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PATHWAYS OF KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE: THE DISSEMINATION OF ROMANIAN PUBLICATIONS IN EUROPE (SECOND HALF OF THE 19TH CENTURY - UNTIL THE FIRST WORLD WAR)

Abstract

In this article, I explore the ways and means publications written and printed in Romania were circulated abroad, mainly in Europe. I aim to identify, analyze and contextualize the transnational networks of individuals, learned societies, and commercial companies involved in this process, by looking at gifts, purchases, and exchanges. My thesis is that the study of these networks is a test of the actual depth of the modernizing process, as it reveals both the ability to connect to the actual transnational, not short of capitalistic, trade flows, as well as the individual relations between scholars.

Keywords: Book Trade; Transnational Networks; Scholar Networks; Learned Societies; Modernization in Romania

In the summer of 1879, Alexandru Socec (1859-1928) wrote in his private diary that he repelled becoming a tradesman. The young man decided not to follow in the footsteps of his father, the most important Romanian bookseller and publisher of the 19th century, Ioan V. Socec (1830-1896). Instead, Alexandru Socec decided to study law in Paris, only to settle later for a military career. The publishing house, the printing press, the bookstore and the other family affairs were to be inherited by his younger siblings. The esteemed father's personal and political networks proved essential in all these choices. Even so, the diary of Alexandru Socec is an important source for the history of Romanian book trade. As presumptive heir, he was sent to study in Leipzig and Paris. There

Alexandru Socec met several publishers, booksellers, or commissioners. Too young to care, or to bother, with the actual flows of the transnational book trade, Alexandru Socec sometimes mentioned only names, without revealing business details. One exception occurred in 1879. A certain Mr. Marechal, from Hachette & Cie., who at some point in the past had travelled for business to Bucharest, asked Alexandru Socec for a list of Romanian writers. Not a translation and publication offer were in hand, but the intention to send bookstore catalogues directly to interested buyers.¹

Mr. Marechal was following an established business pattern. The idea to directly approach fellow publishers and booksellers from all over Europe occurred to Michel Lévy (1821-1875). In 1847, Lévy travelled through France and then crossed Europe from West to East, and back. His aim was to negotiate in person and in different centers the direct sale of the titles published by the Paris-based house he had founded together with brothers, Calmann Lévy and Nathan Lévy. Bucharest was part of this long journey. Michel Lévy was apparently in touch with a fellow French tradesman, but the only indication given was the name Jules. Given the scarcity of the business correspondence kept during this journey, it is difficult to say precisely who were the probable partners among the few booksellers active in Bucharest. There was a good reason for such a long and difficult business trip: to eliminate the mediation of the German commissioners of book trade from Leipzig, Frankfurt/Main, and Vienna.²

There were nevertheless major differences between the Bucharest of 1847 and that of 1879. By 1847, Bucharest was the capital of Wallachia, a principality under Ottoman indirect rule and Russian protectorate. In 1879, Bucharest was the capital of the united (in 1859 with neighboring Moldova) and independent (1877-1878) Romania. Two years later, the Kingdom of Romania was proclaimed. These political changes owed much to the cultural transformations. The 19th century is generally acknowledged by the Romanian historical writing as an era of modernization. Cultural, political, educational, economic, social, socialite, literary and scientific patterns, either inspired, or simply copied from the Western and Central Europe, were essential for this conscious process, however imperfect.³ Co-ordinated and individual efforts were made in order to close first the literary, later also the scientific gaps, between Romania and Western Europe. This was nothing short of a national project, as unprecedented political measures, cultural activities, and scientific research aimed for structural changes in the society.

The prevalence of the Western culture in Romania during the 19th century was generally studied as a 'one-way road'. This is difficult to contradict. A major change occurred in the public role of thinkers. During the 17th and 18th centuries they were characterized by solitude.⁴ Only during the 1820-1830s, arguing the need to reform and change the society became a public debate. Historians Elena Siupiur, Andrei Pippidi, Alex Drace-Francis, and Lucian Boia argued that Western trained intellectuals were an important part of the political and cultural establishment, thus defining the structure and the actions of the Romanian elite on the long term. After earning a diploma or simply attending lectures at Western universities, intellectuals usually returned home and became part of broader elites, as demonstrated by Elena Siupiur. The cultural and political role the intellectuals equaled the economic force of the middle class in the process of nation building, argued Andrei Pippidi. Lucian Boia calculated the ratio of the new chairs created at the universities of Bucharest (established 1864) and Iași (1862) for the holder of doctor diplomas earned in France or Germany. Alex Drace-Francis discussed the role of the publishers and booksellers, and also challenged the idea that intellectuals were major decision-takers, despite being part of the political establishment.⁵ The Romanian society was in a changing process even before the 1859 Union. The economic changes were reflected by transformations in the entire tissue of the society, demonstrated Constanța Vintilă.⁶

Book trade developed against this background of emerging modernity. From a political point of view, the decade between 1856 (Treaty of Paris, which paved the way for the 1859 Union) and 1866 (coup removal of elected prince Alexandru Ioan Cuza and enthronement of a foreign dynasty, later that year of a modern, daring, however equivocal Constitution) was pivotal in the making of the modern state. Coincidentally, the first Romanian modern publishing houses were founded around 1856-1859. They were established by general tradesmen who found a niche in the professional bookselling and must be understood as part of a capitalistic business model. This included book trade, publishing, printing, sale of stationery, and of other wares (toys, music instruments, fashion items, wines). Such beginnings were not particular to the Romanian case.⁷ These capitalistic entrepreneurs were formally called "bookseller-publishers" (*librari-editori*) by their contemporaries. The term mimicked the French concept, at the same time pointing out towards the fact that very few booksellers were economically strong enough to venture as publishers

as well. Uncoincidentally, in the few months between the dethronement of Alexandru Ioan Cuza (11 February 1866) and the arrival of the foreign prince Carol I (10 May 1866), an Academic Society was formed. This became the Romanian Academy of Sciences in 1879. One defining feature of the Academy was that its ranks were open to ethnic Romanians from all the territories, including those under Austrian (later Austro-Hungarian), Russian, or Ottoman rule.

Aims, Sources, Thesis, and a Caveat

Intellectuals, booksellers-publishers, and the Romanian Academy of Sciences are important actors in the study of the 'pathways of knowledge exchange', in other words of the establishment, growth, and entanglement of the networks dealing with the dissemination of Romanian publications abroad. In this study, I aim to understand *if* and *how* books, journals, and scientific bulletins published in Romania were circulated abroad, particularly in Europe. In order to do so, I shall analyze the transnational networks of individuals with an academic background, learned societies (in this case, the Romanian Academy of Sciences), and professional booksellers involved in this process. My approach leaves deliberately outside the boundaries of this study the translations, government propaganda (increasingly active during the First World War), as well as the books published by Romanians abroad. As horrendous as it may be, scientific or literary merits are marginal for this research. Several names of authors and works must be mentioned, yet I shall discuss neither their 'perennial' value, nor the sometimes out-of-places reviews or private opinions expressed by contemporary peers. For this research, the central point of interest is the circulation of publications itself, by means of trade, exchange, or gift. The strategies of the authors and institutions, the subsequent role of the booksellers, publishers, and commissioners in connection to, or creation of new, transnational networks of book trade must be taken into account. The coherence or ineffectiveness of such strategies answers the question of the real capacity of Romanian authors and institutions to make their works known abroad. This also raises a different problem. Written in Romania and in the mother tongue, many publications had, apparently, a restricted public.

The major source for my contribution is the large correspondence available from the second half of the 19th century. The letters exchanged

between academics across Europe provide valuable insights into the circulation of books. The growth of institutional libraries through formalized exchanges is another issue to consider. In this respect, the administrative proceedings of the Romanian Academy of Sciences are very useful. Different archive materials complete the broader image of the international dimension of the book circulation.

My thesis is that, by looking at the dissemination of publications abroad, one gains a better understanding of the actual position of the Romanian culture and intellectual life within the European frameworks. I challenge the deep-rooted idea of the 'unknown or misunderstood Romania' by analyzing the capacity of intellectuals, institutions, and capitalistic entrepreneurs to connect and act within the transnational networks of the book trade. Being able to produce and export knowledge and thus enter into the exchange of ideas defines the depth of the modernization process. Therefore, one better understands the deep and the shallow changes brought upon by the mental, economic, and political process rightfully, however conventionally, defined as 'modernization'. The caveat of this approach is not to be understood as a nationalistic reaction to the modernization as westernization, a phenomenon which must be neither denied, nor minimized.

A word on political geography and one on chronology are also necessary. As mentioned before, the Romanian state emerged in 1859. Subjected to different legislations, the publishing houses and learned societies from the territories united with Romania in 1918 must be considered, as I shall argue below, as part of different other national markets.

Transnational Book Trade and the Difficulties of its Romanian Connections

The exchange of ideas, critique, counter-critique, praise or mockery, was crucial in the rise of the Republic of Letters. Book trade, with its almost inbuilt transnational networks of professional sellers and buyers was perhaps less ostentatious, yet equally important.⁸ Robert Darnton described this elaborated "communications circuit" for the 18th century, but his suggested method may be well extrapolated to the next centuries as well.⁹ Further research has emphasized the transnational dimension of the book trade, citing the influential work of Benedict Anderson in the understanding of "print capitalism".¹⁰ Gary D. Stark defined the booksellers and

publishers as “cultural entrepreneurs”, a vital category for the circulation of ideas.¹¹ The “network approach”, with “imprint evidence” as a tool, was employed as the most suitable analytical method, considered John Hinks.¹² Foremost for those book traders doing business in the economic peripheries, connecting to the already existing networks was a safe way to increase the chances of survival and success.¹³ In order to understand whether Romanian publications were part of transnational book trade, the both the study of personal, commercial, and institutional networks, as well as the “imprint evidence” are central. Romanian book trade and book dissemination were, when this aspect is taken into consideration, more dependent on the foreign contacts established by authors, than their inspiration or work capacity.

There is, I reckon, another important point. The book trade of the 19th century must be seen as part of the different national economies and markets. As a consequence, the production and circulation of books and other publications were subjected to uneven economic fluctuations¹⁴ and state regulations, including here different forms of censorship.¹⁵ During a century defined by ideologically self-centered nation states, book trade had to overcome the harsh rules of both economic protectionism and censorship. For such reasons, Romanian book trade should be researched by taking the political borders of the modern state, from 1859 and until the First World War into account. Buying or selling paper or books in the Austro-Hungarian territories from the so-called ‘Old Kingdom’ was subjected to strong and at times conflictual bilateral trade regulations.

Book trade was generally characterized by several common aspects. Already during the previous century, the interest for reading, either for pleasure, or for the improvement of professional skills, was on the rise, co-existing with high rates of illiteracy. Isolated individuals and reading societies¹⁶ alike were in search of new books and topics. Important progress was made in the technology of printing, with cheaper paper, the steam press¹⁷ and the lithography¹⁸ among the breakthrough innovations. The construction of railways and the interconnectivity between regions and states meant faster transportation between different centers of the book trade. At the same time, train travel gave individuals a certain amount of time to be spent reading.¹⁹ Less obvious for the general public, but of the highest interest in the academic milieu, scientific journals started to increase in number, importance as a communication tool between academics, and ultimately as a profitable investment for specialized booksellers and commissioners.²⁰ Since the middle of the century,

international copyright agreements and subsequent national regulations started to govern the global book market.²¹

A significant characteristic of the book trade was the rise of the business model based on the commission (*Kommissionsbuchhandel*). The main center was Leipzig, joined by Vienna and Frankfurt/Main on a smaller, yet as much effective position. This type of trade, with a (sometimes highly specialized) commissioner as an intermediary between a publisher anywhere in Germany, later all over Europe, and a bookseller akin overcame the hard borders faced by commerce. According to Thomas Keiderling, by the end of the 19th century 95% of the German book trade was handled by the Leipzig commissioners.²²

Researchers have pointed out toward the speed with which the above-mentioned features generalized. Wallachia and Moldova, later Romania, were not an exception. From the few printing presses, both religious and civil, and hard to grasp bookbinders of the early 19th century, one may certainly notice the establishment of bookstores from Bucharest and Jassy. German or Swiss emigres were among the first to uncover a new potential market in a society at the dawn of its modernization as Westernization. Importing books was, in the beginning, more important than publishing new titles. The few booksellers active in the Romanian Principalities during the 1840s were relying on the import of French literature, regardless if this was published in Paris or Brussels. The number of bookstores grew despite the impact of economic crises. Passed in order to control the freedom of the word, the 1862 Law of the Press, an adapted version of the French revolutionary act from 1793, set up the rules for the relation between authors of all kinds and their publishers, by regulating the so-called "literary proprietorship", e. g. the copyrights. Authors used to sell these rights for better or smaller fees (depending on name, previous success, and the generosity of the bookseller-publisher), but none was able to make a living solely from professionalized writing. Reading and literary societies, at times converting their agendas to different political ideas, were established. Some of the important booksellers-publishers were part of the group of politicians and entrepreneurs, which pushed in order to create a new (and vital) industry from scratch: the modern wood pulp paper factories. The thin group of high-cultured intellectuals, able to respond to the newest scientific or literary discoveries and trends, co-existed with the mass of a population subjected to a huge rate of illiteracy.²³

A history of 19th century Romanian transnational book trade and publication exchanges should not avoid Dinicu Golescu's travelogue,

describing three 1824-1826 journeys to Central and Western Europe. The Wallachian boyar described a state of affairs, turned gradually into a state of complaint, familiar to many present-day scholars: the deafening absence of books in the Romanian language, or written by Romanian authors, from the Western public libraries.²⁴ The well-intended aristocrat did not remain an exception. Foreign travelers aiming to arrive somehow familiarized with the realities of Wallachia and Moldova decried the lack of any local literature, save for the early 18th century works of Dimitrie Cantemir.²⁵ Romanian students abroad asked to have books from the personal libraries at home sent to Western Europe, especially when they tried to acquire academic titles with motherland connected topics.²⁶ From the point of view of the Western scholars, the situation was not much different. Hugo Schuchardt (1842-1927) felt obliged to let fellow linguist Bogdan Petriceicu Hasdeu know that, a too warm review of Romanian publications would be met by the German-speaking academic peers with mistrust and disbelief, as the knowledge on the country was limited.²⁷ Wilhem Rudow started his 1892 controversial *Geschichte des rumänischen Schrifttums bis zur Gegenwart* by bluntly accusing the absence of Romanian books from the German libraries, as well as from the general bookstores, a fact that hindered his documentation.²⁸ In addition to these assertions, a history of Romanian book trade, written by an insider during the 1940s, does not mention the external trade for the modern era.²⁹

Such baffling statements suggest, that Romanian publications lay outside the usual continental trade channels. They rather strengthen the idea of the 'one-way' circulation of books and deny the ability of the Romanian book traders and authors to be part of a global market.

Let us return to the admittedly partial information provided by Alexandru Socec's diary. Though running his business from Bucharest, a continental periphery in both geographical and economical terms, the bookseller-publisher Ioan V. Socec was connected to the major European and transcontinental book trade hubs. Among his correspondents one finds Heinrich Kessler, a commissioner bookseller from Leipzig; Eduard Kanitz, an important tradesman from Vienna; Louis Breton, partner and later successor of Louis Hachette. Moreover, Alexandru Socec admired his father's efforts to publish in the Romanian language for a readership partial to the native literature, in contrast to the French or German novels.³⁰ Of course, it was the social elite he had in mind, but import remained an important part of the bookselling business in Romania during the 19th century. In an 1872 letter, Ioan V. Socec himself wrote that he was able to

import books from “any part of Europe, even from the Americas”, besides having a correspondent in Constantinople, able to supply Arabic prints.³¹

Another deterring element was a more likely answer to the above-mentioned complaints. Most publications printed in Romania during the 19th century were written in a national tongue undergoing an almost uninterrupted process of transformation, from the alphabet (Cyrillic to transitional to Latin), to the lexical elements themselves, not to forget the puzzling debates on orthography (phonetic versus Latin-inspired).³² Given this context, there should not be a surprise that linguists were among the first to be interested in acquiring dictionaries, grammars, glossaries, academic or literary publications from Romania.

Establishing Networks: Foreign Scholars Demand Romanian Publications

Once an interest into the Romanian language or history was established, the ordering of books or journals was apparently not problematic. The commission-trade was part of the answer. Even before setting into contact with a colleague from Romania, academics were able to order publications either through their usual local booksellers, from Bucharest booksellers, or from household names of the Leipzig commission trade. Several examples support this idea. It was possible to buy Romanian publications in this way in Paris (as Roma-specialized ethnographer Paul Bataillard or M.P. Dashkevich, the latter studying in the French capital, while preparing to occupy a literature chair at the Kyiv University), Florence (linguist Napoleone Caix), or Budapest (Paul Hunfálvy, linguist and politician).³³ European intellectuals were thus following the pattern they already knew and held as efficient. This was an established behavior and must be understood as normal, and not as a Romania-linked exceptionality. On the contrary, this information confirms the force and the depth of the transnational book trade networks.

To work directly with a Romanian bookseller, and thus eliminate intermediaries, would not only have simplified the international flow of publications, but would have also cut some of the associated costs, one may read in a letter from Napoleone Caix to Bogdan Petriceicu Hasdeu.³⁴ Kristoffer Nyrop must have had a similar point of view, as he decided to subscribe directly with the Soccec publishing house, entrusted with the printing of Hasdeu’s dictionary of the Romanian language. A complaint

may be identified in this case, as the Danish linguist once received twice the same fasciculus.³⁵

The exchange of books and offprints was not a matter of ritualistic relations within the academia. Historian Ioan Bogdan (1864-1919) got a glimpse in the personal laboratory of linguist Franz Miklosich (1813-1891); the founder of the modern Slavic philology quoted the 1885 work of Lazăr Șăineanu, *Elemente turcești în limba română*, due to the good impression made.³⁶ The prestige enjoyed by Miklosich was so great, that Ioan Bianu (1856-1935, the long-time outstanding secretary-general and librarian of the Romanian Academy), sent him in 1889 a special manuscript of the posthumous work of M.G. Obedenaru (1839-1885), *Texte macedo-române. Basme și poezii populare de la Crușova*, printed in Bucharest two years later.³⁷

The correspondence between scholars based in different centers exposes another important dimension of the knowledge exchange: the bibliographical inquiry. Asking for opinions and advises from Romanian colleagues made a difference in the decision to purchase or not a book, to start or to abandon an article.³⁸ Certainly, the answers must be filtered through the looking glass of the internal scientific debates, nevertheless also of friendships or enmities, which need not be discussed here.

Widely celebrated as the founder of the Romanian studies in the Czech lands, later in Czechoslovakia, Jan Urban Jarník (1848-1923) represents an excellently documented case-study.³⁹ His biography and oeuvre are well known. I shall hence focus below on the methods he employed in order to gather a personal library of Romanian titles. In the beginning, Jarník was, just as any other young aspiring scholar anywhere, in search of an original, less, if not entirely, unexplored topic. This proved to be Romanian philology. The 1874 fortunate encounter with Constantin Georgian (1850-1904) – the two were studying together Sanskrit in Paris – unquestionably shaped Jarník's entire career and life. When separated by geographical distance, the two devised a special teaching method. Letters were exchanged only in Romanian, with Georgian correcting and explaining the mistakes Jarník still made. The Czech scholar later extended this convention to all his Romanian correspondents. Reading and paying attention to the "academic" versus the "popular" nuances was the other essential part of the learning process. Georgian recommended *Covorbiri Literare* to Jarník, who also made use of the Romanian newspapers he was able to find in Vienna.⁴⁰

The correspondence of Jan Urban Jarník reveals his academic and personal networks. Before becoming a professor in Prague (1882), he taught in Vienna. Jarník visited Austro-Hungarian Transylvania in 1876, and Romania for the first time in 1879. By 1877, Jarník was already in possession of a good library of Romanian books and periodicals. He boasted of the richness of his private collections in a letter to Hugo Schuchardt: "this is in any case little, but still more than could offer the University Library of Vienna in this respect".⁴¹

Biographers insisted upon the humble origin of Jan Urban Jarník, born in a modest family from the village of Potštýn. When aiming to understand the acquaintances made while in Bucharest in 1879, this turns to be an advantage. In contrast with the many intellectuals and politicians met, the relation with Petre Ispirescu (a self-taught typographer, collector and editor of folk tales), developed into a close friendship. In acquiring a specialized library, the local networks of the Bucharest typographer were actively put to work. Ispirescu purchased books according to lists compiled by his friend. Also, when asked by different authors, Ispirescu was happy to oblige and send their works to Jarník.⁴²

Just as Caix and Nyrop were implying, Jarník was aware of the financial pressure represented by the international acquisition of books. His letters, again, disclose several financial settlements. For once, there was the reluctance to open a credit line with the Viennese bookseller Gerold. There are hints towards different sums of money Jarník gave or sent to Ispirescu in Bucharest in order to purchase and send needed, or simply suitable, titles. As the latter's son spent some time in Vienna, lived with Jarník and his family and went there to school, this kind of arrangement might have been more complicated. The linguist also relied on the books, articles, or periodicals sent directly by fellow authors. Jarník felt obliged to distribute to his students in Prague copies of a folklore collection he co-edited (*Doine și strigături din Ardeal*). Otherwise, students would have had to order from Bucharest.⁴³ Indirectly, this provides the researchers today with an indirect information on the elusive readers of Romanian works.

Few names of booksellers seem to appear in the correspondence between the authors who use to send each other their works. From a certain point of view, it was redundant. The growth of a continental railway network allowed the gradual concluding of special arrangements that made the sending of books easier per regular post. But this was an issue of international relations between states and the companies administrating the railways. The absence of such agreements made the transportation

of heavier and larger volumes not only more expansive, but also more bureaucratic.⁴⁴

But the publishers and booksellers could not be fully taken out of the arrangements between authors and foreign readers. Booksellers-publishers were in position to produce offprints from journals at the request of the authors. In the early stages of their impressive careers, historians Ioan Bogdan and Dimitrie Onciul wanted to personally send articles to peers, at home or abroad. A financial argument was again used: for a publisher like Ioan V. Socec, the separata were not a major investment.⁴⁵ Living at his country estate in Moldova, poet and politician Vasile Alecsandri preferred to entrust his publisher, the same Ioan V. Socec, with sending books to those interested abroad.⁴⁶

From Institutional Exchanges to the Transnational Commission-Trade

Besides an interest in Romance or Slavic philology, there was another connection between many of the scholars mentioned in the previous paragraph. They were members of the 1879 re-organized Romanian Academy of Sciences. Most members were, traditionally, professors at the two universities of the country and also at other important institutions of higher education. The existence of the Academy did not eliminate important difficulties. One was internal: the precarious infrastructure for research in humanities and sciences, of properly organized libraries, laboratories, and museums.⁴⁷ Another issue was the reduced number, oldness, and lack of consistence of the historical, linguistic, or literary works on Romania available abroad. Indirectly, this was a hint towards the circulation of Romanian publications out of the country. To commission or financially encourage foreign authors, by prizes or subsidies, was taken into consideration. As opposed to this, “larger and more serious” works could have been written in Romania. Yet, as it was maintained during internal debates, a main task of the Academy was to cultivate the Romanian language.⁴⁸

The initial Academic Society tried in 1872-1873 to set up an own network of commissioners, willing to distribute its few publications in Vienna (Gerold), Paris (booksellers Frank; Durand; Auguste et Perdonne; Laurel; Dumoulin), London (Henri Sotheran), Madrid (Baily-Baillière), Berlin (Ascher), and Sank Petersburg (Isacoff). These were supposed to

work both ways, as the literary, historic, and scientific sections were entitled to purchases for the own needs. The actual negotiations were not detailed.⁴⁹ The intention might have been stronger than the actual interest of the readers. A better solution was the establishment of one-time or recurrent exchanges with other learned societies. This did not mean, that buying books from the market or receiving donations ceased.

Numerous academies or specialized scientific societies, editing own journals and proceedings, were established all over the world during the 19th century. Making knowledge available was still more important than making a profit by selling scientific publications.⁵⁰ Also, a way to overcome the language barrier was discovered. The language dictionaries endorsed by the Romanian Academy were included in the exchange packages. These further included the published members' lectures, volumes of historical documents (the eclectic "Hurmuzaki Collection"), critical editions of Wallachian and Moldavian mediaeval chronicles, the works of Nicolae Bălcescu (the major ideologue of the 1848 Wallachian revolution), alongside series of meteorological observations.⁵¹ The dominance of the philological and historical works, when compared to applied sciences, reflects the actual divisions within the Romanian Academy.

Even so, the first attempts to use languages of international communication may be linked with the field of meteorology. Ștefan Hepites (1851-1922, an engineer and physicist whom later founded several meteorological and seismological observatories), listed in 1880 thirty-seven possible international institutes and observatories for the Romanian Academy to consider exchanging the published collected data. Though himself concerned with humanities, D.A. Sturdza (1833-1914, historian and numismatics collector, also a leading liberal statesman) insisted to have the column titles printed in French. This was the first initiative of this kind.⁵²

On the long term, this policy had two effects: the constant growth and diversification of the institutional library; and, most important, the dissemination of Romanian produced knowledge worldwide. Due to the publication of the administrative decisions, the extend of the circulation of publications between learned societies becomes clearer. Exchange initiatives were put forward from either part. From 1879 until the First World War, the Romanian Academy partnered with learned societies, academies, university chairs or libraries, and museums from France, Sweden, Serbia, Great Britain, Germany, Austria-Hungary (including here Transylvania, Banat and Bucovina, since 1918 part of Romania), Spain,

Italy, Germany, Netherlands, Portugal, United States of America. When coming from abroad, the reasons for initiating an exchange or request a donation of publications varied. Historical and linguistics seminaries and chairs seemed willing to complete their collections⁵³ and perhaps to avoid the intermediaries.

The most effective way to become part of the transnational and transcontinental circulation of academic publications was the further development of the co-operation with the representatives of the commission-trade. In 1883, the Romanian Academy decided to entrust the Leipzig-based company founded in 1875 by Otto Harrassowitz with the international distribution of its publications.⁵⁴ A catalogue from 1887 listed several works published by the Romanian Academy, some with clarifications in regard to the number of volumes already available and the promise to deliver those due to appear.⁵⁵ How the negotiations unfolded is still unclear, yet this was not random choice. As an antiquarian and publisher, Otto Harrassowitz (1845-1920) followed his own passions and interests: linguistics, Orientalia, library science. He was not only intellectually gifted, but a careful businessman in relation to his highly specialized, academic customers. Since 1882, Harrassowitz worked with the American Library Association. By 1897, North American libraries were already Harrassowitz's main buyers.⁵⁶ The extent to which Harrassowitz went in order to please his American clients is demonstrated by a letter sent to Artur Gorovei. The bookseller was trying to find a book published in Transylvania in 1873 (though the data might have been erroneous) and asked the Romanian folklorist for his advice.⁵⁷ Unfortunately, the entire archive of Harrassowitz was destroyed during an Allied air raid on Leipzig, on 4 December 1943.⁵⁸ This tragic war loss makes the reconstruction of the relationship between Otto Harrassowitz and his Romanian correspondents impossible for the time being. One must add that, the proceedings of the Academy, generous in respect to the decisions and deliberately discreet in regard to the actual debates, do not clear this aspect also.

Besides exchanges, the sale of the works published by the Romanian Academy was also possible. The editions of historical documents were the most sought-after publications of the decade 1882-1892, however without important financial returns,⁵⁹ which indicates a small number of interested readers outside the exchange system.

At the turn of the 20th century, generational and structural changes occurred within the Academy. More scientists were elected than in the previous half of the century. Newer members, including the representatives

of the humanities, owed in a great number their academic careers to scholarships abroad, mostly in Western Europe. More important, a new stance towards the issue of language occurred. What seems to have been a shy proposal in 1905 – to start a “Bulletin” in German and French “in order to make known to the learned world the activity of the academy”⁶⁰ – was reiterated four years later. Two were the reasons behind the idea of printing only the abstracts: additional costs and, surprisingly, an expected limited impact.⁶¹ The peer-pressure of the newer members of the historical and scientific sections increased significantly. The Scientific Section decided on 16 November 1912 to commence a “Bulletin de la Section Scientifique de l’Académie Roumaine”, with papers or abstracts in English, French, German, Italian, and Latin. Authors were supposed to be paid a small retribution. The distribution of the Bulletin was free for universities, institutes, and major publications in and out of the country.⁶² A similar approach had the historical section. “Bulletin de la Section Historique”, under the guidance of Nicolae Iorga, appeared under similar circumstances since 1912.⁶³ These initiatives must be understood as complimentary to the bulk of publications, which remained in the national language.

Commission-trade proved once more its utility and importance. Besides the already established relation with Otto Harrassowitz, in the field of humanities, new partners for the scientific publications were approached. Again, the actual negotiations are difficult to re-construct. But the names on the title pages were those of the most important German, Austrian, and French commissioners in the scientific book trade. They were certainly familiar to the Romanian academic milieu. Established in 1912 and interrupted in 1916 (when Romania entered the First World War on the Entente side), these partnerships demonstrate a pragmatic approach towards the dissemination of the research results. The extraordinary efficiency of the German book trade made the impact of the scientific discoveries even stronger.⁶⁴

The “Bulletin” published by the Scientific Section offers a case-study in respect to transnational book trade, for the title page reunited the names of Friedländer from Berlin, Gauthier-Villars from Paris, and Gerold from Vienna. Socec was the main Romanian commissioner, as the company remained the major player of the book market after the death of its founders, under Ioan I.V. Socec and Emil Socec. Raphael Friedländer&Sohn, established by Raphael Friedländer as a side job in 1828 in Berlin, was a leading name in the antiquarian and commission-trade for natural sciences. At the beginning of the 20th century, though the name

of the founders were kept, the owners became Ernst Buschbeck and Otto Budy, the pair expanding the business from antiquarian trade to publishing and commissioning. Just as Harrassowitz, Friedländer lost the entire archive in a fire.⁶⁵ The publishing house of Jean-Albert Gauthier-Villars (1828-1898) was entrusted by the Paris Academy of Sciences to print and distribute its publications.⁶⁶ Several scientists, who studied in France, were already published by Gauthier-Villars before becoming members of the Academy in Bucharest.⁶⁷ Gerold was one of the first commissioners to accept works published by the Romanian Academy in 1872. The Viennese company traced its history back to the 18th century. Since 1856, the already major position in the Austrian book trade became stronger, as Gerold were appointed booksellers of the Imperial Academy of Sciences.⁶⁸

An important input in the expansion of the pathways of knowledge exchange came from the diplomats manning the few legations Romania maintained abroad. When in need, and perhaps following an own agenda, they were asking for help from the Academy. This sent anyway its own publications to members, whom were also in the foreign service, at the same time to the libraries of the legations.⁶⁹ At times, diplomats acted as intermediaries in the exchanges of publications or requested texts to be published by foreign journals. This was the case of Nicolae Mișu (1858-1924), whose mediation allowed better relations between Romanian and Bulgarian intellectual institutions and journals.⁷⁰ Appointed in London and asked to act directly under the guidance of prime-minister D.A. Sturdza, George Moroianu (1870-1945) identified Scotus Viator and supplied him with data and books on the Romanian interests concerning Austria-Hungary and the nationalities issues there.⁷¹

Intersecting Pathways: Conclusions

Frustrating losses of entire archives, as it was the case of Harrassowitz and Friedländer, and the division of others (e. g. Soccec) between different institutional holders, are an undisputed tragedy. And yet, re-creating the networks involved in the dissemination of Romanian publications abroad during the second half of the 19th century and the first decades of the 20th century, is possible. Corroborated information allows a re-construction in which institutional proceedings and private correspondence are crucial. Imprints, a type of evidence otherwise ‘hidden in plain sight’ do play a vital role.

Divided between at times conflictual economic and cultural desiderata, Romanian book trade was an undisputed part of the modernization process, embodying a mixture of cultural, hence national, ideals, with an economic agenda. Booksellers switched gradually from a business based on the import of foreign titles to becoming publishers for the Romanian authors. As proved by the case of Ioan V. Socec, several times mentioned in this paper, they were excellently connected with the European trade hubs (Leipzig, Paris, Vienna), hence undoubtedly part of the transnational book trade. However, the booksellers-publishers from Romania were more discrete, though equally important, in the dissemination of publications abroad. Despite those many different voices expressing their disappointment in the lack of writings from Western libraries and bookstores, a one-way circulation of books is, for the timeframe studied here, out of question and of place.

The virtually unknown Romanian language, the first barrier one might consider, was gradually, yet unconsciously, transformed from an obstacle into an advantage. From academic, but private, linguistical interests, institutional co-operations derived. Personal networks doubled the already existing habits of ordering from local booksellers and thus put the entire mechanisms of transnational commerce to work.

Though learned societies were able to exchange directly their publications, transnational and transcontinental commissioners, in particular, and booksellers and publishers, in general, could not be taken out of the book circulation. This was, to all extents and purposes, never in the intention or the interest of the authors and readers. The Romanian Academy was not an exception. It rather served as a study case of entangled networks, as the exchange of publications proved a good pathway of dissemination, but perhaps less effective than the complicated transnational bookselling networks set up in decades by Otto Harrassowitz, R. Friedländer&Sohn, Gerold, or Gauthier-Villars. Affected by the lack or archival sources are aspects such as lists of clients and financial earnings or losses. Those would paint a better image of the actual interest on the Romanian publications out of the country and out of the territories still under foreign rule under 1918.

Even if decades were needed, the initial approach to write and publish in the national tongue of a national state in the process of build-up, was finally eased and works in other languages were permitted. At this point, one might say that the assumed 'national' representation made way for a cool-headed approach, especially in the field of sciences. Dialogue and

knowledge exchange predominated in this manner, in an era far from today's scientometrics approach.

As demonstrated in this article, the existence of individual, institutional, and commercial networks dealing with the dissemination of Romanian publications abroad proves that national, cultural, and economic aspects must be analyzed as interconnected elements of the modernization. The circulation of ideas was at the core of this process, and book trade, as a capitalistic venture dealing with perennial values, cannot be ignored. The construction of the pathways of knowledge exchange was possible, in the Romanian case, only by integrating the networks booksellers-publishers and commissioners had developed and kept open.

NOTES

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