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ELENA BEDREAG
ȘTEFAN BOSOMITU
ELENA FIREA
ANDREI IOAN LAZĂR
FLORIN LEONTE
ZAHARIA-SEBASTIAN MATEIESCU
CORNEL MICU
COSMIN UNGUREANU

Editor: Irina Vainovski-Mihai

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New Europe College
Str. Plantelor 21
023971 Bucharest
Romania

www.nec.ro; e-mail: nec@nec.ro
Tel. (+4) 021.307.99.10, Fax (+4) 021. 327.07.74



ȘTEFAN BOSOMITU

Born in 1982, in Vaslui

PhD in History at “Al. I. Cuza” University of Iași

Dissertation: *Miron Constantinescu. The Destiny of an Intellectual Submitted to the Party*

Researcher, The Institute for the Investigation of Communist Crimes and the Memory of the Romanian Exile (since 2007)

Associate Researcher, The Romanian Institute for Recent History (since 2010)

POSDRU (European Union Program) Fellow (2008-2011)

PhD Scholarship, University of Angers, France (2010)

Erasmus-Socrates Fellow, University of Angers, France (2004-2005)

Participation in numerous conferences in Vilnius, Budapest, Prague, Nantes, New York

Author of several scholarly studies about the history of the Romanian Communist Party, the biographies of the underground communist militants, the Communist propaganda, the *Securitate*

IN THE AGE OF “MISERY”. THE ROMANIAN SOCIOLOGY DURING THE COMMUNIST REGIME (1948-1977)

Resumé: L’article a comme principale objectif l’évaluation de la place que la sociologie roumaine a occupé pendant le régime communiste, en reconstruisant le contexte politique interne et international qui a conduit à une (re) institutionnalisation de la discipline. Après une très riche activité entre les deux guerres, la sociologie roumaine a été bannie comme discipline après la seconde Guerre Mondiale et la montée au pouvoir du régime communiste. Après deux décades de « misère », la sociologie a été institutionnalisée de nouveau dans les années 1960 dans le contexte d’une « libéralisation » intellectuelle et politique. L’article essaye d’expliquer le développement institutionnel de la sociologie roumaine pendant le régime communiste, à travers l’analyse du rôle joué par divers facteurs (la tradition d’avant la guerre, le régime politique).

Key-words: Romanian sociology, Est-European sociologies, communist regime, institutionalization

I. Introduction

The history of the Romanian sociology in the twentieth century was closely connected to the political history of the country. Experiencing a fertile period during the two interwar decades, as a result of a modernization process that followed the creation of the national state in 1918, the discipline would be “banned” thirty years later, once with the instauration of the “people’s democracy” regime. A new education reform (1948), that aimed a deep “restructuring” of the Romanian educational system, virtually abolished the sociology – considered to be a “bourgeois” and “reactionary” science, by removing it from the university curricula. The revival of the sociology was possible in the context of an intellectual “opening” in the mid 60s. The sociology regained its place among the academic disciplines and departments of sociology were re-established

within the universities. The subsequent history of sociology would be an equally difficult one, punctuated by moments that will lead to a new “dissolution” of the discipline (1977).

My paper aims an analysis of the history of sociology in this particular chronological framework (1948-1977). I will approach several aspects. Firstly, I intend to undertake a regional comparative analysis. What was the fate of the Hungarian, Bulgarian or Polish sociology after 1948? The marginalization of the discipline in the context of the instauration of the communist regimes in Central and Eastern Europe can be regarded as a regional phenomenon, or we can speak about a Romanian exception? Can we speak about a “reinvention” of the sociology in the countries of the “Soviet bloc” in the 60s, or, once again, we are talking about a Romanian singularity? Only such an approach will allow us to clarify the different aspects of the history of the Romanian sociology as a discipline within its two decades of “illegality”, and the avatars of its revival in the 60s.

Regarding the history of the Romanian sociology, it is essential to try to follow and reconstruct the personal, professional and the intellectual destiny of the preeminent figures of the interwar Romanian school of sociology after 1948. Which were the professional retraining possibilities of the interwar sociologist? What happened with their professional and intellectual careers?

Another issue that I will approach is that of the revival of the sociology in the context of an intellectual “opening” in the 1960s. Which were the avatars of the revival of the sociology? In what type of paradigm one may include this restoration of the discipline? Can we speak about some kind of continuity of the interwar Romanian school of sociology? Or is it just about an institutionalization of the rupture?

II. East-European Sociologies. A Regional Context

The Central and East European area, which was to fall under the influence of the Soviet Union after the Second World War, is characterized by an ethnic, linguistic and religious diversity. Politically dependent until the middle of the 19th century, the area has known a late modernization of the indigenous political structures and could be characterized by economic underdevelopment and by a predominance of agrarian economy and rural population. To the general characteristics of the area, one might add

the absence of an urban middle class, the partial absence of a national identity, a late coding of the indigenous languages and a high religiosity.¹

After the Second World War, the entire region came under the influence of the Soviet Union, which imposed regimes of popular democracy in all the states.² Subsequently, all these states experienced significant political, economic, social and cultural changes. All these changes produced ruptures and discontinuities within the intellectual tradition of the Central and East European states. The interwar democratic values and the opening towards Western Europe were replaced by a propaganda that praised the Soviet Union and the Soviet economic, political and cultural achievements. The Marxism-Leninism became the dominant ideology and the dialectical and historical materialism became the two disciplines which underlay the new social order.³

Regarding the history of sociologies of the Central and Eastern Europe post-World War II, there are at least two types of discourse. On the one hand, there is a quite detailed internal discourse, which highlights the most important moments in the evolution of the discipline in a particular state. More often than not, this type of discourse can be characterized as being distorted and lacking in critical spirit, due to the fact that it tries to ignore or, at best, reduce the influence that communist ideology had on the discipline. There is also a second type of discourse, external, which seems to lack the same critical spirit, as it chooses to ignore the sociological production in former communist countries in its entirety, considering that it would not have departed from the canons of the Marxist-Leninist ideology.⁴ For this reason, it is assumed that East European sociology has no scientific value and would not make a significant contribution from a theoretical perspective.⁵ Moreover, there are views according to which even this type of external speech presents several directions. For example, some researchers consider Central and East European sociologies as *antagonistic* to Western sociologies. This type of discourse is based on the idea that Marxism would be based on an ontological and epistemological conception, completely different from that of the main Western sociological currents.⁶ Others believe that the issue is not *antagonism*, but *deviation*, since East European sociologies have not been an alternative to Western sociology.⁷

The postwar history of social sciences in Central and Eastern Europe is marked by the forced establishment of communist regimes in the states which entered the Soviet sphere of influence. The first post-war years correspond to a phase in which the political power imposed a strict control

over the social sciences. The purpose of this offensive stance was the desire to institute Marxism-Leninism as the only ideology accepted. Everything that existed outside the accepted canons of dialectical and historical materialism was labeled as being bourgeois and reactionary.⁸ Repressive measures were taken against those who held different, uncanonical, views: elimination from higher education or from specialized research institutes, social marginalization or, in the worst cases, arrest and imprisonment. Of all the social sciences, sociology was the most affected. Regarded as a “bourgeois pseudo-science” or even a “reactionary science”, sociology was marginalized or even eliminated from the academic disciplines, but also from the departments of new multidisciplinary research institutes established under the subordination of the new Academies of Sciences.⁹ This offensive position against interwar intellectual traditions had profound implications on the history of sociology in Poland, Czechoslovakia and Romania. The natural development of the discipline was slowed or even stopped. In some cases, the re-institutionalization of sociology, which was to take place two decades later, did not take account of those interwar traditions, and they were lost as a consequence.

The period of ideological dogmatism and immobilism relaxed a bit after Stalin’s death (1953) and with the process of liberalization imposed by the new leader from Kremlin, Nikita Khrushchev.¹⁰ In this period, several important changes occurred in what concerns sociology.

Firstly, the term of sociology itself was to disappear from the dictionary of taboo words, being accepted in academic discussion and political discourse. Sociology became one of the fronts of ideological disputes between the states of the Soviet bloc and the West. The bourgeois *pseudo-science* of society became the *bourgeois sociology*, to which the Soviet Union and the satellite states responded through *Marxist sociology*, as historical materialism began to be perceived. The Marxist sociology had the mission of carrying an *ideological war* with the Western sociology, the goal being that of discovering the latter’s *bourgeois and reactionary* roots.

Liberalization also meant resuming academic contacts with the West, although they were strictly monitored by the political power. Nonetheless, the resumption of academic contacts was an important step in the development of sociology in Eastern Europe. The most significant examples in this sense are the cases of Poland and of the Soviet Union. Poland was the state with the most important sociological tradition in the area. Even after the coming to power of the communist regime, Polish sociology continued its activity for a while.¹¹ Furthermore, Polish sociologists tried

to maintain permanent contact with international intellectual circles. After 1956, the relations of institutional cooperation and collaboration with various institutions from the United States were facilitated. Last but not least, Polish sociologists were always present at the I.S.A. (*International Sociological Association*) Congresses, and some of them were part of the I.S.A. management.¹² Similarly, in the 1950s, the Soviet Union resumed the contacts with the West in what concerns academic relations. The thaw imposed by Khrushchev did not only initiate a process of liberalization, but also marked the beginning of an “*ideological war between the socialist pro-Soviet camp and the capitalist pro-American camp*”.¹³ Sociology thus complied with the political agenda of the Soviet state, but the changes that took place are worth to be mentioned. First, in 1955, a delegation of the Soviet Union participated for the first time at an international congress organized by the I.S.A. The mission of the Soviet delegates was simple – to come into contact with the ideological “enemies”, but also with the Western sociologists who maintained *progressive* views.¹⁴ Also in 1955, several leading scholars from the West made work visits to Moscow. It is the case of a group of French sociologists, led by Jean Piaget, none other than the President of the ISA (April), of Adam Schaff (September), or of Jorgen Jorgensen (October). Not least, it is worth mentioning that in 1958, Moscow organized the *International Conference of Sociologists*, an occasion for Everett Hughes, Raymond Aron, Georges Friedmann, T.H. Marshall, Helmut Schelsky and Tom Bottomore to visit the capital of the Soviet Union.¹⁵

However, the most important consequence of this liberalization was the reestablishment of departments of sociology in East European universities and of research laboratories within these universities. Once more, Poland was the first of the East European states to take such action after the Second World War. In 1956, programs of specialization in the discipline of sociology, with a duration of five years, were introduced in the universities of Krakow, Lodz, Warsaw and in the Catholic University of Lublin.¹⁶ In the Soviet Union, the development from this point of view was a little slower. The first sociological research laboratory appeared in 1960 in Novosibirsk, within the *Institute of Economics and Organization of Industrial Enterprise*.¹⁷ Subsequently, a *Laboratory of Social Research* was established at the Faculty of Philosophy of the University of Leningrad.¹⁸

It should also be noted that both in Poland and in the Soviet Union, at the time of these developments, national professional associations of sociologists were established: in 1957 in Poland - *the Polish Association*

of *Sociology*,¹⁹ and in 1958 in the Soviet Union - *the Soviet Sociological Association*.²⁰

The favorable developments from Poland, but especially those from the Soviet Union influenced the development of sociology in the other countries of the Soviet bloc as well. The only difference was the delay and the difficulty with which they made the steps that Poland, for example, made in a very short time, during 1956-1958. The gap between countries such as Hungary, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia and the German Democratic Republic on the one hand and Poland on the other hand, was not bridged even ten years later. This reality was caused by the fact that the evolution of the discipline was slower in these states. Undoubtedly, the absence of a tradition of sociology in some of these states also had consequences in this regard.

There are enough similarities in what concerns the national developments of the institutionalization of sociology in the other socialist states. A first common feature is the interference of the political power in the process of restoring sociology. This was the case of the German Democratic Republic, where, only after the decision of the VI Congress of the Party (1963), the first steps toward institutionalizing the discipline were taken.²¹ The same held true in Hungary (1963), Czechoslovakia (1964) or Bulgaria (1967).²² Thenceforth, the developments of sociology in these states followed a specific pattern: the emergence of a national professional organization, the establishment of the first university departments or research centers, and the appearance of specialized periodicals.

In Hungary, an important sociological tradition did not exist until the beginning of World War II.²³ An attempt to institutionalize sociology took place immediately after the end of the war. Sándor Szalai, a Marxist-oriented intellectual, managed to establish a department of sociology at the University of Budapest.²⁴ The experiment failed, his department being disbanded in 1948.²⁵ The discussions as regards sociology broke out again in the early 1960s, in a publicist "debate"²⁶ between the same Sándor Szalai and Andras Hegedus.²⁷ The first suggested that the development of Hungarian sociology had to be based on Western models, given the substantial gap that it had to overcome, while Hegedus believed that Marxist philosophy provided a sufficient theoretical framework. As for the ideological imports, he deemed them to be too dangerous.²⁸ The latter was to come off victorious; he was the one who was to lead the *Committee on Sociology* established within the Department of Social Sciences of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences in 1963.²⁹ The institutional

evolution of Hungarian sociology was going to be very slow, since the first publication in the field and the first department of sociology (which became operational only in 1978) was established as late as 1972.³⁰ Subsequently, the first professional association of Hungarian sociologists was established in 1978.³¹

Not having had an institutional profile before World War II, Bulgarian sociology made a first attempt at institutionalization at the end the war, when Todor Pavlov³² set up an *Institute of Sociology* within the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences. The coming to power of the communist party and the imposition of the Stalinist ideological dogmatism led to the abolition of this institution in the late 1940s.³³ After 1960, there were several attempts to lay the basis of sociology in Bulgaria, the representative figure being Zhivko Oshavkov, a Bulgarian Marxist philosopher who had studied in Paris before the war, at that time leader of the Department of historical materialism within the Institute of Philosophy of the Academy of Sciences. However, it also took an external impulse for Bulgarian sociology to be placed on institutional basis. At the *VI Congress of the ISA*, (1966, Evian, France), Bulgaria was granted the privilege to organize the next congress, scheduled to take place in 1970. The Bulgarian political authorities embraced this opportunity, reason for which, a year later, the Politburo of the Central Committee of the Bulgarian Communist Party took the decision of institutionally empowering the emerging Bulgarian sociology.³⁴ The establishment of the *Institute of Sociology* within the Academy of Sciences followed a year later, as well as the appearance of the first magazine in the field - *Sotsiologheski Izsledvanyia* (Sociological Research). Later, in 1975, the first department of sociology at the University of Sofia was established.³⁵

The history of sociology in Czechoslovakia followed a similar route, despite the important tradition of inter-war Czechoslovak sociology. The revival of the discipline occurred in the 1960s, when an *Institute of Sociology* was established within the Academy of Sciences in Prague, specialized periodicals appeared and departments of sociology were introduced in Charles and Masaryk Universities.³⁶ The history of Czechoslovak sociology was also marked by less favorable moments, such as the direct repressive campaigns against sociologists after the events of 1968.³⁷

The examples above, briefly presented as they are, allow us to draw some general conclusions concerning the Eastern Europe sociologies. First of all, the absence of sociology from the academic landscape of all these

states in the first years following the establishment of communism must be remarked upon. Stalin's death and policy shift promoted by Moscow produced the gap that allowed the first changes in the status of sociology. The process of revival of the discipline after 1956 was confronted with various initiatives and actors, but the political power was the one that, each and every time, admitted and "validated" the (re)institutionalization.³⁸ It is interesting to observe that despite the differences between East European countries, despite their distinct historical past, despite the heterogeneous traditions as regards sociological research, and despite differences related to intellectual trends, the revival of sociology seems to have been a common phenomenon.³⁹ Nonetheless, the process was neither unitary, nor simultaneous. There were different stages in the evolution of sociology, the causes behind these differences being related either to certain previous intellectual traditions, or to the inconsistency and reluctance of the political regimes. Instead, it was a similar process, since a pattern of development specific to sociology can be easily observed.

Still, a large number of uncertainties remains. First, we should ask ourselves whether this common and similar phenomenon, even in the conditions in which it was not simultaneous, led to the appearance of a single East European sociology or of more sociologies, particular to each nation. Furthermore, the issues regarding the particularities of East European sociologies should also be put under analysis. What will have been their traditions? How important will have been the influence of Western sociology? Last but not least, we should also ask ourselves to what extent sociology managed to individualize itself in relation to the official ideology, and especially in relation to historical materialism.

From these perspectives, the dimension of our analysis could take an entirely different turn, as all these issues indicate differences much rather than similarities. Since the main purpose of this study differs, however, we shall not dwell on these issues, even though we believe them to be of the highest importance. We shall merely say that in what concerns the tradition of East European sociologies, there are different opinions. The trend in the specialized literature from each and every state is to find the intellectual roots of sociology in the autochthonous intellectual traditions. External influence was very rarely accepted as preponderant. However, we believe that M.F. Keen and J. Mucha are right to indicate Soviet sociology as being the most important tradition of East European sociologies, having had an important influence over all East European sociologies. Their arguments are perfectly valid – a great part of the specialized literature and of the

theoretical essays on historical materialism and Marxist sociology have been translated from Russian in almost all East European languages. These translations aimed at establishing a common standard regarding what was right or wrong, acceptable or unacceptable.⁴⁰ With regard to the influence of Western sociology and the degree of autonomy of sociology, it is obvious that there are significant differences between the socialist countries, caused first and foremost by the flexibility and leniency of the deciders from the ideological apparatus or even from the political regimes.⁴¹

Finally, there are many points of view regarding the issue of the degree of “independence” of sociology in relation with the Marxist-Leninist ideology in general and with historical materialism in particular. A first hypothesis suggests that there were no differences between East European sociology and historical materialism, the two terms being synonymous, both referring to the same science about society.⁴² In this case, the only difficulty lay in defining more exactly the two terms - either the term historical materialism was used to indicate the Marxist social science, case in which the term sociology should refer only to bourgeois sociology, or the term was accepted, under the formula “Marxist sociology”, synonymous with historical materialism.⁴³ Another hypothesis maintained that historical materialism and sociology are two different concepts. The first concept refers to the theoretical and philosophical analysis of society, while the second to the empirical investigation and generalizations based on this type of investigation. There are also authors who, having accepted this difference, emphasized the need of unifying the two into a new and integrated science about society. Neither sociology taken separately as a non-philosophical science, nor historical materialism, as philosophical theory that analyses the relationships between social beings and social consciousness was not able to develop into a complete, logical and fully developed social science. The solution would have been the unification of the two.⁴⁴ There were also those who suggested that sociology was an empirical science with a high degree of generalization that studied social phenomena from the perspective of the structure of the group to which they belonged, while historical materialism was defined as a metascientific philosophical reflection of the utmost importance for all social sciences. Thus, the need for a closer link between philosophical metasociology (historical materialism) and sociology itself was touched upon.⁴⁵ Finally, a *third way* would be defined by the idea that historical materialism overlapped with sociology in the sense that it absorbed the results of the empirical sociological research. In this case, it was admitted

that historical materialism was more general than sociology because it dominated and included sociology in the sense of using the facts and conclusions set forth by sociological investigations. But historical materialism goes beyond sociology, as it tries to establish the most general laws of social development. This hypothesis also implies a converse, as sociology includes historical materialism when it uses basic methods to discover the particular laws of social institutions. On the other hand, sociology is outside the realms of historical materialism when it studies the specific issues of general or particular branches through their own methods and techniques of investigation.⁴⁶ The issue of the relationship between sociology and historical materialism was one of the current debates in all Central and East European countries. It is worth mentioning that common ground has not been reached regarding this analysis, due to the lack of accurate geographical or national crystallizations.

III. Continuity or rupture in post-war Romanian sociology (1948-1965)?

In the first issue from 2005, the magazine *Sociologie românească* held a debate on the status and condition of Romanian sociology.⁴⁷ Among those who accepted the invitation of the editorial team to comment on some controversial matters were important names in Romanian sociology. Under the heading *“Rupture and / or theoretical-methodological continuity between pre-war sociology and sociology in the communist period: the status of the Marxist-Leninist paradigm; defensive strategies of sociology”*, some expressed opinions that summarized the manner in which current professionals in the discipline perceive the post-war period of the history of Romanian sociology.

Virgil Măgureanu was of the opinion that there had been a clear rupture, particularly visible in the first decade after the coming to power of the communist regime, when sociology had been “creatively denied”. He also believed that there had been continuity between interwar sociology and that from the communist period, exemplified through the destinies of Henri H. Stahl or Traian Herseni, who resumed their activity in the communist period. Moreover, Măgureanu stated that another phenomenon that would indicate continuity was represented by the field research carried out in the times when sociology was banned. Despite being subsumed to other purposes, they sought the verification of scientific hypotheses. He further mentioned

that there had been no Marxist-Leninist paradigm in sociology in Romania, nobody seriously appropriating such a prospect to themselves.⁴⁸ Maria Larionescu believed that the establishment of communism led to an obvious rupture in the path of sociology as a science with a critical vocation, since historical materialism, conceived as a dogmatic and simplistic version of Marxism, substituted sociological analysis. She also suggested, however, that the influence of the sociological school of Bucharest on post-war sociology was evident, particularly so after 1965.⁴⁹

The other views expressed under this heading seemed to suggest the same perspective as regards the destiny of Romanian sociology in the aftermath of World War II. 1948 was the year of an obvious *rupture* which was marked by the dissolution of university departments, and of the specialized institutions. Nonetheless, the existence of a connection labeled as *continuity* between interwar and post-war Romanian sociology was also suggested. The durability of the discipline would have been ensured by the tradition of monographic research which would be preserved and perpetuated, even if it was under the “scientific umbrella” of other disciplines: philosophy, statistics, economics, geography.

1944-1948 – an *intermezzo*

The period 1944-1948 is seen as a revival of inter-war sociology.⁵⁰ Sociology tried to survive the war. In Bucharest, Cluj and Iași, sociology was still an academic discipline within the Faculties of Letters and Philosophy. Nothing seemed to announce the dark times that lay ahead. In the summer of 1945, old students and collaborators celebrated Professor Dimitrie Gusti, by organising the 20th anniversary from the first monographic campaign.⁵¹ The old and newer professionals in the discipline predicted the resumption of sociological research and investigations, both in rural and urban areas. The first initiative of this kind after the war took place in August 1945 when a team of ten researchers,⁵² led by Anton Golopenția, was to undertake research in Hodac (Mureș County).⁵³ Another occasion of such an undertaking was to come in the summer of 1946, when Henri H. Stahl decided to resume research in Runcu village in Gorj County, a research begun in 1930.⁵⁴ Another campaign was carried out in 1946 in Drăguș (Făgăraș County), while sociological investigations on forest workers in Vâlcea and Argeș Counties were also carried on.⁵⁵

During this period, one may also observe an increase in the number of sociological publications, as many results of the research carried out

during the war would only now meet the print.⁵⁶ Those who signed these publications are still renowned sociologists of the interwar period: D. Gusti,⁵⁷ H. H. Stahl,⁵⁸ Traian Herseni,⁵⁹ Vasile V. Caramelea,⁶⁰ Lucia Apolzan,⁶¹ Anton Golopenția, and others. The sociologists felt, however, that there was /would be need to adapt their research to the new post-war realities, as what seemed to be a revival of pre-war sociology actually turned out to be only a brief *intermezzo*, cut short by the coming to power of the communist regime. The scenario, as we have seen, is similar to that from other countries from Central and Eastern Europe, where attempts to recover the discipline after the war were annulled by political intervention in 1947-1948.

Breakdown of the institutional framework of sociology

Sociology has always been regarded with suspicion, skepticism and even hostility by the communist regimes.⁶² In these conditions, the *assault* on the discipline followed a series of fixed steps. The *Decree no. 175/ August 3, 1948* (the new Law on Education) ratified the removal of sociology from among academic disciplines.⁶³ In a gesture of free mimesis caused by a desire to align to the “light” model of the Soviet homeland, where sociology was considered to be a bourgeois pseudo-science, Romania ended an important pre-war intellectual tradition. The short, medium and long-term consequences of this decision were entirely unfavorable to professional sociologists. University departments and specialized institutes were dissolved. The periodical publications disappeared as well. Sociology was eliminated among academic disciplines. Anything that had any relation to sociology was subsumed to the new ideology – Marxism-Leninism; sociology was going to *melt* in other disciplines: philosophy, political economy, and most often, historical materialism.⁶⁴

This process certainly met with opposition and resistance. Not a direct opposition, but rather a passive resistance. An illustrative example is that of Anton Golopenția, who tried to continue his projects, despite all the troubles and misfortunes that befell him. He refused to get involved in politics and chose to remain loyal to his preoccupations.⁶⁵ The others did not passively witness the foreseen disaster either. In 1947, Dimitrie Gusti tried to reestablish the *Romanian Social Institute*, compiling a comprehensive plan of research for the coming years. Knowing that in order to carry out his initiative, he would need support from the state institutions, Gusti would have sketched a collaboration agreement

between the *Romanian Social Institute*, the *Central Institute of Statistics*, and the *Superior Economic Council*.⁶⁶ He sought political support as well, turning to his former student Miron Constantinescu. When Gusti wrote to him insistently asking for support in approving the collaboration agreement, Miron Constantinescu had just been appointed Secretary of the *Ministerial Commission for Economic Recovery and Monetary Stabilization*.⁶⁷ Constantinescu's answer made Gusti understand that times had changed and the needs and priorities were different. Constantinescu basically approved of Gusti's initiative, which he found to be "*fair and positive*", but he also drew his attention to the fact that both the *Romanian Social Institute* and the *Central Institute of Statistics* would have to "work" under the authority and "*in agreement with the directives of the Ministerial Commission and the Supreme Economic Council*".⁶⁸ Moreover, Constantinescu mentioned to Gusti that the *Romanian Social Institute* would have to adopt, in the research that they had to carry out, "*the materialist dialectics of Marxism-Leninism, the only one that could lead to a fair interpretation of the results obtained through monographic research and statistics of reality*".⁶⁹ Finally, the same Constantinescu informed Gusti that Romanian sociology, "*former unilaterally rural sociology, must become primarily an urban sociology of the industrial centers and of the working population*".⁷⁰ An option that would soon become an illusion.

Both sociology and the entire intellectual and cultural system built by Dimitrie Gusti were subjected to public disapproval after 1948. The new political power qualified in rough terms the period 1944-1948. Later, by means of detached and objective historical analysis, this was considered to be a "*revival of inter-war sociology*" or "*a period of rebirth of sociology*". But in those times it was seen as manifestations of an attack on Marxist-Leninist ideology. The picture depicted by communist propaganda incriminated practices, ruled judgments on trends and pointed at the real or imaginary enemies of the new political and social order:

In the years 1944-1947, the exploiting classes and their ideologies used the opportunities they still had to publish and disseminate idealistic, mystical and deeply reactionary [...] sociological works, to print newspapers and magazines that continued to spread bourgeois ideology. They used these opportunities to focus their attack on Marxist sociology and philosophy. The ideological representatives of the exploiting classes sought to demonstrate that the Marxist-Leninist conception would not be appropriate for the Romanian realities.⁷¹

The imaginary dispute between inter-war sociology and Marxist-Leninist ideology was not going to end with the coming to power of the communist regime in 1948. The *enemy*, whether collective or impersonal, with invisible social features, represented a constant threat, existing everywhere, waiting for the right moment to strike the finishing blow to the newly established political regime:

With the military defeat of fascism and the establishment of popular democracy, the ideological struggle in our country has not ended [...] This is why one of the major tasks repeatedly outlined in the party documents to our ideological front was [...] that of liquidating the ideological remnants of the past from the people's consciousness, by exposing the reactionary character of their class and by confuting them through scientific means. A brake in the normal development of new life in our socialist state [...] this lumber of the past had to be removed without a trace (underline. - Ș.B.).⁷²

Such logic had the advantage of justifying and legitimizing the policies and practices that communists imposed on the cultural field. The intellectuality was going to be subordinated and the purging campaigns of authors and works, as well as the physical repression against those who did not line up to the model imposed by the party, had their own precise purpose, carried out in the service the people, for its good and interest:

Against all these unscientific theories of bourgeois sociology and philosophy, against these reactionary ideological attacks and maneuvers, a merciless fight was organized and conducted under the leadership of the party. The class basis and social function of these idealistic doctrines and theories, with their deeply anti-scientific content, was exposed. The ideological front, led by the party, conducted a systematic offensive in all domains, opposing these reactionary theories to the bright ideas of the Marxist-Leninist conception, scientifically proving that the only way to social progress, to solving the vital problems of the Romanian people is that indicated by the Marxist-Leninist doctrine.⁷³

In this war against what was considered to be the "*remnant of bourgeois ideology*", a special role was given to sociology, a science that was viewed as reactionary, anti-scientific, obscurantist and subjected to capitalism. The purging process was not going to end anytime soon, as the influence of bourgeois sociological ideologies and theories remained a danger against which a continuous fight had to be carried out:

The disclosure of the anti-scientific, obscurantist nature of all sorts of idealistic, mystical and reactionary philosophical and sociological <systems> which circulated in our country in the past, constitute an important task assigned by our party to the Marxist-Leninist researches from the fields of philosophy and sociology.⁷⁴

Post-war destinies

Beyond the institutional disaster, marked by the dissolution of all the research centers and university departments, there was also a collective drama of the professional body of the discipline, though, as we have seen, the communist acerbic discourse seldom marked its enemies accurately. The abolition of sociology was not enough, as the discipline had not existed independent of certain people who made themselves *responsible* for its propagation. The regime had forged a plan to hold everyone responsible, depending on the seriousness of the acts committed:

In fighting against the reactionary conceptions of the past, the precise determination of the role played by its supporters was rigorously taken into account. It is self-understood that ideas have not asserted themselves, but were put into circulation by people who are responsible for them. In determining the degree of responsibility which lies with everyone who has supported outdated ideas in the culture of our country of the time, the Leninist difference between the different ways of asserting reactionarism were taken into account.⁷⁵

Sociologists thus reached little anticipated situations, many of them being removed from the positions they were holding. Their professional training and educational qualifications were not worth very much in the new social and political context. Some of them chose exile, trying to continue their activities abroad. Others sought opportunities for professional reorientation. Finally, the most unfortunate of the lot had to withstand the rigors of communist repression. Few were those who did not suffer, one way or another.

Constantin Brăiloiu (1893-1958) was characterized by Henri H. Stahl as the "*precursor and first doctrinaire of popular art sociology*".⁷⁶ Invited by Gusti, Brăiloiu participated in several monographic campaigns starting with 1927, in which he carried out folkloric investigations.⁷⁷ Constantin Brăiloiu remained abroad ever since the beginning of the war, occupying

the position of technical consultant for the Romanian Embassy in Bern. He continued his work in France and Switzerland.⁷⁸

Another such example would be that of the spouses Sabin Manuilă (1894-1964) and Veturia Manuilă (1896 -1986) who, in their turn, chose the path of exile, settling in the United States after 1947.⁷⁹ A physician by profession, with studies at the University of Budapest, Sabin Manuilă was concerned with domains such as social hygiene and medicine, and later statistics, sociology and demography.⁸⁰ From 1929 he participated in several monographic campaigns led by Dimitrie Gusti.⁸¹ From 1936 he was the director of the Central Institute of Statistics.⁸²

Dumitru Amzăr (1906-1999) was a close collaborator of Dimitrie Gusti, but in the late 1930s, he had an intellectual dispute with Dimitrie Gusti, which produced a rupture between the two.⁸³ From 1940 he served as press secretary and cultural *attaché* of the Romanian embassy in Berlin.⁸⁴ After the end of the war, he refused to return to Romania and ended his career as a sociologist, dedicating himself to a career in education in Berlin and later in Wiesbaden.

Mircea Vulcănescu was considered to be one of the most illustrious minds of Dimitrie Gusti's sociological school.⁸⁵ Vulcănescu was one of Dimitrie Gusti's closest collaborators, participating in most annual monographic campaigns.⁸⁶ During World War II he was appointed Undersecretary in the Ministry of Finance, position which he held until 23 August 1944.⁸⁷ On August 30, 1948 he was arrested and tried as a former member of the Ion Antonescu government, accused of being a "war criminal".⁸⁸ In October 1946, he was sentenced to eight years in prison. He served his sentence in the prisons of Jilava and Aiud. He died in prison on 28 October 1952, in Aiud.⁸⁹

Anton Golopenția was another victim of the regime. One of Dimitrie Gusti's assistants, Golopenția had an exemplary intellectual training, obtaining a PhD in Germany (1936).⁹⁰ After 23 August 1944, Anton Golopenția refused to get involved in political battles, remaining loyal to his intellectual concerns.⁹¹ He held the position of Director General Delegate of the Central Institute of Statistics, but was released from his job in 1948.⁹² He later worked as a collaborator on various projects of the State Planning Committee, without a doubt with the help of the President of the State Planning Committee of that time, Miron Constantinescu, a former student of his.⁹³ In January 1950, he was arrested and incriminated in the Pătrășcanu lawsuit.⁹⁴ Golopenția did not resist the harsh conditions

of detention and the exhausting investigations and died of galloping consumption on 9 September 1951 in Văcărești Hospital.⁹⁵

Traian Herseni, another important member of the inter-war sociological school, was also faced with the torture of the Romanian Gulag. The indictment act against him was his political work and orientation in the inter-war period, Herseni being an overt supporter of the Legionary Movement.⁹⁶ Traian Herseni was arrested and imprisoned between 1952-1956.⁹⁷ After being released from prison, Traian Herseni continued to be intellectually marginalized, not having the right to sign for a while.⁹⁸

To all this drama was added that of Dimitrie Gusti's – "the Professor", who had patronized and animated Romanian sociology for over two decades. His post-war drama was little anticipated, but seemed to coincide with that of the discipline to which he had devoted himself. From the summer of 1944, Dimitrie Gusti became the President of the Romanian Academy, the highest intellectual dignity that came to confirm his status and role in the Romanian culture.⁹⁹ In this capacity, he left for Moscow one year later to participate at the 220th years anniversary of the Academy of Sciences of Moscow.¹⁰⁰ In the summer of 1945, his old students and collaborators celebrated him by organizing the anniversary of two decades from the first monographic campaign.¹⁰¹ One year later (1946), the same Gusti travelled to the United States of America, where he had meetings with the most important sociologists across the Atlantic and held several conferences at the University of Wisconsin and at Harvard and Yale Universities.¹⁰²

These details might mislead us, since we might think that Dimitrie Gusti got safely over the war and over the changes imposed by the new geopolitical order. However, the truth seems to be somewhat tinted. Gusti himself must have seen the dangers entailed by Romania's entrance into the sphere of influence of the Soviet Union. Otherwise, we would not be able to explain some of his acts – as, for instance, his presence in the committee of intellectuals who decided to found ARLUS (Romanian Society for Friendship with the Soviet Union) in the autumn of 1944.¹⁰³ Another example would be the laudatory remarks regarding the Soviet homeland published in the articles of the Romanian informal publications of the Red Army – *Graiu nou*.¹⁰⁴ The complete change of perspective to Marxism-Leninism, easily discernable in Dimitrie Gusti's courses after 1945, would be equally difficult to explain.¹⁰⁵ All this makes sense, however, if we admit that Gusti had understood, better and faster than others, the destiny of post-war Romania.

Dimitrie Gusti was going to feel the full shock of the disintegration of sociology, falling into the disgrace of the regime.¹⁰⁶ Gusti's drama continued and might have amplified if some of his old disciples had not done everything in their power to help him. For five years, Dimitrie Gusti lived in completely inappropriate conditions, in the house of one of his former students and monographist team workers. He was rehabilitated no sooner than 1955, when he was granted a special pension and a comfortable home in the center of the Capital.¹⁰⁷ The burden of old age and the bitterness of the five years of being disgraced had their say, and Gusti could not take advantage of this late rehabilitation. He died just two months after being rehabilitated.¹⁰⁸

What kind of sociology between 1948-1965?

In 1948, the last series of students of Dimitrie Gusti and Henri H. Stahl's finished sociology at the University of Bucharest.¹⁰⁹ It was the moment in which a circle was closed, for in the autumn of the same year, a department and a course of sociology disappeared from the curricula of the university from Bucharest. The entire intellectual edifice built by Dimitrie Gusti over the past decades no longer existed.

Sociologists were forced to hide their identity behind other professions, trying to survive the changes of the time. The most common option was the migration to ethnography – professional opportunities were available in institutions such as the Village Museum and the Folklore Institute. This was the case of Gheorghe Focșa,¹¹⁰ Ernest Bernea,¹¹¹ Lucia Apolzan¹¹² or Mihail Pop.¹¹³ Others worked for the Institute for Anthropological Research of the Academy – Vasile V. Caramelea; or for the Institute of Psychology – Traian Herseni. Last but not least, the Central Institute of Statistics was another option. After Anton Golopenția's resignation from the post of Director in 1948, the mathematician Gheorghe Mihoc was appointed leader, and the Institute was subordinated to the State Planning Commission.¹¹⁴ Gheroghe Retegan, Roman Cresin, Vladimir Trebici, and others worked for the Central Institute of Statistics.

Under these circumstances, is it necessary to ask ourselves to what extent sociology still existed in Romania between 1948-1965? This particular issue was discussed and debated only at the surface level and without great interest. Most scholars recognize the rupture that occurred in sociology in 1948, but they try to suggest that it was not absolute.¹¹⁵ There were also opinions that went further, suggesting that sociology

would have survived “in illegality”, not in *institutionalized* forms, but as a *cultural infrastructure*.¹¹⁶ Not least, there has been talk of the existence of a revival of sociology, or at least an attempt in this direction since 1953, when Paul H. Stahl, Florea Stănculescu and Adrian Gheorghiu started a project concerning the ensemble of peasant architecture, which had in view the publication of sixteen volumes.¹¹⁷

The strongest argument in favor of continuity was nonetheless represented by the monographic research, the tradition of which was not lost after 1948. These initiatives of monographic research were undertaken by institutions such as the Central Department of Statistics,¹¹⁸ the Institute of Economic Research of the P.R.R. (People’s Republic of Romania) Academy,¹¹⁹ the Institute of Geology and Geography of the P.R.R. Academy, the Department of Social Welfare of the Institute of Hygiene and Labor Protection and the Institute of Philosophy of the P.R.R. Academy.¹²⁰ It is true that these activities were additional, and most often than not subordinated to other aims and interests, reason for which their scientific value is not significant. All the more so as this empirical research was limited to information and data collection which has never been analyzed from a theoretical perspective, in a scientific, sociological manner.¹²¹

What mattered, however, was to continue the tradition of inter-war sociology, despite its having survived underground, in illegality.¹²² It nonetheless survived through Dimitri Gusti’s disciples, who conducted studies and programs of empirical research on the model of pre-war tradition. This way, new specialists in sociology were formed, even though they were not sociologists *per se*.¹²³

IV. A *Controlled* Re-institutionalization of Sociology (1965-1977)

On 29 May 1959, several representatives of various sectors dealing with research in social sciences established the *National Sociological Committee*, which was affiliated, the same year, to the I.S.A. (*International Sociological Association*).¹²⁴ The first meeting of the Committee established a number of priorities, adopted a statute and voted a ruling committee which included: Athanase Joja (as Chairman), Mihail Ralea, Vasile Malinschi, Petre Constantinescu-Iași (vice-Presidents), Manea Mănescu (general-secretary), Andrei Oțetea, Constantin Ionescu-Gulian and Tudor Bugnariu (members).¹²⁵ The establishment of this committee

and the affiliation to the International Sociological Association were followed by the participation, for the first time by a Romanian delegation, to the *IV International Congress of Sociology* which took place from 8 to 15 September 1959 to Stresa, Milano, and at the *V International Congress of Sociology*, which took place in the United States at Washington, from 2 to 8 September 1962.¹²⁶ In 1962, it was issued, after almost fifteen years of absence, a new specialized periodical – *The Romanian Journal of Sociology*, publication of the National Committee of Sociology. The magazine's periodicity would not be yearly, as between 1962-1970, only six numbers were issued grouped in four volumes.¹²⁷

How should we understand and analyze these events? A brief look at those who were part of the ruling committee of the N.S.C., on those two delegations who attended the Congresses of the I.S.A., but also at those who signed the articles of the first issues of *R.J.S.*, reveals a paradox. No one subject to the above enumeration were professional sociologists. In these circumstances, one should ask himself to what extent these initiatives have contributed to the revival of the Romanian sociology? The answer to this question is quite simple. It is obvious that the establishment of N.S.C. in 1959 was a political and propagandistic act, which didn't took into account the tradition of Romanian sociology. The purposes of these initiatives were different. Those who were charged to represent Romanian sociology abroad were merely "diplomats" appointed with an ideological mission rather than a scientific one. Their aim was not to bring to the attention of the academics the stage of development of the Romanian sociology – a discipline sidelined for over a decade, but to record the trends in Western sociology and to respond to these trends from a Marxist perspective. At least until 1965, the existence of N.S.C. and its periodical have brought almost no benefits for the Romanian sociology. The sole positive aspect of the two initiatives could have been a cautious and controlled openness towards sociology. However, the fact that professionals as Henri H. Stahl, Traian Herseni or Ovidiu Neamțu, were ignored and not asked to be a part of these initiatives, is a detail showing rather political and ideological intentions, but also reserves towards the old Romanian sociological school.

The history of the Romanian sociology between 1959-1965 is difficult to define. Sociology was still regarded with mistrust and suspicion, as it was still a marginalized discipline, but its place among the other social sciences was to be discussed. Dimitrie Gusti, though rehabilitated in 1955, was still judged for his errors and mistakes – the most serious of which

was his or his school's political involvement.¹²⁸ But, as a consequence of the Soviet Union's ideological thaw, a liberalization current was also perceived in Romania,¹²⁹ and the first steps towards a recovery of the interwar Romanian sociology's heritage were made.¹³⁰

1965 represents a milestone in the history of Romanian sociology. After many years in which the discipline tried to define its identity and find a place of its own among the other social sciences, the political regime, through the voice of the R.C.P. leader, gave a signal in terms of reconsidering the role of sociology in Romania.¹³¹ The consent given by N. Ceaușescu apparently guaranteed the re-institutionalization of sociology after nearly two decades of marginalization. At this point, it is necessary to emphasize that the "legalization" of sociology occurred at a time when the internal and the international context favored making such a decision. First of all, it was a pressure from other socialist countries, which were making progresses in this field. Second of all, the institutionalization of sociology and the timid recovery of the interwar Romanian sociology tradition – by republishing the works of Dimitrie Gusti or Petre Andrei, represented an ideological remoteness from the monopoly imposed by Moscow.

The first steps towards a re-institutionalization of the Romanian sociology were exceeded. Accepted and promoted even by the regime – essential detail in a ultra-centralized communist system, sociology could have hoped to regain the status and importance it had in interwar. But the gap caused by the nearly two decades of marginalization would not be so easy to recover. Firstly, the institutional framework of the discipline was to be restore.

In 1965, a first important step towards the institutionalization of sociology is implemented by the setting up of a *Centre for Sociological Research* at the Romanian Academy of Science and by the re-establishment of departments of sociology, first at the University of Bucharest, and later within the University of Iași and Cluj-Napoca.¹³²

On the "ins and outs" of these undertakings and on the struggles that were given from those who could claim the paternity of these departments, Henri H. Stahl remembers some interesting details. As reported by Stahl, Tudor Bugnariu was the one who had a practical and coherent initiative for the recovery of sociology as an academic discipline.¹³³ Trying to materialize his intention in a manner as professional as possible T. Bugnariu sought feedback on this issue through lengthy discussions with Traian Herseni and Gh. Vlădescu-Răcoasa. Later, they discussed the subject through a series of articles on the relationships between sociology

and socialism/communism which were published in the “Contemporanul” magazine.¹³⁴ Of the new climate around the discipline benefited C-tin Nicuță, a former diplomat and a Philosophy PhD, who reinterpreted the theses launched by Bugnariu, radicalizing them in a Stalinist manner.¹³⁵ Thus, it seems that he was the one to reestablish a Department of Sociology at the University of Bucharest’s Faculty of Philosophy. But C-tin Nicuță was soon to be intruded in his project by Miron Constantinescu, a former student of Dimitrie Gusti and a former important member of the communist nomenclature. Removed from the Politburo and the Central Committee after a putsch attempt in 1957, Constantinescu was to regain his high position in the management structures of the communist system within less than a decade. The new balance of power determined a compromise. Thus, they were created two departments: one of sociology, led by Miron Constantinescu, and another one in the sphere of sociological doctrine and methodology, which was assigned to C-tin Nicuță.¹³⁶ Subsequent the agreement between the two, C-tin Nicuță experienced a period of professional decline, which allowed Miron Constantinescu to take charge and become the only “patron” of the discipline.

It is interesting the fact that the presence of these three characters at the top of the discussion on the restoration of sociology in Romania was not coincidental. Curiously, the destinies of the three show similarities that are worth be brought into attention. All three were students in the 30s and had sympathies for the Left. All three graduated the Faculty of Letters and Philosophy, but each one in another important Romanian academic center: Miron Constantinescu in Bucharest, Tudor Bugnariu in Cluj and Constantin Nicuță in Iași. All of them had a major in sociology, working each with a different important sociologist of interwar Romanian: Miron Constantinescu with Dimitrie Gusti, Tudor Bugnariu with Virgil I. Bărbat and Constantin Nicuță alongside Petre Andrei. After 1945, all of them were professors of dialectical and historical materialism in Iași (Constantin Nicuță), Cluj (Tudor Bugnariu) and Bucharest (Miron Constantinescu).

Moreover, after 1945 the careers of the three experienced similar ascending trends. During the postwar years, they occupied similar positions and offices. Miron Constantinescu was Secretary of State in the Ministry of Education in 1947. Tudor Bugnariu occupied a similar position from 1950 until 1956. Meanwhile Constantin Nicuță was a professor, head of department and vice-chancellor at the “A. A. Zhdanov” Superior School in Social Sciences during 1951-1956. Afterwards he was replaced in all these functions by Tudor Bugnariu, while Constantin Nicuță took his

place as Deputy of the Minister of Education. During this period, Miron Constantinescu experienced an impressive political career, occupying high positions in the party and state structures. After Constantinescu's "fall" of 1957, the careers of the other two took a turn for the best. Bugnariu was appointed professor of dialectical and historical materialism and head of department at the Faculty of Philosophy, University of Bucharest, occupying an academic office which belonged to Miron Constantinescu prior to his political decline. Constantin Nicuță made a career in diplomacy – becoming ambassador of Romania in Vienna and Paris.

In 1965 the balance of power between the three seemed to favor Bugnariu who had the most important academic background. Nicuță was the one who left the academic field for nearly a decade, opting for a career in diplomacy, while Constantinescu was politically and also academically marginalized also for nearly a decade. But Nicuță probably took advantage of his political capital acquired during his diplomatic experiences and easily surpassed Bugnariu, obtaining a primacy in the re-institutionalization of the Romanian sociology. Also, Miron Constantinescu's gradual rehabilitation after 1965 changed again the balance of power, since Constantinescu had the most impressive political background, now acting as a "new old star".

By assuming the success in terms of "ruling" the new academic discipline, Miron Constantinescu saw a huge potential in this opportunity. He brought by his side the retired Henri H. Stahl, one of the most valuable exponents Bucharest Sociological School, seeking to obtain a primacy in the discipline, which would could satisfied Constantinescu's pride and thirst for power after a decade of political and social marginalization. His pride and perhaps a dose of significant resentment made him take some bizarre decisions too. Thus, Constantinescu did everything in his power to "marginalize" Traian Herseni or just keep him away from sociology. Constantinescu probably believed that the latter could weaken, through his intellectual background and his prestige, his privileged position in the Romanian sociology.

After 1965 the number of the Romanian sociological research units has expanded and diversified. In addition to the departments of sociology established within the Romanian universities, other departments have emerged within institutions subordinated to the S.R.R. Academy of Science. Distinct sociological research units were also established. Moreover, a 1970 "general survey" of the sociological research projects carried on in

Romania revealed that there were many other academic research institutes with preoccupation in the field of sociology.¹³⁷

Within the University of Bucharest there were two separate units of sociological investigation. Firstly, it was the *Department of Sociology* of the Faculty of Philosophy, whose main objective lied in teaching. The other unit was the *Sociological Laboratory* which had its one administrative status, even if it was working under the authority of the *Department of Sociology*. The *Department* was established in 1966 through the efforts of Miron Constantinescu and Ion Drăgan.¹³⁸ The *Sociological Laboratory* was established by Order no. 739/5.12.1968 of the Minister of Education. It was functioning as a branch of the Department of Sociology of the University and had different tasks: to undertake field investigations, to grant methodological assistance and to co-ordinate as far as methodology is concerned the investigations made by other educational units.¹³⁹

At the "Babes-Bolyai" University in Cluj-Napoca it was established a *Department of Philosophy – Sociology* and a *Sociological Laboratory*. The Department was founded in 1967, while the *Laboratory* a year later.¹⁴⁰ In the "Al. I. Cuza" University of Iași was founded a *Department of Psychology – Sociology* in 1967.¹⁴¹ Sociological research was also undertaken by the *Department of Economic of Agriculture and Statistics* of the Faculty of Economics.¹⁴² The *Department of Sociology* of the "Ștefan Gheorghiu" Academy of Social and Political Education was established in 1966. Operating within the Faculty of Philosophy and Political Science it also served the Faculty of Economics and the Faculty of History of the Academy.¹⁴³ It is also worth mentioning the fact that the Popular University of Bucharest has approved a series of lectures "*Introduction to sociology*" since 1967.¹⁴⁴

Beside these centers which mission was primarily didactic, there were also established sociology departments within the institutes subordinated to the Academy of Sciences, or even distinct specialized institutes. An example of this kind is the *Department of Sociology* of the Institute of Philosophy of the R.S.R. Academy of Science.¹⁴⁵ Another example is the *Research Centre for Youth Affairs*, established in 1968 under the coordination of the Ministry for Youth Affairs. The *Centre* was coordinated by Ovidiu Bădina and had a structure similar to a research institute of the Academy of science.¹⁴⁶

Investigations with sociological character were also undertaken by other institutions, despite the fact that within their structure there were not distinct departments of sociology: the *Institute of Psychology* of the

R.S.R. Academy,¹⁴⁷ the *Center for Anthropological Research*,¹⁴⁸ the *Institute of Economic Research*,¹⁴⁹ the *Institute of Hygiene and Public Health*,¹⁵⁰ the *Institute of South-East European Studies*,¹⁵¹ the *Institute of Pedagogical Sciences* of the Ministry of Education¹⁵² or the *Research Institute for Agrarian Economy and the Organizing of Socialist Agricultural Enterprises*.¹⁵³

Towards a New Marginalization (1970-1977)

The history of the Romanian sociology after 1965 was marked by several events that lead to a further marginalization of the discipline. At first moment was the establishment of the Academy of Social and Political Sciences. On November 13, 1969 a work meeting that gathered scientists, researchers and professors of social sciences was held. During this meeting it was decided to form a commission which was to draw up the drafts of what would become the Academy of Social and Political Sciences.¹⁵⁴ On February 19, 1970 the first General Assembly of the A.S.P.S. was held. The institution was going to be submitted to the authority of the Romanian Communist Party's Central Committee. With this meeting the Statute of A.S.P.S. was adopted, and the full members, the correspondents and the managing offices of the Academy were elected. The decisions adopted by the General Assembly of February 19, 1970 were enacted by the S.R.R.'s State Council Decree no. 121/ March 18, 1970.¹⁵⁵ The Decree scrupulously established the duties of the institution that was to control the social sciences in Romania.¹⁵⁶ Also, the third article of the Decree stipulated that: "*The Academy of Social and Political Sciences promotes the dialectical and the historical materialism as methods of research and provides theoretical and ideological orientation of the scientific research on Marxism-Leninism grounds*".¹⁵⁷

The Academy was organized in specialized departments, which were subordinated to the General Assembly and the Presidium. A.S.P.S. had eight sections,¹⁵⁸ and it was composed of 125 full members and 95 correspondents,¹⁵⁹ The impact of the A.S.P.S. establishment on the Romanian sociology was mainly a negative one. Although the appointment of Henri H. Stahl as head of the Section of sociology could have been considered as a guarantee of an improving of the work and of research methods, Miron Constantinescu remained the "master" of discipline.

Another turning-point occurs in 1973-1974, when Romania's cultural policy is subject to an ideological reorientation, with the launch of the

famous “theses of June”. In this context, the death Miron Constantinescu also occurs (July 1974). Miron Constantinescu’s influence on all the social sciences increased with his appointment as president of the A.S.P.S. (1970). Constantinescu, who was still one of the most zealous “Stalinist”, as far as his attitude towards his subordinates, had powers allowing him to control the entire scientific activity in the social sciences. He was the one who approved research internships abroad or any travel to international convention or conferences. And during those times, such privileges were the ultimate benefit that a researcher could have. But Miron Constantinescu’s political position could have had a positive influence over the discipline, mainly in terms of the possibilities that he was able to provide to the research units. Thus, his death in 1974 produced a little “earthquake” in the Romanian sociology as the discipline lost an important support and its influence among the party officials and the decision-making bodies. After his sudden death in 1974, the history of Romanian sociology took an unexpected turn. Subsequently, the Sociological Laboratory of the University of Bucharest was to be abolished. A few years later, in 1977, Romanian sociology would receive another blow. The Central Committee Plenum in June was to impose a set of measures that led to a further marginalization of the discipline: the study of sociology was restricted to post-graduate studies, the graduating specialization being abolished.

Conclusions

The postwar history of the Romanian sociology could be divided into several, distinct periods, each and every one influenced by some dramatic changes due to social, economic, and political causes, but also to the international context. If the 1944-8 chronological framework was a period of revival marked by a “re-launch” of the discipline, this short *intermezzo* was nothing but a late echo of the prewar and the war time scientific accumulations. Although in this period the contributions in the field were valuable and numerous, these works were written by well-known prewar sociologists and it were based on their previous activities and researches. The establishment of the communist regime in Romania was the first major breakpoint in the history of the discipline. The new political regime developed a hostile attitude towards sociology, considering it as a “bourgeois pseudo-science of society”. The university departments and the specialized institutes were disbanded, and the

sociologists were to find possibilities for professional retraining. However, the sociological researches continued during these years of “misery”, but at an “underground” level, conducted by some of the prewar sociologist who worked in different research institutes.

A significant political, ideological and intellectual breakthrough could be detected during the first half of the 60s, doubled by a paradigm shift of the communist regime’s attitude towards sociology. This change was detectable even within the discourse, as the “bourgeois pseudo-science of society” became the “bourgeois sociology”. The re-institutionalization of the discipline in the 60s led to an explosion of empirical studies, which was followed by a significantly increase of the sociological literature. But a new decline of the discipline occurred in the second half of the 70s. Although the number of sociological contributions does not decrease dramatically, most of these were not valuable, but rather profound ideological contributions.

To conclude, we must say that the establishment of the Soviet-type communist regime in Romania led to the abolition of sociology and then delayed its re-institutionalization for almost two decades. The natural and normal development of the discipline was thus delayed by the political repression and the ideological inflexibility of the communist regime. Thus, with the rehabilitation of the discipline in the 60s, the efforts to recover the advances made by the Western sociologies were to be doubled. But the need to fill the scientific gap had at least a positive aspect, as the (re) emerging Romanian sociology’s attitude towards the Western sociologies was both receptive and critical. This tortuous process during which the Romanian sociology sought to regain its position among the other social sciences could be explained by several hypotheses. Firstly, sociology was again institutionalized only when the regime was capable to accept it as a legitimate and useful discipline.¹⁶⁰ Moreover, a re-launch of sociology was only possible when the discipline was able to individualize itself within the theoretical and ideological complex consisted of Marxism-Leninism, dialectical and historical materialism and scientific socialism.¹⁶¹

NOTES

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- 131 Nicolae CEAUȘESCU, *Expunere cu privire la îmbunătățirea organizării și îndrumării activității de cercetare științifică*, In: Nicolae CEAUȘESCU, *Știința, învățământul, cultura în procesul formării societății socialiste multilateral dezvoltate*, București, 1976, p. 31.
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- 133 **Tudor Bugnariu** (b. June 30, 1909, Budapest – d. June 25, 1988, Bucharest). He was a student of the Faculty of Letters and Philosophy of the University of Cluj and, after graduating, he was offered a job as an assistant professor at the Department of Romanian language. He was soon released because of his political options, becoming a secondary school teacher. After August 23, 1944 Tudor Bugnariu became the Mayor of Cluj and after the 1948 Education Law he was reinstated as a professor at the University of Cluj and then at the University of Bucharest [Corneliu CRĂCIUN, *Dicționarul comunizanților din noaptea de 23 spre 24 august 1944*, Oradea: Editura Primus, 2009, p. 121]. In October 1958 he was transferred at the University of Bucharest, where he became a professor of dialectical and historical materialism and the Dean of the Faculty of Philosophy, Arhiva Universității București / The University of Bucharest Archive, Direcția Resurse Umane - Dosare de cadre / Department of Human Resources – Personal Files, file B 516 (Tudor Bugnariu).
- 134 *Ibidem*.
- 135 *Ibidem*.
- 136 **Constantin (Costache) Nicuță** (September 8, 1906, Pașcani – 1991, Bucharest). Student of the University of Iași – the Faculty of Letters and Philosophy and the Faculty of Law (1928-1932). He was later offered a job as an assistant professor at the Department of sociology and ethics of the University of Iași, thus working with Petre Andrei (1936-7). Afterwards, he

- was eliminated from the University due to his political option for the left. He became a PhD of the University of Iași with a thesis on the theory of social knowledge in the work of Max Weber (1945). Soon after, he was a professor of dialectical and historical materialism at the University of Iași. After 1948 he settled in Bucharest. After 1965 he was the Dean of the Faculty of Philosophy (1965-8), head of the Department of sociological and political doctrines (1966-1972), and head of the Department of sociology (1972-4). In 1970 he becomes a member of the Academy of Social and Political Sciences, and the vice-president of the Section of sociology (1970-1990), Ștefan COSTEA (coord.), *Sociologi români ...*, pp. 342-343.
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