

HABILITATION THESIS

Abstract

Education and Modernization

The Historical Evolution of Romanian Education Legislation

(19th – 20th centuries)

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The habilitation thesis entitled as above summarizes my scientific research results, obtained after having been awarded the title of Doctor of Philosophy in History. The research conducted throughout the doctoral thesis on "Imaginea omului politic român reflectată în opinia publică (1864-1918)" / "The Image of the Romanian Politician Reflected in the Public Opinion (1864-1918)" is only the starting point, the epistemic antecedent of my subsequent endeavours that will be circumscribed to some working hypotheses regarding the role played by social capital in building modern political institutions in our country. In order to verify this hypothesis, I have referred to a universally accepted principle within modern political thinking - the principle of anticipated reactions, a principle to which, voluntarily or not, the modern politician relates (by measuring the metamorphosis of the politician's ideas and statements into facts, the public opinion may validate them or not) thus explaining:

a) mechanisms of public opinion formation within the Romanian public space specific to the historical epoch analysed;

b) how the public opinion receives and conveys the politician's image;

c) the politician's role in shaping facts of consciousness and forming public opinion;

d) the role of public opinion in influencing the politician's behaviour (Horățiu Tiberiu Gorun, *Opinia publică și omul politic român / Public Opinion and the Romanian Politician (1866-1918)*, Editura Niculescu, 2007, pp.13-25).

The analysis of the politician's professional development is based on the essential idea that has persisted in theoretical thinking since antiquity namely that reflection and dialogue about the politician are closely related to the reflection on the political environment and public space in which the above-mentioned operates, given that he is not an entity in itself. His identity is a complex one, appearing

simultaneously as a rational, actional and valorizing being, which outlines a scientific fact: basically the politician does not belong only to himself, but to the city that has created him and to whose creation he has also contributed. And that is the reason why, he cannot not indifferent to his self-image, to the way his actions are perceived and reflected by the public opinion.

Being preoccupied with the deceleration of this complex phenomenon namely the reflection of the politician's image in the public opinion, my research has shown a particular interest in some theoretical clarifications, especially because the modernization process of the Romanian society cannot be investigated irrespective of political accountability. By taking into account the historical dimension, I have defined and reconstructed concepts such as the *political* one, *politics*, *political elites*, *public opinion*.

This thesis is structured into two parts: Part I - *Education and Early Modern Romanian Society. The role of Intellectual Elites in Shaping the Education Project* and Part II - *Modernising Education. Historical Evolution of Romanian Legislation*.

The first chapter – *Social Capital and Public Opinion. Conceptual Developments*, starting from the results of the research conducted during the elaboration of the doctoral thesis, has deepened the above-mentioned concepts, correlating them with the one of *social capital*. In this regard, I have approached *political*¹ as one of the components of human existence, a type of structure and specific human activity, created in complex, asymmetric and competitive social environments, activity allowing society to respond to a particular type of request. Avoiding both minimalist and maximalist guidelines, we have established stringent political boundaries, providing this field with a *composed definition* (we emphasize the notes of the definition via modes of spatial organization, functions, ways of political actions and personal characteristics). Within the same theoretical scope, I have expanded the concept of *politica* (term originating in the same group: *polis*, *politeia*), as an objectification of politics, the *activity* by which the latter is expressed, the human activity "concerned with decisions vested with the authority of society for which decisions are made" (Jack C. Plano, Robert E. Ripag, Helenan S. Robin - Dictionary of Political Analysis, p. 114). The historical dimension used

¹I have used within my research two different Romanian terms "political" and "politica" that are both rendered into English by the term "politics". More information on the meanings I have attributed to these terms can be found in my thesis.

in the concept analysis allowed me to detect how the *public – private* distinction is shaped, distinction that is well-known in the modern era, especially through the delimitation of the interference and non-interference spheres. This distinction establishes a different meaning of politics namely politics as *profession* (people of the city and politicians *build*, participate in the public space, but *agora* appears as unity in diversity). The city and the individual-citizen now appear as a duality: a duality between the private and public space. *Only the agora occurs exclusively as a public space*. From this time forward, politics takes the form of *public policy*, as rules and programs, taken individually or collectively. In other words, it appears under the form of a decisional output of a political system (Horațiu Tiberiu Gorun, *Opinia publică și omul politic român*(1866-1918) / Public Opinion and the Romanian Politician, pp. 40-45).

Another notion put forward by my current research in order to give a theoretical treatment of analyses undertaken is that of *political elites*. This very common and descriptive term refers to categories or groups that seem to be at the ‘top’ of some structures of authority or resource distribution and conveys the meaning of "the leaders", the power of the elite which prevails naturally. The multitude of terms used indistinctly - elites, leaders, politicians, political professionals, etc. - indicates the difficulties in elaborating a universally accepted definition (considering the studies of Erza Suleiman, Henri Mendras, BT Bottomore, S. Keller, R. Miliband, as well as especially those of Robert Putnam, Gaetano Mosca and Vilfredo Pareto in the field of the quality of elites, justification of preserving elites’ monopoly on power, postulation of elites’ relative autonomy, etc.). My research insists upon the specificity of elites, by nuancing their *structure*, *recruitment* and *evolution in the social environment subject to modernization*. Thus, I have described the evolution from *elites* to the *political leader* and solve the equation of the elite – mass rapport, considering the aspect of associating another term to that of leader namely *leadership* (management). Thus, within the political modernization process, a relational universe emerges namely the one of connections that bring leaders and their supporters together. These connections determine these politicians’ *recognition* and *legitimacy* i.e. *acceptance of their authority*. Then the use of ideal-types of Weberian legitimacy (traditional legitimacy, charismatic and rational-legal legitimacy that establish the three types of domination) has allowed me to examine the processes and mechanisms for the selection and recruitment of politicians, as well as the relation between the types of

leaders and requirements of the Romanian society in the stage of modernization. This is how I have described the *public opinion* sphere, a complex psychosocial phenomenon, expressed by a term which in its turn is not devoid of equivoques and inconsistencies either, due to the plurality of meanings acquired during the historical evolution, but also as a result of the accreditation of either too narrow or too vague vision. I have demonstrated that in the case of the Romanian space as well, the path from *doxology* to *public opinion* is one that includes the pluralistic model of power management in the society subjected to modernization since, similarly to other geopolitical spaces, prior to the pluralist model, the epistemic bibliography of public opinion had had several significant stages, such as the *prehistoric stage* and the one of shaping *modern understanding*. Within this historical space, I have shown how the focus has shifted from *society inclusion* to some political elites' *personality assertion*, a process in which the delegation of the authority of the designated leaders is correlated with their being controlled by the public opinion of voters during the exercise of public mandates. However, it is worthy to note that in the case of Romanians, in addition to the *political dimension* of public opinion, there was a more pronounced *ethical dimension*, customs-related, through which deviations from accepted patterns of behaviour, known as norm at the level of the collective mentality (people occupying public positions were often subjected to public opprobrium) were corrected. Basically, *the public spirit* developed especially during the rise of the bourgeoisie, whose members became aware of the fact that only the shaping of social consciousness can mobilize support movements on the part of the masses to conquer legitimately fundamental institutions. And, those who come into power and wish for this rise to happen cannot be indifferent to the popular reaction.

The analysis of the nature and characteristics of public opinion suggests the idea that opinion is a *psychosocial fact*, while the public is a *social phenomenon*. The dimensions of this phenomenon are variable, going in the case of Romanians from relatively small groups, to the large national or even European ones, dimensions that together with categories of *publics* have a significant importance on the formation and manifestation of the Romanian public opinion, structure, role and social influence (Horațiu Tiberiu Gorun, op. cit., pp. 49-60).

If my initial research started from narrower goals, aiming at capturing the way public opinion reflects the image of the Romanian politician during the period 1866-1918, focusing on the formation and strengthening of public opinion during a

determined time interval, my further research will acquire other coordinates, both in amplitude and depth. Therefore, I have expanded the concept of *social capital* as *a reserve of common values* of a community/society, illustrating its role in building modern institutions. Or, as institutional modernization was either delayed or interrupted, our investigation has extended in duration, throughout some studies, including after 1990. Also, by means of the social capital, I investigate the degree of public opinion foundation, from the starting assumption that the foundation of any non-formal control - including that of the public opinion - is *mediated through culture*.

My effort of expanding the content of the doctoral thesis resulted in the introduction of the phrase of *social capital* into the conceptual space, analysing the decisive role of the system of values and non-formal norms in generating educational capital in the works entitled *A Recent History of Social Capital. The Great Rupture and New Existential Matrix and 1989. Romania between Revolution and Coup D'état*. These concepts led to the devaluation of social capital during the totalitarian communist regime in Romania, as well as the mechanisms and forms of manifestation of the crisis of culture and education, etc.

Starting from the assumption that the value system that confers identity to a community/society is defined, in most cases, by the synthesis of components of culture and civilization, accepted as legitimate at the communitarian level, I have shown interest throughout my studies in the deceleration of the *relationship between public opinion and political culture, perceiving the social capital as the function norm according to which public opinion legitimates itself or not during a historical stage*. In this regard, the political culture forges the opinion of different publics, increasing its degree of plausibility. I mean that through the mediation of the political culture, the distinction immanent to any kind of investigation may be carried out: *the distinction between public opinions about facts, events, phenomena that took place during a particular historical epoch and the real facts, events and phenomena*. This is because opinions can be either *true* or *false*, while events and facts cannot acquire these attributes: they – the historical facts, events simply *exist*. It is important, in the case of public opinion, to discern the character, depth, accuracy degree of the reflection of these facts and events (to check how accurate the reflection is), which also requires for distinctions between *prejudice, stereotype, hearsay and rumour*.

Building on this theoretical basis, in Chapter II I will analyse *the general morale and state of mind of Romanians at the middle of the 19th century*. In order to answer the questions regarding *a distinctive identity of the state of mind* during this period, I added depth to our research by adding certain conclusions put forward by C. Rădulescu-Motru in his study *Puterile sociale.Cultura*, insisting on the particularities given by historical and geographic factors. The postulate formulated by the Romanian scholar in order to characterize our culture is of methodological utility for my research, as Romanians' morale was influenced, among others, by culture, and generally the political culture, be it common or elaborated. Then, just as culture is under the influence of *social powers* or *energies*, public opinion - as state of mind - but especially social capital are, in their turn, influenced by these social phenomena. Moreover, the reasoning herein can be extended to education, in the meaning that social energies give birth to the *educational ideal, its mission and finalities*, and the educational capital is *the ferment through which social capital regains value perpetually*.

Following this path, in II.1, *Axiological construction. Foundations of the educational capital*, I have chosen to insist on collective mentality and on an outline of its contents. Collective mentality *preserves* and *innovates*, just as public structures preserve and innovate themselves, which is also true for the Romanian collective mentality. And as *language* is a means of collecting value as well as of communicating lifestyles, the formation of the Romanian language had a determining role in the process of mentality shaping and becoming. Then, processes such as those regarding the unification of state factions, the increase in voivode power in order to face territorial claims of other nations and their rulers, the exodus of Romanian groups over the mountains generated by the catholicization imposed by Hungarian kings, the claims to vassalage, the tribute requested by "Barbarian" monarchs etc. contribute to the outlining of the premises afferent to the morale of Romanians and their rulers, which took the form of disobedience, dissatisfaction with the authority imposed from outside, revolt.

My research insists on the fact that the period before 1848 is the time when one of the coordinates of the Romanian spirit, namely the fight for national unity and independence, the need for unification and freedom, dominating both collective consciousness (especially after Michael the Brave's rule) and the consciousness of rulers, of some of the enlightened boyars and intellectual elites (Moldavian and Wallachian historiographers, the Humanists, the representatives of

Enlightenment, Romanticism, but especially the Forty-Eighters) take place. On this background we have investigated *the theoretical fundamentals of a special axiological construct: that of educational capital, insisting on the role of intellectual elites in gaining awareness of the need for education in order to become "good Romanians" and "good Christians."*

The starting premise of investigation of the Romanian spirit at the dawn of modernity is one that takes into account the history of the fight for national unity and independence, born long before, preserved and amplified around a general interest that gradually takes on the form of a national ideal. Intellectual elites gain self-awareness - the promoters of culture and of the incentive to education by learning - and so do communities, from the ideal for a utopic beginning of the Enlightened to the understanding of the historical mission of the elites as well as of the people. *Culture helps build the axiological architecture of a people*; the social capital that the people identifies with within the geopolitical as well as cultural space coagulates and recapitalizes.

Promoted by our elites, Romanian culture becomes, at the same time, an act of creation, to which both elites and masses contribute. By means of the *spiritual* goods that it creates, *it cultivates* a state of mind and a morale within the community, its values becoming values of a desirable lifestyle (religious beliefs, customs, institutions, works of art, moral principles become, for starters, matters of consciousness that take the shape of behaviours, attitudes). Romanians understand gradually that their lives can change for "the better" if the country is united and independent, which leads them to a new situation: *the status of a people with aspirations, expressing their interests in full awareness and fighting for their accomplishment*. This condition crystalizes social capital and the public opinion favourable to attachment to common values. *Values that can only be accessed by education*. Therefore, *a large-scale educational project* was called for. In this project, the main roles are played by *Humanism, Enlightenment* and *Forty-Eightism*, trends with an interest in the humanization of culture, erudition and appreciation for Greek and Latin culture, trust in humans and their virtues, trust in re-humanized life, recommending education in the spirit of moral values and acting for the education of masses. The establishment of the Corvina Library, of the first center of humanist culture in Oradea, the writings of Nicolaus Olahus, Iohannes Sommerus Pirnensis, Iohannes Honterus and Valentin Wagner, those of Unitarian humanists following Erasmus, those carried out by the representatives of Cartesian

rationalism, the development of the Humanist centre in Alba Iulia, the opening of *new* educational institutions bringing professors from Western universities etc. are only a few examples, illustrating the interest for the development of culture and education in Transylvania. Also, there are multiple educational features in the writings of Miron Costin, Ion Neculce, Nicolae Milescu Spătarul and Constantin Cantacuzino Stolnicul, whose humanism aimed at the formation of a historical consciousness, premise for a national consciousness and a Romanian culture. And the thesis of the good nature of man, determining Dimitrie Cantemir to believe in *the power of education*, indicates the presence of *Renaissance Civism* in Romania since the first years of the 17th century.

Continuing humanistic tendencies, the Enlightened also have a militant goal: *to argument national rights and cultivate enlightened patriotism*. That is why the investigation that I am conducting attributes a very clear space to the Enlightenment project demonstrating the contribution of this current in pointing up the teaching role in the progress of the civilization of the Romanian people.

Demonstrating the theoretical foundations of the modernization of the Romanian society, I have then developed, in *II.2*, a series of ideas regarding the beginnings of the modern state, the role of education in modernization, the outline of modern Romania and the educational ideal of the 1848 generation. The thesis insists on the fact that, although the defining benchmarks of modern Romania took shape in the period between the Revolution of 1848 and the Constitution of 1866, the beginnings of modernization take place after 1821, the generation of the "century of light" merely foreshadowing them. The return of native rulers in Wallachia and Moldavia, the Convention of Akkerman (1826) and especially the Peace of Adrianopol (1828) were important moments in the economic, political and administrative development of the Principalities. Also, Organisational Regulations, as fundamental laws, bring radical changes to political life, expanding the sphere of participations to the political and administrative life by making it possible for the middle class to occupy certain positions and develop economically. By introducing the principle of separation of powers (although the ruler remained the key-figure of the political system) and certain fiscal system modernising provisions of the fiscal system (annual decision regarding budget). The Organisational Regulations contributed to the political, economic and social progress of the Principalities. The transformations in cultural life, political thought and public opinion are also significant. The spirit of the age - the *Zeitgeist* - a

coordinate of the 1848 Generation's social capital - is defined by the term "Forty-Eightism," and the intellectuals who belonged to this spirit were interested in defining a complete ideal: retrieving Romania from backwardness and isolation.

The educational ideal is concentrated in the spirit of the times, expressed by:

- the ideal of national unity and independence;
- sympathy for "lower classes," especially peasants;
- trust in the educational value of ideas;
- a new understanding of nation, *an ethnic concept*, which took into consideration all social categories, including statute labourers, replacing the legal definition, in which the criteria of appurtenance focused on rank or fortune;
- the rationalist nature of the philosophical, historical or judicial thinking, expressed especially by the tendency of emancipation from religion, initiated, more timidly, by Samuel Micu, but continued by Eufrosin Poteca, Gheorghe Lazăr, Eftimie Murgu, August Treboniu Laurian, Simion Bărnuțiu, Cezar Bolliac, C. A. Rosetti, Ion Heliade Rădulescu, George Barițiu, N. Bălcescu, M. Kogălniceanu etc.

Disciples of France or Germany, young sons of boyars will become mentors of their nation. The writings and ideas of N. Bălcescu, S. Bărnuțiu, M. Kogălniceanu, V. Alecsandri, C. A. Rosetti, Gh. Barițiu, D. Brătianu, I. C. Brătianu, Timotei Cipariu, A. C. Golescu et al. formulate the theoretical foundations of the "Modern Romania" project, and their actions, together with those of the following generation, have a decisive contribution to the construction of the modern state, entering the consciousness of public opinion. *Romanian scholars from the Forty-Eighters' generation saw education as one of the essential factors of modernization. Expressing the spirit of a generation of intellectuals, the educational ideal is rooted in the informal norms and values that define the identity of Romanian communities at the middle of the 19th century, meaning in the capital produced by the activity of intellectual elites and promoted in the collective consciousness.* Romanians' self-awareness in 1848 took the form of an awareness of common belonging, the need for national unity and the pursuit of independence, as well as of the understanding of the need to overcome the backwardness of the fundamental milestones of social capital and educational ideal.

The actions taken for the accomplishment of the Unification of 1859 confirmed the unionist spirit resulted from the ample educational effort in which the Romanian elites engaged, and the reforms implemented during the rule of Al. I. Cuza would open the path to the modernization of the new state.

Chapter III is dedicated to my contribution to *the research on the role of education in the construction of modern Romanian institutions*. Here, in III.1, I insist, in utmost synthesis, on the role of elites and educational capital in the construction of the institutions of the modern Romanian state. I dedicated the first part of the thesis to the personal contributions to the investigation of the theoretical bases that articulated a European architecture of the Romanian educational project, a projects in which national values integrate in the universal system of values. The creation of social capital as set of informal norms and values shared especially by intellectual elites formed in Western universities generated a slow change of attitude regarding the need for literacy, first in relatively small social groups, then in larger groups, making a positive dent in the public opinion on matters of education.

With the help of Mihail Kogălniceanu, who forms Government between October 1863 and February 1865, Al. I. Cuza succeeded in drawing up a series of liberal reforms of great importance for the new state (impropriation of monastery possessions, rural law, electoral law, public education law, the Civil Code and the Criminal Code, the establishment of the Court of Auditors and the National Savings Bank, the establishment of the Universities of Iasi and Bucharest, of the Conservatory, of the schools of belles-arts, the construction of bridges and roads, reforms on forestry, organization of the army, the church, public education, introduction of the new system of weights and measures, judicial organisation etc).

In works such as *Repere de imagologie politică* (Editura ProUniversitaria, 2013), *O istorie recentă a capitalului social. Marea ruptură și noua matrice existențială* (Editura Didactică și Pedagogică, București, 2013), *Repere de imagologie și radiografii sociale* (Editura Niculescu, 2007), *Public – Privat: Public sphere and Citizenship* (Journal of US-China Public Administration, vol. 8, nr.3, March 2011), *Informal and Formal Control of Social Deviance Through Education* (4th SGEM GeoConference on Echology, Economics, Education and Legislation, vol. 3, No SGEM 2014), *Sociology and Communities* (Analele Universității “Constantin Brâncuși” din Târgu Jiu, 2014) et al. that I authored or co-authored, I talked about the role of education in the new institutional construct. I therefore brought forward a series of important conclusions regarding:

- a) the social issues of Romanian communities and the persistence thereof during the process of modernization;

- b) the role of intellectual and political elites in the construction of the institutional edifice of education and the orientation of public opinion towards sharing the educational ideal for the achievement of the national ideal;
- c) the role of education in fighting poverty and forming the political culture by embodying the values of democracy;
- d) the role of education in the modernization of the national state, political, legal and social institutions;
- e) the contribution of education to the construction of rational public administration;
- f) the impact of modern institutions on social order and the organization of lifestyle in communities subjected to modernization.

Delays in modernization, in comparison to other European states, are evident at the middle of the 19th century. The Westernization of Romania is an objective process, imposed by the course of history, but *elites have the merit of having actually chosen this direction*, militating for its realisation. *Education needed to be institutionalized, organized on legal grounds and freed from dominant prejudice*. The law of public instruction in 1864, promoted by Cuza, that we will analyse in Part II, created the legal framework for a modern education.

Educated in Western universities, the intellectual and political elites of Romania during the second half of the 19th century had learned that a strong state is impossible without modern, operational, rational institutions. Yet the operation of these institutions required trained people to occupy positions and titles, education thus being one of *the main factors of state development*. Education articulates *the consciousness of unity*, materialized by the Union of 1859 and, subsequently, by the Great Unification of 1918, which evolves into *national consciousness*.

This is when history is completely rewritten, and elites, under the rule of Carol I of Romania, choose the supremacy of this criterion to the detriment of the previous unifying principle - Orthodoxy: now, "Latinity rises above Orthodoxy" (Lucian Boia, *De ce este România altfel?* Ediția a II-a adăugită, Editura Humanitas, 2013, p. 60).

The educational ideal, promoted by Romanian elites, is grounded in Western values, known and appropriated by them as early as their study days. These values identify with those promoted by the education of common sense,

promoting the spirit of "good Christian" and "good Romanian," thus amplifying the axiological content of these coordinates. Instructional and educational at the same time, Romanian education inevitably also gains a justifying dimension. Elites did not believe in the reality of myths, but knew that myths, by essence, have an influence on education. Thus developing the patriotic component of the educational ideal (an enlightened patriotism, in which the values of Humanism and Enlightenment intersect with modern rationalism).

In my investigations, I have reached the conclusion that Romanian elites, coming from the upper layers of society, were both beneficiaries of Western education, as well as main vectors of modernization, undertaking the mission of cultivating values that they believed in with lower strata. Many intellectual elites act as politicians in the "century of modernization," having a primordial role in the choice of direction and means for enforcing change. The designed institutional architecture is consistent to the parliamentary regime, based on the principle of separation and balancing of powers and of legislative, administrative, legal and controlling organisms. In the system of state organisms, the major role was played by the parliament, as legislative organism, increasingly representative in nature, having during the second half of the 19th century "a special activity, especially in the preparation and development of a modern, European legislation" (Vasile Popa, Adrian Bejan, *Instituții politice și juridice românești*, Editura All Beck, 1998, p. 106). The activity of the government becomes increasingly important, while the responsibility of the police, justice, central and local public institutions and authorities amplify. Church is no longer part of the state mechanism, gradually becoming an institution controlled by the authorities of central administration. The national Romanian State was governed as a constitutional monarchy, and the Constitution of 1866 - the most important constitutional act of Romania until the First World War, analysed by me in the thesis - reapplies the principle of separation of powers, the king being, in theory, the head of the executive, that he then delegates to the head of the ministerial cabinet. The new constitution - developed under the mediation of Carol - is an act of will of political elites, liberal or conservative, organizing the state on the principle of national sovereignty exercised by delegation.

The constitution of 1866, as further amended, establishes the fundamental legal and political framework for the development of the modern institutional system, which I insisted on during my post-doctoral research. For

reasons regarding the development of the higher education institution in which I operate, as well as the structure of the curriculum, I introduced new topics in my research regarding the modernization of Romania, such as those regarding the modernization of administrative organization in Romania. In *III.2 Contributions to the investigation of the modern administrative act*, I elaborate on these aspects. Therefore, in works such as *Elemente de administrație publică. Studii comparate* (Editura Bibliotheca, 2009), *Elemente de epistemologie juridică. Administrația public și mediul ei. Actele administrative* (Editura „Academica Brâncuși”, 2010), *Ghid pentru activitatea în administrația public central și locală* (Editura „Academica Brâncuși”, 2010), *România și politici regionale* (Editura „Academica Brâncuși” 2013.), *O perspectivă istorico-sociologică asupra legislației din învățământul românesc (De la Marea Unire la decretul nr.175/2 august 1948)*, (Editura ProUniversitaria 2014), *1989. România între revoluție și lovitură de stat* (Editura ProUniversitaria, 2015), *Public function an politics intrusions* (Proceedings of the 4th WSEAS International Conference on Business Administration, University of Cambridge, UK, February, 20-22, 2010), *The impact of Globalization on the Development of rural Communities from Romania, Case study: The main social problems generated by degradation of the environment in the rural communities of Gorj County* (Cambridge, February 23-25, 2011), *Sociology from Communities* (Analele Universității „Constantin Brâncuși” Tg-Jiu, nr.2/2015) et al., that I co-authored, I have elaborated on a series of topics regarding the modernization of Romanian administration. Thus, introducing the historical coordinate in the analysis of the administrative phenomenon, I have approached the evolution of the concepts of equity, justice, law, public and private space, public institution, public utility institution in the process of modernization of Romania. Proving that, during the modern era, the *public* expands and diversifies spatially, restructures its contents, but also withdraws before individual freedoms and the institutionalization of natural rights, I insist on the interest of intellectual elites in forcing government to limit the sphere of its interferences in order to avoid any intrusion into private life, highlighting the essential differences between the parliamentary democratic regime and the totalitarian communist regime in this field. Our elites, beneficiaries of a modern education, understood that the citizen has rights and freedoms (negative and positive, recognized and granted) as well as obligations arising from their relationship with the state as well as with other people: the state *recognizes* and *grants*, while the individual is forced to act or

abstain from acting, actions that trigger public or private consequences (in relations with others), an area which must also be protected by the government. This is the thesis that I arrive to in my research on modern administration, underlining the role of *public interest* in the foregrounding of the spheres of reference, capitalizing on the highly refined theories of Paul Negulescu, Anibal Teodorescu and M. Văcaru from the Interwar.

The historical perspective is also used when approaching the evolution of the concept of *public administration*. Thus, starting from the premise that the origins of the concept cannot be separated from state, political power, authority - I identify the methods and mechanisms through which public administration gains a certain autonomy, insisting on the dichotomy afferent to the connotation of *administration* (noun) - *administration* (verb), which, by societal education, led to a double angle of approaching public administration:

➤ as part of the social system (administration as a system observed in its synchrony and diachrony) - *the institutional approach*;

➤ as a system of activities undertaken, as skill set, as group of tasks, actions - *the operational approach* (Adrian Gorun, Horațiu Tiberiu Gorun, Elemente de epistemologie juridică. Administrația publică și mediul ei. Actele administrative/ Elements of Legal Epistemology. Public Administration and its Environment. Administrative Acts, Editura „Academica Brâncuși”, 2010, pp.47-50).

Proving the inefficiency of unilateral approaches and using a significant factual basis from the "century of modernization" of Romania, I have formulated a definition that eliminates any prior gaps. Also, following the defining notes of public administration, in my research I have insisted on the evolution of Romanian administration, parallel to the evolution of the Romanian *administrative act*. I thus illustrate the role of education in the understanding and awareness of the developing administrative phenomenon and the formation of the body of public workers necessary to the modernization of the state and to a proper operation of the administration, developing comparative studies and insisting on the contribution of illustrious Romanian professors (Constantin G. Disescu, Paul Negulescu, Anibal Teodorescu) to the research of the administrative act in our country after the Unification of 1918. Approaching the Romanian administrative act opened the horizon for the development of ample studies regarding public administration and its environment, as well as the historical evolution of a process stemming from the age-old wish: *the administrative and territorial organization of Romania during*

various historical stages. To this end, I insist on the relations between public administration and political regime, between this, political plurality and the modern system of political parties, demonstrating the role of education and political culture in structuring the relatively autonomous environment of modern public administration.

The practical and applied nature of my research in which the call to history is an argument for the return to a rational and operational public administration are synthesized in *Ghidul pentru activitatea în administrația publică centrală și locală* (Activity Handbook of National and Local Public Administration), a guide for those who occupy public positions and offices in the Romanian state and public administration, as well as for the institutions involved in the initial and continuous training of specialized staff. The guide contains - in an instrumental synthesis - applications regarding the relationship between the public administration and the political parties, the public administration and the legislative power, the public administration and the legal environment, provides grounded explanations for the bureaucracy of modern administration and stresses the coordinates of the principle of subsidiarity for operational administration (*Ghid pentru activitatea în administrația publică centrală și locală/Activity Handbook of Central and Local Public Administration* pp.13-16, 29-30, 56-70).

The administrative and territorial organization of Romania occupies a vast space in my research regarding the modernization of the state. The hypothesis that I started from includes the two understandings of the genesis of communities: the one according to which communities are, by birth, natural, *preceding the existence of the state*, and the one according to which communities are administrative inventions, products of the law, *appearing after the state*.

By making an appeal to history, I notice the evolution of our territorial organization throughout a very wide time interval. A history of the organization of Romania's territorial administration, drawn up by reference to the specificities of *Romanian communities and society*.

In III.3 (*Administrative-territorial organization and modernization of Romania between 1859-1918*), III.4 (*Administrative-territorial organization of Romanian communities outside state borders before the Great Unification*) and III.5 (*Administrative-territorial organization after 1918*), I insist on the role of education in the organization of territorial administration on rational grounds, highlighting the fact that technical operations, specific to modernity, claimed for

education in the spirit of order and training relevant to social and administrative realities. At the same time, my thesis is that *the rational bureaucratization of administration could not have been carried out without a trained body of public workers*, and the introduction of the legal control of the prefect required extensive legal studies from the occupants of said position.

Part II

Modernising Education. The Historical Evolution of Romanian Education Legislation

The first part of the thesis presents personal contributions to the identification of the theoretical guidelines that underpinned educational capital and shaped the morale of Romanians at the middle of the nineteenth century, showing the role of intellectual and political elites in shaping an educational project. Disclosing the reception of educational identity within public opinion, I have carried out some research on the stages of the axiological construction which has laid the basis for the modernisation of the Romanian state and I have also explained the functions of education within the modernization process, highlighting the role of the relation between national and educational ideal in building modern educational institutions. I have dedicated special attention to the examination of the historical evolution of the Romanian administrative phenomenon and fact, highlighting the role of education in organising public administration on rational grounds.

Part II of the thesis deals with the *modernization of education* itself. In brief, starting from the premise that education is both, *vehicle* and *product* of modernization, my concerns are centred on the role of legislative politics in the modernisation of education, achieving to that effect an extensive research on the education laws, from the first Law of Public Instruction in 1864 up to the present.

The historical analysis undertaken allowed me to systematise legislative benchmarks and characteristics of modernization of the Romanian education, elaborating and publishing as sole author the series of studies on *A recent history of the social capital: the great rupture and the new existential matrix*, Editura Academica Brancusi, *Fundamente normative ale modernizării învățământului românesc /Normative Foundations of the Modernization of Romanian Education (1864-1918)* /, Editura ProUniversitaria, Bucharest, 2013, *O perspectivă istorico-*

sociologică asupra legislației din învățământul românesc (De la Marea Unire la decretul nr. 175/2 august 1948) / A Historical and Sociological Perspective on Romanian Education Legislation (From the Great Unification to the Decree no. 175/2 August 1948), Editura ProUniversitaria, Bucharest, 2014, *Regimul comunist din România și legiferările din educație / The Communist Regime in Romania and Regulation in Education*, Editura ProUniversitaria, Bucharest, 2014, *O nouă paradigmă a educației? (Construcții normative după 1989) / A New Paradigm of Education? (Normative Constructions after 1989)*, Editura ProUniversitaria, Bucharest 2014, 1989. *România între revoluție și lovitură de stat /1989. Romania between Revolution and Coup D'état*, Editura ProUniversitaria, Bucharest, 2015, *Major Problems facing the Romanian Education System at the Beginning of the Third Millennium* (Annals of "Constantin Brancusi of Targu Jiu no. 2/2015), *Education and Community in the Globalization Era* (the 15th. International Multidisciplinary Scientific GeoConference 15 SGEM, Albena, 2015) *Formal and Informal Standards in Institutionalized Education* (Albena, 2015), *University between Two Paradigms: The Production and Validation of Knowledge and the Competitive Information* (the 14th International Multidisciplinary Scientific GeoConferene SGEM 2014), etc.

I shall next present a summary of the research results obtained throughout these studies.

Chapter IV. *The Modernization of Romanian Education*

IV.1. *Theoretical guidelines; general investigation framework*

Political boundaries should be established not only in the case of various social relations, but also for culture, perceived either as a whole or in terms of some of its components - both perspectives aiming at understanding culture within a continuous historical evolution. Understanding education as *individual development through cultural transmission and social integration* may allow us to assume that both culture and education are dynamic areas, subject to modernization (understood as a type of development).

The term *modernization* contains some inaccuracies –mentioned by Myron Weiner in 1966 - which largely justify the great number of definitions that have been and are still given to it. Thus, Weiner demonstrates the plurivalence of the concept by using it in contexts that prove the equivalence of modernisation with *the development of rationality, secularization, economic development and westernization* (M. Weiner, *Modernization*, New York: Basic Books, 1966).

Based on these observations and also on the ambiguities identified by D. Fisichella, my research (Adrian Gorun, Horațiu Tiberiu Gorun, 1989. România între revoluție și lovitură de stat, Editura ProUniversitaria, Bucharest, 2015, pp. 131- 142) demonstrates that the term *modernisation* has a functional plurality, being used and applied not only within the political sphere, but also within social, cultural, economic, educational spheres, focusing on correlating modernization with change and development. Thus, proving that the term *modernization* has not *only* the meaning of westernization (since the modernization process also takes place in other non-Western countries) and that it does not identify with the one of *innovation* either, that modernization is characterized by multiple dimensions, residing in *structural and functional differentiation* and in *complexity*, I emphasize our educational identity benchmarks outlined prior to the Romanian state modernization and enhanced throughout this process. Also, based on the common characteristics of modernization and development, but also taking into account the elements that specify its size, I elaborate a general but also operational definition of modernisation. To begin with, modernization can be identified by its distinctive notes as a kind of development belonging to a historical stage that is *culturally* characterized by *secularization, an increasingly strategic role of science through educational expansion; economically* through *industrialization, urbanization, redistribution of national income* through an *expansive role of technology; politically* through the emergence and consolidation of *modernizing leadership*, i.e. a guiding group that assigns itself the function to operate with political instruments in order to modify structures or traditional political cultures, following *the objective of centralised power*, as well as that of *popular participation/mobilization* (D. Fisichella, *Political Science. Problems, Concepts and Theories*, Polirom, 2017, pp.109-117).

But in addressing the modernization of education, I have felt the epistemic need for a concise and operational definition, while maintaining the distinction between *modernity* and *modernization*. In this regard, we have developed the following ideas:

- the link between modernization and development, the former being a type of development during a particular historical stage;
- each historical stage is characterized *culturally, economically, politically, educationally, etc;*

➤ each of the above-mentioned aspects has its own impact - through its size and magnitude of immanent areas –on the historical period that contains the type of development (modernization);

➤ each aspect gets objectified through its own processes/phenomena:

– *the cultural aspect*: secularization, the strategic role of science, educational expansion;

– *the economic aspect*: industrialization, urbanization, national income redistribution, expansive role of technologies;

– *the political aspect*: the emergence and consolidation of modernizing leadership, a guiding group which, using specific political instruments, aims to centralize power and widen popular participation/mobilization.

In the light of these details, I have come up with a concise definition: modernization represents that type of development of a specific historical stage, culturally, economically and politically characterized by multidimensional processes converging towards an expected finality (modernity - 1989. *România între revoluție și lovitură de stat/ Romania between Revolution and Coup D'état*, pp. 136-137). Basically, modernization is the process that involves changes to the social system, namely at the level of social relations, institutions, culture and community life. These cultural changes characterize all levels (subsystems) of the social system: the level or subsystem of relations between society/community and nature (the subsystem of productive activities, materials), the level/subsystem of social structure and specific relations; the institutional level/subsystem; the level/subsystem of culture, education, social consciousness, ideology and spiritual life, the level/subsystem of community life (as coexistence manner and environment).

Other aspects have been taken into consideration in the analysis of the modernisation of the Romanian education:

a) connections exist between the political, economic and cultural-educational modernization so that dimensional differences do not concern closed and impermeable realities;

b) many features and factors characteristic of modernization are ambivalent, making modernization "in reality" a change both *balanced* and *unbalanced*, both *peaceful* and *violent* (the possibility of emergence of *differences* and *antinomies* that cannot be ignored). This ambivalence manifests itself in terms

of *participation, mobilization, secularization, industrialization, urbanization* etc., all with direct impact on the modernization of education as it will be revealed by our effort to investigate the evolution of Romanian education legislation.

IV.2. Normative Benchmarks of 1864 Education Act

Education has proved itself a particularly fertile field for parliamentarians over time, who show a genuine zeal to develop and amend legislation in this area subject to modernization. Thus, "whether the legislation had been amended, or passed and replaced –which is something natural, if we consider the successive changes of political regime or form of government" - after 1864, interventions on regulations are observed successively in 1893, 1899 1900 (July 1, July 5, July 9) 1912, 1924, 1925, 1928, 1932, 1939, 1948, 1968, 1995, 1997, 1999, 2001, 2011. We consider it important to mention that we only interested in the study of the normative acts passed or approved by the parliament (laws, legally approved government ordinances) and not in the countless less important regulatory actions (Adrian Gorun, *Studiu sociologic asupra Legii 1/2011, Educația și comunitatea / A Sociological Study on Law 1/2011, Education and Community*, Editura Didactică și Pedagogică, Bucharest, 2013, page 260).

The Education Act of 1864 is the first law *unitary* regulating Romanian education after the Union of the Principalities of Moldavia and Wallachia, signed by ruler Alexandru Ioan Cuza and countersigned by the Secretary of State for Justice, Cults and Public Instruction, N. Crețulescu.

The law is structured into two parts: Part I – *On the administration and organisation of instruction* and Part II - *On the institution asked with teaching and special administration of schools*, while *General Provisions* contain rules and definitions relating to: the division of instruction into *public* and *private* (Article 1), the classification of public instruction as *primary, secondary, higher* education (Article 2), the components of primary instruction (primary schools in rural and urban areas - Article 3), the organisation forms of secondary instruction (high schools, secondary schools, gymnasiums and seminaries, science schools, schools for arts, vocational schools and girls' secondary schools - Article 4), organisation forms of higher instruction (Faculty of Letters, Faculty of Mathematical and Physical Sciences, Law, Medicine – Article 5), gratuity of mandatory elementary education (Article 6), teaching expertise certifications of the teaching staff, (elementary male or female teachers in rural areas, elementary schoolmasters in urban areas; secondary schoolmasters; college professors – Article 7), the central

administration exercise of instruction by the Ministry of Education and the Permanent and General Council of Education (Article 7).

Part I is structured into four chapters and regulates the administration and organization of public instruction. My investigation has closely followed the modernizing measures introduced by the 1864 Act on the organization of public instruction on rational grounds, highlighting the competences and responsibilities of the Ministry of Public Instruction, Permanent Council of Public Instruction and General Council.

The detailed analysis of texts has allowed us to remark both the emergence of a framework specific to competitive democracy, but also a strong administrative tutelage, reflected by a generalized state control of public instruction. The manner of modernising public instruction from the "top-down" is introduced, the state - via its structures- being the change-promoting agent – aspect emerged from the whole content of Law of 1864.

Regulations on organizing elementary education, generalization of primary education and its mandatory nature, contents of curricula, students' promotion, sharing of responsibilities, development of primary education in rural communities, instruction management and control via specialized forms and especially those concerning the establishment and functioning of science schools (as vocational schools in different fields), theological seminaries, gymnasiums, high school and girls' secondary schools illustrate the understanding of modernisation of education through developing its connections with real life.

The idea understood and promoted by the political and intellectual elites, namely that *only an effort to modernize school education may make state modernization happen*, acquires consistency also through the principles and values that define the organization of higher education. Carrying out some research on the field of education, I have noticed the correlation that used to be between the educational content taught in the Romanian faculties (the two Universities of Iasi and Bucharest consisting of the Faculty of Philosophy and Letters, Faculty of Law, Faculty of Medicine and Faculty of Physical, Mathematical and Natural Sciences) and that being taught in European universities. Also, concern for the rational, modern organisation of higher education emerges from the norms established for the appointment of collegiate and unipersonal management bodies: *university bodies, the academic council, the faculty council, the deans and rector*.

A thorough education could not be achieved without a well-trained teaching staff. Therefore, cultivating *the interest for national public instruction*, The Act of 1864 confers the legal framework for the *stipend* delivery by the state for young Romanians who aspired to attending schools abroad, without neglecting the initial and continuous professional development of teaching staff in Romanian schools and universities. The principles embodied in the law regarding rights, "debts", selection, appointment and promotion of teaching staff, establishing periodical forms of training are also clear evidence of the organisation of education on rational grounds.

The Instruction Act of 1864 is the first organic law on education in Romania. It has laid the foundation for reforms necessary for building the modern nation-state, as the result of a legislative approach structured both according to the aspect of being familiar with the society issues, including those of Romanian education, but also with the tendencies of European education at that time. The public instruction act is one that *preserves* and *innovates*, playing a vital role in modernising society by increasing its degree of elementary public instruction: the main stakes of the reform promoted by the Act of 1864 are circumscribed precisely to the modern nation-state through the establishment of culture, national consciousness, national identity and preserving traditions such as "good Christian" and "good Romanian". Efforts to modernize Romanian education continue, the Public Instruction Act of 1864 being only the first of many others to come.

Chapter V *Norms and Values of the Romanian Education (1864-1948)* highlights my contribution to the investigation of the role of formal rules in the evolution of the whole education system, noticing the dimensions of its identity construction project (Horațiu Tiberiu Gorun, Adrian Gorun, *Fundamente normative ale modernizării învățământului românesc (1864-1918)*, Editura ProUniversitaria, Bucharest, 2013; Adrian Gorun, Horațiu Tiberiu Gorun, *O perspectivă istorico-sociologică asupra legislației din învățământul românesc (de la Marea Unire la decretul din 2 august 1948)*, Editura ProUniversitaria, 2014), Editura ProUniversitaria, 2014). In this regard, I insist on resuming (after 27 years from the publication of the Act of 1864) regulations on primary, secondary, vocational and higher education. The general characteristic of the regulations consists in the fact that they -as ways of adapting legislation to the country's social realities –correlate education with the economic and political needs of the new Kingdom.

Following the Act of 1864, several law projects were elaborated: I. The Strat Project (1866), Al. Crețescu (1869), P. P. Carp (1870), Cr. Tell (1872), Titu Maiorescu (1876), Vasile Conta's school reform project (1880-1881) and the D. Sturdza Project (1886). These projects have not been adopted as laws, however, a number of principles embodied in their content have constituted bench marks for subsequent laws (e.g. the V. Conta project regarding public and private instruction - articulated on the basis of a "more realistic" and "more practical" approach of school - will be found in the Spiru Haret's legislation of). Furthermore, the explanatory memorandum to the law project elaborated by D. Sturdza will result in what used to be the key challenge, namely increasing the school role in strengthening the state: "The school is an organic public institution, which has only one pillar: the State; one single and unique purpose: to strengthen and ensure its future".

In 1893, the Conservative government led by Lascăr Catargiu under the ministry of Take Ionescu manages to promote The Law of primary and normal primary Education (law that takes many provisions of the one in 1864, but also introduces many new elements in the field of primary education, by establishing *refresher courses* for primary school graduates from rural areas), and in 1896, the government Dimitrie Sturdza A. (under the ministry of Petru Poni) amended this law, publishing it under the same name in the Official Gazette No. 24 of April 30 (Horațiu Tiberiu Gorun, Adrian Gorun, *Fundamente normative ale modernizării învățământului românesc (1864-1918)*, Editura ProUniversitaria, Bucharest, 2013, pp. 42-54).

The personality who had definitely contributed to the Romanian school reform during this period is Spiru Haret.

Holding numerous positions and titles in the field of public instruction, Haret – the first Romanian intellectual who was awarded a PhD in mathematics at Paris – proved himself an excellent expert in the real problems of schools, enjoying wide appreciation among political and intellectual elites. During his five ministry mandates (overall 10 years as a ministry), Haret introduced reforms that allowed Romanian education to finalise its institutional construction and succeeds in making itself known in Europe, enjoying recognition and prestige in developed countries. Spiru Haret considered that only the intellectual, moral, physical and aesthetic development of students' personality ensures the school mission, insisting both on the *informative* but also *formative, educational* nature of education. This

thesis expounds Haret's contribution to strengthening the identity of Romanian education, capitalising on the results of the investigation of the *Law on Secondary and Higher Education* (1898) and the *Law on Vocational Education* (1899), laws that contain many provisions valid even at present (Horațiu Tiberiu Gorun, Adrian Gorun, op. cit., pp. 55-169).

Up to the Great Union, three other laws were adopted in order to continue the modernization process of Romanian education: *Law on Primary, Primary-Vocational, Primary-Higher and Normal-Primary Education*, sanctioned by High Royal Decree No. 2199 of 1896, with the amendments introduced through the law sanctioned by the Decree No. 2108 of April 5, 1900 and published in the Official Gazette No. 75 of July 5, 1900 (Horace Tiberiu Gorun, Adrian Gorun, op. cit., pp. 173-194), the *Law on Vocational Education* published in Official Gazette No 79 of July 9, 1900 (Horațiu Tiberiu Gorun, Adrian Gorun, op. cit., pp. 195-210) and the *Law on Secondary and Higher Education of 1912* (Ibidem, pp. 211-255).

The Act on Secondary and Higher Education of 1912, drafted during a Conservative government had remained in force - with successive changes to it - and after the Great Union (two laws were passed, one in 1928 on secondary education and one in 1932 on higher education). During this time interval, the governments: Titu Maiorescu (28.03.1912-14.10.1912 - with Constantin Arion to the Ministry of Cults and Public Instruction); Titu Maiorescu (14.10.1912-31.12.1913, Constantin G. Disescu to the Ministry of Public Instruction and Cults); Ion I. C. Brătianu (04.01.1914-11.12.1916 with I. G. Duca as Minister of Cults and Education); Ion I. C. Brătianu (11.12.1916- 01.28.1918, with I. G. Duca as Minister); Alexandru Averescu (29.01.1918- 03/04/1918, with Matei B. Cantacuzino as Minister of Cults and Public Instruction); Alexander Marghiloman (05.03.1918- 10.23.1918, with Simeon Mehedinți as Minister of Cults and Public Instruction); General Constantin Coanda (24.10.1918-28.11.1918 with Petru Poni to the Ministry of Instruction); Ion I. C. Brătianu (11.29.1918/old style - 09.12.1919/new style, with I. G. Duca and Dr. C. Angelescu to the Ministry of Instruction).

The year 1918 is the year of creation of Great Romania, the First World War having radically changed the map of the world, including the national relationships in our geographical area. The book *An historical and sociological perspective on the legislation of the Romanian education (From the Great Union to Decree no. 175/2 August 1948)* (book that I co-authored, published at ProUniversitaria

Publishing House in 2014), has assigned a considerable space to the modernization of our education, investigating the norms and values cultivated through the regulatory acts passed between 1918 and 1948: *Law on the state primary education* (children schools, schools and classes for adults, special schools and classes for debilitated and abnormally educable children) and *primary-normal education* from July 26, 1924, *Law on private education* of December 22, 1925, *Law on secondary education* of May 15, 1928 (all passed under the ministry of C. Angelescu), *Law on the organization of academic education* of April 22, 1932 (passed by the government of N. Iorga, which also owned the portfolio for Public Education), *Law for the organization and functioning of the primary and normal education* from the 27th of May 1939 (passed during the government of Armand Calinescu, under the ministry of the sociologist Petre Andrei) and *Law no. 386. Law Decree related to the organization of higher education* of May 19, 1942 (under the ministry of the philosopher Ioan Petrovici, Ion Antonescu's government).

By completing a social and political radiography of the period between 1918 and 1940 in order to detect the state of national education (Adrian Gorun, Horațiu Tiberiu Gorun, An historical and sociological perspective on the Romanian legislation and education (From the Great Union to Decree no. 175/2 August 1948),pp. 9-15), I have reached the conclusion that the first-rank personalities involved in the organisation of Romanian education had an European resonance. Intellectuals such as Dr. C. Angelescu, Alexandru Lupașcu, Octavian Goga, Petre Negulescu, George C. Mironescu, Ion Petrovici, Nicolae Costăchescu, Nicolae Iorga, Dimitrie Gusti, Victor Iamandi, Petre Andrei, Dumitru Caracostea and so on have contributed to the development of a performant education system in our country. If the period from late 19th century and early 20th century was under Spiru Haret's professional authority, the inter-war period bears the imprint of Constantin Angelescu's thinking and activity, due to its member quality of the board of the Ministry of Public Education throughout ten governments (some in a consecutive order, while others with a break generated by governmental rotation). The name of Doctor Constantin Angelescu is linked to the politics of modernizing the inter-war school, as he is a worthy follower of the works of Spiru Haret. Surgeon by profession, Dr. C. Angelescu did not stop at leading education after the Great Union, but elaborated its normative bases, being the creator of the main laws in the field (Adrian Gorun, Horațiu Tiberiu Gorun, op. cit., pp. 71-153). These laws re-

organised the Romanian education according to constitutional principles throughout the whole territory of Romania, completing its modernization process.

The development of the Romanian educational identity was made during the inter-war period through the modernization of the institutional construction, the quality of education and instruction, the professionalization of the teaching staff and the accent put on the thorough preparation of students. The Romanian school is a competitive school, with elite teaching staff, with theoretically and practically well-prepared students, a school in which the rigor and discipline that creates social capital rule, a school centered on democratic values, principles and norms, a school that builds characters and cultivates the mind, educating in the spirit of work. A school that is really integrated within the community (Adrian Gorun, Contributions to the reconstruction of national educational identity. Summaries, pp. 30-37).

Chapter VI of the thesis synthesizes the results of the research disseminated in the book *The Romanian communist regime and education legislation* (book published at the ProUniversitaria Publishing House in 2014 that I co-authored). With the adoption of Decree no. 175 from the 2nd of August 1948 (published in the Official Monitor no. 177 from the 3rd of August 1948) the process of axiological destructuring of the Romanian education begins; the whole architecture built between 1864-1945 being practically dismantled. The second paragraph of Article I tacitly annuls private education, setting the base for the secularization of the entire system: „it (education n. n.) is organized exclusively by the state on the basis of a structural unity and is laid on democratic, popular, realistic and scientific bases”. The conclusions of education are, from now on, circumscribed to the vision of the totalitarian regime that was installed in Romania after King Mihai’s banishment. A vision that conferred education the status of *ancilla politicae* and fixed its mission through some guiding marks that had an invariable incidence: *the strengthening of the socialist state as a totalitarian state*.

The decree elaborated under the ministry of an illiterate – Gheorghe Vasilichi, minister with four elementary classes, tin man by profession – abruptly interrupts the modernization of the Romanian education, imposing a sovietizing of education (Adrian Gorun, Horațiu Tiberiu Gorun, quoted works, pp. 13-20). Decree no. 175, issued for „educational reform” on the 2nd of August 1948, has a pronounced anti-national character, setting the bases of a unilateral education that, through its “unitary” character has unrooted the value system and has weakened

the general culture of those who graduated from school, irrespective of its level. At the same time, it contributed essentially to the annulment of the brilliance of the Romanian universities and of the prestige they enjoyed during the inter-war period.

Analyzing the process of axiological destructuring of the Romanian education, I have insisted on the means of „converting to Communism” from our country (Ibidem, pp. 20-27), and then I developed an ample investigation on the means of the communist totalitarianism from our country (Ibidem, pp. 28-89). Within this framework I explained the *modernizing authoritarianism* under which Ceaușescu tried to generate the perception of restoring the inter-war values in education, a perception fueled also by the expansion of education – as a sub-domain of the cultural frame -during the Ceaușescu regime.

Without neglecting the changes, we put forth in the thesis that the modernization, understood in its complexity and magnitude, is not a coordinate of the Ceaușescu regime, but a consequence to which the regime was constraint by the historical context. Just that the modernization of education during the totalitarian-communist regime is a cosmeticized one, amounting to the form aspects, while the contents remained almost invariable, quartered in the omnipotent, omnipresent and ossified ideology. *The law for education in The Socialist Republic of Romania* from the 13th of May 1968 (Ibidem, pp. 90-125), *Law number 6* from 14.03.1969 *regarding the Status of the Teaching Staff from the Socialist Republic of Romania* (Ibidem, pp. 126-175) and the *Law of education no. 28* from the 21st of December 1978 (Ibidem, pp. 176-220) – regulatory documents, on the basis of which the Romanian education was organized and functioned during the totalitarian communist regime, illustrate both the axiological destructuring of the Romanian education, through forced leveling, and the justificatory role, of supporter of the regime, played by education during that period.

“A series of provisions – positive through their content – are suffocated through an almost vulgar political indoctrination that generated a loss of credibility of the Romanian education worldwide, an isolation of the school through its ideological isolation, a decline of the teacher's status. The enactment of the principle of integrating education with production, scientific research and engineering (...) represented, basically, a positive fact, only that, as a result of the imperfect way in which it has been applied, through the gross immixture of the political, it seriously weakened the quality of the educational process, allowing an

‘invasion’ of the ‘proletarian spirit’ in education”(Adrian Gorun,*Contribuții la reconstrucția identității educației naționale. Sinteze / Contributions to the reconstruction of the national educational identity. Summaries*, p. 56). The negative aspects of totalitarian regime has distorted the social capital, unleashing an identity crisis for education, crisis that can be felt even today (Ibidem, p. 57).

Conclusion. This habilitation thesis highlights my contribution to the investigation of the role of education within the modernization of Romania, highlighting the fundamentals of the educational capital that have built the axiological construction of our educational project. By contributing to the construction of the institutions of the modern state, education itself has traversed a long modernization process, a process reflected by the historical evolution of the legislation that has developed the formal bases of a rationally legitimated education.

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