



Anexa nr.6

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SCOSAAR

ABSTRACT OF THE HABILITATION THESIS

TITLE: Communism, regime change, elites and the minority problem in Romania

Field of habilitation: History

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This habilitation thesis represents, on the one hand, the synthesis of the research I have carried out before and after my PhD dissertation defense (2011), and, on the other hand, the main directions on which I intend to focus my research projects in the upcoming years. In the first part of the thesis, I presented my most important scientific and professional achievements according to disciplinary or interdisciplinary thematic directions, with references to professional training and prestige, and with an emphasis on the accomplishments after finishing the PhD program. Achievements of the post PhD time period have been structured around four major topics, each consisting of several sub-topics. For each of these topics I presented the scientific results, such as conference participations, scientific publications, and volumes or book chapters written on that particular topic. In each case I have devoted some space to an overview of the subject matter, so that the results and activities presented can be better contextualized.

The first topic I have generically titled "The establishment of Communism, the 1950s" and I have divided it into three sub-topics: "The establishment of Communism", "The Hungarian Autonomous Region and the 1950s", and "The 1956 Hungarian Revolution". When appropriate, I have presented to these topics, often without going into details, grants, conferences I organized, volumes, studies, articles and oral presentations, exhibitions I curated and other significant research activities.

The second topic presented is "The Ceaușescu period", which is the best known and mostly investigated historical period in my professional carrier. This period was in the focus of my PhD thesis too. The first sub-topic developed and extensively analyzed, both in the doctoral thesis and in subsequent scientific publications was "The politics towards national minorities and Hungarians". In 2011 and 2016, I published two volumes of documents with comprehensive introductory analyses in Hungarian language. Later on, in 2020, I published a revised version of my thesis in Romanian language at "Cetatea de Scaun" Publishing House (Târgoviște) with the title "Ceaușescu and the Hungarians". This book is focusing on the policies of the Romanian Communist Party towards Hungarians during the dictatorship of Nicolae Ceaușescu, and the socio-cultural evolution of the Hungarian community from Transylvania during this time period. In this respect, I have published studies and articles and presented scientific papers at national and international conferences. In particular, I would like to mention here the post-doctoral fellowship granted by the Hungarian Academy of Sciences in 2013-2015.

The second sub-topic developed in "The Ceaușescu period" chapter was "The administrative reform of 1968". By analyzing the preparation, the implementation and the impact of this wide-ranging administrative reform on the policies towards minorities, I have been able to address a very pertinent issue not only at the level of ethnic minorities but also at national level. Parallel to these endeavors, I have made great efforts (an issue already touched upon in my doctoral thesis too) to carry out comparative analyses of the policies towards minorities in Eastern Europe, and to elaborate a periodization of the Romanian minority policies. The fourth sub-topic of this chapter is the research concerning "Romanian-Hungarian diplomatic relations" during Communism. In several studies and book chapters I have tried to present in detail the evolution of the Romanian-Hungarian relations, a



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very sensitive topic not only in the two historiographies but also in the collective memories of the two nations.

The third major topic I have examined in the course of my professional activity is "The Revolution of December 1989 and the change of the political regime". The first sub-topic of this chapter was the analysis of the revolutionary events in different Transylvanian counties with several case studies from Mures, Harghita, and Covasna counties. The second topic explored was "The regime change and the national question". A collaboration with the Romanian Institute for the Research on National Minorities in Romania (RIRNM/ISPMN) helped me greatly with this work. Within the RIRNM, I organized a research group and together we carried out a comprehensive analysis of transition and regime change in the context of minority policies. I participated with this topic in workshops and at conferences. We produced an extensive oral history collection, and also developed a methodology for using oral sources in the research of this particular topic. Last but not least, two volumes have been published, in Romanian and in Hungarian languages, which addressed for the first time in the Romanian historiography the issue of transition and regime change within the context of minority politics. This research has led me to an individual project on a very sensitive and much debated topic, which interested me both as a historian and as a fellow citizen, namely the tragic events of March 1990 in Târgu-Mureș. Concerning these events, I carried out an extensive analysis, and I co-authored a book, handling this case of interethnic conflict in a scientific context and a scientific narrative.

The last of the four major topics was "Elites and cultural policies", which, although less consistent than the previous ones, is also supported by research and publications. The analysis of political and cultural elites, their influence and evolution during Communism has been a constant topic of my professional activity. In the sub-topic entitled "Elites in the Ceausescu period" I have dealt with several aspects of this subject matter. I presented the recruitment and education patterns of the elites, their role played at local level, the profile of minority elites, and the role of the Hungarian elites in the political life of this period. Recently, my professional interest has turned to the topic of "Cultural policies in the Communist period". At the Theatrical and Multimedia Research Institute, where I have been working since 2018, I have initiated several research projects on the relationship between the arts and the political regime during Communism. The research regarding this topic has been capitalized on in workshops, conferences and a conference volume.

My professional work has been significantly influenced by the two institutions where I have worked for the past 19 years: the "Gheorghe Șincai" Institute for Social and Human Researches of the Romanian Academy, and the Theatrical and Multimedia Research Institute from Târgu-Mureș. Due to the specific duties of these two institutions, my research concerns have been linked to Communism and the transition period, and as it can be easily deduced from my research results, I have assumed this research direction and my tasks with strong perseverance. I have to gratefully acknowledge that both institutions offered me many opportunities, both in terms of engaging me in national and international projects, and in terms of disseminating my research results.

I consider, nevertheless, equally important the personal steps I have taken outside these two institutions, as a result of which I have obtained scholarships and grants, I have been co-opted to various projects, and I have carried out research internships abroad, all of which have given me the opportunity to grow professionally and to benefit of interdisciplinary insights. The quality of the research carried out throughout my career, devoted mainly to the study of the history of Communism, is also evidenced by the citations in studies published in prestigious journals and in volumes



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published by important publishing houses from Romania and abroad, as well as by being invited to participate in research projects and in the editorial boards of scientific journals. My capacity to coordinate complex research teams has been proven by numerous successful projects, as it is reflected both in the present habilitation thesis and in my Curriculum Vitae. In the conclusion of the habilitation thesis, I have highlighted my short, medium and long-term goals, as well as the research topics I intend to continue and expand, and those I plan to initiate, as well as other projects that concern educational aspects too, essential skills of a PhD coordinator.