sup> Im Gespräch mit ihm artikuliert er seine Enttäuschungen und lernt mit ihnen umzugehen. Sichtbarer wird das aber vor allem später: immer dann, wenn ihm das Volk murrend entgegentritt (15,24; 16,2; 17,3, vgl. auch Num 11,1f., 14; 16f.). Es gelingt ihm, auf Distanz zum Volk zu gehen, indem er sich jedes Mal an seinen Gott wendet. Dabei geschieht das, was Schall als „Relevanz des Glaubens“ beschreibt, das Sammeln, das Ausruhen vor Gott.<sup>33</sup> Dazu lernt er, was für Burnout-Gefährdete so wichtig ist, anzunehmen, dass die Menschen, für die man sich einsetzt, eben so sind, wie sie sind, und helfende Taten mit Undank belohnen. Schall nennt diese Fähigkeit „Undank als ‚Dank mit verkehrtem Vorzeichen‘ richtig einord-



nen und ertragen lernen<sup>34</sup>. Andererseits scheint Mose niemals so richtig auf Distanz zu seiner ‚Arbeit‘ zu gehen, denn sein von Gott erteilter Auftrag erfüllt sein ganzes Leben. Möglicherweise liegt darin der Grund dafür, dass er immer wieder mit dem Problem Burnout konfrontiert wird. Könnte man sich aber Mose denn anders vorstellen denn als einen Menschen, der mit seinem ganzen Leben im Dienst für Gott aufgeht? Und das ist ja gerade das Wunder. Mose brennt weiter, obwohl er eigentlich ausgebrannt sein müsste. Die Forderung nach Distanz zur Arbeit ist für Mose offensichtlich schlicht nicht realisierbar. Er braucht anscheinend auch keine Nebenarbeitsfelder,<sup>35</sup> die ihm zu seinem Dienst Distanz verschaffen. Und damit ist er nicht allein. Deshalb gewinnt die Theorie von Ruth Enzler Denzler, die Burnout bei Führungskräften analysiert, an Wichtigkeit.<sup>36</sup>

Diese Theorie gründet auf der Beobachtung, dass viele Spitzenführungskräfte, obgleich unter ständigem großem Stress, niemals ausbrennen. Das führt zu der Annahme, dass es nicht der Stress an sich ist, der ausbrennen lässt, sondern ein Ungleichgewicht zwischen der Arbeitsbelastung bzw. den Stressfaktoren auf der einen Seite und dem Gegengewicht, den Belohnungsfaktoren auf der anderen Seite.<sup>37</sup> Wenn also die Belohnungsfaktoren groß genug sind, können auch die Stressfaktoren sehr groß sein, ohne dass dies zu Burnout führt.<sup>38</sup> Mose scheint es also gelungen zu sein, angemessene Belohnung zu erhalten. Diese besteht, religiös gesprochen in seinen Gesprächen mit Gott, in denen er die Gewissheit göttlichen Beistands erhält und dadurch aufgemuntert wird, und psychologisch formuliert, in seinem Dialog mit dem Selbst, in dem ihm der Sinn seines Lebens und Schaffens jedes mal von neuem bewusst wird, weitere Energien zu Tage gefördert werden, so dass er nicht ausbrennen muss.

## Der Traum der Tradenten

**D**ER TRAUM des literarischen Mose ist nicht der einzige Traum, der im Hintergrund der Erzählung im Exodusbuch steht. Denkbar wäre, nach dem historischen Mose zurück zu fragen. Das soll hier nicht geschehen, da m.E. zu wenig Informationen hierüber zur Verfügung stehen. Der Traum des literarischen Mose ist jedoch in erster Linie von den Tradenten der Moseüberlieferung geträumt worden. Deshalb stellt sich jetzt die Frage: Wer waren diese und warum haben sie so von Mose erzählt? Wie haben sie sich selbst gesehen und auf welche Weise Zugang zu ihrem Selbst gefunden? Wofür mögen sie weiter gebrannt und danach das Gefühl erhalten haben, ausgebrannt zu sein? Wofür wollten sie weiter brennen und schöpften Kraft aus der Gestalt des Mose, der trotz aller Anfechtungen so erfolgreich war?

Zunächst wird man dem Urteil Werner H. Schmidts zustimmen müssen, dass die Moseerzählung in Ex 3-4 in einem Prozess der Traditionsmischung entstand,<sup>39</sup> d.h. dass hier verschiedene Traditionen zusammengefloßen sind und dass wahrscheinlich kein einheitliches Bild über die Tradenten gewonnen werden kann. Die klassische Literarkritik hat hier das Ineinandergreifen der beiden Quellen J und E gesehen.<sup>40</sup> Gemäß dieser These ist die eigentliche Vision in Ex 3,2-3 dem Jahwisten zuzuschreiben<sup>41</sup> den man früher in die Blütezeit Salomos datiert hat.<sup>42</sup> Für diesen Fall könnte man das Murren des Volkes als vergleichbar mit der Unzufriedenheit unter Salomo verstehen, der große Bauwerke unter schweren Opfern aufzog, was vermutlich bei den Verantwortlichen in der Begegnung mit dem Volk zu mancher Krise geführt hat (vgl. 1Kön 11 über Jerobeam). In dem Kontext wäre die Vision vom weiter brennenden Sene-Busch die Begegnung mit der Hoffnung, dass die Gemeinschaftsaktionen trotz aller Krisen weiter gehen würden.

Legt man hingegen das sog. Münsteraner Pentateuchmodell<sup>43</sup> zu Grunde, dann erzählte die im Norden beheimatete *Mose-Exodus-Geschichte* (Ex \*1-15)

*Israels (= Nordreich) Rettung aus der Unterdrückung der Staatsmacht Ägypten so..., dass es dabei zugleich um die Konflikte zwischen Salomo/Rehabeam (= Süd-stämme) und den Nordstämmen unter Führung des Jerobeam (erster König des Nordreichs) ging.*

Für diese Zeit ist die Erzählung vom beinahe ausgebrannten Mose schwerlich in spezifischer Weise in Anspruch zu nehmen. Für die Zeit nach 722, dem Zusammenbruch des Nordreichs, rechnet das Modell mit einer Fortschreibung der Exodusgeschichte. Hierhin könnte die Vision vom brennenden, aber nicht ausbrennenden Sene-Busch sowie die Aufmunterungen, die Mose in seiner Verzweiflung durch Gott regelmäßig erhält, durchaus passen. Sie würde Kraft geben, trotz des gewaltigen Ereignisses des Nordreich-Endes nicht aufzugeben, sondern weiter für den Gott Israels zu brennen. Ein Weitermachen lohnt sich, auch wenn viele Volksangehörige daran verzweifeln. Sicherlich ist die Moseüberlieferung auch Teil des sog. Jerusalemer Geschichtswerks aus der Manassezeit geworden, stimmt man dieser These zu. Da hat das Brennen des Mose vermutlich Kraft gegeben, der assyrischen Macht Stand zu halten, bzw. trotz der assyrischen Macht den Glauben zu bewahren. Aber nach dem Modell stammen aus dieser Zeit wohl nicht viele der besprochenen Texte. Ähnliches gilt wohl auch für das deuteronomistisch inspirierte Geschichtswerk, deren Teil die Erzählungen später geworden sind, ohne völlig überarbeitet zu werden.

Nach Erhard Blum gehört Ex 3 der frühnachexilischen Komposition KD an. Neuerdings ist die Abhängigkeit von Ex 3-4 von priesterschriftlichen Texten (vor

allem Ex 2,23ab-25,6, 2ff. aber auch anderen)<sup>44</sup> betont worden. Dies widerlegt zwar E. Blum im Hinblick auf Ex 3 überzeugend,<sup>45</sup> während er 4,1-17 durchaus von P beeinflusst sieht, erkennbar vor allem in 4,10.13-16, wo Aaron als Moses Assistent eingeführt wird.<sup>46</sup> Blum stimmt der These von Konrad Schmid und Jan Christian Gertz zu, dass das erste und dritte Beglaubigungszeichen in 4,1ff. aus dem priesterlich erweiterten Plagenzyklus (Ex 7,8-13.19.21b) erklärt werden können<sup>47</sup> bzw. „eine Fortschreibung der nicht-priesterlichen Überlieferung von Ex 3\* darstellt, die sich zugleich auf priesterliche Pentateuchzusammenhänge bezieht“.<sup>48</sup> Interessanterweise gehört nach Blum auch Ex 18 zu dieser nachpriesterlichen Fortschreibung,<sup>49</sup> wohl auch Num 11, zwei Texte, in denen Mose als Energiesuchender vor Gott tritt. Stimmt man diesen Überlegungen zu, wird man annehmen, dass die Erzählung von Mose in der letzten überlieferten Form nachexilisch ist. Wohl sind da ältere Stoffe exilischer oder sogar vorexilischer Prägung mit eingeflossen, denn man wird die Mosegestalt nicht in nachexilischer Zeit erfunden haben. Die jetzige Prägung, vor allem die Texte, die Mose als verzweifelten, Gott um Kraft bittenden Menschen darstellen, stammen jedoch aus spätester Zeit. Und wenn hier Mose als Vorbild dargestellt wird, das schwach ist, sich aber von Gott die notwendigen Energien schenken lässt, dann verrät dies den Glauben der Tradenten der Moseüberlieferung in nachexilischer Zeit. Man erzählte die Mosegeschichte neu, sprach von der Sklaverei in Ägypten, dachte aber an die Zeit des Exils in Babylonien, eine Zeit der kollektiven Depression, aber vielleicht auch einer Zeit der Sammlung neuer Energien. Der Auszug aus Ägypten war der Rückkehr der in Babylonien Gefangenen vergleichbar, und dann konnte die Zeit des Wiederaufbaus in Analogie zur Wüstenwanderung gesehen werden. Man wollte etwas aufbauen, aber mit wem sollte man das tun? Waren überhaupt noch Energien für gemeinsame Projekte wie beispielsweise den Aufbau des Tempels vorhanden? Man traf wahrscheinlich immer wieder auf Menschen, die anfangs willig waren, zu helfen und beizutragen, denen aber dann die Kräfte ausgingen. Sie murrten, so wie die Tradenten der Mosegeschichte von den Umherirrenden in der Wüste erzählten. Vielleicht meinten sie auch, es wäre ihnen in Babylonien besser ergangen. In so einer Situation gab vielleicht auch der eine oder andere Volksführer auf: Wie sollte man mit so einem Volk den Wiederaufbau schaffen? Helfen konnte da das Beispiel des Mose. Er musste doch dieselben Probleme gehabt, mit sich und mit Gott gerungen und dann die Kraft bekommen haben, für die Sache Gottes weiter zu brennen. Wenn er es schwer hatte, der Verzweiflung nahe war, wandte er sich an den Gott Israels, und der half ihm. Und so ging es weiter und weiter, bis das Gelobte Land erreicht war. Und wenn Mose nicht mehr konnte, dann wurden Helfer gefunden (Num 11). Auf diese Weise klammerten sich die Erzählenden der Mosegeschichte an die Mosegestalt. Sie wurde zum Ausdruck ihres Selbst,

das ihnen Kraft gab. Wie er nicht ausgebrannt war, nachdem er den brennenden Busch gesehen hatte, so hofften auch sie, weiter brennen zu können, wenn sie das Vorbild Mose betrachteten. Auch wenn alle sich abwenden würden, durch Gottes Hilfe kann das Ziel erreicht werden, werden sie geglaubt haben um die Wende vom 6. zum 5. Jh. v.u.Z. Das Bild, das sie von Mose überlieferten, ist so ergreifend, dass es sicherlich den einen oder anderen Hörer bzw. die eine oder andere Leserin mitgerissen und für die Sache Gottes motiviert hat, so dass sie mitbrennen konnten, aber auch heutige Leser noch fasziniert und diese mitträumen und mitbrennen lässt.

Aus obigen Überlegungen resultiert, dass die Überlieferung vom nicht ausbrennenden Mose in verschiedenen Zeiten Bedeutung gewinnen konnte, mal mehr, mal weniger eindrucklich. Deshalb ist die Erzählung vermutlich in verschiedenen Kontexten fortgeschrieben worden, so dass die Entstehungsgeschichte nicht mehr ganz aufgehellt werden kann. Was aber bis heute bleibt: Die Erzählung ist in der Lage, den Zuhörern und Leserinnen Kraft zu geben, weil diese bei der Auseinandersetzung mit der Erzählung in einer Weise ihrem Selbst begegnen, die einer Begegnung mit Gott gleichkommt. Die Kette könnte weitergeführt werden durch alle Zeiten, in denen die Mosegestalt wichtig geworden ist, bis zu uns, die wir heute von Mose träumen und aus seiner Geschichte Kraft schöpfen.

## Zur Frage nach der Richtigkeit der Deutung

**Z**UM ABSCHLUSS mögen noch einige Überlegungen zur Richtigkeit der gelieferten Deutung gegeben werden. Christoph Morgenthaler schreibt:

*„Richtig“ ist eine Deutung, die „klickt“, ja zündet und beim Träumenden einschlägt. Richtig ist eine Deutung, die für den Träumenden handelt und konkrete Lebensmöglichkeiten eröffnet. Richtig ist eine Deutung, wenn kommende Lebensereignisse sie bestätigen. Und richtig ist eine Deutung, die nicht zuletzt durch weitere Träume unterstützt wird.<sup>50</sup>*

Man wird aufgrund dieser Einschätzung festhalten können, dass die Deutung, die der literarische Mose der Vision gegeben hat, für ihn richtig war. Die Tatsache, dass er hinter den Ereignissen Gott sah, beflügelte ihn und ließ ihn sein Leben danach auszurichten. Ohne die Vision, die von außen betrachtet, auf sein Selbst zurück geht, aber auch ohne die Deutung, dass Gott zu ihm sprach, wäre er wohl nicht befähigt gewesen, solche Leistungen zu erbringen. In dem

Sinne ist also die Deutung Moses für ihn selbst richtig und auch für alle, die dieser Deutung folgen konnten und können. Die Tatsache, dass die Erzählung immer weiter tradiert wurde, bestätigt wiederum die Richtigkeit, denn sie zeigt, dass der Traum des Mose durch weitere Tradenten weitergeträumt wurde bzw. durch weitere Träume derselben unterstützt wurde. Die Deutung der Tradenten ist vor allem dann richtig gewesen, wenn sie ihnen Kraft gab und andere motivierte, weiterzumachen, wenn es schwer war und der Sinn des Weitermachens verloren zu gehen schien, denn dadurch haben sie kommende Lebensereignisse bewältigt. Ob diese Deutung eine Möglichkeit für heutige Leserinnen und Hörer ist, mag sich daran entscheiden, ob Mose zum Inbegriff ihres Selbst werden kann und Kraft zum Weitermachen in Zeiten schwerer Anfechtung gibt. Gerade dies scheint mir in der postmodernen Welt des vielgefürchteten und exzessiv problematisierten Burnouts möglich zu sein. Dort, wo Berufstätige aus Angst vor einem Burnout immer weniger geneigt sind, sich mit ihrem Beruf voll und ganz zu identifizieren,<sup>51</sup> sondern in strenger Gesetzmäßigkeit der Ideologie der Work-Life-Balance folgen, immer leiser treten und sich damit in die Gefahr des Boreout<sup>52</sup> begeben, könnte das biblische Bild eines feurig brennenden, manchmal verzweifelten, aber niemals ausbrennenden Mose an Bedeutung gewinnen. Vielleicht nicht in erster Linie in der reinen theologischen Wissenschaft, dafür umso mehr in der theologischen Praxis, die durch die Wissenschaft stets neue Impulse erhält.

„Sieh da: er brennt feurig und brennt nicht aus...“ – die Vision eines einzelnen großen Mannes? Nein, die Vision des Volkes Gottes.



## Anmerkungen

1. Mit der Aufklärung der Bedeutung von סנה ist man vor eine nicht ganz einfache Aufgabe gestellt. Zunächst ist festzuhalten, dass es für die Übersetzung „Dornbusch“ einen anderen Begriff gibt, vgl. Ri 9,14 wo der Begriff קטף gebraucht wird. Auch im Griechischen gibt es dafür zwei Wörter: Ri 9,14: ῥάμνος; Ex 3: βῆτος. Man kann daher entnehmen, dass mit סנה nicht dasselbe wie mit קטף gemeint ist. Was bedeutet aber dann סנה? Im Hebräischen kommt der Begriff außer in der Berufungserzählung des Mose nur noch in Dtn 33,16 und in 1Sam 14,4 vor. Die erste der beiden Stellen ist von der Moseerzählung abhängig, kann also zur Klärung der Frage nichts beitragen, und in der zweiten wird ein Felsen so benannt, was auch nicht weiterhilft. Oder sollte Mose einen brennenden Felsen gesehen haben? Man hat סנה im Anschluss an die LXX, die das Wort mit βῆτος (Dornbusch, Brombeerstrauch) wiedergibt (vgl. Gemoll, W./Vretska, K., Griechisch-deutsches Schul- und Handwörterbuch).

terbuch, München/Düsseldorf/Stuttgart <sup>10</sup>2006, 164), als Dornbusch interpretiert, so beispielsweise Jacob, Benno, Das Buch Exodus, Hg. Mayer, Shlomo, Stuttgart 1997, 43; Fischer, Georg/Markl, Dominik, Das Buch Exodus (Neuer Stuttgarter Kommentar. Altes Testament 2), Stuttgart 2009, 49; Das zweite Buch Mose. Exodus (Das Alte Testament Deutsch 5), übersetzt und erklärt von Noth, Martin, Göttingen 1959, 17; Scharbert, Josef, Exodus (Die Neue Echter Bibel 24), Würzburg 1989, 21; Willi-Plein, Ina, Das Buch vom Auszug. 2. Mose, Neukirchen-Vluyn 1988, 21; Schmidt, Werner H., Exodus, Sinai und Mose. Erwägungen zu Ex 1-19 und 24 (Erträge der Forschung 191), Darmstadt <sup>2</sup>1990, 38; Newsome, James D., Exodus (Interpretation Bible Studies), Louisville, Kentucky 1998, 16. Ähnliches scheint auch der Targum mit der Wiedergabe אסנסא zu verstehen. Bei der Präzisierung sind *rubus sanctus* und *cassia senna* vorgeschlagen worden, der erste eine Brombeerstrauchart, die in der Nähe von Wadis und auf feuchten Böden wächst, und der zweite, weil er im Arabischen *sene* heißt (Sarna, Nahum M., Exodus שמות. The Traditional Hebrew Text with the New JPS Translation, Philadelphia/New York/Jerusalem 1991, 14). Besonders für den zweiten Sinn setzt sich Zohary ein, weil der Strauch am Sinai vorkommt (Zohary, Michael, Pflanzen der Bibel. Volständiges Handbuch, Stuttgart <sup>3</sup>1995, 140f.), während sich dort keine Rubusart befindet. (Noth, Exodus, 27 meint wohl mit *cassia obovata* nichts anderes als die *cassia senna*.) Andere Forscher messen der Identifizierung von סנה keine Bedeutung bei, konstatieren aber die klangliche Ähnlichkeit mit dem Berg סיני und sehen dahinter ein Wortspiel; so beispielsweise Coggins, Richard, The Book of Exodus (Epworth Commentaries), London 2000, 15. Anders Noth, Exodus, 27, der davon überzeugt ist, dass mit סנה im Hebräischen eine Strauchart bezeichnet wird, die nicht anders ausgedrückt werden kann, und deshalb mit dem Namen des Berges סיני nichts zu tun hat. Er hält es aber für möglich, dass später ein Anklang an den Namen des Berges herausgehört wurde und dann die Szene an den Sinai verlegt wurde. Ähnlich Schmidt, Werner H., Exodus. 1. Teilband. Exodus 1-6 (Biblischer Kommentar Altes Testament II/1), Neukirchen-Vluyn 1988, 116, der folgert, dass die Beziehung der Handlung zum Sinai überlieferungsgeschichtlich sekundär ist, der Busch also nicht dort zu suchen ist. L. Baeck hat im Blick auf Dtn 33,16 die Annahme vorgebracht, „סנה, וסיני wären vielleicht nur verschiedene Formen desselben Wortes und verhielten sich zu einander wie פֶּלֶד, ‚Feld‘ zu פֶּלְדָּה, ‚Feld‘“ (Baeck, Leo, Der im Dornbusch Wohnende, in: Monatsschrift für Geschichte und Wissenschaft des Judentums 46, 1902, 299-301, zitiert nach Eissfeldt, Otto, Ein Psalm aus Nord-Israel. Micha 7,7-20, in: Zeitschriften der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft 112, 2 (1962), 259-268, 263). Man wird zusammenfassen können, dass Mose auf jeden Fall einen brennenden Gegenstand gesehen hat. Für ein Gewächs spricht wohl mehr als für einen Felsen, vor allem, weil Mose doch offensichtlich annimmt, dass der Gegenstand eigentlich verbrennen müsste, was für einen Felsen nicht gelten würde.

2. הנה ist eine hinweisende Interjektion, die dem Zweck dient, das Nachfolgende hervorzuheben (Hebräisches und aramäisches Lexikon, Leiden/Boston <sup>3</sup>2004, 242).

Die traditionelle Übersetzung lautet „siehe“, erwogen werden könnten noch „hier doch“ oder „da!“. Ein solcher Hinweis wird jedenfalls die sehende Aufmerksamkeit nach sich ziehen, so dass die Übersetzung „sieh da“ geeignet erscheint.

3. Sanford, John A., Gottes vergessene Sprache (Studien aus dem C. G. Jung-Institut Zürich XVIII), Zürich/Stuttgart 1966, 77.
4. Vgl. auch Lanckau, Jörg, Der Herr der Träume. Eine Studie zur Funktion des Traumes in der Josefsgeschichte der Hebräischen Bibel (ATHANT 85), Zürich 2006, 73, der hier Vision und Traum „auf gleicher Bewertungsstufe“ ansieht.
5. Lanckau, Der Herr der Träume, 74.
6. Behrens, Achim, Prophetische Visionsschilderungen im Alten Testament. Sprachliche Eigenarten, Funktion und Geschichte einer Gattung (Alter Orient und Altes Testament 292), Münster 2002, 373. Interessanterweise meint er allerdings inneralttestamentlich die Phänomene Vision und Traum voneinander trennen zu können.
7. Sanford, Gottes vergessene Sprache, 77.
8. Sanford, Gottes vergessene Sprache, 77. Zu Recht betont Sanford (77f.), dass die Vision kein Zeichen von geistiger Störung ist, sondern nur der Standpunkt, den das Ich ihr gegenüber einnimmt: „Im Wahnsinn wird die Vision wörtlich, als konkrete äußere Realität angesehen – das Bewusstsein macht keinen Unterschied zwischen der äußeren und inneren Welt –, vom normalen Ich jedoch ihrer subjektiven, inneren Natur entsprechend erkannt. Nicht die Vision ist ein Symptom für Krankheit, auch ist nicht das unbewusste Material ‚krank‘, sondern das Ich ist krank, d.h. es hat die Kontrolle verloren. Die Tatsache, daß Wahnsinnige mehr zu Visionen neigen als gefestigte Individuen, beruht einfach auf der leichteren Verwundbarkeit ihrer geschwächten und erschütterten Ichstruktur durch Einbrüche vom Unbewußten her.“
9. Morgenthaler, Christoph, Der religiöse Traum. Erfahrung und Deutung, Stuttgart/Berlin/Köln 1992, 82.
10. Jung, Carl Gustav, Zwei Schriften über analytische Psychologie. Gesammelte Werke. Band VII, Olten/Freiburg am Breisgau <sup>3</sup>1981, §399.
11. Sanford, Gottes vergessene Sprache, 162.
12. Morgenthaler, Religiöser Traum, 97.
13. Dorst, Brigitte, Therapeutisches Arbeiten mit Symbolen. Wege in die innere Bilderwelt, Stuttgart 2007, 45.
14. Sanford, Gottes vergessene Sprache, 172.
15. Morgenthaler, Religiöser Traum, 98.
16. Morgenthaler, Religiöser Traum, 97.
17. Morgenthaler, Religiöser Traum, 99.
18. Morgenthaler, Religiöser Traum, 99.
19. Morgenthaler, Religiöser Traum, 117.
20. Morgenthaler, Religiöser Traum, 119.
21. Morgenthaler, Religiöser Traum, 121.
22. Morgenthaler, Religiöser Traum, 121.
23. Morgenthaler, Religiöser Traum, 122.

24. Morgenthaler, Religiöser Traum, 123.
25. Burisch, Matthias, Das Burnout-Syndrom. Theorie der inneren Erschöpfung, Berlin/Heidelberg, <sup>4</sup>2010, 4, sieht als Beweis dafür die Szenen in Ex 18,17-18 und Num 11,11-15.
26. In das Internationale Verzeichnis der psychischen Störungen DSM IVR ist dies Krankheitsbild nicht aufgenommen worden. Im ICD 10 steht es unter „Probleme mit Bezug auf Schwierigkeiten bei der Lebensbewältigung“; vgl. ICD-10-GM 2011. Systematisches Verzeichnis. Internationale statistische Klassifikation der Krankheiten und verwandter Gesundheitsprobleme. 10. Revision. German Modification. Version 2011. Herausgegeben vom Deutschen Institut für Medizinische Dokumentation und Information (DIMDI) im Auftrag des Bundesministeriums für Gesundheit unter Beteiligung der Arbeitsgruppe ICD des Kuratoriums für Fragen der Klassifikation im Gesundheitswesen (KKG), Köln 2011, Z73, figuriert dort als Zusatz- und nicht als Behandlungsdiagnose; vgl. Nelting, Manfred, Burn-out. Wenn die Maske zerbricht. Wie man Überbelastung erkennt und neue Wege geht, München 2014, 32.
27. Hark, Helmut, Traumbild Baum. Vom Wurzelgrund der Seele. Träume als Wegweiser, Olten/Freiburg im Breisgau <sup>2</sup>1987, 17-19.30.
28. Vgl. Schall, Traugott Ulrich, Erschöpft – müde – ausgebrannt. Überforderung und Resignation: vermeiden – vermindern – heilen (Perspektiven für die Seelsorge 8), Würzburg 1993, 69.
29. Nach Schall, Erschöpft, 90, hängen innere Müdigkeit und Maßlosigkeit zusammen.
30. Schall, Erschöpft, 76.
31. Schall, Erschöpft, 80f.
32. Distanz zur Arbeit und Besinnung auf den „tragenden Grund des Glaubens“ bzw. Begegnung mit Gott hängen auch nach Schall, Erschöpft, 85, miteinander zusammen.
33. Schall, Erschöpft, 86f.
34. Schall, Erschöpft, 86.
35. Zu den „nötigen Nebendarstellungen“ vgl. Schall, Erschöpft, 83f.
36. Enzler Denzler, Ruth, Karriere statt Burnout. Die Drei-Typen-Strategie der Stressbewältigung für Führungskräfte, Zürich 2009. Freilich weiß auch Schall, dass eine zu große Distanz zur Arbeit dem Helferberuf nicht gerecht wird, zu große Nähe führt jedoch seines Erachtens zwingend zu Überlastung (1983, 82).
37. Enzler Denzler, Karriere statt Burnout, 12.
38. Interessant sind an dieser Theorie die drei Typen von Führungskräften, und zwar der Erkenntnistyp, der Ordnungs- und Strukturtyp sowie der soziale Typ, die jeweils unterschiedlich auf Stress- und Belohnungsfaktoren reagieren.
39. Schmidt, Exodus 1-6, 107.
40. Noth, Exodus, 21f.; Schmidt, Exodus 1-6, 107.
41. Vgl. Noth, Exodus, 22.
42. Schmidt, Werner H., Einführung in das Alte Testament, Berlin/New York <sup>4</sup>1989, 73, vgl. auch Kaiser, Otto, Einleitung in das Alte Testament. Eine Einführung in



ihre Ergebnisse und Probleme, Gütersloh <sup>5</sup>1984, 93-96, der allerdings insgesamt Bedenken zu dieser Datierung äußert.

43. Vgl. zum Folgenden Zenger, Erich, Einleitung in das Alte Testament (Kohlhammer Studienbücher Theologie 1, 1), Stuttgart <sup>6</sup>2006, 100-106.
44. Schmid, Konrad, Erzväter und Exodus. Untersuchungen zur doppelten Begründung der Ursprünge Israels innerhalb der Geschichtsbücher des Alten Testaments (Wissenschaftliche Monographien zum Alten und Neuen Testament 81), Neukirchen-Vluyn 1999, 203.
45. Blum, Erhard, Die literarische Verbindung von Erzvätern und Exodus, in: Gertz, Jan Christian/Schmid, Konrad/Witte, Markus (Hgg.), Abschied vom Jahwisten. Die Komposition des Hexateuch in der jüngsten Diskussion (Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft 315), Berlin/New York 2002, 119-156, hier: 123-127.
46. Blum, Erzväter und Exodus, 128f.
47. Blum, Erzväter und Exodus, 129.
48. Blum, Erzväter und Exodus, 130.
49. Blum, Erzväter und Exodus, 137.
50. Morgenthaler, Religiöser Traum, 119.
51. Rothlin, Philippe/Werder, Peter R., Diagnose Boreout. Warum Unterforderung im Job krank macht, Heidelberg 2007, 8, schreiben davon, dass eine Gallup-Umfrage ergeben hat, „dass sich in Deutschland 87 Prozent aller Beschäftigten gering oder gar nicht an ihr Unternehmen gebunden fühlen“.
52. Zum Problem des Boreout vgl. grundlegend Rothlin/Werder, Boreout. Sie führen eine Umfrage von Salary.com und AOL im Jahr 2005 unter 10.000 Arbeitnehmern an: „Das Resultat: 33,2 Prozent dieser Gruppe sagten aus, sie hätten bei der Arbeit nicht genug zu tun, sind also unterfordert.“

## Abstract

“Behold, the bush burned with fire, and the bush was not consumed”:

The Vision of Moses (Ex. 3) in Psychological-Theological and Historical-Exegetical Perspective

The paper deals with Moses' vision of the burning bush (Ex 3). Literary, psychological and historical questions are asked. It turns out that in the vision Moses encounters himself in his self, as it were, like a mirror: just as the bush burns and does not burn out, so Moses recognizes that he burns for God and at the same time is saved by his self from being burned out. The vision is threefold, namely, the vision of the literary Moses, the vision of the traders, and last but not least, the vision of the recipients. In its time, the vision of the fiery, burning, sometimes desperate, but never burning out Moses could give people the strength to deal with problems of various kinds.

## Keywords

Moses, self, psychic instance, burnout, vision, biblical traders

***Solenoide***  
**Una proposta di lettura  
in chiave dantesca**

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MIRCEA CĂRTĂRESCU, *Solenoide*,  
Milano: il Saggiatore, 2021.

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**A** PARTIRE DAL XX secolo assistiamo a una sostenuta presenza dantesca, a una sorta di *revival* di Dante nella letteratura italiana e straniera, nonché in vari altri campi artistici, che continua con lo stesso vigore anche nei nostri giorni, acquisendo le forme più svariate di rilettura, di riadattamenti, di rivisitazioni e di riuso che si rintracciano in ambiti sempre più estesi e, a volte, sorprendenti, come la musica pop, i giochi video, vale a dire l'impatto del Sommo Poeta e in particolare della sua *Commedia* si rivela piuttosto forte e di risonanza mondiale anche nell'epoca della globalizzazione, quindi incarna mirabilmente il senso calviniano del classico, cioè “un libro che non ha mai finito di dire quel che ha da dire”,<sup>1</sup> e forse va anche un po' oltre, offrendo sempre nuovi spunti e stimoli.

In un tale contesto, la letteratura romena, che in genere si è dimostrata abbastanza restia nell'accogliere l'influsso dantesco nella profondità del suo tessuto testuale, propone proprio nella sua ultima contemporaneità

un esempio alquanto insolito ma al contempo molto rappresentativo, si tratta dell'autore più noto e prolifico, e, di certo il più tradotto, quindi conosciuto e riconosciuto all'estero, vale a dire Mircea Cărtărescu, il quale diventa, anche nell'ambito della particolare accoglienza dantesca, una sorta di faro, di luce, a volte, "abbacinante". Ma, ancorché provocatoria in questo senso, non intendiamo soffermarci sulla famosa trilogia magistralmente tradotta da Bruno Mazzoni (sempre a lui si devono tutte le trasposizioni in italiano delle numerose opere cĂrtĂreschiane). Menzioniamo solo *en passant* che già la struttura tripartita del poderoso romanzo porta in sé un'eco dantesca, nonché la quasi corrispondenza del vocabolo che chiude le tre parti, vale a dire "abbacinante", che ci fa pensare alla perfetta simmetria dantesca scandita dal vocabolo "stelle", nell'autore romeno però si ripete in posizione finale solo nel secondo e terzo volume, mentre nel primo si annida, ben due volte, nell'ultimo paragrafo.

Il presente contributo, che prende spunto dalle pagine finali di un nostro recente articolo in cui abbiamo gettato uno sguardo complessivo sui riferimenti danteschi in varie opere dell'autore romeno, si incentra invece su un romanzo più recente, *Solenioide*, di cui proponiamo una lettura singolare nonché parziale, poiché dall'oceano degli *auctores* cĂrtĂreschiani, sapientemente fusi, dallo sfarzoso *melting pot* intertestuale cerchiamo di estrarre e recuperare solo una figura canonica – Dante, perché, di conseguenza, sarà una lettura filtrata attraverso la lente di un'italianista, perché è letteralmente impossibile raccontare, questa opera-mondo, nella quale, al pari della trilogia *Abbacinante*, sostanzialmente manca un *plot* vero e proprio, parziale perché i limiti imposti ci impediscono di illustrare tutti gli elementi danteschi in un'opera che supera le 800 pagine nell'edizione romena, in questo iper-romanzo uscito nel 2015, mentre la sua trasposizione in italiano è pubblicato proprio nel 2021, l'anno dedicato a Dante.

Come avevo già scritto altrove,<sup>2</sup> la presenza dantesca nella produzione letteraria complessiva cĂrtĂreschiana si dimostra sorprendentemente ricca, composta e proteiforme, spaziando dalle costruzioni basilari a quelle più astruse, dalla semplice menzione del nome dell'autore o dagli inserti dell'aggettivo che ne deriva fino a scelte lessicali di chiara matrice dantesca o fino a richiami più articolati di episodi, da temi e motivi facilmente riconducibili alle sue opere fino a inevitabili sovrainterpretazioni, dall'uso dell'allegoria fino alla configurazione tripartita di un'opera, dalle fugaci annotazioni nel diario fino a un intenso e complesso dialogo intertestuale e, non da ultimo, da una straordinaria creatività linguistica e dal plurilinguismo al potente senso visionario, da un raffinato enciclopedismo fino alla creazione di un'opera-mondo. E forse tale presenza si manifesta nelle forme più lussureggianti nella seconda *summa* cĂrtĂreschiana – *Solenioide*. Sia la *Commedia* che l'iper-romanzo *Solenioide* sono definibili in quanto opere-mondo,

che racchiudono in loro l'intero universo, delle *summe* delle conoscenze dei loro tempi, una sorta di enciclopedie che si muovono con agio in campi del sapere che normalmente superano le conoscenze degli uomini.

La costruzione di tali opere-mondo ha sempre suscitato l'interesse degli esegeti nel decifrare le tecniche utilizzate che avevano agevolato il monumentale lavoro. Di certo, se mettiamo a confronto la configurazione strutturale delle due opere, osserviamo delle immense differenze, il notevole divario temporale si impone quale confine invalicabile, poiché le due opere diventano specchi delle proprie epoche, ma, al contempo, la nostra formazione di italianisti ci suggerisce che c'è forse un elemento condivisibile a livello essenziale, data l'estrema ricchezza contenutistica di uno stampo enciclopedico, vale a dire una sorta di teatro della memoria, e facciamo cadere l'accento su "una sorta". L'arte della memoria che aveva accostato la memoria a una sostenuta esperienza visiva era di largo impiego nel Medioevo (soprattutto nell'ambiente dei mistici e dei predicatori) e soprattutto nel Rinascimento (basti pensare al singolare *Teatro della memoria* di Giulio Camillo), mentre per ovvie ragioni è in disuso da secoli, grazie anche alle sempre più innovative tecnologie. Si trattava di

*una memoria legata all'immaginazione e quindi alla capacità di ricreare, di inventare. Si insegnava a plasmare la mente, a costruirvi complesse architetture, scale, alberi, giardini, tappe di un percorso che poteva condurre a una trasformazione interiore, fino a un incontro col divino.*<sup>3</sup>

Il recentissimo libro di Roberto Antonelli si incentra appunto, continuando e sviluppando le ricerche e gli spunti forniti da Frances A. Yates (*The Art of Memory*, 1972) e di Harald Weinrich (*La memoria di Dante*, 1994), su una lettura della *Commedia* come un "gigantesco teatro della memoria", poiché il viaggio di Dante-personaggio rispecchia implicitamente un viaggio nella memoria del mondo e di sé, quindi l'Aldilà diventa

*la rappresentazione di una memoria in sé, oggettivata, fisicamente cristallizzata [...] la memoria dell'intera umanità, dall'antichità più remota, pagana e cristiana, in cui Dante, personaggio e poeta, si muove con libertà creatrice, fra Passato, Presente e Futuro.*<sup>4</sup>

Per certi versi, anche il romanzo cãrtãreschiano si può definire come una sorta di (nuovo) teatro della memoria e del mondo, poiché costruito su un analogo meccanismo di ricche e fitte relazioni intertestuali come il capolavoro dantesco, il quale però, in questo caso, tradisce anche una evidente impostazione post-

moderna, ma ciò non toglie nulla a questo magnifico gioco intertestuale che lo scrittore romeno spinge, secondo Radu Vancu, fino a sottigliezze ipnotiche,<sup>5</sup> e il quale rispecchia in fondo sempre una inusuale capacità mnemonica, addestrata con una quantità impressionante di letture e di riletture, poiché in quest'ultima risiede, precisa l'autore del romanzo, l'autentica lettura. Quindi il bagaglio e la memoria culturali filtrano con scioltezza immagini, sintagmi, vocaboli rappresentativi, appartenenti anche a Dante nonché a una nutrita schiera di *auctores*.

Un altro aspetto generale, da noi già menzionato altrove, che accomuna le due opere è indubbiamente la grande creatività linguistica. Dante è universalmente riconosciuto come padre della lingua italiana, colui che ha creato e, a volte, inventato una lingua letteraria, che ha impastato una diversità stilistica impensabile usando i registri linguistici più eterogenei, spalancando in questo modo la porta del volgare italiano verso altri settori disciplinari. Anche se lo scrittore romeno non può rivendicare la paternità della lingua romena letteraria, ci invita in *Solenioide* (e non solo), a un singolare spettacolo linguistico, dimostrando, così, la versatilità della lingua e dei suoi registri stilistici, premendo tutti i tasti, dal volgare al sublime, dal grottesco al raffinato, dal reale al metafisico. Al pari di Dante, non si accontenta della ricchezza della lingua letteraria, ma attinge con naturalezza ai linguaggi settoriali, a un armamentario tecnologico di scienze, quindi il lettore si ritrova ogni tanto un po' sconcertato in mezzo a vocaboli che esigono l'uso di un vocabolario, di un'enciclopedia, poiché derivanti dalla matematica, dalla fisica quantistica e astronomica, dalla geologia, dall'entomologia, dalla medicina, dalla teologia, dalla mistica.

Il particolare estro linguistico dei due autori diventa determinante anche nella rappresentazione di un ricco mondo di visioni, che scandiscono ritmi diversi: il lungo percorso visionario dantesco va dalla "meravigliosa" alla "mirabile visione", nella *Vita nuova*, per arrivare fino alla visione di Dio nel *Paradiso*, mentre l'esperienza onirica cărtăreschiana, tradotta in visioni, sogni, allucinazioni (trittico, diremmo, tutto dantesco!), si declina soprattutto in chiave psichedelica e mistica. La fonte dantesca non è però diretta, come chiarisce l'autore stesso in un recentissimo dialogo con il suo traduttore, Bruno Mazzoni, nell'ambito della fiera del libro *Bookcity* di Milano (17-21 novembre 2021): secondo Cărtărescu, la *Commedia* è una delle opere che sta alla base della letteratura europea, perciò fa parte del nostro DNA letterario, vale a dire nessun autore può ignorarla, poiché è un libro fondamentale per l'intera umanità che ha unificato il destino umano e l'ha guardato dall'altezza delle stelle, e il nostro destino acquisisce senso solo se guardato dalle stelle dantesche.<sup>6</sup> Infatti Cărtărescu aveva collocato Dante nella schiera privilegiata dei sacerdoti e dei santi della letteratura. Tramite loro, la letteratura sale sulle vette della conoscenza umana, dove si cancellano le differenze

tra scienza, arte, pensiero filosofico, in questo spazio si abbinano, si fondono le varie modalità di conoscenza.<sup>7</sup>

L'esperimento di una fugace e superficiale ricerca quantitativa di alcuni vocaboli, facilmente collegabili alla *Commedia*, nel corposo testo del romanzo cãrtãreschiano pare sufficiente per confermare il fitto dialogo intertestuale che il narratore romeno istituisce con uno dei suoi *auctores* per eccellenza. Così, ad esempio, scopriamo che il nome di Dante compare tre volte, le variazioni dell'aggettivo dantesco hanno cinque occorrenze, mentre inferno – 40, infernale/infernali – 9, guida – 2, Virgil/Virgilio – 42, bolgia – 3, visione/visioni – 44, allucinazione – 8, demone/demoni – 18, diavoli – 5, dannazione – 14, dolore/dolori – 84, sofferenza – 36, paradiso – 15, beatitudine – 2, beato/beati – 5, salvezza – 6, salvati – 4, angelo – 9. La presenza infernale è piuttosto significativa, e rinvia spesso alla *Commedia*, soprattutto se paragonata alla frequenza nonché al senso attribuito al paradiso, il quale, bensì presente 15 volte, non acquisisce mai il significato religioso e dantesco della salvezza; abbiamo un unico riferimento alla sola configurazione del paradiso dantesco in cerchi concentrici, usato però come semplice termine di paragone: “Le più affascinanti fra queste ruote dentate, mezzelune, croci e triangoli incrociati di un linguaggio *ad hoc* erano abitate in ciascuno dei loro cerchi concentrici, da paradiso dantesco”,<sup>8</sup> mentre almeno tre volte viene inserito in costruzioni ossimoroniche e atipiche: “paradiso infernale e inferno celeste”,<sup>9</sup> il paradiso “illuminato dalle fiamme dell’inferno”,<sup>10</sup> una “solitudine del paradiso”,<sup>11</sup> data l'impossibilità della redenzione, e le occorrenze più numerose hanno un senso meramente metaforico. Il vocabolo “guida” appare due volte in stretta correlazione con il personaggio che incarna tale funzione, cioè Virgil, un Virgilio rivisitato, una guida che si dimostrerà in un certo senso mancata. In più, c'imbattiamo in innumerevoli visioni – che si dimostrano con alta frequenza strane, mostruose, crepuscolari, incredibili, terribili, fantastiche, dantesche, diaboliche, pieni di orrore, infernali.

A guardare solo le cifre, senza calarci nei vari contesti delle occorrenze, che ovviamente non rimandano sempre a Dante, si può facilmente osservare che nel *Solenioide*, il quale peraltro non intende illustrare l'aldilà, in senso tradizionale, ergo la vita eterna dell'anima, non segue il percorso della *Commedia* che va dall'inferno al paradiso, quindi da un mondo terribile e pieno di orrore a un mondo serafico, diafano, illuminato dalla visione di Dio, sembra dominare un paesaggio cupo, infernale in stretta correlazione però con la vita terrena. Ciò nonostante neanche la narrazione di questo romanzo-finto diario è esente da un'asse verticale, ascensionale e trascendente, come conferma lo stesso autore,<sup>12</sup> che si traduce nella ricerca di una salvezza. Il paesaggio infernale è quasi intimamente legato alla città, che diventa una vera e propria protagonista, ma si tratta

ovviamente di uno spazio immaginario che non combacia con il disegno della carta urbanistica reale, ancorché ci siano degli edifici, degli scorci identificabili: si tratta di una Bucarest labirintica, sotterranea, in rovina, desolante, apocalittica. Ma al contempo la raffigurazione infernale si allaccia anche al mondo delle visioni, delle allucinazioni, intensamente vissute dal personaggio, alter-ego dello scrittore. Il testo è attraversato da una fitta rete di viaggi nelle profondità sotterranee, nelle viscere più sorprendenti e conturbanti che spaziano da gallerie, tunnel, grotte, sottopassaggi, labirinti ubicati sotto i vari edifici della città, a partire dal palazzo comunista in cui abita il protagonista alla sezione di polizia o all'obitorio, dove avviene una delle discese più spettacolari di un forte sapore dantesco.

Molto probabilmente, nell'autore romeno si annidano anche gli echi di un Italo Calvino risalenti alle *Città invisibili* (1972), vale a dire di un inferno dei viventi, un inferno quotidiano, esistente, da cui cerca l'evasione in un universo con, più dimensioni:

*L'inferno dei viventi non è qualcosa che sarà; se ce n'è uno, è quello che è già qui, l'inferno che abitiamo tutti i giorni, che formiamo stando insieme. Due modi ci sono per non soffrirne. Il primo riesce facile a molti: accettare l'inferno e diventarne parte fino al punto di non vederlo più. Il secondo è rischioso ed esige attenzione e apprendimento continui: cercare e saper riconoscere chi e cosa, in mezzo all'inferno, non è inferno, e dargli spazio, e farlo durare.*<sup>13</sup>

Un'altra volta ancora, l'intervento di Cărtărescu porta dei chiarimenti importanti, che infatti confermano l'affinità con il pensiero calviniano, affermando che la realtà è sofferenza, esistere significa percepire in eccesso il mondo e tale eccesso è la sofferenza,<sup>14</sup> da cui si aspira all'evasione in una quarta dimensione.

Menzioniamo solo *en passant* che Dino Buzzati, già nel suo *Viaggio agli inferni del secolo*, risalente al 1966, aveva collocato il suo inferno nelle grandi metropoli disumanizzanti, in cui alla fine si rende conto che non rappresenti un castigo, bensì forse il mistero del destino umano<sup>15</sup> o in tempi più recenti Daniele Benati, nel suo romanzo *Cani dell'inferno* (2004), immagina il palazzo statunitense di Mystic Avenue e dintorni come una specie di inferno, un moderno aldilà, dove si va a scontare i propri peccati. Come possiamo quindi facilmente notare, la *Commedia* si presta a tantissime corrispondenze, quindi rimane sempre potenzialmente aperta e accogliente e si attiva quando viene riambientata “in paesaggi ipermoderni o postatomici, nei Lager e nei ghetti”,<sup>16</sup> o nelle metropoli, in cui si insediano i nuovi inferni, ormai non necessariamente raffigurazione, ma simulacro, del mondo ultraterreno cristiano.

Secondo Radu Vancu, nel caso di Cărtărescu si tratta piuttosto di una teodicea, del tentativo di capire la ragione per cui il male esista, ma al contempo anche di una corsa sempre più accelerata verso la salvezza nonché verso l'apocalisse finale.<sup>17</sup> Abbiamo a che fare quindi con un libro sulla salvezza in cui il protagonista non si salva, l'autore stesso aveva dichiarato in questo senso:

*Il mio eroe principale desidera per tutta la vita ottenere la Salvezza, uscire da questo mondo carcerario, ma quando finalmente ha l'opportunità di fuggire, ci rinuncia, perché ha scoperto un modo molto migliore: stare al mondo con le persone che ama, condividendone gioie e dolori.*<sup>18</sup>

Per la descrizione del male, del dolore e della sofferenza l'autore romeno ha indubbiamente bisogno del sostegno autoriale di Dante, ma al contempo un pizzico di sapore ludico, mitemente ironico lo induce a entrare in una sorta di gara in materia d'invenzione dell'orrido, in cui pare superare il maestro/i maestri:

*Né Dante, né Bosch, né Lautréamont avevano visto da vicino, quando hanno concepito i loro inferni, il volto bestiale del pidocchio, la figura della larva di mosca, le zampe flagellate dell'acaro. Non erano stati capaci d'inventare, per popolare con essi le caverne di fiamme e lacrime che stanno sotto il mondo dei vivi, demoni più terribili come le pulci e le zecche, come i lombrichi e la tenia, come il verme del globo oculare e come gli eserciti ciechi degli acari.*<sup>19</sup>

**D**ANTE È autore e personaggio del suo poema sacro, in cui fonde autobiografismo con l'"alta" fantasia, con la straordinaria potenza visionaria dell'immagine, ma lo stesso Cărtărescu propone una fusione identica nel suo romanzo in cui, per di più, il protagonista si chiama Mircea ed è uno scrittore, però mancato, ma porta il nome di uno scrittore lontano e celebre – ingegnosa e ludica insinuazione dell'autore nel proprio romanzo. Il suo poema *La caduta*, il cui successo tra gli esperti sigla lo statuto di poeta di Cărtărescu nella vita reale, nel romanzo viene bocciato dalla stessa schiera di esperti del Cenacolo, ciò indurrà il protagonista, un professore di romeno in una scuola della periferia bucarestina, a rinunciare alla scrittura letteraria. La descrizione di questo suo poema, collocata all'inizio del romanzo, introduce già una discreta presenza dantesca:

*Il mio componimento aveva sette parti che rappresentavano sette tappe della vita, sette colori, sette metalli, sette pianeti, sette chakra, sette scalini digradanti dal paradiso nell'inferno. Doveva essere una colossale, stupefacente cascata tra l'escatologico e lo scatologico, una scala metafisica su cui disponevo demoni e santi, labelli e astro-*



*labi, stelle e ranocchie, geometria e cacofonia con l'impersonale rigore del biologo quando schizza il tronco e le arborescenze del regno animale. Era anche un enorme collage, poiché la mia mente era un puzzle di citazioni, era pure una summa di tutto ciò che è possibile sapere, un amalgama di patristica e fisica quantistica, di genetica e topologia.*<sup>20</sup>

Il clamoroso fallimento del suo poema è il motore primo della nascita di questo diario concentrato sulle sue anomalie per capire il mondo e la propria vita, attraverso questo libro totale in cui si fonde sapientemente il mondo reale e quello onirico, in cui rielaborando i suoi ricordi e convertendoli in visioni, allucinazioni che si confondono con la realtà, cerca l'evasione. Il romanzo viene costruito su due livelli, quello superficiale, autobiografico, realistico, a volte grottesco e quello profondo, della narrazione metafisica, onirica e allucinatoria, che si completano a vicenda. Quindi non è solo un romanzo metafisico, ma anche il racconto molto realistico degli anni 1980-1989, in cui lo scrittore aveva davvero insegnato in una scuola di periferia della capitale, un periodo da lui<sup>21</sup> definito come molto intenso e felice nonostante le grosse difficoltà quotidiane imposte dal regime dittatoriale comunista.

Un altro dettaglio non indifferente di questo raffinato dialogo e gioco intertestuale e della rilettura della *Commedia* riguarda l'età del protagonista: se Dante inizia il suo viaggio nell'oltretomba "nel mezzo del cammin di nostra vita," quindi a 35 anni, Mircea inizia il proprio viaggio e la scrittura della sua opera-mondo a 33 anni, un'altra cifra con un'alta valenza simbolica, l'età che segna la negazione dello statuto ufficiale di poeta, siamo nel 1989, tutto il contrario di quello che era avvenuto nella sua vita reale. Al pari di Dante, è un eletto, un prescelto, la cui missione è "quella di agrimensore e cartografo, esploratore delle protuberanze e dei sotterranei, delle botole e delle carceri della mia mente".<sup>22</sup> Se nel caso di Dante, che si colloca sull'eccezionale scia degli illustri predecessori, Enea e San Paolo, tale condizione privilegiata viene concessa dalla grazia divina che autorizza il viaggio ultraterreno, nel caso del protagonista di *Solenioide* non è altrettanto chiara l'identità dell'istanza superiore. Ciò che salta agli occhi del lettore è invece l'insistenza con cui torna varie volte su questa condizione privilegiata – il vocabolo *eletto* ha ben 11 occorrenze. A mo' di esemplificazione, riportiamo tre brevi frammenti sparsi nel testo:

*Ho sentito che il gigantesco ganglio del mio cranio mi predestinava alla ricerca ossessiva dell'uscita. Ho capito di dovere utilizzare il cervello come un occhio, dischiuso e attento sotto la diafana calotta cranica, capace di vedere con un altro sguardo e di scoprire le crepe e i segni, gli artefatti nascosti e i legami oscuri del test di intelligenza, pazienza, amore e fede che è il mondo.*<sup>23</sup>

*Poco a poco, ho cominciato a provare una sorta di strana e masochistica fierezza, di sentirmi un eletto per non so quali operazioni mistiche o magiche, o teologiche o scientifiche o poetiche, pur non essendone sicuro, avevo una sensazione, potente e incontenibile, che ero stato eletto, che mi stava succedendo qualcosa di coerente, anche se incomprensibile.<sup>24</sup>*

*Mi sento di nuovo un eletto, anche se in vista del disastro e della follia. Sento di nuovo che non sono solo, poiché se sei un eletto, puoi sapere che esiste da qualche parte almeno un altro unico essere: quello che ti sceglie.<sup>25</sup>*

Uno degli elementi ripresi dalla sua precedente narrativa (*Abbacinante*) è quello di una setta misteriosa, questa volta quella dei manifestanti che protestavano contro la vecchiaia, la malattia e la morte, il cui leader si chiama Virgil, un nome che riporta nella nostra memoria quello di Virgilio. La consorteria dei manifestanti, una setta gnostica, diventa la parabola della esistenza umana, secondo quanto afferma l'autore stesso,<sup>26</sup> il cui scopo è quello di non lasciare non percepito il male, ma di sostenere il diritto dell'uomo di gridare al mondo questo dolore metafisico. La figura di Virgil, che assumerà la guida dei manifestanti nonché la funzione di guida nel sottoterra dell'obitorio, diverge parecchio da quella del suo famoso predecessore. Virgilio, figura rarefatta, entra in scena quale ombra "che dapprima sembra non concreta, quasi inesistente, come una fiammella debole" e si distingue per il lungo silenzio, un silenzio che "ha il potere di nascondere, mettere da parte o addirittura far sparire [...] perché chi non ha parole, chi tace, rischia di non esistere narrativamente",<sup>27</sup> per assumere con massima competenza e sapienza il ruolo di guida nell'Inferno e nel Purgatorio. Virgil invece è una presenza modesta, un personaggio "impacciato, privo di aura e di carisma, scialbo, un po' curvo, vestito in maniera trascurata, dall'aria di un ingegnere consumato dal lavoro in una fabbrica di provincia",<sup>28</sup> che assume lo stesso ruolo nella discesa infernale e nel mondo dei morti, ossia nel sottoterra dell'obitorio. La descrizione del massiccio portone d'ingresso, scolpito in altorilievo con immagini della morte, diventa degna eco dell'immaginario infernale dantesco:

*cipressi e tombe, stuoli di scheletri erranti su strade che non conducono da nessuna parte, uomini disperati che cercano di uscire dal telaio del portone nero come l'ebano, allungando i loro volti urlanti verso le pareti vicine e protendendo le loro mani con dita divaricate perpendicolarmente all'asse della porta.<sup>29</sup>*

Arrivati davanti alla gigante statua della Dannazione, elevata al rango di divinità, Virgil presenta una lunga schiera di santi e illuminati, tra cui lo stesso Dante, che hanno formato la sua mente e modellato il suo interiore. In fondo nomina un

pantheon di scrittori, filosofi, artisti, scienziati, una lunga fila che non può non richiamare alla nostra memoria quella degli spiriti magni del Limbo, a cui appartiene Virgilio stesso. Tra i nomi citati ci sono Gesù, Platone, Omero, Pitagora, Dante, Shakespeare, Michelangelo, Leonardo da Vinci, Newton, Bach, Mozart, Rembrandt, Milton, Dostoevskij, Eminescu, Kafka, Wittgenstein, Freud, Proust, Rilke, Einstein, Virginia Woolf, De Chirico, Max Ernst, Faulkner, Ezra Pound, Lennon, Tarkovskij, Fellini ecc., un elenco questo di spiriti magni o eletti che per certi versi corrisponde a quelli che hanno maggiormente influito sulla formazione di Cărtărescu (e di cui parla nel diario, nelle interviste, nei suoi saggi), e i quali si annidano profondamente nel tessuto intimo della sua lirica e della sua narrativa, e in questo modo l'autore romeno riscrive, da bravo postmoderno (e oltre) la letteratura mondiale e romena, attraverso una sapiente contaminazione delle fonti, tra cui, di certo, il famoso esule fiorentino e il suo capolavoro.

Virgil offre il grande lascito delle civiltà e delle culture, che si è insediato nella sua pelle, nel suo cranio, a questa figura ciclopica affinché allontani la sua ombra dalle loro vite. La risposta di questa singolare divinità è metaforicamente e letteralmente schiacciante, vale a dire schiaccia con la pianta del piede il cervello di questa guida mancata. Perciò, nell'ultimo capitolo, prima dell'apocalisse, sarà il protagonista ad assumersi in un certo senso questo ruolo che spettava, per tradizione, a Virgilio.

Prima di illustrare la scena apocalittica di evidente sapore dantesco, che chiude il romanzo, ci soffermiamo per un istante su un famoso episodio dell'*Inferno* che pare abbia molto colpito Cărtărescu, poiché lo rivisita e lo riusa in varie circostanze, vale a dire la suggestiva descrizione della bolgia dei ladri, dove i dannati sono sottoposti a sorprendenti e terribili metamorfosi. Nel *Solenioide* appare due volte, come termine di paragone, in due contesti radicalmente diversi:

*Ho vagato a lungo fra i diorami dei parassiti, in quella luce crepuscolare. Ho guardato negli occhi il pidocchio e la larva dell'icneumonide. Ho visto in che modo, come nella bolgia dei ladri dell'altro Inferno, l'ospite e il parassita si fondono in un abbraccio agonico, passano l'uno nell'altro, diventano organi e membri l'uno a favore dell'altro.<sup>30</sup>*

*La porta della camera si è scagliata su di noi con una velocità terrificante, l'abbiamo superata avendo l'impressione di mandarla in mille pezzi e all'improvviso eravamo sul letto, mescolati l'uno con l'altra in un mandala inestricabile, sforzandoci di passare l'uno nell'altra, come i dannati danteschi del girone dei ladri, fusi l'uno nell'altro come la plastilina e uscendo, dall'altro lato del letto, io nel corpo di Irina e Irina nel mio corpo, dopo che mi ero rannicchiato nel suo utero e lei era fluitata dentro il mio cranio nell'aria dorata dell'orgasmo.<sup>31</sup>*

**S**IN DALLE prime pagine dell'ultimo capitolo, i riferimenti danteschi irrompono con forza e il lettore si imbatte in vocaboli alludenti all'inferno: voragine, burrone, luogo della dannazione eterna, buca infernale, terribile visione. L'immagine di un immenso abisso dalla profondità sconfinata rispecchia la città sradicata dalle sue fondamenta, che levitava a centinaia di metri sopra il protagonista come un vassoio immenso di edifici decrepiti, da cui pendeva un intricato sistema di tubi flessibili a rappresentare le arterie e le vene "dell'aorta del dolore", cioè "il canale collettore della sofferenza umana",<sup>32</sup> pane quotidiano del

*popolo crepuscolare del centro della terra, le creature fragili, lunatiche, mutilate, con occhi enormi da insetto, quelli che salivano di notte attraverso gli stessi tubi ramificati, simili ai salmoni controcorrente, per apparirci nel corso di sogni e allucinazioni.*<sup>33</sup>

Quest'ultima immagine sembra, peraltro, ritagliata dal romanzo di esordio di Ermanno Cavazzoni, *Il poema della luna*, e tradisce, secondo la nostra opinione, una velata affinità con l'esercizio di fantasticazione del narratore italiano. Orbene è un fatto noto che la scrittura cavazzoniana abbonda di personaggi lunatici e di voli onirici, per non parlare della *quête* inseguita, identificabile anche nel romanzo cãrtãreschiano, vale a dire la ricerca di una salvezza, ma il protagonista non si salva, almeno non in una dimensione trascendente, ancorché, scopre, si rende cosciente, sulle orme dell'illustre predecessore italiano, ovvero Dante, di ciò che muove tutto l'universo, cioè l'amore.

La seconda discesa nell'Obitorio precede la scena apocalittica che conclude il romanzo, ora però i manifestanti sono guidati dal protagonista, dato che "non c'era più nessuno che ci accompagnasse nell'inferno, [...] poiché Virgil era stato messo sotto, sbadato e senza rancore, come si schiaccia una mosca"<sup>34</sup> dalla terrificante statua della Dannazione. Perciò il protagonista avanza "nella debolissima luce di una lampadina sospesa al di sopra della piazza, fino al centro del cerchio in cui, come creazioni dantesche di ombre e luci, camminavano i manifestanti",<sup>35</sup> che saranno condotti da lui davanti alla stessa divinità della distruzione e della morte, in una sorta di scena di giudizio universale. Il protagonista davanti a cui si aprono le fiamme dell'inferno è costretto a scegliere tra il suo manoscritto e la figlia. L'esito della sua scelta riecheggia il finale del sacro poema, poiché la salvezza, anche se non quella individuale trascendentale, viene conferita dall'amore che muove l'universo, che è il meccanismo del mondo e di tutta la vita: "Da questo momento, la dea poteva tranquillamente alzare il piede e schiacciarci tutti: vivevamo nell'amore, e questo non poteva più togliercelo nessuno."<sup>36</sup> Il

personaggio sceglie di stare con le persone che ama, rinunciando alla possibilità di evadere da solo dal mondo della sofferenza in uno spazio dello spirito.<sup>37</sup>

All'improvviso la città si alza sollevata dai solenoidi e scompare nell'universo, mentre nello spazio rimasto vuoto si disvela la precisa geografia dantesca dell'Inferno e del Purgatorio, lo stesso sconvolgimento geologico, vale a dire un

*cono di una fossa senza fondo, che arrivava forse fino al centro della Terra e che aveva in corrispondenza, nell'altro emisfero, una montagna bianca come il latte, spuntata forse da onde verdi e limpide.*<sup>38</sup>

La stessa visione infernale apre e chiude il capitolo, la “smisurata profondità della voragine aperta” si riecheggia perfettamente nel “cono di una fossa senza fondo” e nella “sacca infernale” dove si vede la folta schiera dei demoni che si nutrivano dalla sofferenza umana.



## Note

1. Italo Calvino, *Perché leggere i classici* (Milano: Mondadori, 2002), 7.
2. Monica Fekete, “L’occhio della mente: appunti sull’interesto dantesco nell’opera di Mircea Cărtărescu”, articolo in corso di pubblicazione.
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19. Cărtărescu, *Solenoid*, 164.
20. *Ibid.*, 39-40.
21. *Visioni*, cit.
22. Cărtărescu, *Solenoid*, 113.
23. *Ibid.*
24. *Ibid.*, 335.
25. *Ibid.*, 478.
26. *Visioni*, cit.
27. Luigi Tassoni, *I silenzi di Dante* (Bologna: Pàtron Editore, 2016), 11.
28. Cărtărescu, *Solenoid*, 425.
29. *Ibid.*, 425-426.
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31. *Ibid.*, 577.
32. *Ibid.*, 915.
33. *Ibid.*
34. *Ibid.*, 921.
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## **Abstract**

### ***Solenoid*: A Proposition for Dantean Reading**

The presence of Dante in literature and in other cultural fields still holds a privileged position nowadays, when rereadings and reuses acquire surprising, innovative and stimulating forms. Within this context, we propose a Dantean reading of Mircea Cărtărescu's super-novel, *Solenoid*, which is a representative and appropriate example to showcase a dense inter-textual dialogue between the two authors irrespective of the 700 years separating them.

## **Keywords**

Dante, rereading, reinterpretation, theater of memory, guide, infernal landscape, *Solenoid*

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## EDITORIAL EVENTS

# Eine Ideengeschichte der Modernisierung Rumäniens

ANDREI  
CORBEA-HOISIE



MĂDĂLINA DIACONU, *Ideengeschichte Rumäniens*,  
Paderborn: Brill | Ferdinand Schöningh, 2021.

**E**IN BUCH über das rumänische intellektuelle Universum von gestern und heute ist im Publikationsprogramm der großen westlichen Verlage nicht gerade alltäglich. Und genau aus diesem Grunde, aber nicht nur deshalb, ist der jüngste Titel, mit dem Mădălina Diaconu in den deutschen Buchhandel zurückkehrt, erwähnenswert: *Ideengeschichte Rumäniens*, erschienen im Ferdinand Schöningh Verlag in Paderborn. Dank des Titels, der sich auf eine von der deutschen Kulturgeschichtsschreibung viel gepflegte Textsorte bezieht, versteht das Publikum sofort, was es in diesem Buch zu lesen bekommt – mehr als eine einfache informative Einführung, die gleichzeitig nahelegt, dass die Geschichte von „Ideen“ auch eine Rekapitulation der gesamten „Geschichte“ bedeutet, die diese begleitet und mehr oder weniger gespeist hat.

### Andrei Corbea-Hoisie

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Der Name Mădălina Diaconu ist in rumänischen Akademikerkreisen durchaus bekannt. Nach dem Philosophiestudium und der Promotion in Bukarest erwarb Mădălina Diaconu ein zweites Doktorat an der Universität Wien, wo sie auch die Lehrbefugnis für Philosophie erlangte; sie hat neben ihren in Rumänien erschienenen Büchern bereits in wichtigen Verlagen im deutschsprachigen Raum veröffentlicht – das vorletzte, *Phänomenologie der Sinne*, beim bekannten Philipp Reclam jun. Verlag in Stuttgart/Leipzig. Der vorliegende Band steht im Zusammenhang mit einem Projekt, das die Rumänische Akademie vor einigen Jahren in Wien gemeinsam mit dem Institut für Österreichkunde, der Menachem Elias Stiftung und dem Rumänischen Kulturinstitut lobenswert gefördert hat: Mădălina Diaconu wurde damit die Gelegenheit gegeben, eine Reihe von Vorträgen zur rumänischen Geistesgeschichte vor einem österreichischen Publikum zu halten. Es war ein Beweis dafür, dass das Interesse an einem im Westen weniger oder gar nicht beachteten Themenkreis im Vergleich zu entsprechenden „Historien“ aus Polen, Ungarn, der Tschechischen Republik oder auch aus dem ehemaligen Jugoslawien lebendig ist und dass seine Vertiefung in einem Buch durchaus Chancen hat, die Neugier und vor allem das Interesse eines offensichtlich über den begrenzten Kreis der Experten hinausgehenden Leserkreises zu wecken, und sei es nur durch die Hervorhebung eines „Ideenexzptionalismus“, der das Verständnis des besonderen, wenn nicht „außergewöhnlichen“ historischen Schicksals dieser rumänischen „Lebenswelt“ im Vergleich zu denen der umliegenden Nationen erleichtert. Es besteht kein Zweifel daran, dass die Wurzeln dieses Sachverhalts, der eine Unwissenheit aufzeigt, die auch aus Missachtung resultiert, mit Umständen zusammenhängen, die „auf lange Dauer“ messbar sind und auf die wir hier und jetzt nicht näher eingehen wollen; die Bemühungen eines Titu Maiorescu in den letzten Jahrzehnten des 19. Jahrhunderts, eines Nicolae Iorga, Vasile Pârvan oder Sextil Pușcariu in der ersten Hälfte des 20. Jahrhunderts, geeignete Kanäle zu finden, um zu erreichen, dass über die rumänische Literatur- und Kulturproduktion im Ausland gesprochen und geschrieben wird, sind das Symptom eines chronischen Defizits. Der Isolationismus, den der dominierende Totalitarismus in den letzten 50 Jahren auferlegt hat, hat sich nur noch tiefer zugespitzt, indem er zahllose weitere Vorurteile und Klischees hervorgebracht hat, die bis zur Verachtung vereinfachend wirken. Dreißig Jahre nach der Wende von 1989 ist das Handicap eines endemischen „Provinzialismus“ trotz unbestreitbarer Fortschritte noch nicht überwunden – auch nicht in umgekehrter Richtung, wenn man beispielsweise die prekären Möglichkeiten unserer großen Bibliotheken zur Erwerbung ausländischer Bücher betrachtet. Dass es andererseits heute einen fruchtbaren Boden gibt, um die rumänische Spiritualität mit ihrem Erbe und ihrer Gegenwart für die transnatio-



nale intellektuellen Debatte zu öffnen, zeigt der vielversprechende Weg, den der mutige Ansatz von Mădălina Diaconu bisher eingeschlagen hat.

Die Expertin für Phänomenologie und Ästhetik sowie Exegetin von Kierkegaard und Heidegger zeigt in diesem Buch, wie gründlich sie in die Geistesgeschichte des rumänischen Raums eintaucht – und das bedeutet nicht nur exhaustive Informationen, sondern auch die Beherrschung der zu ihrer Verarbeitung notwendigen analytischen Instrumente – seit dem Zeitpunkt, als hier eine „Bewegung der Ideen“ entstand, die diesen Namen verdient. Im Gegensatz zu den skeptischen Stimmen, die das Gegenteil behaupten, ist Mădălina Diaconu von den Auswirkungen überzeugt, die „Ideen“ auf den Verlauf unserer sozialen und politischen Geschichte in den letzten zweieinhalb Jahrhunderten hatten, und „verankert“ sie im Kontext ihres Auftretens und ihrer Wirkung – einer Wirkung, die sich manchmal sofort, andersmal viel später äußerte.

Für den inn- und ausländischen Leser erhält das historische Ereignis durch die Lektüre der Ideologien, die zu dessen Auslösung oder Gestaltung beigetragen haben, jenen Hintergrund, der das Verständnis und die Interpretation erleichtert: So lässt sich beispielsweise der wirtschaftliche Modernisierungsschub zwischen 1870 und 1914 besser erklären, wenn man die scheinbar widersprüchliche Gesetzgebung als einen letztlich fruchtbaren „Kompromiss“ zwischen dem reformorientierten Liberalismus und dem gewichtigen Konservativismus betrachtet, die sich in der Regierung abwechselten; die Bauernaufstände, die 1907 ihren Höhepunkt erreichten, erscheinen im Gegenteil als eine unglückliche Folge der Unfähigkeit der politischen Klasse, die Alarmsignale wahrzunehmen, die vom sozialen Denken jener Zeit, vertreten durch Constantin Dobrogeanu-Gherea oder durch Constantin Stere, ausgegangen ist; vor der Folie einer reichhaltigen philosophischen Produktion, die sich vor allem kritisch mit dem Rationalismus auseinandersetzte, enthält die Ideologie, die in den 1930er und 1940er Jahren den politischen Extremismus entfachte, ungeahnte Ressourcen. Mădălina Diaconu schildert mit großem Mut und Feingefühl, jenseits aller essayistischen Versuchungen, diese sehr komplexe und für viele verwirrende Ideenlandschaft, deren Konturen sie in einem sichtbaren Bemühen um Objektivität mit allen Nuancen, Widersprüchen und ihren dahinterstehenden individuellen Engagements zu enträtseln versucht. Für denjenigen, der es auf diese Weise entdeckt, und insbesondere für den ausländischen Leser, lenkt die möglichst rigorose Rekonstruktion dieser Vielfalt den Blick auf eine Weise, die die Vielfalt in ihrer Chromatik absolut faszinierend erscheinen lässt und das Aufbrausen eines kühnen und kreativen Engagements suggeriert, das in der Sphäre des Denkens mehr als nur einmal („im Guten“ und „im Schlechten“) recht gewagt ist. Die pädagogisch begabte Autorin, die das zu vermittelnde „Thema“ vollkommen be-

herrscht, findet einen Ton, der sowohl für den ausländischen als auch für den rumänischen Leser geeignet ist, und erkennt intuitiv dessen Fragen und Zweifeln, um sie dann geduldig eine nach der anderen zu erklären. Ebenso exemplarisch ist die nachvollziehbare Art und Weise, in der die Thesen der Siebenbürgischen Schule (rumänisch Școala Ardeleană) über die „ethnische“ Identität der Rumänen als Auslöser eines sozialpsychologischen Phänomens dargelegt werden, dessen ideologische Früchte jahrzehntelang „reifen“, bis sie in die „nationalen“ Programme der Revolutionäre von 1848 in Jassy, Bukarest und Blaj (Blasendorf) und dann, über das wesentliche Moment der „kleinen“ Vereinigung von 1859, in die des frühen Liberalismus bis 1870 eingebettet und angepasst wurden. Dies ist nur ein Beispiel für eine „positive“ Didaktik!

Was man als „Rückgrat“ des Buches von Mădălina Diaconu bezeichnen könnte, ist die Beobachtung – in all ihren Details und Darstellungen im Laufe der Jahrhunderte – der obsessiven Fixierung der rumänischen Intellektuellen, angefangen mit Samuil Micu, Gheorghe Șincai und Petre Maior um die Wende vom 18. zum 19. Jahrhundert, auf die Frage, wie sie in ihrem eigenen Namen und/oder kollektiv ihren „Europäismus“ behaupten können. Nach Ansicht der Autorin scheinen die Schwankungen des Leitmotivs, das nach 1989 wieder in den Mittelpunkt gerückt ist, die gesamte kulturelle Produktion zu inspirieren, von der Publizistik (in ihren brillanten Formen, wie der von Mihai Eminescu) bis zur Dichtung und von der historiographischen Forschung bis zur Konstruktion ehrgeiziger, origineller philosophischer Systeme. Die „Figuren“, die sich von einem Kapitel zum nächsten bewegen, erwecken den Eindruck, als seien sie – in unterschiedlichem Maße – hin- und hergerissen zwischen dem Bewusstsein, dass die symbolische „Eintrittskarte“ für Europa, das schon seit den ersten Jahrzehnten des 19. Jahrhunderts unaufhaltsam ins Zeitalter der immer schneller werdenden technologischen und sozialen Modernisierung eingetreten ist, die „Synchronisierung“/die Anpassung ist einerseits und andererseits, der manchmal bis zum Äußersten getriebene Wille, eine unverwechselbare und letztlich selbstbestimmte Identität zu bewahren. Mădălina Diaconu gelingt es, so glauben wir, im einzigen offenkundig subjektiven Moment ihres Unternehmens, die Variablen dieses Dilemmas überzeugend „herauszustellen“ (siehe auch die Erfahrung des „Juden von der Donau“ Mihail Sebastian, symptomatisch für das schmerzhaft Schicksal vieler jüdischer Intellektueller in der rumänischen Kultur), die sich entweder in öffentlichen Auseinandersetzungen oder im inneren Monolog äußern. Interessant ist zum Beispiel die Pluralität der Facetten, die die Autorin jenem Widerstand verleiht, der, wie bereits erwähnt, angesichts des Pragmatismus der rationalen Anpassung an die modellierende Koordinaten eines Westens, der bereits von den siebenbürgischen Aufklärern als „Maß

der Dinge“ auferlegt wurde, proklamiert wird: „Kritizismus“, „Sămănătorismus“ (vom rum. Sămănător/derjenige der ansät, anbaut), „Traditionalismus“, „Autochtonismus“, „Orthodoxismus“, „Thrakismus“, „Post-Byzantinismus“/„Orientalismus“/„Balkanismus“ und so weiter, bis hin zum „Protochronismus“ des achten Jahrzehnts des 20. Jahrhunderts. Die differenzierte Betrachtung der einzelnen Episoden dieser latenten oder turbulenten Opposition kann nur die unseres Erachtens berechtigte Frage nach ihrem nachhaltigen Gewicht im Verhältnis zu den („geistigen“) Kräften nahelegen, die eine „bedingungslose“ Modernisierung befürworten; die Tatsache, dass einige dieser Strömungen nach 1989 im öffentlichen Raum Rumäniens wieder auflebten, ob nun epigonal oder nicht, vervollständigt diese Frage und verleiht ihr Aktualität.

Eine der Qualitäten, die das vorliegende Werk von Mădălina Diaconu besonders dem ausländischen Leser empfiehlt, der sich sowohl für die Vergangenheit als auch für die Gegenwart der rumänischen intellektuellen Dilemmata interessiert, besteht in der sehr sorgfältigen Untersuchung des Erscheinungsbildes, mit dem jeder Moment ihrer Geschichte in das Bewusstsein der heutigen Menschen projiziert wird. Die Überlegungen von Sorin Alexandrescu zur zeitgenössischen Rezeption von Titu Maiorescu oder von Daniel Barbu zum „Byzantinismus“ der rumänischen politischen Kultur werden fundiert und sachlich analysiert; weniger überzeugend ist die Diskussion der Erbschaft von Constantin Noica aus der gegensätzlichen Perspektive von Alexandra Laignel-Lavastine und Sorin Lavric. Hervorragend gelungen ist schließlich die thematische Auswahl (mit den zitierten und kommentierten Autoren von Adrian Marino und Gabriel Liiceanu bis hin zu Andrei Marga und Ciprian Șiulea), die die Autorin in den eigens den intellektuellen Debatten und Kontroversen – jenseits der hohlen journalistischen Agitation – gewidmeten Sonderkapiteln mit ihren schwierigen „Baustellen“ der letzten drei Jahrzehnte vornimmt, wie zum Beispiel der Wiederherstellung eines kollektiven Gedächtnisses am Rande der historischen Wahrheit: ein wahres Kompendium von Thesen und Antithesen (einige davon sind offensichtlich beunruhigend!) über die Herausforderungen der „Europäisierung“ Rumäniens im 21. Jahrhundert (auch innerhalb der Europäischen Union), die auf ein Spannungsverhältnis in ihrer Entwicklung hindeuten, aus dem schließlich oft das lang erwartete und lang ersehnte Neue hervorgeht. Aus der Entfernung Wiens übt sich Mădălina Diaconu also in Optimismus, den sie hoffentlich beibehalten wird, wenn sie eine notwendige rumänische Ausgabe des vorliegenden Buches vorbereiten wird.



*(Übersetzt von SUSANNE SZABADKAI)*

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## BOOK REVIEWS

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**DUȘIȚA RISTIN**

**Manuscrisele slavone și tradiția chirilo-  
metodiană din Banat**

(I manoscritti slavoni e la tradizione  
cirillo-metodiana del Banato)  
Editura Universității din București,  
București 2020

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**I**L RICCO e denso volume, tratto da una tesi di dottorato consacrata alle *Valenze espressive nei manoscritti slavo-romeni del Banato*, mette in evidenza la funzione e il valore estetico dei testi slavoni redatti o copiati in una regione di confine dove la cultura romena antica «si è sviluppata a stretto contatto con la cultura bizantina e slava, in special modo con quella del sud, ma anche con altri elementi di origine tedesca e ungherese, per esempio, data l'immediata vicinanza con l'Europa Centrale» (pp. 7-8).

Nel capitolo introduttivo, dopo aver sottolineato il ruolo dei monasteri ortodossi nella conservazione e nella trasmissione dei manoscritti, Dușița Ristin ricostruisce il paziente lavoro dei filologi cechi, polacchi, russi, romeni e serbi che, negli ultimi due secoli, hanno scoperto, catalogato e studiato quei testi, dando un contributo fondamentale alla conoscenza della cultura romena antica in lingua slava. Tra loro spiccano l'insigne slavista Ioan Bogdan e i ricercatori Emil Turdeanu e Ion-Radu Mircea.

Nel secondo capitolo l'Autrice traccia un breve profilo della letteratura serba antica per poi soffermarsi sugli scritti di quella letteratura che hanno circolato nello

spazio romeno a partire dal XV secolo. Si tratta per lo più di testi agiografici, come la *Vita di San Sava* del monaco Teodosije (XIII secolo), le *Vite di re e di arcivescovi serbi* dell'arcivescovo Danilo II (XIV secolo) e la *Vita di Ștefan Dečanski* di Grigorij Camblak (XV secolo),<sup>1</sup> ma anche di cronache e di romanzi popolari. La diffusione di queste opere rimanda ai rapporti romeno-serbi nel medioevo, molto intensi sia in campo culturale e religioso sia in ambito politico e sociale, come mostrano i legami di parentela fra le case regnanti e le massicce migrazioni di serbi verso i Paesi romeni al tempo della conquista ottomana.<sup>2</sup>

Nel terzo capitolo Dușița Ristin si concentra sui manoscritti slavoni conservati presso la Biblioteca del Vescovado Ortodosso Romeno di Arad, alla ricerca degli elementi che attengono alla vita culturale e spirituale. Oltre ai romenismi presenti nei testi, l'Autrice mette in luce credenze e pratiche magiche negli scritti di medicina e vari riferimenti alla storia romena nelle cronache serbe, laddove si fa cenno alle lotte sostenute da Mircea il Vecchio e da Stefano il Grande contro i turchi o alla conquista di Chilia e di Cetatea Albă da parte di Bayazid II (1484). La caduta delle due piazzeforti moldave e la conseguente trasformazione del Mar Nero in un "lago ottomano"<sup>3</sup> dovettero impressionare non poco i vicini serbi, sottomessi da Maometto II nel 1459.<sup>4</sup> Il capitolo si chiude con una riflessione sul culto mariano sviluppatosi intorno a luoghi di pellegrinaggio quali il monastero romeno di Hodoș-Bodrog, il monastero serbo di Bezdin e il convento

francescano di Maria-Radna, frequentati anche da ungheresi.

Decisamente originale, sia per la tematica sia per il modo di trattare la materia, è il quarto capitolo, incentrato sulle note a margine che corredano i manoscritti. Dopo aver rimarcato il valore storico, estetico-letterario e linguistico di tali annotazioni nel quadro della letteratura serba antica, Dușița Ristin ne analizza la struttura e ne mette in evidenza gli elementi che presentano un interesse per la storia e per la spiritualità del Banato. Particolarmente significative sono le note risalenti al periodo della dominazione ottomana, in quanto assumono spesso il carattere di autentiche cronache. Due di esse ricordano la presa di Timișoara da parte degli imperiali e la cacciata dei turchi dalla regione nel 1716.

Nel capitolo quinto l'Autrice approfondisce la vita e l'opera del «sedicente conte Đorđe Branković (1645-1711)» – così lo ha definito Arturo Cronia – «strano tipo di avventuriero settecentesco, mezzo serbo e mezzo rumeno, che, dopo aver svolto vari incarichi alle corti di principi transilvani e valacchi, finisce miseramente i suoi giorni nelle carceri austriache di Cheb in Boemia perché sospettato di relazioni segrete con la Russia e con la Valacchia e perché anche aveva pescato nel torbido in Serbia».<sup>5</sup> Dușița Ristin ne riesamina la formazione cosmopolita e la produzione letteraria, soffermandosi sui temi d'interesse romeno nella *Cronaca slavo-serba*, l'opera principale di Branković, da lui redatta «più per dimostrare i diritti dell'autore al trono serbo che per illustrare la vera storia serba», scrive sempre Cronia.<sup>6</sup> Nondimeno, sia nella storiografia serba sia in quella romena Đorđe Branković segna il passaggio «dai primi scritti storici sotto forma di annali e cronache, con apogeo nel secolo XVII, alle opere storiche di concezione moderna, re-

alizzate con spirito critico nell'interpretazione delle fonti», rileva l'Autrice (p. 167).

Per l'approccio interdisciplinare, al confine tra slavistica, antropologia e storia delle mentalità, il libro di Dușița Ristin rinnova in modo profondo gli studi sulle relazioni romeno-serbe nel medioevo, rivelandosi uno strumento prezioso per comprendere l'identità di una regione di frontiera quale è il Banato e, più in generale, quel retaggio slavo che è patrimonio comune di tutti i romeni.



MARCO CASSIOLI

## Note

1. Su questi autori e sulle loro opere si rinvia ad Octavia Nedelcu, *Istoria literaturii sârbe vechi*, terza edizione, Editura Universităţii din Bucureşti, Bucureşti 2008.
2. Ion-Radu Mircea, *Relations culturelles roumano-serbes au XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle*, «Revue des études sud-est européennes», I (1963), 3-4, pp. 377-419; id., «*Les Vies des rois et archevêques serbes* » et leur circulation en Moldavie. Une copie inconnue de 1567, «Revue des études sud-est européennes», IV (1966), 3-4, pp. 393-412; Ștefan Olteanu, *Relațiile româno-sârbe în secolele VI-XVI*, Editura Academiei Române, Bucureşti 2013; Claudiu Neagoe, *Nicolae Alexandru Voievod*, Ars Docendi, Bucureşti 2014; Boris Stojkovski, Ivana Ivanić, Laura Spăriosu, *Serbian-Romanian Relations in the Middle Ages until the Ottoman Conquest: Connections, Influences, Co-habitation*, «Transylvanian Review», XXVII (2018), Supplement No. 2, pp. 217-229.
3. Su questi avvenimenti: Nicoară Beldiceanu, *La Conquête des cités marchandes de Kilia et de Cetatea Albă par Bayezid II*, «Südost-Forschungen», XXIII (1964), pp. 36-90; Ileana Căzan, *Dușmani de temut – aliați de nădejde. Țările române în epoca lui Ștefan cel Mare în contextul politicii central-europene*, Editura Minerva, Bucureşti 2004, p. 105.

4. Francis Dvornik, *Gli Slavi nella storia e nella civiltà europea*, trad. Pasquale Portoghese, Dedalo, Bari 1968 (edizione originale: *The Slavs in European History and Civilization*, Rutgers University Press, New Brunswick – New Jersey 1962), vol. I, p. 322; Jože Pirjevec, *Serbi, croati, sloveni. Storia di tre nazioni*, il Mulino, Bologna 2015, p. 18.
5. Arturo Cronia, *Storia della letteratura serbo-croata*, Nuova Accademia, Milano 1956, p. 174.
6. *Ibid.*

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FLORIN NICOLAE ARDELEAN

**Organizarea militară în Principatul Transilvaniei (1541–1691): Comitate și domenii fiscale**

(The military organization in the Principality of Transylvania, 1541–1691: Counties and fiscal domains)

Foreword by IOAN-AUREL POP

Cluj-Napoca: Academia Română, Centrul de Studii Transilvane, 2019

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**F**LORIN NICOLAE Ardelean is one of the young Transylvanian historians whose main field of study is the region of Transylvania, more precisely the military history of Transylvania. The book presented here is Florin Nicolae Ardelean's first work as a sole author, and it is a revised and enlarged version of his doctoral dissertation, which he defended in 2010, at Babeș-Bolyai University, under the coordination of Academician Professor Ioan-Aurel Pop—such details and more can be found in the introductory chapter (p. 11–15).

From a structural viewpoint, this average-size book is organized into eight chapters, unequal in length, with more than 400 pages in total.

In the first chapter, the author makes a chronological survey of the sources and

of the historiography on the matter, highlighting the new and the already known sources underpinning his work (pp. 17–23).

The second chapter, “War, Society and Military Organization in 16<sup>th</sup>–17<sup>th</sup> Century Europe” (pp. 25–50), contains general information on the European society and its military organization during the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries, this being the temporal limits within which he did his research. The essential phrase in this chapter, characterizing mainly the aforementioned centuries, is “military revolution.” It triggered a chain reaction within the medieval and pre-modern society, and it favored at the same time the development and refinement of military techniques. In several subchapters, the author describes a few important components of the military organization of Europe at the time, still within a general approach (infantry, cavalry, fortifications, artillery and siege techniques, and, last but not least, logistics).

The third chapter, “The Noble Army in Transylvania” (pp. 51–82), also presents general aspects, but the author reduces the geographical area analyzed from the European level to the local one. Thus, he describes in detail the noble army, emphasizing mainly the role of the military in the Kingdom of Hungary and in the Principality of Transylvania. The chapter provides minute details, such as close approximations of the number of cavalymen in a unit, or data on the cost of a cavalryman's upkeep, making it possible to also calculate the total cost of a noble army at the time. Also, we find information on the monthly wages of a Transylvanian cavalryman: 5 golden florins. There is even a table with the number of cavalymen and infantrymen which each county had to

provide; these are details that validate the preparatory work done for this book.

The fourth chapter, “Military Conscriptions and the Porte’s Army” (pp. 83–114), describes the medieval origins of military conscriptions; the military conscription was a contingent of soldiers-peasants from the noblemen’s domains, and their recruitment was a necessity resulted from the Ottoman threat, which had become ever more present in the Balkans at the end of 14<sup>th</sup> century. In the second part of the chapter, the military conscriptions and the Porte’s army in the Principality of Transylvania are described in detail; this is the period following the Ottoman conquest and the transformation of Transylvania into an autonomous state, under the sovereignty of the High Porte.

In the fifth chapter, “Fortresses and Fiscal Domains in the Principality of Transylvania” (pp. 115–127), we find an administrative description of the region of Transylvania and of the entire eastern region of the former medieval Kingdom of Hungary.

While the fifth chapter only provides a general survey of the fortresses, in the sixth chapter, “Evolution of the Defensive System in the Principality of Transylvania” (pp. 129–169), the Transylvanian fortresses are described in detail, as is the entire regional defense system. The author provides not just an outline, but rather a concrete description of the western frontier of the Principality of Transylvania, based on documents from archives and not only, showing that this border had changed, experiencing a sort of reorganization, especially after 1660, when the fortress of Oradea was conquered. Florin Nicolae Ardelean tells us that the role that the captain of Oradea had held until 1660 was

taken over after this period by the captain of Cluj. Therefore, the Habsburg army was increasingly incisive.

The seventh chapter, “Permanent and Semi-Permanent Military Categories” (pp. 171–239), contains relevant information regarding the permanent or semi-permanent garrisons of the fortresses, presenting the numbers of the military complement of each fortification (for instance, in 1552, the fortress of Timișoara was defended by 2,300–2,500 fighters, 400 of whom were Spanish and German mercenaries; or the fortress of Oradea, which in 1598 was defended by 2,000 men, and two years later, in 1600, its garrison dropped to 900 men). These details, and many others on the foreign mercenaries in the Transylvanian armies or the complements of various military units, information about outlaws, the princely guard, the boyars of the Land of Făgăraș, about the infantry, the riflemen, the free soldiers, the knezes, the voivodes, the judges—all this information can be found within this sizable chapter. Apart from this, we also find here a description of the economic aspects pertaining to each of the abovementioned categories—meaning, their wages; all this proves that serious research has gone into piecing together the military history of Transylvania under the Ottoman rule.

Chapter eight, “Military Campaigns” (pp. 241–365), is the most sizable one, both regarding the historical data it contains and the descriptive length. It describes the reigns and the military campaigns of various Transylvanian princes, among whom Stephen Báthory, Sigismund Báthory, Michael the Brave, Gabriel Báthory, or George Rákóczi I, all of whom fought to maintain the autonomy of the region. Other Transylvanian princes, how-

ever, like George Rákóczi II, through different military actions intended, for instance, to occupy the Polish throne, put this autonomy in danger, according to the author. In the second part of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, internal conflicts and Ottoman military interventions led to a weakening of the princely power, which later resulted in a transfer of authority, as Transylvania came under Habsburg rule.

The volume written by Florin Nicolae Ardelean approaches the military aspects of Transylvanian history, describing the organization of the principality during the historical period when it was autonomous, under Ottoman sovereignty. Thus, the book is quite complex, a real historical military monograph, which opens new research perspectives.



ROBERT-MARIUS MIHALACHE

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ILIE SCHIPOR

**Destinul Tezaurului României.**

**Argumente din arhivele ruse**

(Le Destin du Trésor de la Roumanie.

Les arguments des archives russes)

Bucarest, Oscar Print, 2021

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**L**E TRÉSOR de la Roumanie perdu en 1918 est un sujet de grand intérêt pour les historiens, les autorités publiques de l'État roumain, mais aussi pour le grand public. C'est pour cela que toute apparition éditoriale à ce sujet devient vite diffusée dans des cercles toujours plus larges de lecteurs. L'auteur du présent livre, militaire et diplômé, est en même temps un historien connu et l'auteur unique ou en collaboration de nombreux ouvrages d'histoire militaire, surtout de l'histoire du XX<sup>e</sup>

siècle etc. Après presque une décennie de mission diplomatique à Moscou en tant que conseiller, période pendant laquelle il a aussi passé du temps dans les archives de la capitale de la Fédération russe, Ilie Schipor a synthétisé ses propres recherches, fondées sur une documentation laborieuse dans plusieurs archives d'État de la capitale russe et sur la consultation de la bibliographie de spécialité. Le résultat en est un volume consistant qui réunit tant des interprétations personnelles qu'un nombre de 162 documents d'une certaine valeur scientifique et non seulement. Parmi ceux-ci, plus de 120 documents inédits, provenant tous des archives de Moscou qu'il a eu l'occasion de consulter.

Les documents et les interprétations d'Ilie Schipor désignent clairement les problèmes importants et novateurs du livre en question. Ainsi, il documente sans doute l'initiation par la partie russe de l'opération d'évacuation à Moscou du trésor de la Banque Nationale de Roumanie, opération qui s'est déroulée le long d'une année à peu près, entre octobre 1916 et août 1917, finalement menant aux deux transports de biens et de valeurs de la Roumanie vers la Russie. Cette pression diplomatique et l'affirmation de l'intérêt russe pour l'or roumain explique d'une certaine manière la non-implication adéquate des armées tsaristes sur le territoire roumain dans la défense de Bucarest en novembre 1916. Dans cette opération de convaincre les responsables de Bucarest ont été impliqués le tsar Nicolas II, les chefs des gouvernements de Petrograd de cette période, les ministres des Finances et de la Défense et d'autres officiels russes. La partie russe a connu la valeur du trésor de la Banque Nationale de Roumanie et a compris très bien le fait que la réserve d'or de la Rou-



manie pouvait contribuer partiellement au redressement des finances de l'Empire tsariste, épuisé après plus de deux années de guerre. Par conséquent, Ilie Schipor démonte une des thèses enracinées dans l'historiographie russe, notamment le fait que la Roumanie a initié et a voulu transférer en Russie le trésor de la Banque Nationale de Roumanie et de nombreux autres biens culturels du patrimoine national de la Roumanie.

Bien soulignée par les documents du volume est aussi la saisie par le pouvoir bolchevique en janvier 1918 du trésor de la Banque Nationale de Roumanie et des biens du patrimoine culturel et artistique, par la transgression flagrante par le régime dirigé par Lénine de toutes les normes de droit international. De même, quelques autres documents reconstituent les « voyages » en dehors de Moscou du trésor et des autres biens de la Roumanie pendant la période 1919-1921, lorsque le pouvoir bolchevique a considéré, durant la guerre civile de Russie, que le trésor pouvait finir dans les mains des forces militaires de ceux qui s'opposaient au gouvernement bolchevique. Après la suppression du danger représenté par les forces du général Dénikine, le trésor est revenu pendant l'été 1921 à Moscou. Il paraît que ce fut le début de son gaspillage successif jusqu'à sa dévaluation presque totale par le régime bolchevique. Certes, on connaît les deux restitutions partielles de biens et d'archives pendant l'entre-deux guerres par l'implication de Nicolae Titulescu et ensuite, durant le régime communiste en Roumanie, par les efforts de Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej, par lesquels sont revenus à la maison (entre autres) les célèbres pièces « la poule d'or et les poussins » du trésor de Pietroasa.

Le livre contient aussi une partie intéressante dans laquelle sont présentés certains mythes liés au sujet du trésor de la Roumanie, des personnes impliquées dans l'initiation ou le déroulement de l'évacuation du trésor, les endroits où celui-ci a été déposé etc., ainsi qu'une chronologie qui synthétise de manière réussie le conte/l'histoire du trésor de la Banque Nationale de Roumanie. En conclusion, nous avons un nouveau livre précieux pour l'historiographie, mais aussi intéressant pour tous les passionnés de l'histoire du dernier siècle du passé de la Roumanie et des relations russo-roumaines.



ADINA-MARIA CORNEA

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GREG GRANDIN

**În umbra lui Kissinger. Moștenirea celui mai controversat om de stat al Americii**  
(À l'ombre de Kissinger. L'héritage de l'homme d'État le plus controversé de l'Amérique)

Trad. ANCA SIMITOPOL  
Bucarest, Litera, 2020

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**L**É RYTHME accéléré des changements intervenus dans les relations internationales à l'issue de la Guerre Froide et le retour au système multipolaire de pouvoir ainsi que la série de crises qui en avait résulté au niveau de l'économie globale et des structures intégrationnistes ont suscité un vif intérêt au sein du grand public et ont assuré à la production historiographique inspirée par l'actualité politique et les personnalités emblématiques du passé récent une incontestable primauté en comparaison avec d'autres directions de recherche. La littérature générée par les réflexions sur

les actes de politique étrangère connaît une grande popularité, comme en témoigne la fascination exercée par la diplomatie, avec ses sinuosités et ses valeurs éthiques et culturelles, sur tous ceux qui s'intéressent à la vie de la Cité, depuis les habitants des polys grecs aux communautés ethniques de l'espace ex-soviétique et des Balkans de l'Ouest. Cependant, la fréquentation intense de ces sujets a généré une production éclectique et inégale comme valeur scientifique, depuis la publication des mémoires de certains protagonistes – où la vérité est à découvrir à travers le subjectivisme de l'implication personnelle –, à des analyses qui se servent du fait historique comme prémisses pour des constructions idéologiques ou des projections sur les perspectives de la civilisation, souvent tributaires des tangences avec le politique. Outre ces défis, la connaissance des mécanismes de prise des décisions dans les relations internationales se heurte aux tentatives des autorités de contrebalancer le passif enregistré dans la politique intérieure, par d'éventuelles réussites, réelles ou clamées, sur le plan diplomatique.

La Maison d'édition Litera vient nous proposer une traduction du livre de l'historien Greg Grandin, *Kissinger's Shadow: The Long Reach of America's Most Controversial Statesman* (2015), une analyse de la diplomatie américaine des années 1970 et de l'impact qu'elle avait eu sur l'évolution de la société dans son ensemble. Elle s'individualise dans la série plus large de productions similaires par la spécificité des opportunités mises à la disposition d'un public insuffisamment familiarisé avec les particularités de l'espace culturel traumatisé par l'impact du Rideau de Fer, d'une perspective positive, vue comme alternative à l'oppression du totalitarisme

communiste. La disponibilité critique de l'auteur, qui place les sujets abordés sous les auspices des controverses qui animent le débat politique aux États-Unis, se matérialise en un nécessaire appel à la lucidité, adressé aussi bien aux enthousiastes simplistes tentés par le conformisme de la rectitude politique, qu'aux promoteurs d'une vision volontairement iconoclaste des réalités internationales, favorisée par les échecs que la soi-disant Pax Americana avait subis pendant la dernière décennie et par la réactivation de la compétition générale pour les ressources. Le discours léger et l'absence du caractère sentencieux préféré par certains genres historiographiques en ont assuré le succès auprès du grand public. On constate ainsi que les options de la société américaine par rapport aux réalités de proximité ont évolué au fil de l'histoire, depuis la différenciation des réalités d'origine par l'adoption d'un profil idéologique distinct à la politique de non-intervention promue par le président Monroe ou aux oscillations entre l'implication dans la configuration d'une politique globale de sécurité et les retranchements dans la logique de ses propres intérêts. Ces réalités, qui se soustraient à la dimension événementielle du passé et du présent, sont décryptées à travers les options méthodologiques de l'auteur, qui personnalise son analyse par l'identification de l'action diplomatique avec la carrière d'Henry Kissinger. Cet ancien secrétaire d'État des États-Unis (1969-1975) est l'auteur de quelques ouvrages de référence pour la théorie des relations internationales et le dépositaire d'un énorme capital de sympathie de la part du public de l'Europe de l'Est. La signification scientifique de cette analyse et certifiée par la formation de l'auteur, qui est professeur à l'univer-

sité Harvard et auteur de plusieurs livres portant sur les raisons de certaines actions politiques des États-Unis suspectées de tentations colonialistes. Ses options libérales ne portent pas atteinte à la manière dont son personnage est perçu, celui-ci dévoilant de multiples facettes, où les limites de la conduite personnelle coexistent avec l'articulation d'une conception politique et d'une philosophie de l'histoire placée aux origines du paradigme de politique étrangère de la droite américaine.

Le prologue de l'ouvrage nous introduit directement dans les débats qui divisaient l'élite intellectuelle des États-Unis au début des années 1970 et qui ont séparé l'administration Nixon de la soi-disant élite du pouvoir de l'Université Harvard, dans les conditions de l'implication des États-Unis dans le conflit de Cambodge et des actes de répression interne. Cette dichotomie est personnalisée par la conversation entre Kissinger et le professeur Thomas Schelling, adepte de l'utilisation de l'analyse mathématique dans la prise des décisions politiques. La section introductive, un auto-déclaré nécrologue construit en oxymoron, passe en revue les approches contradictoires proposées par les biographes du protagoniste et fait une digression sur les étapes de formation de celui-ci, depuis ses origines qui le relient à la communauté juive de l'Allemagne nazie à sa carrière dans les services américains de renseignement. La succession des événements est un prétexte pour esquisser la biographie intellectuelle de Kissinger. Placée dans la logique de la tradition de la diplomatie européenne de l'équilibre entre les puissances et dépourvue de toute justification morale propre au discours public américain, elle dévoile de profondes réflexions sur les sens et le caractère tragique de l'histoire, ayant

des tangences évidentes avec l'existentialisme de Jean-Paul Sartre et la théorie de l'homme d'État créateur de sa propre réalité. Ces options de nature à inspirer une véritable doctrine politique ont précédé la participation active du professeur de Harvard à une nouvelle définition du concept de sécurité nationale et à la création de l'infrastructure institutionnelle capable de la générer. Le premier chapitre, centré sur les commencements de la carrière publique de Kissinger, tente de découvrir les fondements intellectuels qui avaient inspiré ses options. Identifiées avec les concepts de la philosophie d'Oswald Spengler et avec les attitudes sceptiques relatives à l'influence du positivisme et des sciences exactes sur l'analyse sociale, elles se sont matérialisées sur le plan institutionnel dans l'ascension des bureaucrates aux dépens des hommes politiques, ce qui a été considéré comme un symptôme du déclin. La conception de Kissinger – d'éviter l'inaction comme moyen d'affirmation du pouvoir, comme contrepoids aux hésitations liées à l'utilisation de la dissuasion nucléaire – a supposé la division de la menace essentielle en plusieurs menaces séquentielles, et s'est matérialisée dans l'implication dans des guerres locales, évitant toute responsabilité publique pour les souffrances provoqués aux peuples neutres et pour des échecs comme celui de Vietnam.

La section suivante analyse le profil moral du futur diplomate en identifiant ses fondements éthiques issus des préceptes de la philosophie de Kant sur l'individu, les buts et les moyens. Cet utilitarisme de souche conservatrice est jugé responsable pour sa conduite au début de sa carrière politique, durant la campagne électorale de 1968, lorsque les informations sur les négociations de paix de Paris avaient joué

un rôle important dans l'élection du président Richard Nixon et la nomination de Kissinger au poste de conseiller à la Sécurité Nationale. Le chapitre suivant dévoile les tentatives de réorganiser la politique étrangère des États-Unis, qui sera placée sous le contrôle du Conseil de Sécurité Nationale, alors que le Département d'État passera sur un plan secondaire après la décision des États-Unis d'élargir le conflit en Asie du Sud au Cambodge et au Laos. Le lecteur a ainsi l'occasion de réfléchir sur la relation entre le discours de politique étrangère et l'impact des décisions prises en son nom sur la population civile et sur l'évolution de quelques nations neutres, affectées par des coups d'État et la destruction délibérée de leurs ressources de subsistance. L'effet sur le plan interne en a été la dissolution du consensus institutionnel au sujet de la politique étrangère et la genèse d'une culture protestataire qui a fini par mettre en cause les fondements mêmes de l'échafaudage politique interne.

Un autre chapitre est centré sur les tentatives de l'administration américaine de se servir de l'acte de politique étrangère dans la future campagne de réélection de Richard Nixon et l'anéantissement de l'opposition libérale, qui s'est soldée par la démission du président et la mise en cause de la fonctionnalité du système politique américain.

Le cinquième chapitre fait une digression à propos des mécanismes bureaucratiques de l'administration, à partir des réformes opérées dans les années 1960, tout en soulignant l'impact des changements imposés par Kissinger. Ces changements avaient privilégié l'intuition et l'action individuelle au détriment des données statistiques et de l'information

proprement-dite, ce qui allait déterminer en dernière instance le conflit avec son ancien collaborateur, Daniel Ellsberg, et l'entraînement de l'administration présidentielle dans les controverses liées à la publication de données sur les actions diplomatiques en Asie. Contrairement aux attentes, ces controverses ont renforcé son capital de confiance est favorisé son accession à la position de secrétaire d'État sous l'administration Gerald Ford.

La section suivante est la plus importante pour l'histoire proprement dite et consiste en une série d'analyses séquentielles des initiatives diplomatiques américaines, publiques ou secrètes, en Asie, en Afrique et au Moyen-Orient. Elles avaient été marquées par des épisodes discutables du point de vue éthique, tels que les massacres au Bangladesh, le soutien porté aux gouvernements suprématistes d'Afrique ou l'instrumentalisation des crises au Moyen-Orient et en Asie centrale, responsables pour l'actuelle crise structurelle en Afghanistan.

Les deux chapitres suivants portent sur la relation entre les décideurs politiques extérieurs et le pouvoir législatif, telle qu'elle apparaît à travers les enquêtes effectuées par le Congrès au sujet de différentes crises régionales impliquant l'administration et des opérations secrètes légitimées par les besoins de la Guerre Froide. Le caractère spectaculaire des auditions dans les commissions de spécialité et la tendance de privilégier les questions internes, telle l'affaire Watergate, au détriment d'une clarification de la conduite des services de renseignement, donnent l'occasion à une énumération des violations des droits de l'homme commises par les alliés conjecturaux des États-Unis ainsi que des preuves concer-

nant le soutien que Kissinger avait porté aux régimes militaires en Amérique du Sud en invoquant le péril représenté par les options de gauche des mouvements démocratiques de la région. Ces actions ainsi que la politique de détente initiée dans les relations avec l'Union soviétique et la Chine ont été exploitées par le discours de la nouvelle droite dominée par le futur président Ronald Reagan. Quittant le Département d'État en 1976, après le retour de l'administration démocrate, Henry Kissinger s'est retrouvé dans la position de l'apprenti sorcier. Son amoralisme politique sera surclassé par ceux qui se serviront du même type d'arguments pour promouvoir les intérêts américains, n'hésitant pas de sacrifier des nations toutes entières des pays en voie de développement et de recourir même à l'engagement militaire comme solution diplomatique. La dimension morale de l'analyse est complétée de la présentation des évolutions au Cambodge, qui était dévasté par le régime des Khmers rouges. Examinant cette situation du point de vue de la relation cause-effet, l'auteur lance l'idée de la responsabilité de Kissinger pour la radicalisation de la rébellion cambodgienne et la légitimation partielle des excès qu'elle avait commis.

Les dernières sections reconstituent l'influence de Kissinger sur les administrations républicaines à partir de 1980. Il a défendu les politiques interventionnistes néoconservatrices, que l'auteur considère comme le nouveau militarisme américain, à la fois comme président de la Commission bipartisane pour l'Amérique latine – en proposant l'intervention militaire en Grenade et au Panama – et comme expert intensément fréquenté par la presse, qui a vulgarisé le soutien qu'il avait porté à l'im-

plication des États-Unis dans la première guerre du Golfe et surtout à la guerre contre le radicalisme islamique après le 11 septembre 2001. L'épilogue de l'ouvrage évalue la continuité de la vision spenglerienne professée par Kissinger au niveau de l'action politique américaine, de même que la dimension économique des bénéfices directs obtenus par les promoteurs de cette politique dans la relation avec leurs alliés politiques de différentes régions du globe.

Même si les options éthiques de l'auteur sont peu compatibles avec les concepts et, surtout, avec les pratiques de la politique étrangère de Kissinger, sa critique ne vise pas à les dénoncer sans appel, mais elle est plutôt un prétexte pour restituer un homme et son époque à l'aide d'un vaste instrumentaire, propre au métier d'historien, depuis les biographies aux relations de presse et aux mémoires. Cependant, la place centrale revient à des citations amples tirées des écrits du protagoniste, qui dévoilent un Kissinger oscillant entre le tragique des premières années de vie et des réflexions sur le tragique de l'histoire même, mais aussi un homme d'État tenté par le défi de construire sa propre réalité et d'inverser le déclin de son monde par le retour à la force de l'intuition. La lecture de l'ouvrage est en dernière instance à la fois un exercice de liberté intellectuelle et une invitation à la réflexion sur des thèmes actuels, telles que la relation entre la liberté et l'efficacité ou bien les significations de la souveraineté, afin de savoir si la société a vraiment un contrôle de l'exercice du pouvoir public.



FLORIAN DUMITRU SOPORAN

**MIRCEA-GHEORGHE ABRUDAN**

**Ortodoxia românească în istorie și contemporaneitate: Articole, eseuri și note de lectură**

(Romanian Orthodoxy in contemporaneity:

Articles, essays and reading notes)

Foreword by Bishop MACARIE DRĂGOI

Cluj-Napoca: Renașterea; Stockholm:

Felicitas Publishing, 2019

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**M**IRCEA-GHEORGHE Abrudan is already a well-known name, both in the historical and in the theological fields. His complex synthesis dedicated to the relationships between Orthodoxy and Lutheranism in Transylvania between 1848 and 1918 (2015), together with a few editions of documents and the studies, articles and book reviews already published place him among the young researchers with interdisciplinary skills. His new book comes to confirm these aspects.

An anthology of texts previously published in important Romanian journals is, first and foremost, a proof of his rich and consistent activity as a writer and historian who knows how to identify and analyze a document, and also possesses a rich and encyclopaedic culture. Bringing together more than 40 studies, articles, chronicles, medallions and articles, the book is a real voyage across the history and culture of the Romanians in Transylvania. Underlining the complexity and the richness of the informational material contained in this book, Bishop Macarie Drăgoi of the Romanian Orthodox Church in Northern Europe, who forwarded it, contends that: “Choosing a topic of current interest, the researcher from Cluj sees Orthodoxy as a cornerstone in the ancient and contemporary history of our people, rediscovering

the continuities, transformations and overlaps between the histories of the great, but also of the smaller people within and beyond the Carpathians, who led a life dedicated to a greater and more comprehensive good than that of one’s own well-being” (p. 9).

Segmented into six large parts, the book deals in the first one of them (pp. 9–82) with the images and legacies of important personalities (princes or martyrs from the Romanian lands). The reader can discover here interesting information about princes like Mircea the Elder (pp. 19–25), Michael the Brave (pp. 26–36), Constantin Brâncoveanu (pp. 40–70), the Holy Metropolitan Bishop Antim Ivireanu (pp. 71–77), but also about some important faces of the Romanian Orthodox resistance against the imperial actions of denationalization and de-confessionalization of Romanians, the holy martyrs from the Năsăud area (pp. 78–81). Synthetizing the historiographical sources and re-evaluating in a critical way the existing information about the investigated topics and personalities, he offers not only texts meant to bring again to attention their life and activity, but also unpublished information, creating bridges between different areas of research and contributing to the renewal of the discourse about them.

The same thing can be surely said about the second part of the book. Here, he deals with the way in which important foreign personalities like the Patriarch Cyril Lucaris saw the Romanians (pp. 85–93), discussing how Paisius Velichkovsky wrote an important page in the history of Romanian spirituality (pp. 94–96), or pleads for the investigation of the activity of important personalities of the Orthodox Church from Transylvania like the bishops

Vasile Moga (pp. 102–107) or Nicolae Ivan (pp. 108–112). Famous clergyman like Sebastian Stanca (pp. 119–134) and Ioan Lupaș (pp. 166–184) or important laypeople who were deeply attached to the church, such as Ioan Broșu (pp. 135–149), are also featured here, together with important reviews dedicated to recent books or the presentation of different aspects of recent history of the Church and personalities like the Patriarch Justinian Marina (pp. 185–198). Important lay contributions to church historiography, such as those of Professor Nicolae Bocșan (pp. 215–219) or Nicolae Edroiu (pp. 220–227), are also presented there.

As expected, an important section of the investigation is dedicated to the Metropolitan Andrei Șaguna (pp. 243–312), whose activity for the cultural and confessional emancipation of the Orthodox Romanians in the Habsburg and later Austro-Hungarian Empire is analyzed on the basis of the unpublished documents that the author found both in church archives (like the ones of the Metropolitan Church of Transylvania located in Sibiu) or in the ones in Vienna.

Due to the fact that the last few years were dedicated to the commemoration of the centenary of the First World War and of the Great Union, Mircea-Gheorghe Abrudan also offers generous space to this topic in the fourth part of his book (pp. 315–424). Together with the role of dif-

ferent Romanian publications in the completion of the union of Transylvania with Romania, he also presents the sufferance of the priests from this period or offers interesting prosopographical studies dedicated to some of the men who represented the Romanians at Alba Iulia assembly. An interesting section is later dedicated to theology and spirituality, and to the manner in which they can be seen through the lens of a historian (pp. 427–514). He offers here studies, analyses, but also presentations of the most recent books related to the topic and released in the Romanian space, recommending to a curious reader valuable texts that could provide information about the Orthodox Church, its theology, spirituality, and contemporary outcomes. The book ends with a section containing essays (pp. 517–561), where Mircea-Gheorghe Abrudan describes some travels and speaks about the historical relevance and impact of several places.

Well-written and containing diverse and complex articles, studies and reviews, Mircea-Gheorghe Abrudan's book is a useful work meant not only for historians and theologians, but also for any reader who wants to learn more about Romanian history from the documents presented, and to understand how the Orthodox Church contributed to the formation and becoming of the Romanian nation.



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