

Romanian Research on Elites of the 19th and 20th Centuries

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The paper offers a synthetic overview of the historical and social sciences writings on 19th and 20th century Romanian elites. Following the original local sociological constructs developed during the interwar period, the early socialist regime stopped almost all research on the topic for the next two decades. The interest rose again slowly in the 1970s and 1980s, when preliminary investigations highlighted some of the future research subjects: intellectuals, economic, and political elites. After 1989, historians were the first to enter the field, opening workshops on the previously mentioned categories, and more recently on ecclesiastical, military, and administrative elites. Social and political scientists followed shortly, focusing mainly – but not exclusively – on the socialist and post-socialist elites. Despite the flourishing period of the last two decades, and the generally positive trend, the historical research on elites in Romania produced mainly empirical studies. The methodological and theoretical framework was left unapproached, partly due to a lack of tradition, partly because of the low level of collaboration between historians and social scientists.

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Argument

The ensemble of works to which I shall be referring does not only consist of titles within the field of history, but also of the neighboring fields of sociology and political sciences. I have chosen this perspective not only in the spirit of interdisciplinarity, best represented in frontier works such as the one signed by Marius Lazăr,¹ but also guided by a trade selfishness. Through their specific nature, history and historiography inevitably take ownership of consistent theories which have previously formed the object of other sciences. For example, the autochthonous theories of elites developed during the interwar period and

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¹ LAZĂR, Marius: *Paradoxuri ale modernizării: Elemente pentru o sociologie a elitelor culturale româneşti* [Paradoxes of the Modernization: Elements for a Sociology of the Romanian Cultural Elites]. Cluj-Napoca 2002.

brutally cut off by early socialism², equally belong, in contemporary times, to the history of sociology (as an epistemic memory of the field) and to the history of Romanian culture.

I was also motivated by the current situation of Romanian historical writing on modern and contemporary elites. Within it, the number of retrospective historiographical analysis remains small, while their coverage is carefully cropped – thematically, chronologically or geographically. In sociology, Dan Dungaciu offered an ample perspective on the development of the interwar Romanian versions of the elites' theories.³ In historical writing, Cornel Sigmirean published, in 2004, the first study dedicated to the research of Transylvanian elites in the post-1989 historiography. A revised and extended version of the paper, published in 2012, analyzed the situation of the research of elites at the level of the entire country, with emphasis on the formation of intellectuality.⁴ That same year, Laurențiu Ștefan offered the most comprehensive and well-documented perspective of the knowledge on political elites of the 1948–1989 and 1990–2010 periods. His study showed the enhanced interest for the subject within the ranks of representatives of all three disciplines, with a slight prominence on the political scientists' side.⁵

The forerunners

The Romanian theoretical debates on elites in Romania started at the end of the 1920s in the sociological environment, influenced by the specificities of Romanian society of the time, but also by the expectations of intellectuals and, most of all, by what D. Dungaciu called 'the social agenda' of Romanian interwar sociology.⁶ Great figures in the field (Dimitrie Gusti, Traian Brăileanu, Virgil Bărbat, Mihail Manoilescu, Eugen Speranția) resonated with the classical theories of the elites, but all of them rejected the a-moral, purely theoretical and scientific perspective of Vilfredo Pareto, in favor of a more engaged vision, promoting the moral duty of the elite, both at the level of exceptional individual ('the great man') and at the level of the social class that was meant to guarantee the progress of the nation, in all plans.⁷ In fact, Romanian sociologists of the time only projected, upon an ideal elite model,

² Most of the historians dealing with 20th century Romania tend to use the terms communism/communist regime/communist elites/post-communist elites when referring to the 1948–2000 period. After careful consideration and talks for which I am grateful to both the paper reviewers and to some of my colleagues studying contemporary history, I have chosen to use instead terms such as: socialism/state socialism/early-socialist (for the 1948-1965 period), as they reflect more accurately the actual development stage of the Romanian political regime and society of the time.

³ DUNGACIU, Dan: *Elita interbelică : sociologia românească în context European : Contribuții la o sociologie a sociologiei* [The Interwar Elite: Romanian Sociology in European Context : Contributions to a Sociology of Sociology]. Bucharest 2003. For cited pages see the 2nd ed., e-book, 2011, pp. 255–348.

⁴ SIGMIREAN, Cornel: The History of the Romanian Elites of Transylvanian Society in the Postcommunist Historiography. *Anuarul Institutului de Cercetări Socio-Umane 'Gheorghe Șincai' din Târgu Mureș*, VII, 2004, pp. 267–268; Idem: Histoire des élites : Perspectives historiographiques. *Anuarul Institutului de Cercetări Socio-Umane 'Gheorghe Șincai' din Târgu Mureș*, XV, 2012, pp. 90–112.

⁵ ȘTEFAN, Laurențiu: Research on Elite Dynamics in Post-Communist Romania. In: BEST, Heinrich – WENNINGER, Agnieszka (eds.): *Landmark 1989: Central and Eastern European Societies Twenty Years After the System Change*. Berlin 2010, pp. 220–238; Idem: An Overview in Elite Research in Romania. In: Idem: *Who Governs Romania? : Profiles of Romanian political elites before and after 1989*. Bucharest 2012, pp. 235–257.

⁶ DUNGACIU, D.: *Elita*, p. 255.

⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 255–348; SIGMIREAN, C.: *The History*, pp. 267–268.

their own hopes and expectations from a political class with which they fully shared the nationalist spirit, but to a lesser extent the moral values and practices.

While these constructs were facing their last years of existence, the first work of historical and empirical sociological research of the Romanian political class was conducted. In 1946, Mattei Dogan published a study on the members of the Romanian Parliament between 1922 and 1934, later translated in an extended French version.⁸ The author underlined the deep professional imbalance between Members of Parliament (MPs) (mostly lawyers and great land owners) and the ones they represented (the immense majority of peasants), the lack of differences between the social-professional structure of different parties, the lack of collaboration between the parliamentary majority and the opposition, and the extremely low percentage of active MPs.

Around the same time, without being fully integrated to history of elites, but announcing the coagulation of a future main research area, a series of papers dedicated to *peregrinatio academica* were published. The effects of this educational practice on the formation of the Romanian elite had been analyzed by Eugen Lovinescu, within his theory of synchronism.⁹ It is worth mentioning the fact that research works regarding Romanian students in the West were favored, in some cases (such as the example of Dumitru Cristian Amzăr) by the diplomatic stance of the author, and also, probably, by reasons pertaining to cultural diplomacy.¹⁰ This, of course, does not lower their historiographic importance. Within the area of the history of intellectual elites, the publishing of George Călinescu's *History of the Romanian Literature*, which occurred during the same period, is also noteworthy. This work, beyond its inherent subjectivity and selectivity, represents a classical model of empirical systematization in the field of literary elites.¹¹

The period of state socialism

During the next 40 years, Romanian state socialism left its mark on the intellectual environment, both in regard to the reception of Western elite theories, and to the historical research of social classes associated with elites. Immediately after 1948, the most harmful effect of the intellectual hiatus that had just begun was, probably, the end of autochthonous sociological debates regarding the elites, which had gained a certain note of originality. Together with the ideological abuse that followed, this contributed to the development of a habit of avoiding the theoretical reflection on the subject and neglecting conceptualizations in favor of empirical research, leading to the present-day situation, which is somehow similar to the one in Hungarian historical writing.¹²

⁸ DOGAN, Matei: *Analiza statistică a 'democrației parlamentare' din România* [Statistical Analysis of the 'Parliamentary Democracy' in Romania]. Bucharest 1946; Idem: L'origine sociale du personnel parlementaire d'un pays essentiellement agraire, la Roumanie. *Revue de l'Institut de Sociologie*, 2–3, 1953, pp. 165–208 apud ȘTEFAN, L.: An Overview, pp. 240–241.

⁹ SIGMIREAN, C.: Histoire, pp. 96–98.

¹⁰ BOIA, Lucian: *Capcanele istoriei : Elita intelectuală românească între 1930 și 1950* [Traps of the Past : The Romanian Intellectual Elite Between 1930 and 1950]. Bucharest 2011, pp. 220, 249.

¹¹ CĂLINESCU, George: *Istoria literaturii române : Compendiu* [History of the Romanian Literature : Compendium]. Bucharest 1945.

¹² PÁL, Judit: The Study of Hungarian Elites of the 19th and 20th Century. *Historica : Revue pro historii a příbuzné vědy* 5, 2014, No. 2, p. 221.

The decades of early socialism represented the most restrictive period in the Romanian study of elites. Prior debates and sociological constructs vanished, replaced by exegeses of the Marxist paradigm, newly imposed in all areas of knowledge, especially in social sciences and humanities. At the same time, the Romanian society was dealing with a process of replacement and elimination of former elites, in almost all fields and on all levels. There was, however, a layer of the elite which withstood the 'obsessive decade' better than others: intellectuals. In a world in which hierarchies were overthrown, a not at all insignificant part of the intellectual elite (also including a part of the scientific community) managed to preserve its status, taking advantage of the propaganda and practical needs of the new regime and also of the fact that sometimes, even an inadequate political background could be forgotten or forgiven.¹³

In fact, the ambiguous position of intellectuals in the Marxist social grid had led, on an international level, to a series of debates whose echoes were felt as soon as the ideological relaxation allowed it. In 1965, Ernő Gáll, a university professor from Cluj, published a book on the history and philosophy of the intellectuals, in which he approached, from a Marxist point of view, the idea that intellectuals formed a social class or even a spiritual elite that transcended the structure of social classes. Its argument was that intellectuals should not be regarded as a 'privileged elite', but rather as a social layer whose members would end up assimilated, gradually, to production workers (since they were in fact just workers producing culture/science).¹⁴ Despite the fact that it contains only accidental references to the history and theory of elites, this book announced two important evolutions in the field.

First of all, regarding social and political sciences, one can observe a gradual rise of Romanian interest in the theories of elites after 1965, while not breaking the borders of the Marxist paradigm. In 1969, a posthumous paper by Stela Cernea analyzed the sociological system of V. Pareto from the traditional critical leftist perspective.¹⁵ One year later, the treaty of Petre Andrei (an important sociologist and Romanian socialist from the interwar period) in general sociology was republished (first edition: 1936), including a short presentation of Pareto's works and minor references to the theory of elites.¹⁶

Around the same period of time, at the University in Cluj, Liviu Petru Zăpârțan started his doctoral research on the theories of elites. He defended his dissertation in 1974, and it was printed, in a revised version, in 1979.¹⁷ The origins of his interest for the study of elites can be found in the Weberian perspective that had been perpetuated, despite the ideological pressure, at the Faculty of Philosophy in Cluj. However, due to increasingly strict application of the ideas in the 'July theses' of Nicolae Ceaușescu, the period of ideological relaxation at the end of the 1960s and the beginning of 1970s had ended, and

¹³ BOIA, L.: *Capcanele*, pp. 295–339.

¹⁴ GÁLL, Ernő: *Intellectualitatea în viața socială [Intellectuality in the Social Life]*. Bucharest 1965, pp. 5–14, 321 sqq.

¹⁵ CERNEA, Stela: *Sistemul sociologic teoretic al lui Vilfredo Pareto [The Theoretical Sociological System of Vilfredo Pareto]*. *Revista de Filozofie* 16, 1969, No. 6, pp. 703–716.

¹⁶ ANDREI, Petre: *Sociologie generală*, ed. a II-a, îngrijită și cuvânt introductiv de M. Măciu [*General Sociology*, 2nd ed.]. Bucharest 1970, pp. 116–117.

¹⁷ ZĂPĂRȚAN, Liviu-Petru: *Teoriile elitelor: Contribuții la critica marxistă a elitismului social politic [Theories of Elites : Contributions to the Marxist Critic of Social–Political Elitism]*. Ph.D. Thesis. Babeș-Bolyai University Cluj-Napoca 1974; Idem: *Contribuții la critica teoriilor elitare [Contributions to the Critique of Elite Theories]*. Cluj-Napoca 1979.

even L. Zăpârțan's thesis needed to be rewritten in a dialectical form (Marxism vs. elitism) before its publication was accepted, with a delay of five years.¹⁸ Even so, his work has the great merit of listing a large spectrum of authors and theoretical perspectives from the Western sociology of elites, which had been very difficult to access by Romanian scholars up until then. Moreover, for the students at the Faculty of History and Philosophy in Cluj, a manual on the theories of elites had been elaborated.¹⁹ Given the lack of Romanian translations of classical sociological treatises,²⁰ the works of L. Zăpârțan constituted, at the time, a huge leap forward.

A second evolution announced by the work of E. Gáll. was represented by the increasingly important place occupied by historical research of intellectuals, respectively, the intellectual formation of the Romanian elite. This was made possible because: the seeds of a tradition of researching intellectuality had been planted before 1948; the topic was easier to integrate, from certain points of view, to the demands of the increasingly nationalist historiographic speech of the 1970s–1980s; the self-perception of the scientific community (intellectuals themselves), naturally urged towards the research of this social segment, to which they were bound by an inalienable *esprit de corps*.

An important role in the revival of this topic was played by the research conducted by Hungarian historians from Romania on *peregrinatio academica* of Transylvanian students in the Middle Ages and the Early Modern period. The revival of interest did not materialize, however, in vast works. On the contrary: their number remained small, despite the pleading of important historians of that time (Zsigmond Jakó, Virgil Câdea). The ideological restrictions and the impossibility of accessing the archives of Western universities represented decisive inhibitive factors.²¹ Even so, the generated interest and scope were enough to ensure the massive extension of this research topic after 1990.

Beside the intellectuals, from the second half of the 1970s, historians started to be interested in the nobility of early modern and modern times, a topic impossible to deal with a decade before. Prior to 1989, only the terms 'dominant class' or simply 'nobility'/'boyars' were used. However, the revisions of some of these texts after 1989 managed to adapt to the new context more quickly, making references from the start to the 'nobility elite'.²² Those who chose to conduct such research on the nobility in Wallachia and Moldavia were important historians of that time (Gheorghe Platon, Paul Cernovodeanu, Dan Berindei),²³ and the dissemination within international environments indicates the existence of a broader interest and, at the same time, of a historiographical necessity. The attempts at

¹⁸ Information provided by L.-P. ZĂPĂRȚAN.

¹⁹ Idem: Teoriile elitelor [Elite Theories]. In: *Curs de doctrine politice contemporane*. Cluj-Napoca 1972.

²⁰ The works of classical sociologists of elites (Vilfredo Pareto, Gaetano Mosca, Robert Michels, Charles Wright Mills) have not been translated to Romanian, with a single recent exception: PARETO, Vilfredo: *Tratat de sociologie generală* [Treatise on General Sociology], 1–2. Craiova 2014.

²¹ SIGMIREAN, C.: Histoire, pp. 98–100.

²² PLATON, Gheorghe: Considerații privind situația numerică și structura boierimii din Moldova în preajma revoluției din 1848 [Considerations on the Numerical Situation of the Boyars in Moldavia Around the Time of the 1848 Revolution]. In: PASCU, Ștefan (ed.): *Populație și societate :Studii de demografie istorică, 2*. Cluj-Napoca 1977, pp. 351–443; PLATON, Gheorghe – PLATON, Alexandru Florin: *Boierimea din Moldova în secolul al XIX-lea : Context european, evoluție socială și politică* [The Boyars in Moldavia in the 19th Century : European Context, Social and Political Evolution]. Bucharest 1995, p. 8.

²³ BERINDEI, Dan – GAVRILĂ, Irina: Mutații în sânul clasei dominante din Țara Românească în perioada de destrămare a orânduirii feudale [Mutations Within the Dominant Class from Wallachia in the Period of the

ordering the field of research through quantifying and structuring/ranking the members of this elite layer were of great importance with regard to the methodology of these works, and proved that the authors were aiming at creating a solid research basis and that diving deeper in the subject was being envisioned.

Along with the formation of the intellectual elite and the research on nobility in the Romanian Principalities, before 1989, especially in the last decade before the Revolution, one can identify works of Romanian historiography that definitely do not pertain to the history of elites, but which indicate the presence of interest for certain elite categories, foreshadowing, through the approached theme, the evolutions in the post-socialist period. This is firstly the case for the monography of the Conservative Party by Ioan Bulei, whose editorial avatars were revealed by the author in the preface of the revised edition, published a decade later. Without overstepping the boundaries of the history of classical politics, the work indicated the attraction that the political elite of the Romanian Kingdom exerted on historians. Regarded retrospectively, it could be considered a sign of the explosion of interest for this subject that took place in the following two decades and lasts until the present.²⁴

C. Sigmirean places sections of the works written by Nicolae Bocșan and Ladislau Gyémánt in the same category.²⁵ N. Bocșan, writing about the enlightenment in the Banat, dedicates a special chapter to Romanian elite structures, materialized as an effect of enlightened reformism. Following the definition and approach of Guy Chaussinaud-Nogaret, he identified the emergence of social groups that could be integrated in this concept (small nobility, clerics, lay intellectuals, officers, etc.). He also made an explicit and most welcomed dissociation between ‘official elites’ (members of the elite from the point of view of the social-political establishment of the Monarchy) and the ‘national elites’ (members of the elite from the point of view of the Romanian social structure). Unfortunately, in the following decades, this dissociation was historiographically perpetuated only in the sense of prioritizing research of ‘national elites’, to the detriment of the Romanian members of the ‘official elites’.

While analyzing the social basis of the national movement of Romanians in Transylvania between the *Supplex* and the Revolution of 1848, L. Gyémánt identified, *grossomodo*, three social categories from which the national political elite was recruited: the intellectuals (mainly priests and teachers), small nobility (also including the military nobles from borderline regiments) and the townspeople. The author added detailed statistical analyses

Feudal System]. *Revista de Istorie* 34, 1981, No. 11, pp. 2029–2046; Eadem: Analiza situației clasei dominante din Țara Românească în temeiul catagrafiei din 1829 [The Analysis of the Situation of the Dominant Class from Wallachia Based on the Census of 1829]. *Revista de Istorie* 36, 1983, No. 4, pp. 349–362; Eadem: Analyse de la composition de l'ensemble des familles de grands dignitaires de la Valachie au XVIII^e siècle. In: *Comunicaciones al XV Congreso Internacional de la Ciencias Genealogica y Heraldica. Madrid 19–25 septiembre 1982*, 1. Madrid 1983, pp. 239–253; CERNOVODEANU, Paul: La Structure sociale de la classe des boyards roumains pendant sa dernière étape d'existence institutionnelle (1831–1858). In: *Comunicaciones*, 1, p. 429–446; BERINDEI, Dan: Sozialer Wandel der rumänischen Führungsschichten in XIX. Jh. *Österreichische Osthefte* 29, 1987, 1, pp. 56–69.

²⁴ BULEI, Ion: *Sistemul politic al României moderne : partidul conservator [The Political System of Modern Romania : The Conservative Party]*. Bucharest 1987; Idem: *Conservatori și conservatorism în România [Conservatives and Conservatism in Romania]*. Bucharest 2000, pp. 5–6.

²⁵ SIGMIREAN C.: Histoire, pp. 93–94.

to his research, revealing the share of these elite categories within the ensemble of the Romanian ethnic body, and the schools they frequented.²⁶

Another point worth mentioning, is the assiduous and erudite research of Pompiliu Teodor on Romanian enlightenment, as well as his historical vision which decisively contributed to the interest manifested after 1990 for the knowledge of Romanian elites in 19th century Transylvania. His line of research, which was closer to the history of culture than to the history of elites, influenced the historical school from Cluj in the 1980s much more than the sociological theoretical perspective brought upon by the work of L. Zăpârțan.²⁷ Thus, even from before 1990, the difference in perspective between historians and sociologists, which still exists today in the research of Romanian elites, was easily distinguishable.

The publication in 1983 of a *History of the Romanian Parliament until 1918*, at the Publishing House of the Romanian Academy, also fits the category of ‘signs’ forecasting the evolutions within the next decade.²⁸ Last, but not least, it is worth mentioning the historical research of the Romanian financial-banking system, conducted by Mihai Drecin and Vasile Dobrescu, which extended the former preoccupations of Bujor Surdu.²⁹ Alongside these, one could also mention a high number of biographies of important members of the Romanian national political movement in Transylvania. However, as C. Sigmirean observed, these did not lead, after 1990, to the development of thorough research in this respect.³⁰

Looking back on the evolution of the research of elites in socialist Romania, it can be observed that, even though a connection within social sciences did take place after 1970, to the international knowledge in the field (true, with a purely critical purpose and without modifying the Marxist paradigm in any way), the reverberations within the field of historiography reached a low amplitude. From a terminological point of view, ‘elite’ and ‘elitism’ were reserved for works of political philosophy, while historians were limited to using concepts such as: ‘intellectuality’, ‘dominant classes’, and ‘the upper middle class’. From a thematic point of view, the two domains in which the history of elites timidly manifested itself in 1970–1989 Romania (intellectuals and nobility) had historiographic roots in the interwar period and their evolution was too little connected to the advances

²⁶ BOCȘAN, Nicolae: *Contribuții la istoria iluminismului românesc* [*Contributions to the History of Romanian Enlightenment*]. Timișoara 1986, pp. 83–150, esp. 143–150; GYÉMÁNT, Ladislau: *Mișcarea națională a românilor din Transilvania între anii 1790–1848* [*The National Movement of the Romanians in Transylvania between the Years 1790–1848*]. Bucharest 1986, pp. 336–404.

²⁷ Information provided by N. BOCȘAN.

²⁸ ADĂNILOAIE, Nichita – CÂNCEA, Paraschiva – IORDACHE, Anastasie: *Istoria parlamentului și a vieții parlamentare din România până la 1918* [*History of the Parliament and Parliamentary Life in Romania until 1918*]. Bucharest 1983.

²⁹ SURDU, Bujor: Aspecte privind rolul băncilor în consolidarea burgheziei românești din Transilvania până la primul război mondial [Aspects Regarding the Role of Banks in the Consolidation of the Romanian Bourgeoisie in Transylvania until the First World War]. *Anuarul Institutului de Istorie din Cluj* V, 1962, pp. 179–202; DRECIN, Mihai: *Banca Albina din Sibiu*. Cluj-Napoca 1980; DOBRESCU, Vasile: Rolul băncilor românești din Transilvania în domeniul agrar până la 1918 [The Role of Transylvanian Romanian Banks in Agriculture until 1918]. *Marisia* X, 1980, pp. 317–334; XI-XII, 1981–1982, pp. 235–278; XIII-XIV, 1984, pp. 287–303; XV-XXII, 1985–1992, pp. 295–316.

³⁰ SIGMIREAN, C.: *The History*, p. 279.

in political sociology. At the same time, the history of political elites, which would have benefitted a lot more from such interactions, could not develop due to ideological constraints. In the end, the initial phase of what would become the history of Romanian economic elites in Transylvania developed somewhere at the border between economic and social history, benefitting, however, of its placement within the wider framework of the national movement. This was an intensely promoted and ideologized research field during the state socialism period, with fatal medium-term results, for the development of the history of Romanian political elites in 19th-century Transylvania.

It is obvious that during the 1980s, Romanian historians developed expectations and the will of starting research in the field of elites. The reasons can be associated with intellectual curiosity, but also with the need to bridge the gap with Western historiography, which gradually became wider. Unfortunately, Romanian historiography at the end of the 1980s offered few of the premises required for a successful development of the history of elites: the theoretical frame was lacking (including the lack of a tradition in interdisciplinary collaboration with social sciences), the conceptual inventory and the interpretative patterns remained difficult to update, the connection to the international bibliography was reduced, there was a lack of most of the work tools needed to construct the basis of the research (especially biographical dictionaries, and prosopographic and genealogical works) and, last but not least, the state of organization of archive collections was precarious. For these reasons, even though research on elites grew immediately after 1990, the first major results were felt only a decade after, and their quality was greatly dependent on the way in which authors chose to overcome the above-mentioned difficulties.

The post-socialist period

As L. Ștefan underlined, after 1990, historians were the first to take advantage of the possibility to study the elites, followed by sociologists, and only later by political scientists. This fact seems only natural, given the necessity of a period of epistemological coagulation, both at the institutional and the personal level, in a country in which political sciences had previously been almost completely assimilated to political philosophy. On the other hand, the sources regarding the object of the research (the pre- and post-revolutionary political class) were not available yet.³¹ However, concerning the assertion regarding a better ownership of the research methodology by historians, I remain somewhat skeptical, in the sense that, in the field of research on elites, as in other historiographic areas, new interpretative directions were assimilated and implemented quicker than methodological accumulations.³²

Paradoxically, sociologists, who had, before 1989, been closer to the concept than historians, seem to also have taken a step back in the first decade after the Revolution, leaving the research of elites to the latter. When the elites started to attract the interest of sociologists again, empirical research glided either towards the history of culture

³¹ ȘTEFAN, L.: An overview, pp. 237–238, 241.

³² An overview of Romanian research on elites in the 1990s is offered by the thematic issue of *Xenopoliana* IV, 1996, no. 1–4.

and intellectuals (Marius Lazăr,³³ Irina Culic,³⁴ Mihai Dinu Gheorghiu³⁵) – joining the current mainly promoted by historians – or towards the analysis of the political class (I. Culic)³⁶ – announcing future evolutions in the field of political sciences. The theoretical approaches also started to appear in the late 1990s, reviving the tradition of presenting and analyzing Western theories of elites, sometimes comparing them with interwar Romanian developments.³⁷ More recently, Oscar Hoffman and Ion Glodeanu promoted another theme of interest of contemporary sociology: the role of a highly-qualified middle class, as ‘an elite of knowledge’ (thus, depositary of power) in a post-industrial society based on services. The two authors attempted, in the same work, to evaluate the role that the respective elite segment in Romania could have in reducing the socio-economic gap with the Western space.³⁸ It should be mentioned, in the same registry, the recent partial translation of V. Pareto’s *Treatise of General Sociology*, tightly connected to a controversial Ph.D. thesis dedicated to his sociological system,³⁹ and the translation of Robert Michels’ book on political parties.⁴⁰

While social sciences were taking a step back (almost ‘strategically’), reconsidering the conceptual and methodological tools, historians did not hesitate to open up research sites in the field of the history of elites, responding to the scope they had identified in the 1980s. In a first stage, a priority was to extend the areas already in research, and then to open those upon which censorship was applied and the ideological pressure had affected the most. Thus, the history of the formation of the intellectual class and intellectual elites, the economic elite and the metamorphoses of the nobility elite in the Old Kingdom, together with the political elite, were the main workshops of the 1990s, new directions only opening in the next decade.

Intellectual elites

Historiography of the intellectual elites integrates two related, but still distinct, fields of research. On one side stands the study of those forming the social-professional category usually defined as ‘intellectuals’: university professors, researchers, people of letters, members of the Academy, ‘public intellectuals’, etc. On the other hand, it includes the study of the intellectual training of a large mass of students, without having the certainty

³³ LAZĂR, M.: Paradoxuri.

³⁴ CULIC, Irina: The Strategies of Intellectuals: Romania under Communist Rule in Comparative Perspective. In: BOZÓKI, András (ed.): *Intellectuals and Politics in Central Europe*. Budapest-New York 1999, pp. 43–72.

³⁵ GHEORGHIU, Mihai Dinu: *Intelectuali în câmpul puterii : Morfologii și traiectorii sociale [Intellectuals in the Field of Power : Morphologies and Social Trajectories]*. Iași 2007.

³⁶ CULIC, Irina: *Câștigătorii : Elita politică și democratizare în România 1989–2000 [The Winners : Political Elite and Democratization in Romania 1989–2000]*. Cluj-Napoca 2002.

³⁷ BĂDESCU, Ilie – DUNGACIU, Dan – BALTASIU, Radu (ed.): *Istoria sociologiei : Teorii contemporane [History of Sociology : Contemporary Theories]*. Bucharest 1996, pp. 556–690; MILCA, Mihai: *Geneza teoriei elitelor : Provocarea neo-machiavelienilor [The Genesis of Elite Theories]*. Bucharest 2001.

³⁸ HOFFMAN, Oscar – GLODEANU, Ion: *De la mediocrație la meritocrație : Societatea cunoașterii și noile elite [From Middlecracy to Meritocracy : The Society of Knowledge and the New Elites]*. Bucharest 2007.

³⁹ PARETO, V.: *Tratat; VASILESCU, Lia Olguța: Contribuția lui Vilfredo Pareto la dezvoltarea sociologiei moderne [The Contribution of Vilfredo Pareto to the Development of Modern Sociology]*. Ph.D. Thesis. University of Bucharest 2007.

⁴⁰ MICHELS, Robert: *Partidele politice : Studiu sociologic al tendințelor oligarhice din democrația modernă [Political Parties : A Sociological Study of the Oligarchical Tendencies of Modern Democracy]*. Bucharest 2011.

that they could all be integrated into the category of intellectuals, without even mentioning their accession to a statute that could be defined as elite.

University professors from Romania formed the subject of research for Lucian Nastasă-Kovács, who analyzed the mechanisms of selection, promotion, and professional adaptation. Another of his works touches on the issue of private life, focusing on the way in which the university intellectual behaved within the framework of traditional social forms: family, friends, and work environment.⁴¹ The Romanian intellectual elite between 1930–1950, the relationships between its representatives and the succession of dictatorial political regimes, the silent dispute on political criteria that slowly took the place of dialogue in the 1930s, the adaptation and reinvention strategies depending on the demands of the moment – these were all analyzed by Lucian Boia who used an extended sample of university professors and members of the Academy.⁴² The issue of intellectual unemployment and political radicalization of young intellectuals in interwar Romania were approached by Dragoș Sdrobiș.⁴³

A different perspective was offered by Marius Lazăr, through the dense and rigorous application of quantitative sociological methods in the history of modern Romanian culture, with reverberations towards contemporary times. His work analyzes the members of the Romanian cultural elite in their role of creators of culture and political leaders at the same time, engaged from both perspectives in the country's modernization process.⁴⁴ Elena Siupur reached relatively similar conclusions regarding the interferences within the field of culture and politics in the modern period. Her work, dedicated to the relation between intellectuals as social elite and the political life, is constructed on a sample of 3 000 people in the area of South-Eastern Europe (mainly from today's Romania and Bulgaria), publicly active in the 19th century. She reached the conclusion that, out of those studied, a third of them occupied political functions alongside their position in the cultural space.⁴⁵

In the same field of research, the work of Sorin Adam Matei, dedicated to the coagulation and functioning of 'prestige groups', is also noteworthy. Using arguments from the field of social studies, the author explains the way in which, inside superior intellectual strata, image capital and decisional power were taken over by smaller groups, which thereby became heads of the elite, with all related pecuniary and status benefits.⁴⁶

41 NASTASĂ, Lucian: *Intellectualii și promovarea socială: pentru o morfologie a câmpului universitar* [*Intellectuals and Social Promotion: For a Morphology of the Field of Higher Education*]. Cluj-Napoca 2004; Idem: „Suveranii” universităților românești: *Mecanisme de selecție și promovare a elitei intelectuale* [*The 'Monarchs' of the Romanian Universities: Selection and Promotion Mechanisms of the Intellectual Elite*]. Cluj-Napoca 2007; Idem: *Intimitatea amfiteatrelor: Ipostaze din viața privată a universitarilor literari 1864–1948* [*The Privacy of Amphitheaters: Stances from the Private Life of Men of Letters*]. Cluj-Napoca 2010.

42 BOIA, L.: *Capcanele*.

43 SDROBIȘ, Dragoș: *Limitele meritocrației într-o societate agrară: Șomaj intelectual și radicalizarea politică a tineretului în România interbelică* [*The Limits of Meritocracy: Intellectual Unemployment and Political Radicalization of the Youth in Interwar Romania*]. Bucharest 2015.

44 LAZĂR, M.: *Paradoxuri*.

45 SIUPIUR, Elena: *Intellectualii, elite, clase politice modern în sud-estul european: Secolul XIX* [*Intellectuals, Elites, Modern Political Classes in South-Eastern Europe: 19th Century*]. Bucharest 2004.

46 MATEI, Sorin Adam: *Boierii minții: Intellectualii români între grupurile de prestigiu și piața liberă a ideilor* [*Boyers of the Spirit: Romanian Intellectuals between Prestige Groups and the Free Market of Ideas*]. Bucharest 2004.

The tradition of *peregrinatio academica* and the interest towards the social and political role of the intellectuality, together with the influences coming from the Hungarian historiography within the Transylvanian space⁴⁷ turned the research of the intellectual training of the elites into another frequently discussed topic by Romanian historians. A synthetic perspective and a pertinent analysis of this phenomenon were already offered by C. Sigmirean in two relatively recent studies,⁴⁸ so I shall only reiterate the main evolutions and publications in the field.

The research of the formation of intellectuality evolved at different paces for Transylvania and the Old Kingdom. Students coming from Transylvania who studied at universities in the Habsburg Empire and Western Europe were recorded and analyzed by C. Sigmirean. Leaving aside the high number of priests-to-be, most of the students studied law and medicine. They were enrolled at universities in Hungary, but a not at all negligible number (over 10 %) studied in Austria and Western Europe.⁴⁹ The students of the Faculty of Medicine in Cluj before 1918 formed the subject of research for L. Nastasă and Victor Karády.⁵⁰

For the Old Kingdom, for a long period of time, research was formed by studies dedicated to specific universities or linguistic spaces, while a synthesis work was lacking.⁵¹ An overall perspective on *peregrinatio academica* and its effects in the development of the Romanian culture was offered by L. Nastasă-Kovács. The presence of Romanian students in the German-speaking area was the subject of research for Elena Siupur, which she reunited in the final part of her previously mentioned work. The presence of Romanian students in Belgium was researched by Laurențiu Vlad.⁵² Recently, more in-depth studies dedicated to the frequenting of German universities by Romanian students in the interwar period and the ideological effects associated with it were conducted by Irina Nastasă-Matei.⁵³ Several collective volumes should also be mentioned.⁵⁴ In recent years, the chronological interest has shifted towards the interwar period, owing to the richness of archive sources, as well

⁴⁷ For the Transylvanian Hungarian research on the topic see PĂL, J.: The Study, pp. 230.

⁴⁸ SIGMIREAN, C.: Histoire, pp. 96–106.

⁴⁹ Idem: *Istoria formării intelectualității românești din Transilvania și Banat în epoca modernă* [History of the Formation of Romanian Intellectuality in Transylvania and Banat in the Modern Era]. Cluj-Napoca 2000.

⁵⁰ NASTASĂ, L. – KARÁDY, Victor: *The University of Kolozsvár/Cluj and the Students of the Medical Faculty (1872–1918)*. Budapest – Cluj 2004.

⁵¹ Essential titles in SIGMIREAN, C.: Histoire, pp. 102–104.

⁵² NASTASĂ, Lucian: *Itinerarii spre lumea savantă: Tineri din spațiul românesc la studii în străinătate* [Paths towards the Scholarly World: Young People from Romania at Studies Abroad]. Cluj-Napoca 2006; SIUPIUR, E.: Intelectuali, pp. 258–308; VLAD, Laurențiu: *Studenți români la Universitatea Liberă din Bruxelles (a doua jumătate a veacului al XIX-lea – prima parte a secolului al XX-lea)* [Romanian Students at the Free University of Bruxelles (second half of the 19th Century and first half of the 20th Century)]. Iași 2014.

⁵³ NASTASĂ-MATEI, Irina: *Educație, politică și propagandă: Studenți români în Germania nazistă* [Education, Politics and Propaganda: Romanian Students in Nazi Germany]. Cluj-Napoca 2016.

⁵⁴ Selective: SIGMIREAN, Cornel (coord.): *Intelectualii și societatea modernă: Repere Central-Europene* [Intellectuals and Modern Society: Central-European Landmarks]. Târgu-Mureș 2007; KARÁDY, Victor – TÖRÖK, Borbála Zsuzsanna (eds.): *Cultural Dimensions of Elite Formation in Transylvania (1770–1950)*. Cluj-Napoca 2008; NEAGOE, Liviu (ed.): *Elite, națiune și societate în România modernă* [Elites, Nation and Society in Modern Romania]. Cluj-Napoca 2012; NASTASĂ-MATEI, Irina – VLAD, Laurentiu: *Universitate și politică: Evoluții instituționale românești și trasee europene de formare intelectuală (secolele XIX–XXI)* [University and Politics: Romanian Institutional Evolutions and European Paths of Intellectual Formation (19th–20th Centuries)]. Bucharest 2014.

as due to the more complex mental and social phenomena that can be said to be arising from the study of the intellectuality.

Economic elites

The research of economic elites in Transylvania, even though anticipated by historiographic evolutions in the 1980s, had its true debut only a decade afterwards and, as opposed to the study of other elite segments, managed to detach itself with more difficulty from the former interpretative patterns. The main initiator of this direction was V. Dobrescu. His first work, published in 1996, followed the links between the Transylvanian Romanian elite, and the economic growth and education of the rural world, through cultural associations, cooperatives and the credit system.⁵⁵ Later on, Dobrescu oriented his research more and more intensely towards the Romanian banking elite in Transylvania, the result being a monograph published in 2006.⁵⁶ Even though, conceptually, he sticks to the definition of the Romanian elite as the sum of the middle class and intellectuality, the work brings forth more thorough empirical research over the concerned social-professional segment and introduces new concepts, such as 'elite micro-groups'.

Regarding the area of the Romanian Principalities, Gheorghe Platon and Alexandru Florin Platon studied the metamorphosis of the small and middle nobility into the middle class of the 19th century.⁵⁷ Other studied aspects were the relations within the newly-formed social class, the intra- and inter-generational mobility, the transfer of symbolic values of the former social structure (rank, function, wealth). One of the important conclusions of the research, later supported by works of other authors, concerns the multi-positionality of the upper middle class (respectively, those with economic power): up until the start of the 20th century, its members could be found holding positions within the intellectual, administrative, or political elites simultaneously.

Military elites

The Romanian historiography's preoccupations with the military elites are highly dispersed and more recent. The research methodology is also different, with less attention given to quantitative analyses and with tendency towards a broader perspective, integrating the military elites in the social establishment. For the space of the Old Kingdom, Dumitru Bleoancă conducted research regarding the social status of the Romanian militaries between 1878 and 1914, and Maria Georgescu studied the Romanian officers who graduated from the Cavalry School in Saumur.⁵⁸ In Transylvania, the status of Romanian officers in the Habsburg army as pillars of dynasticism and aspects regarding the mentality were analyzed

⁵⁵ DOBRESCU, Vasile: *Elita românească în lumea satului transilvan 1867–1918* [*The Romanian Elite in the Transylvanian Rural World 1867–1918*]. Târgu Mureș 1996.

⁵⁶ Idem: *Funcții și funcționalități în sistemul de credit românesc din Transilvania până la primul război mondial: Studiu de caz* [*Functions and Functionalities within the Romanian Credit System in Transylvania before the First World War: A Case Study*]. Târgu Mureș 2006.

⁵⁷ PLATON, G. – PLATON, A. F.: Boierimea; PLATON, Alexandru Florin: *Geneza burgheziei în Principatele Române (a doua jumătate a secolului al XVIII-lea – prima jumătate a secolului al XIX-lea): Preliminariile unei istorii* [*The Genesis of the Bourgeoisie in the Romanian Principalities (second half of the 18th century – first half of the 19th century): Preliminaries of a History*]. Iași 1997.

⁵⁸ BLEOANCĂ, Dumitru: *Statutul social al militarilor armatei române în perioada 1878–1914* [*The Social Status of the Militaries in the Romanian Army between 1878 and 1914*]. Bucharest 2003; GEORGESCU, Maria: *Cavaleriști români la Saumur* [*Romanian Cavalry Troopers at Saumur*]. Bucharest 2015.

by Günter Klein and Liviu Maior,⁵⁹ while C. Sigmirean identified the Transylvanian cadets at the Military Academy ‘Ludovika’ in Budapest.⁶⁰ Also worth mentioning are two recent doctoral theses, yet unpublished: Iulian Boțoghină studied the role of the military elite in Romania within the modernization of society, and Irina Marin analyzed the military career and the issue of loyalty of several Romanian officers from the border guard regiments in the Banat.⁶¹

Ecclesiastic elites

Research in the field of clerical elites started only after 1990, and only in Transylvania, thanks to N. Bocșan. Given the extremely precarious state of research in the field, marginalized before 1990 and left mainly to the clergy, two decades of methodological, informational and editorial accumulations were necessary until the first results on the topic of elites could be felt. Recently, under the coordination of Mirela Popa-Andrei, a biographical dictionary of Greek-Catholic canonicals and a collection of studies were published. The latter deal with the intellectual training, professional selection and promotion, personal relationships, matrimonial strategies and the Greek-Catholic clerics’ implication in the financial-banking system between 1853 and 1918.⁶² Prior to this, and linked to his previous researches, C. Sigmirean had analyzed the graduates of the Greek-Catholic Theology Institute in Blaj between 1806 and 1948, including biographical and career data.⁶³

Administrative and political elites⁶⁴

Romanian historians paid little attention to the administrative elite in Transylvania prior to 1918, on the background of low Romanian presence among the civil servants and the interpretative historiographic cliché opposing them, as employees of the Hungarian state, to the radical representatives of the national political movement. The most thorough studies

⁵⁹ KLEIN, Günter: Die rumänischen Offiziere in der k. (u.) k. Armee : Sozialer Aufstieg ohne Verlust der nationalen Identität. *Revista Istorică : Serie nouă* VII, 1996, No. 3–4, pp. 175–189; MAIOR, Liviu: *Romanians in the Habsburg Army : Forgotten Soldiers and Officers*. Bucharest 2004.

⁶⁰ SIGMIREAN, Cornel: *Formarea elitelor militare ale Imperiului Austro-Ungar : Studenți transilvăneni la Academia Militară „Ludovika” din Budapesta* [The Formation of the Military Elite of the Austrian-Hungarian Empire : Transylvanian Students at the Military Academy ‘Ludovika’ in Budapest]. Târgu-Mureș 2011.

⁶¹ BOȚOGHINĂ, IULIAN: *Instituția armatei în România modernă : Elitele militare și rolul lor în modernizarea societății românești* [Army as an Institution in Modern Romania : Military Elites and their Role in the Modernization of the Romanian Society]. Ph.D. Thesis. University of Bucharest 2011; MARIN, Irina: *The Formation and Allegiance of the Romanian Military Elite Originating from the Banat Military Border*. Ph.D. Thesis. University College London 2009.

⁶² POPA-ANDREI, Mirela (coord.). *Canonici, profesori și vicari foranei din Biserica Română Unită (1853–1918) : Dicționar* [Canons, Professors and Curates of the Romanian Church United with Rome (1853–1918) : Dictionary]. Cluj-Napoca 2013. Idem et al.: *Recruitment and Promotion among the Romanian Greek-Catholic Ecclesiastical Elite in Transylvania (1853–1918) : A Collection of Studies*. Cluj-Napoca 2014.

⁶³ SIGMIREAN, Cornel: *Intelectualitatea ecleziastică : Preoții Blajului (1806–1948)* [The Ecclesiastical Intellectuality : The Priests of Blaj (1806–1948)]. Târgu-Mureș 2007.

⁶⁴ An extended comparative overview of the Hungarian and Romanian historical writing on political elites in: PÁL, Judit – POPOVICI, Vlad: O perspectivă comparativă asupra cercetării elitelor politice din secolele XIX-XX

were written by Judit Pál and are dedicated to the Lord-Lieutenants.⁶⁵ For the space of the Old Kingdom and of interwar Romania, an analysis of the civil servants' body, together with an ampler case study on county prefects was recently conducted by Andrei Florin Sora.⁶⁶ A special category of civil servants, the state-employed physicians, formed the research subject for Constantin Bărbulescu, but as promoters of a modernizing discourse, rather than as an elite group.⁶⁷

Owing to ideological pressures, the history of political elites in Romania truly developed only after 1990. For the 19th century Kingdom of Romania, prosopographical studies have been conducted on samples of the Liberal and Conservative parliamentary elite,⁶⁸ while the process of political professionalization and the parliamentary discourse focusing on the concept of 'nation' have been researched by Silvia Marton.⁶⁹

For Transylvania, a first overview on the Romanian elites was offered by Keith Hitchins.⁷⁰ Stelian Mândruț followed the Romanian National Party from Transylvania and Hungary (RNP)'s representatives in the Parliament of Hungary between 1905 and 1910, while Ovidiu Iudean dealt with the Romanian deputies elected on the lists of the Hungarian parties between 1881 and 1918.⁷¹ An ample research project directed by J. Pál ended this year, among its results being a large prosopographical database of the members of the Hungarian Parliament elected between 1865 and 1918 in the constituencies from Transylvania and Eastern Hungary, together with data on the counter candidates, election results and electoral geography.⁷² Still regarding the Romanian MPs in the Parliament of Budapest, one should note the three volumes written by Balázs Sándor which include most of the former's parliamentary speeches, the third volume comprising thematic analogies between their speeches and those of the Hungarian MPs from Romania's Parliament after

în Ungaria și România [A Comparative Perspective on the Research of Political Elites of 19th-20th Centuries in Hungary and Romania]. *Analele Științifice ale Universității 'Alexandru Ioan Cuza' din Iași (serie nouă)* LXI, 2015, pp. 585–608. An English translation is to be published in the following years.

65 PÁL, J.: The Study, p. 233.

66 SORA, Andrei Florin: *Servir l'État roumain : Le corps préfectoral (1866–1940)*. Bucharest 2011.

67 BĂRBULESCU, Constantin: *România medicilor : Medici, țărani și igienă rurală în România de la 1860 la 1910 [The Physicians' Romania : Physicians, Villagers and Rural Hygiene in Romania from 1860 to 1910]*. Bucharest 2014.

68 RĂDULESCU, Mihai Sorin: *Elita liberal românească 1866–1900 [The Romanian Liberal Elite 1866–1900]*. Bucharest 1998; Idem: Sur l'élite du Parti Conservateur roumain. *Revue Roumaine d'Histoire* 37, 1998, 1–2, pp. 61–72; RĂDULESCU, Ana Maria: *Conservatorii în Județul Dolj 1899–1922 [The Conservatives in Dolj County 1899–1922]*. Craiova 2005.

69 MARTON, Silvia: *La construction politique de la nation : La nation dans les débats du Parlement de la Roumanie*. Iași 2009, esp. pp. 42–52; Ead: Becoming Political Professionals : Members of Parliament in Romania (1866-1914). In: PÁL, Judit – POPOVICI, Vlad (eds.): *Elites and Politics in Central and Eastern Europe (1848–1918)*. Frankfurt am Main etc. 2014, pp. 267–280.

70 HITCHINS, Keith: *A Nation Affirmed : The Romanian National Movement in Transylvania 1860–1914*. Bucharest 1999, pp. 101–110.

71 MÂNDRUȚ, Stelian: *Mișcarea națională și activitatea parlamentară a deputaților Partidului Național Român din Transilvania între anii 1905–1910 [The National Movement and the Parliamentary Activity of the Romanian National Party from Transylvania's Deputies between 1905 and 1910]*. Oradea 1995; IUDEAN, Ovidiu Emil: *The Romanian Governmental Representatives in the Budapest Parliament*. Cluj 2016.

72 PÁL, Judit (coord.): *Parliamentary Elections in Eastern Hungary and Transylvania 1865–1918* (provisional title of the manuscript to be published in 2017 with Peter Lang).

1918.⁷³ In the case of Bukovina, Mihai Ștefan Ceașu analyzed the province's Diet between 1848 and 1918.⁷⁴

Amongst the popular-representative organisms of the years 1917–1918, which can be placed on the edge of parliamentarianism, the composition of the Country's Council (*Sfatul Țării*) from Bessarabia was analyzed by Katja Lasch,⁷⁵ while a prosopographical approach to the delegates at the Great National Assembly from Transylvania (Alba Iulia, 1. December 1918) is currently being prepared by Valer Moga.⁷⁶ Speaking of Bessarabia, the political elite of the years 1917–1918 was the object of a recent study signed by Svetlana Suveică.⁷⁷ Outside the history of parliamentary life, the elite of the RNP was studied by Vlad Popovici.⁷⁸

Research on the parliamentary elite from interwar Romania started in the 1940s and 1950s through the previously mentioned work of Mat(t)ei Dogan⁷⁹. In the early 1990s, this area received a vital impulse from abroad by Mads Ole Balling's prosopography of German members of Parliament in the interwar period⁸⁰, and by Hans Christian Maner, a German historian of Romanian descent, through his valuable analysis of parliamentarianism and governing system in the period 1930–1940.⁸¹ Prosopographical studies have remained few and, until now, only the parliamentary elite of the RNP has been the object of a study by Sorin Radu and Alexandru Nicolaescu.⁸² Other titles have been dedicated to the activity of Hungarian, German and Jewish representatives in the Parliament of interwar Romania.⁸³ An analysis of the senatorial corps, including senators from the pre- and interwar period,

73 BALÁZS, Sándor: *Román képviselő a dualista Magyarország parlamentjében*, 1. *Beszédek 1906–1909*; 2. *Beszédek 1910–1918*, 3. *Analógiák* [Romanian Deputies in the Parliament of Dualist Hungary, I. *Speeches 1906–1909*; II. *Speeches 1910–1918*; III. *Analogies*]. Kolozsvár 2010.

74 CEAȘU, Mihai Ștefan: *Parlamentarism, partide și elită politică în Bucovina habsburgică (1848–1918)* [Parliamentarism, parties and political elite in Habsburg Bukovina (1848–1918)]. Iași 2004.

75 LASCH, Katja: Der Landesrat in Bessarabien. *Transylvanian Review* XXI, 2012, No. 2, pp. 19–36.

76 The first partial results published in: MOGA, Valer: Social Mobility in Transylvania at the End of the First World War. In: DUMITRAN, Daniel – Moga, V. (eds.): *Economy and Society in Central and Eastern Europe: Territory, Populations, Consumption: Papers of the International Conference Held in Alba Iulia, April 25th–27th 2013*. Wien – Berlin 2013, pp. 323–342.

77 SUVEICĂ, Svetlana: Between the Empire and the Nation-State: Metamorphoses of the Bessarabian Elite (1918). *Euxeinos*, 2014, No. 15/16, pp. 34–45, accessible at: http://www.gce.unisg.ch/~media/internet/content/dateien/instituteundcenters/gce/euxeinos/suveica%20euxeinos%2015%2016_2014.pdf, last accessed at 22.08.2016.

78 POPOVICI, Vlad: *Studies on the Romanian Political Elite from Transylvania and Hungary 1861–1918*. Cluj-Napoca 2012.

79 DOGAN, M.: L'origine.

80 BALLING, Mads Ole: *Von Reval bis Bukarest, 2: Ungarn, Jugoslawien, Rumänien, Slowakei, Karpatenukraine, Kroatien, Memelländischer Landtag, Schlesischer Landtag, komparative Analyse, Quellen und Literatur, Register*. Kopenhagen 1991.

81 MANER, Hans Christian: *Parlamentarismus in Rumänien (1930–1940): Demokratie im autoritären Umfeld*. München 1997 – Romanian edition: Idem: *Parlamentarismul în România (1930–1940)*. Bucharest 2004.

82 RADU, Sorin – NICOLAESCU, Alexandru: The Parliamentary Elite of the Romanian National Party (1919–1926). *Studia Universitatis Cibiniensis* 9, 2012, pp. 211–239.

83 BALLING, M. O.: Von Reval; BALÁZS, S.: *Magyar Parlamenti képviselő a királyi Romániában* [Hungarian Parliamentary Representatives in the Kingdom of Romania]. Kolozsvár 2008; ȘEULEAN, Paul: *Parlamentari*

is currently being prepared by Sorin Radu.⁸⁴ The relationship between elite and electorate, including electoral practices, was the historians' main topic of interest, forming the object of several monographs and collective volumes.⁸⁵ Although a unitary database of the members of Romania's Parliament between 1860 and 1948 does not yet exist, the reason has to do with the lack of an ample initiative and, most likely, with the specificities of the methodological model that was perpetuated, and not with low interest or lack of research on the topic.

Research on the elites of the socialist period started soon after 1990 as well. One of the topic's pioneers was Stelian Tănase, who has dedicated more works to the relationships between the elites and society, but also between the different elite categories during the socialist period. His conclusions emphasize the profound rift between the two social echelons ever since the 1950s, a process that, in his opinion, caused, amongst other things, the profoundly violent Romanian revolutionary model of the year 1989.⁸⁶ Still in the 1990s, Lavinia Betea initiated a series of interviews with political personalities of the time,⁸⁷ which can be situated somewhere between memoirs and history of elites. The various components of the elite between 1948 and 1989 have also represented the subject of monographic works. Nicoleta Ionescu-Gură has focused her attention on the nomenklatura, which however she does not consider as part of the socialist elite, but as merely embodying a complex mechanism designed to control the state and society by the holders of the political power.⁸⁸ Ionescu-Gură also wrote an ample introductory study to a dictionary of the members of the Central Committee of the Romanian Communist Party.⁸⁹ Mihăiță Lupu was concerned with the influence of the Party Academy 'Ștefan Gheorghiu' on the formation of the socialist elite, while Mihai Dinu Gheorghiu has studied, comparatively, the system of party schools and the formation of intellectuals in Romania and East Germany, tracing the evolution of those he had in view even after 1989. The two previously mentioned authors have also coordinated volumes dedicated to the mobility of elites during the last two decades, both in

germane în forul legislativ al României (1919–1929) [*German Representatives in the Legislative of Romania (1919–1929)*]. Cluj-Napoca 2015; URSUȚIU, Claudia: *Senatori și deputați evrei în Parlamentul României (1919–1931) : Între reușită și eșec* [*Jewish Senators and Deputies in the Parliament of Romania (1919–1931) : Between Success and Failure*]. Cluj-Napoca 2006.

⁸⁴ RADU, Sorin: *Senators for life in the Romanian Parliament within 1866–1938*. Paper presented at 'Society for Romanian Studies 2015', Bucharest, 17–19 June 2015. Manuscript consulted owing to the author's benevolence.

⁸⁵ RADU, Sorin: *Electoratul din România în anii democrației parlamentare (1919–1937)* [*The Electorate from Romania in the Years of the Parliamentary Democracy (1919–1937)*]. Iași 2005; ȘERBAN, Stelu: *Elite, partide și spectru politic în România interbelică* [*Elites, Parties and Political Spectrum in Inter-War Romania*]. Bucharest 2006; RADU, Sorin – MÜLLER, Florin (coord.): *Elite parlamentare și dinamică electorală în România (1919–1937)* [*Parliamentary Elites and Electoral Dynamics in Romania (1919–1937)*]. Bucharest 2009.

⁸⁶ TĂNASE, Stelian: *Revoluția ca eșec : elite și societate* [*Revolution as a Failure : Elites and Society*], Bucharest 1996; Idem: *Elite și societate : Guvernarea Gheorghiu-Dej* [*Elites and Society : The Gheorghiu-Dej Governing*]. Bucharest 1998.

⁸⁷ BETEĂ, Lavinia: *Maurer și lumea de ieri : mărturii despre stalinizarea României* [*Maurer and the World of Yesterday : Testimonies on Romania's Stalinisation*]. Bucharest 1995; Ead: *Alexandru Bârlădeanu despre Dej, Ceaușescu și Iliescu : Convorbiri* [*Alexandru Bârlădeanu about Dej, Ceaușescu and Iliescu : Dialogues*]. Bucharest 1997.

⁸⁸ Approach similar to the one of Tibor Huszár. See PÁL, J.: The Study, p. 236.

⁸⁹ DOBRE, Florica (ed.): *Membrii C.C. al P.C.R. 1945–1989 : Dicționar* [*Members of the Central Committee of the Romanian Communist Party. 1945–1989 : Dictionary*]. Bucharest 2004.

Romania and in the French postcolonial area.⁹⁰ The early socialist elite from Transylvania has been studied by Bogdan Ivaşcu,⁹¹ while the old political elite's relationship with the new society has been approached by Liviu P. Niţu.⁹²

Regarding the research of elites of the post-socialist period, a recent and well-documented presentation of the developments in the field of political sciences' field, for the period of time between 1990 and 2010, was conducted by L. Ştefan, and therefore I shall only insist on the general directions of the period. The 1990s brought forth the first works of research and empirical estimations, especially dedicated to the transformations atop the political elite. Researchers such as Silviu Brucan or V. Tismăneanu observed that the extraction strata of the new elites were represented by inferior levels of nomenclatura and technocracy of the socialist period (from which both authors actually also originated), and estimated that Romania was a country with a level of reproduction of socialist elites that was above the regional average. Later studies dedicated to elites in the transition period, realized on extensive samples of members of the political class (George Tibil, Andrei Stoiciu), or on entire parliamentary cycles (Irina Culic), partially contradicted them. Even the study of continuity of the nomenclatura, by Raluca Grosescu, showed that, after an inherent high point at the beginning of the 1990s, the presence of its representatives remained connected to the executive functions (obtained through appointments), whereas, within the Parliament, it never exceeded 15%.⁹³ Together with the issue of reproduction of the socialist elite, the sociological profile of the post-1989 political elite represented an intensely debated field of research. Members of post-1990 governments were the object of Alexandra Ionaşcu's analysis, and the selection, recruitment and career patterns were studied, for the entire political class, by L. Ştefan, whose conclusions indicate the major role played by the political parties in all these processes (somehow pointing back towards Dogan's findings for the interwar political elite).⁹⁴ Last but not least, within the framework of research on the elites of the socialist and post-socialist periods, the studies and projects dedicated to the political elite of the Hungarian minority in Romania should be mentioned.⁹⁵

Conclusions

Historiography dedicated to the Romanian elites of the 19th and 20th century is characterized by specificities generated, above all, by the political and ideological context in which authors were shaped and conducted their research, and also by traditions, priorities and habits of the scientific environment, and, last but not least, by the self-perception of Romanian historians and their relation with international historical research. Prior to 1948, classical theories of elites, together with the related terminology, had been the point of debate for Romanian sociology, and had generated original autochthonous constructs, especially

⁹⁰ GHEORGHIU, M. D.: Intelectuali; GHEORGHIU, Mihai Dinu – LUPU, Mihăiţă (ed.): *Mobilitatea elitelor în România secolului XX* [*The Elites' Mobility in 20th-century Romania*], Piteşti – Bucharest – Cluj-Napoca 2008; GHEORGHIU, Mihai: *La mobilité des élites. Reconversion et circulation internationale*. Jassy 2012.

⁹¹ IVAŞCU, Bogdan: *Naşterea unei noi elite: Transilvania (1945–1953)* [*The Birth of a New Elite: Transylvania (1945–1953)*]. Arad 2008.

⁹² NIŢU, Liviu P.: *Elita politică istorică, 1945–1955* [*The Historical Political Elite, 1945–1955*]. Bucharest 2011.

⁹³ ŞTEFAN, L.: Research, pp. 225–228.

⁹⁴ Ibidem, pp. 228–233.

⁹⁵ An extended bibliographical overview in: PÁL, J. – POPOVICI, V.: O perspectivă, p. 604.

among sociologists with a right-wing political perspective. The empirical research of political elites also started in this period. In the field of historical writing, developments were slower; only minimal accumulations can be identified, announcing future research sites, especially in the history of intellectual formation of the elites. The study of elites restarted after 1970, rather timidly, at first within sociological and political philosophy circles, and then, in a more and more pronounced manner, in historical writings. However, only after 1990 did the exploitation of the field really began. Up to this day, an inner thematic imbalance has persisted, between fields such as the history of intellectual and/or political elites on the one hand, and that of economic, military, ecclesiastic and administrative elites, on the other. In some of the latter, research of elites was practically stifled by a very dense, low- and medium-quality biographical literature, with hagiographic nuance. Furthermore, if the political elite of the period prior to 1948 was mainly the object of study for historians, the elites of the state socialism period only naturally elicited heightened interest within the ranks of sociologists and political scientists. This situation opened the way to sensible methodological differences between pre- and post-1948 focused researches. On the whole, however, the last two decades have represented an auspicious moment for the Romanian research of elites, which is currently undergoing an ascending trend in the general framework of Romanian historical writing.