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O I P O S D R U



ACADEMIA ROMÂNĂ



Octavian BUDA

Identitate națională și medicină socială *antropologie culturală, psihiatrie și eugenism în România – 1800-1945*



Editura Muzeului Național al Literaturii Române



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ANTROPOLOGIE CULTURALĂ, PSIHIATRIE ȘI EUGENISM
ÎN ROMÂNIA – 1800-1945

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Octavian BUDA

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Colecția AULA MAGNA



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Obiectivele proiectului și domeniile de cercetare:

- Obiectivul general:** Model-pilot de școală postdoctorală prin implicarea a 92 de cercetători postdoctoranzi, în scopul dezvoltării carierei în cercetare, al îmbunătățirii programelor de cercetare postdoctorală în domeniul umanităților, al impulsivității și consolidării sectorului de cercetare în științele socioumane din România, pentru sprijinirea economiei românești în dobândirea unor avantaje competitive durabile și micșorarea decalajelor între România și celelalte țări membre ale Uniunii Europene.
- Obiectivele specifice:** Elaborarea și implementarea de noi tehnologii-suport pentru derularea proiectului; formarea și perfecționarea cercetătorilor prin programe postdoctorale
 - Organizarea unor acțiuni de îndrumare a cercetătorilor pe parcursul stagiilor derulate în străinătate
 - Sprijinirea cercetătorilor în participarea la seminarii și conferințe internaționale
 - Organizarea unor sesiuni pentru promovarea egalității de șanse și a dezvoltării durabile
 - Sprijinirea colaborării între universități, institute de cercetare și companii din aria tematică a școlii postdoctorale
 - Dezvoltarea de activități inovatoare în vederea accentuării importanței programelor de cercetare interdisciplinară; crearea de metodologii proprii cu privire la derularea programelor postdoctorale
 - Elaborarea unor ghiduri de bune practici cu privire la schimbul de experiență internațional în aria cercetării în științele socioumane prin programe postdoctorale.
- Domeniile cercetării:** filologie - literatură • științe istorice și arheologie • filosofie, teologie, psihologie, pedagogie • arte, arhitectură și audio-vizual • știința informației • sociologia culturii • antropologie • etnografie și folclor

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ADDENDA

Summary

National Identity and Social Medicine *Cultural Anthropology, Psychiatry, and Forensic Medicine in Romania: 1800-1945*

History of medicine is currently undergoing a remarkable transformation, one defined by society's need to engage with scientific advances and the ethical dilemmas they raise on the one hand, and the inclusion of hitherto ignored case studies on the other. Largely neglected until 1989, Eastern European medicine is gradually being rediscovered. The proposed project contributes this burgeoning historiography by concentrating on the development of Romanian social medicine, psychiatry, forensic medicine, and evolutionism between c. 1800 and 1945.

During this period, Romania experienced profound political, social, and economic upheavals, including its independence from the Ottoman Empire (1878), the Balkan Wars (1912-1913), territorial aggrandizement following the First World War, the rise of far right (1930s), loss of territories (1940) and the end of the Second World War (1945). The history of Romanian medicine mirrored these historical changes as much as it reflected the role of medical professionals in creating a modern nation state. Welfare of the nation was conterminous with the creation of a modern health system. By creating a network of hospitals, asylums, institutes of research, and university chairs, psychiatrists, forensic doctors and evolutionists hoped to provide remedies for the social and medical illnesses prevalent in Romania. This process of institutionalisation also played a fundamental role in changing the social position of psychiatry and forensic

medicine from peripheral disciplines of uncertain scientific status to a socially sanctioned profession able to provide the state with a standardized language to address medical and social concerns. It was customary for Romanian physicians, to receive their medical education in France and be influenced by French medical practices and ideas. With respect to interpretations of social medicine, public hygiene ideas still flourished in the 1850s and 1900s, encouraging the view that environmental modifications could influence certain diseases.

Psychiatrists and hygienists accepted that mental diseases were often a biological reaction to specific environmental conditions. Psychiatrists accepted that mental diseases were often a biological reaction to specific environmental conditions. By the beginning of the 20th century, however, these interpretations of social and biological degeneration - which still found supporters among many French psychiatrists - receded in Romania. Contrary to other countries in Europe and Latin America where the Latin tradition of France and Italy was strong, and which embraced the modern theories of human body constitution or biotypology, the predominant view in Romania was rather that of biological determinism, upholding the idea that heredity traits were transmitted from generation to generation independently of the environment.

The First World War marked a turning point in the transition from social medicine as a diffuse elitist discourse to a nationally wide programme. This transformation was corroborated with the fact that, after 1918, the medical profession in Romania gained visibility and prominence. Evolution, Heredity and Eugenics, initially adopted by a handful of medical doctors, was now transmitted to broader audiences. New and more powerful organisations emerged, like the Romanian Royal Society for Eugenics and Heredity and the Eugenic and Anthropological Section of the Romanian Social Institute. In 1939 these societies formed the Union of the Eugenics Societies in Romania under the presidency of Constantin Parhon, at the time also the president of the International Latin Federation of Eugenics Societies. Between c. 1860 and 1945, psychiatrists and forensic doctors in Romania campaigned for the implementation of a professionally controlled and biologically based form of national belonging, both

externally in conjunction with similar developments in Western Europe, and internally as a direct response to local social and economic conditions. An analysis of the medical profession's appropriation by the Romanian state offered a substantial insight into the process of medicalisation experienced by various discourses on society, the nation, and the body in this country.

This study address the relationship between forensic medicine, psychiatry, and darwinism in modern Romania on the basis of a jointly refined set of methodological precepts; namely, the disentanglement of European symbolic geography (the East vs. West division); secondly, the introduction of an asymmetric comparison, that is evaluation of different national contexts which shared similar eugenic practices; in other words the originality of Romanian medical traditions versus the influence exercised by Western European medical and scientific models. Several interconnected aims were guiding this project:

Professionalization of Forensic Medicine and Psychiatry

Any perspective on the professionalization of medicine in Romania between 1870 and 1945 is extremely limited unless it incorporates theories of psychopathology and forensics and discusses the role played by psychiatrists and medical institutions in disseminating these sets of ideas.

Socialisation of Psychiatry and Darwinism

Any discussion of Romanian psychiatry and social medicine during this period should engage with broader theories on social and biological degeneration, economic backwardness, rural versus urban environments, and, ultimately, ideas of social welfare.

Nationalisation of Medicine

The "scientific" version of a nation envisioned by psychiatrists and criminologists cannot be completely comprehended unless it discusses the ways the biologisation of national belonging had influenced politics in Romania, especially between 1918 and 1944, and it inquires into how

discourses on national medicalisation and sanitation gained ascendancy in the domestic politics of this country (Thomas Jonnesco).

Towards a comparative history of medicine

The project's first task, methodological tool, and tangible outcome is the need to define the parameters upon which a substantive comparative analysis of the emergence of the medical profession in Romania can be built, to write a history of Romanian medicine that is currently greatly needed. Moreover, and in order to understand the profound political and national transformations Romania experienced between 1860 and 1945, a closer examination of how psychiatrists and medical sociologists envisioned the modernisation of their countries and of their role in establishing institutions for health and welfare related to demographic issues is here given. Through their organisations and specialised journals, Romanian psychiatrists and pathologists argued for the improvement and sanitation of the nation. In the name of traditional Romanian values, a new medicalised vision of the national body was proposed.

Referring to French, British and German medical sciences, Romanian psychiatrists and forensic doctors (Mina and Nicolae Minovici, Alexandru Sutz, George Bogdan, Victor Babeş, Gheorghe Marinescu or Iacob Felix) argued for a total transformation of the national health system. It became clear that only a strong, centralised state could infuse the medical profession with a new scientific morality and assign medical doctors a socially and morally responsible role.

A social history of medical welfare

The second aspect to be followed is that of social history. One of the more illuminating ways to capture the variety of social medical views expressed by psychiatrists and pathologists in Romania is to compare various biological definitions of the nation they offered. With respect to the national strategies devised, we focused on two issues: social psychopathology and health regulations. The social and forensic assessment of the mentally ill had been central themes of the psychiatric

discourse since the mid-nineteenth century. Until the mid-1930s, however, they did not play an important role in the research agenda of the Romanian doctors (like Alexandru Sutzu, Gheorghe Marinescu, Francisc Rainer or Constantin Parhon). In other words, Romanian doctors connected the strength of the nation to its healthy members. As with many linked fields of research concurrently emerging in Central European states, institutional psychiatry needed an additional pillar of support in order to establish itself not only as a respected but also as an innovative discipline within the canon of the humanities. It found this pillar in the medical profession. So it is not surprising that the first “national scientists” in Romania were in most cases medical doctors or benefited from medical training in their education. As was the case with history and ethnology, however, the combination of medicine with social welfare became part of the nationalistic programmes envisioned by the state. In the name of traditional Romanian social values, a new medicalised interpretation of the national body was proposed.

Clinical Psychiatry, Criminality and Law Enforcement

The third method to be used in this project reflects developments in clinical psychiatry and relates to the history of psychiatric disorders. Closely connected to the protection of race was the issue of heredity, criminality and social prevention. At the beginning of the twentieth century, heredity became an influential concept in the debate about the treatment of a wide range of mental diseases and disorders, and had a considerable impact on the psychiatric profession. There were many reasons why heredity and criminality were considered so important. The main argument was that medical doctors hoped that the knowledge about how mental diseases are transmitted would also be the key to control them. For instance, criminologists claimed that mental conditions were, to a large degree, inheritable. On the other hand, social psychiatrists inspired by Freudian psychoanalysis stressed the social causes of mental disorders and diseases and argued that psychotherapy and social preventive measures would be the only effective treatment. These are two among a spectrum of possible interpretations, but they illustrate the importance attached to the heredity problem in explaining aggressive and criminal behaviour, mental

and physical degeneration. Psychiatrists helped to popularise the concept of heredity in the common culture of society; they also connected heredity to social degeneration. Romanian psychiatrists were preoccupied with the question of whether and to what extent psychiatric disorders and diseases were inherited. Although the argumentation about the mental degeneration of certain groups is phrased entirely in terms of the medical discourse of its time, it has very specific political overtones. In some rare cases, Romanian doctors (like Nicolae Paulescu) were supporters of anti-Darwinism, hereditary determinism and anti-Semitism.

Scientific Knowledge, Medicine and Public Sphere

Finally, the general methodological approach adopted by this project stresses the complex nature of the production of knowledge and of political and intellectual discourses. In this respect, we follow the Foucauldian emphasis on the dynamic nature of the networks by which medical knowledge was produced and negotiated in the public sphere.

The proposed project addresses the conceptual ramifications of medical thinking in Romania between 1860 and 1945 by providing an analysis of the convoluted relationship between theories of forensic medicine, and psychiatry, on the one hand, and medicine and society, on the other. During this period, psychiatry, surgery and forensic medicine were established as an important medical field, contributing directly to the formulation of a new medical worldview, according to which the mind and the body of the individual and the nation have been professionally controlled.

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