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FIELD: HISTORY**

**EDUCATION IN MUREȘ COUNTY DURING THE
CEAUȘESCU REGIME: "SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY"
-ABSTRACT-**

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PHD THESIS ABSTRACT

The topic of the doctoral thesis: **EDUCATION IN MUREȘ COUNTY FROM THE PERIOD OF THE CEAUȘESCU REGIME: *SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY*** is an attempt to reconstruct, at the present time, what *education and training* meant during the regime of the communist leader Nicolae Ceaușescu, but also the methods used by the Security to infiltrate the lives of teachers and students. Analyzing the changes that occurred after August 23, 1944, we can say that Romania became one of *the most communist countries* behind the Iron Curtain. A major cause was the very large discrepancy between the social categories in the interwar period, a fractured society in which there was almost a complete absence of the middle class that would achieve a balance between the extremes, the result being a society divided both materially and culturally. The majority of the rural population was composed of illiterate or semi-illiterate peasants (with the three primary grades graduated), their major problem being the difficult situation regarding daily living. Unfortunately, this situation was not better even in the urban environment. In these conditions, to which was added the lack of an intellectual level that would allow them to refuse the establishment of communist egalitarianism, the communist teaching, received with the help of Moscow, gradually made its way into their lives, with the aim of transforming them into what the communists called *New Man*.

As a case study, we focused on a region in the heart of Romania, namely the Mureș-Autonomous Hungarian region (1965-1968), respectively Mureș County (1968-1989), a region, respectively a multi-ethnic county. In this case, a clarification must be made: Ceaușescu mentioned "cohabiting nationalities" almost every time. For him, the term "minorities" was considered inadequate because it would have minimized their political, economic and cultural weight in relation to the majority ethnic group, which did not consider itself and did not want to be considered, in party propaganda, dominant. In Ceaușescu's vision, all residents, regardless of nationality, were partners, with rights, but also with obligations in the process of building socialism.¹

The Second World War changed the outlook on life for millions of people, entire people and nations being put in a position to live a different way of life. Left-wing dictatorship, communism became widespread. In Romania, communism, as in the whole of

¹Emanuel Copilaș, *Socialist Nation. Identity Politics in the Golden Age*, Polirom Publishing House, Iași, 2015, p.212.

Central and South-Eastern Europe, was installed with the decisive contribution of Moscow, this being a regime imposed by the conqueror. Referring to the establishment of the communist regime, the historian Dennis Deletant states that, in our country, the communist party took the initiatives aimed at reducing Romania to a state of obedience to the Soviet Union through the political system, the trade unions and the education system.² Domestically, the goal pursued - that of destroying the existing social structures - was crowned with success. The final act represented the forced abdication of King Mihai, on December 30, 1947, on the same day the Romanian People's Republic was proclaimed. Thus began, without the will of the Romanians, but following the dictates of a political group, a puppet of Moscow, the period of communism in Romania, a utopia that ended in December 1989. The history of Romanian communism was a forged history in which the ideological factor was decisive for creating the destinies of several generations of Romanians.

Education and the "*creation of the new man*" served and accompanied the entire construction of the totalitarian regime, in the conditions in which teachers were regarded with respect and hope in acquiring a better social status. However, the teacher was called to take into account, first of all, the "cultural aspirations" of the era and to educate the youth in the spirit of the new regime.³ In the 1950s, all the values of Romanian history and culture were reconsidered. The purge phenomenon led to the removal of many intellectuals from cultural and scientific life, this fact representing a real drama and a setback for Romanian society. The education system - through the education laws - represented the main engine of the reconversion of the population and the transition to communism. As it is known, there were two distinct periods in the history of Romanian communism: *the Stalinist period* or *the period of Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej* (1947-1965) and *the period of Nicolae Ceaușescu* or *the period of nationalist communism*. Ceaușescu's coming to power after Dej's death represented the beginning of a detachment from Moscow's politics. Thus, new models appeared, history was rewritten, and the school became the main servant of the policy promoted by the new leader. The denunciation by Nicolae Ceaușescu of the abuses of the Security and the reforms of the period 1965-1968 gave birth - in those years - to an atmosphere of optimism and hope for greater liberalization. The "Prague Spring" was viewed with sympathy by the R.C.P in the context in which the Romanian communists pleaded for non-interference from the outside regarding the policy pursued by each communist party in the Warsaw Pact area.

²Dennis Deletant, *Romania under the communist regime*, Civic Academy Foundation, Bucharest, 2010, p. 85.

³Stelian Păun, *The Man from the Chair*, Albatros Publishing House, Bucharest, 1974, p. 16.

There was some liberalization in education, in the '60s, young people from rural areas were massively admitted to higher education, from a space where a strong attachment to Christian values was preserved, the admission criteria were liberalized which previously restricted access in faculties for the children of the interwar elite, and after 1965, these young people were even accepted into the ranks of the PCR ⁴. The vast majority of the population, however, had a passive attitude, for this reason it should be mentioned that no internal reform aimed at relaxation in our country, which emanated from the party in the '60s, did not in any way weaken its leading role.⁵

The motivation for choosing this topic is based on an argument that has more to do with my implications as a teacher, but also as the General School Inspector of the Mureș County School Inspectorate, this subject, of studying Mureș education during the Ceaușescu regime, helping me to understand better the whole organization and operation of education in the county, but also the way and the context through which a series of kindergartens, primary and secondary schools, high schools, school groups or faculties were established. This research activity helps me to understand the way and the methods used by teachers in the learning process of pupils and students and the behavior they had, both in everyday life and during educational activities. This work opens for me new horizons and perceptions on the model we could choose in the education of today's youth, it shows me where it went wrong or what were the effective methods in the education of the youth.

The aim was to present, objectively and analytically, the history of Romanian education from 1965-1989, a period in which Romania was a communist state. Here we must bear in mind that, after 1989, the bibliography is quite poor on the topic of education from the communist period. Very little has been written on this topic, the priority being gained by the study of former political prisoners, the forced labor camps, their memorials, but also by all the horrors that took place during this period, a priority that I recognize and accept. The curiosity to know more, to enter the world of pre-December education, to meet people who were part of this world, both its masters and disciples, the methods they used in the educational process, made me motivated towards choosing this topic.

⁴Adam Burakowski, *The Dictatorship of Nicolae Ceaușescu (1965-1989)*, Polirom Publishing House, Iasi, 2011, p. 130.

⁵Regarding this passivity, Jean-Francois Soulet explains, at length, the three major obstacles that prevented political changes from the end of the eight decade: the RCP was led by people who were opposed to any openings or challenges; the total lack of organization and fearful paralysis of civil society; the constant indifference of the West towards the fate of Romania. (see Jean-François Soulet, *History of Eastern Europe from the Second World War to the present*, Polirom Publishing House, Iasi, 2006, pp. 137-138.

Regarding the emergence and evolution of education in the current territory of Mureș county in the modern and pre-modern era, several articles and studies were written by the researchers of the "Gheorghe Șincai" Socio-Human Research Institute in Târgu Mureș, some of them being published, throughout the last decades, at the "Petru Maior" University Publishing House from Târgu-Mureș. Some of these can be found in the work of the researcher Ioan Chiorean, *The Intellectuality of Transylvania in the pre-modern and modern eras. Studies and articles*, "Petru Maior" University Publishing House, Târgu-Mureș, 2008. The history of Târgu-Mureș education from the same period is also covered in the works: *Târgu-Mureș City Monography*, author Traian Popa, 1935 (republished in 2005) and *Târgu - Mureș Treasure Book*, author Zágoni Balazs, with a version in Romanian, made by the historian Cornel Sigmirean, published in 2013 at the Projectograph publishing house in Târgu-Mureș.

A specialized paper, having as its theme the history of Romanian education in Mureș County during the Ceaușescu regime, has not been written until now. Instead, valuable works were written with the theme of communism in Romania, works that also refer to the Romanian educational system of that period. In order to understand the education during the Ceaușescu period, it is very important to know the political context in which it evolved, and the following works present us with a pertinent x-ray of the studied period in which the creation of *the New Man* was desired, including through the educational system: Constantin Anghelache, et alii, *Centennial evolution of education in Romania*, Economic Publishing House, Bucharest, 2018; Cornel Sigmirean, *Between tradition and modernity: elites from Romania in the "short century" (1918-1989)*, Presa Universitară Clujeană, Cluj-Napoca, 2022, Luminița Banu, *Security and the communist educational system in Romania. (1948-1989)*, Demiurg Publishing House, Iasi, 2015; Zoltán Bartos, *Ministry of Internal Affairs – Ministry of State Security. Documents*, Risoprint Publishing House, Cluj-Napoca, 2012; Mihai Bărbulescu et alii, *History of Romania*, Corint Publishing Group, Bucharest, 2003; Bogdan Murgescu, *Romania and Europe, The accumulation of economic gaps (1500-2010)*, Polirom, Iasi, 2010; Lucian Boia, *The Scientific Mythology of Communism*, Humanitas Publishing House, Bucharest, 1999; Lucian Boia, *The pitfalls of history. The Romanian intellectual elite between 1930-1950*; Bozóki András, *Intellectuals and Politics in Central Europe*, Central European University Press, Budapest, 1991; Gheorghe Bunescu, *Anthology of Romanian Education Laws*, Institute of Education Sciences, Bucharest, 2004; Adam Burakowski, *The Dictatorship of Nicolae Ceaușescu (1965-1989). The Genius of the*

Carpathians, Polirom Publishing House, Iasi, 2011; Paul Cernat, Ion Manolescu, Ioan Stanomir Mitchievici, *Explorations in Romanian Communism*, Polirom Publishing House, Iași, 2004; Adrian Cioroianu, *On the shoulders of Marx. An introduction to the history of Romanian communism*, Curtea Veche Publishing House, Bucharest, 2018; Nicolae Constantinescu, *The Economic History of Romania, vol.2, 1939-1989*, Economic Publishing House, Bucharest, 2000; Emanuel Copilaș, *The Socialist Nation. Identity politics in the golden age*, Polirom Publishing House, Iasi, 2015, Richard J. Crampton, *Eastern Europe in the 20th century...and after*, Curtea Veche, Bucharest, 2002; Dennis Deletant, *History of Romania*, Corint Publishing House, Bucharest, 2006, Denis Deletant, *Romania under the communist regime*, Civic Academy Foundation, Bucharest, 2010; Florin S. Soare (coord.), *Politics and society in the Ceaușescu era*, Polirom, Iasi, 2013, etc.

The Romanian political and social realities presented by recent historical research contradict the militant, ideological public discourse of communism, frequent in society since 1989, with the mention that reconstructing the history of education is difficult, because we can end up contradicting our own memory. When we refer to the situation of the social state and the cultural level of the masses, after the Second World War, we know that the new regime faced a reality that left no room for doubt. Approximately half of Romania's population was illiterate, the percentage in rural areas being much higher. From an economic point of view, quite a few could afford a decent life under the conditions given by the war. The peasants were in the last place in terms of a satisfactory living.⁶ A large part of today's Romanian citizens studied during the years of communism. How to convince them that they were educated in a counterfeit regime, when they became specialists, acquired careers through the education system of that time?

Of course, every political regime in the last century produced reforms or changes with a positive effect, but it also produced projects that were not validated. We are talking about an evolutionary process valid for all nations. The Romanian education system before 1944 often produced excellence, in general, the graduates had a good and constant level of training. Regarding accessibility, the interwar education system was characterized by many discriminations. This system was free only up to the 4th grade, and the differences between

⁶George Popescu, *The pivotal years of Romanian public education 1948-1968-1978* in the show "History" from Radio Romania Actualități, 18.02.2019, editorial contribution, Gheorghe Lăzărescu - National College "St. Sava" from Bucharest; source: http://www.romania-actualitati.ro/anii_de_cumpana_ai_educatiei_publice_romanesti_1948_1968_1978-123956, accessed on 02.12.2020.

the city and the village were quite visible. Public education in the interwar period did not take into account the achievement of a massive literacy of the masses, nor a higher qualification for industrial workers in direct relation to the stage of development of Romania at that time.

After August 23, 1944, in Romania, the Romanian Communist Party⁷ was concerned, as I mentioned before, to take over total power, also using the education system. The seizure of power by the communists resulted in the establishment of a political, economic and social regime copied in all aspects from the Soviet system.⁸ In his intimate diary, Antonescu's successor at the presidency of the Council of Ministers, General Sănătescu, explains what happened in the fall of 1944: "The Communists, who did not mean anything until the arrival of the Russians, have since been under their protection and received funds, they became very combative and, led by the Russians, forgot that they were Romanians and put the interests of the party above the interests of the country".⁹ And on the world level, in less than five years (1945-1949) the communist system registered a considerable advance. An explanation of this situation was the crisis humanity was going through after the war, and many Europeans were convinced then that only communism would get rid of all their problems.¹⁰ People invented utopias that could change their lives, they believed that the communist regime could represent the renunciation of all the humiliations of the past, especially during the war, when millions of people died in extermination camps.¹¹

Regarding the way *the work was structured*, we can say that it keeps the classic model, where we start with an *Introduction* that presents some aspects of our approach. The first chapter is entitled *Romanian Education between 1966-1989* and includes: a brief review of the evolution of education in our country until 1945; then the education from the period of 1948-1965 and the education from the period of the Ceaușescu regime. The chapter begins with a brief history of education in the studied area and is focused on the beginnings of Romanian education and Romanian education after the Union of Principalities and the Great

⁷In 1944, *the RCP* counted around 1,000 members. Most of them were Jews and Hungarians. The small number of communists is explained by the lack of political involvement of the poor peasantry, and the wealthy did not approve of the ideas promoted by the communist left in the interwar period. Many Romanians were illiterate, and this category had no ideological temptations. (Lucian Boia, *Why is Romania different?*, Humanitas, 2013, pp. 91-93).

⁸Jean François-Soulet, *History of Eastern Europe from the Second World War to the present*, Polirom Publishing, Iasi, 2008, p. 69.

⁹Thierry Wolton, *A World History of Communism. An attempt at historical investigation*, vol.1, Humanitas, Bucharest, 2019, p. 450.

¹⁰Jean François Soulet, *The comparative history of communist states from 1945 to the present day*, Polirom, Iasi, 2008, pp. 12-13.

¹¹See Keith Lowe's book, *Fear and Freedom. How the Second World War changed our lives*, Polirom, Iasi, 2020.

Union. It continues with general perspectives of pre-university education in Mureș between 1966-1989, analyzing some important aspects that help us form an image of the studied theme. An important role was played by the study of laws and decrees regarding education and research in the Socialist Republic of Romania.

The year 1945 marked the transition from the "bourgeois-landlord" education to the "sovietized" one, in which the "new man" was born, the ideal of the communist regime. This year began with an education based on fear and strict rules, but with a well-defined direction and vision. The victory of communism in Romania was accompanied by rapid reforms in all fields of activity.

Through the education reform of August 1948, the school was strongly politicized "in the spirit of popular democracy". In universities, the chairs of Marxism-Leninism, with academics invented ad hoc, because these disciplines did not exist before, set the tone for ideological correctness.¹² Beginning with September 25, 1948, *Decree no. 266 for the organization of the Ministry of Public Education*, published in the Official Gazette no. 224 of September 27, 1948, became effective. Since that date, Law No. 494 of June 1, 1941, regarding the organization and functioning of the Ministry of National Culture and Cults, as well as any other laws and provisions previously issued that were considered contrary to this law, were abolished.¹³ Thus, a copy system of the educational system in the USSR was installed. All students who belonged to foreign schools in Romania were obliged to be "enrolled in state schools," and teachers "Romanian citizens who work at these schools can be included in state education".¹⁴

In the CC report of the RCP, the new general secretary elected within the 9th Congress of the RCP, Nicolae Ceaușescu, presented the party's vision regarding the development and improvement of scientific research and education. To finance the research, 7 billion lei were to be allocated, of which 1.5 billion were intended for the construction of new institutes and laboratories and endowments with specific equipment. It was estimated that by 1970, more than 30,000 people would be involved in research, focusing on personnel trained in fields such as: mathematics, physics, chemistry, biology, technical sciences,

¹²Lucian Boia, *The pitfalls of history. The Romanian intellectual elite between 1930-1950*, p.194.

¹³The signers of *Decree no. 266* of September 25, 1948 were: Constantin Ion Parhon (president of the Presidium of the Grand National Assembly of the Romanian People's Republic), Marin Florea Ionescu (MAN secretary), Gheorghe Vasilichi (Minister of Public Education), Vasile Luca (Minister of Finance) and Avram Bunaciu (Minister of Justice).

¹⁴Author Cristina Pop, *The education reform of 1948. Romanian education subordinated to the regime*, 2015, Source: <https://ro.historylapse.org/reforma-invatamanului-din-1948#cadrul-general-a-impunonisi-reforme>, accessed on 2.12.2020.

economics, etc. In addition to *the Council of Ministers, the National Council of Scientific Research* was to be established in 1965.¹⁵ A special emphasis was placed on the technical field, considered far behind. One of the important objectives of the party and state policy was *the continuous development and improvement of education at all levels*.¹⁶

Communist propaganda presented Romanian education as the beneficiary of a rich material base. In those years, RCP was concerned with expanding the educational network of all grades. It is true that, during the years 1965-1989, numerous school buildings were built that provided pupils and students with "a sufficient number of classrooms, courses and seminars, libraries, laboratories, school workshops, dormitories, canteens, gyms."¹⁷

In the second chapter, *Pre-university education in Mureș: local particularities*, a presentation is made of the evolution of the pre-university education from Mureș until 1965, as well as a presentation of how the training of pre-university teachers was carried out between 1965-1989. This chapter comes with a history of the beginnings of education in Târgu-Mureș, with the Mureș School, but also with didactic requirements and propaganda. The ethnic composition is analyzed to better understand the county and the peculiarities of local education. I then continued the research on the training of teaching staff, but also with a history and an evolution of the House of the Mureș Teaching Corps during the years 1970-1986.

The first beginnings of a Romanian school in the territory of the current Mureș county appeared in the second half of the 18th century. Its appearance seems natural to us, responding to the growing scientific needs of the Romanians from Târgu-Mureș, among whom a significant number of merchants, craftsmen, economists, owners are beginning to rise, whose role will increase significantly in the economic life of the city. However, it must be mentioned that, obstructed by numerous factors, among which the poverty of the vast majority of the Romanian inhabitants, it did not know the upward evolution towards a natural fulfillment.

At the end of the 19th century, there were 6.000 schools in Transylvania. Of these, only 1.300 were state schools, the rest being denominational schools. The number of Romanian schools was 2.200, but only 50% of Romanian children were enrolled. This

¹⁵C.N.C.Ș. was composed of 90 members, among whom was Elena Ceaușescu in 1965. By Decree 89/16.03.1971, published in B. Of. no. 42/29.03.1971, C.N.C.Ș. changed its name to *the National Council for Science and Technology (C.N.Ș.T.)*.

¹⁶From Nicolae Ceaușescu's speech at the 9th Congress of the Romanian Communist Party.

¹⁷*** *Constitution of the Socialist Republic of Romania. Knowledge about the state and law. Manual for the 7th grade*, Didactic and Pedagogical Publishing House, Bucharest, 1986, p.67.

explains the fact that in those years the percentage of illiterates in the countryside exceeded 80%. Amongst the Romanians only 14% were literate. It is estimated that in all of Transylvania, at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries, out of 2.1 million inhabitants, almost 1.725.000 were illiterate. The causes of the disastrous situation regarding education were: the opposition of the local administration that did not support education, the poor material base that was financed exclusively by the contribution of the inhabitants, mostly poor, the low salary of the teachers, which until 1892, when the salary ceiling was fixed at 300 fl.¹⁸, were paid with a few bushels of grain, being thus obliged to do more agriculture than school. The students' attendance was particularly poor because they were detained by their parents for various household chores.¹⁹

At the end of 1879, the school in Mureș had 267 buildings with 312 teachers and 23.526 students with an attendance rate of 66.8%. By denomination, the situation was as follows: 28 Roman Catholic schools, 68 Greek Catholic schools, 35 Orthodox, 100 Reformed schools, 3 Lutheran schools, 12 Unitarian.

The construction of new Romanian schools in Transylvania and the transformation of Hungarian schools into Romanian schools, in the first years after the Great Union, was a variable process, which trained rural and urban environments differently. In the Transylvanian urban areas, both the population and the state were interested in expanding the network of Romanian schools that were considered true "hotbeds of Romanianism". Difficulties were greater in rural areas. Here, the population was against the construction of schools because they had to contribute financially or in kind – something they did not have to do before the Great Union.²⁰

Education in Mureș, which became part of the national education system, had a number of peculiarities. First of all, it developed into a multi-ethnic county, with Romanians, Hungarians and partly Germans.

Even though at the beginning of the 20th century Târgu-Mureș did not have a university, it was known as the "city of schools". When the First World War broke out, the city had a total of three kindergartens, thirteen middle schools and twelve high schools.

¹⁸ *The Austro-Hungarian florin or the Austro-Hungarian guilder or the Austro-Hungarian forint* was the currency of the Holy Roman Empire, of the Austrian Empire, and then of the Austro-Hungarian Empire from 1754, until its replacement, in 1892, by the Austro-Hungarian Crown, with the adoption of the gold standard.

¹⁹ Ioan I. Costea, *Reghin Schools*, Micador Reghin Printing House, p.9.

²⁰ Irina Livezeanu, *Culture and nationalism in Greater Romania 1918-1930*, Humanitas Publishing House, Bucharest, 1998, pp. 200-201.

Among them were confessional schools, high school for boys and girls, vocational school, music school and military school.

The communist regime invested massively in the educational infrastructure. In the Mureș-Autonomous Hungarian region, almost 2.000 classrooms were built, more than 1.100 since 1961 alone, new schools equipped with workshops, laboratories and modern didactic material. If in the year 1947-1948 there were 606 4-year schools and 221 units with seven classes, in the year 1967, only in the Mureș-Autonomous Hungarian region there were 780 schools, meeting the conditions for all children of school age to be included in the education system. The number of students included in the school increased from around 82.000 in 1947 to almost 150.000 in the current school year. Regarding the teaching staff, in 1948 there were around 3.000 teaching staff in the region, but many of them with incomplete, inadequate studies and very few with higher qualifications. The years of the Ceaușescu regime coincided with a Romanianization policy, the school becoming an important educational support in this project. These aspects can be found in the policy of developing the infrastructure of the educational system, through the personnel policy, through the overbidding of some traditions to the detriment of others.

In 1967, the teaching staff reached 9.000 teachers and professors, over 65% of the total teaching staff being represented by graduates of universities and pedagogical institutes.

Another important aspect studied was that of the university education in Târgu-Mureș, with considerations regarding the Institute of Medicine and Pharmacy, the Institute of Theater and the 3-year Pedagogical Institute (which became the Institute of Higher Education, respectively the Institute of Sub-Engineers). Târgu-Mureș was elevated to the rank of a university center during the years of popular power, in 1945. A first step was the establishment of the *Institute of Medicine*, with Hungarian as the language of instruction. In the 1950-1951 academic year, there was a higher education institution with 5 faculties in which 340 teaching staff worked, providing training to 927 students, 203 of whom graduated in that year.²¹ In 1965, the city of Târgu-Mureș hosted three important higher education institutes: *the Institute of Medicine and Pharmacy* with teaching in Romanian and Hungarian, *the 3-Year Pedagogical Institute - IP3*. (later became the *Institute of Higher Education* - from 1977 and the *Institute of Sub-Engineers* - from 1984) and the *Theater Institute*.

²¹Constantin Anghelache et alii, *Centennial evolution of education in Romania*, Economic Publishing House, Bucharest, 2018, p. 221, available online at: <https://www.aracis.ro/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/Evolutia-centenara-a-invatomantului-in-romania-2018.pdf>, accessed on 15.09.2021.

The indicators that show us the evolution over time of the higher education institutions in the Târgu-Mureș university center are reflected in the statistical data regarding the number of faculties, teaching staff, students and graduates in the three higher education institutions.

The Institute of Medicine and Pharmacy from Târgu-Mureș. In 1948, after the education reform, the Medical-Pharmaceutical Institute was established, an independent institute, with the following Faculties: General Medicine, Pediatrics, Hygiene, Dentistry and Pharmacy. Medical education in Târgu-Mureș began in 1945, within the Faculty of Medicine of the "Bolyai" University from Cluj-Napoca.

In the period 1945-1983, the Institute's material base experienced continuous development, 6.400 doctors and pharmacists graduated. In 1983, 1.461 students were enrolled, approximately 50% of whom studied in Hungarian.

The institute had 5 student dormitories with 1.512 places, including a dormitory for married students, a canteen with 432 places (per series), 23 lecture halls, 43 practical work rooms, 76 laboratories, 3 museums, 3 photo laboratories, a lithography, a library with 212.426 volumes, a social science cabinet with over 11.320 volumes, a computing office, a botanical garden, a medicinal plant garden and a sports base.

"Szentgyörgyi István" Theater Institute from Târgu-Mureș. In 1948, in the context of the then education reform, by Order of the Ministry of Public Education no. 263.327/1948, *the Romanian Institute of Art* with the faculties of music, acting and dance and *the Hungarian Institute of Art, with the faculties of music, theater direction and dance acting*, were established in Cluj, within which the higher education programs started in the Conservatory. Through the unification of the theater faculties from the two Art Institutes in Cluj, *the "Szentgyörgyi István" Theater Institute* was created with teaching in Romanian and Hungarian. The "Szentgyörgyi István" Theater Institute²² was established in its current institutional form in 1950.²³ In 1954, the Romanian Section and the directing specialization from the Hungarian section of the "Szentgyörgyi István" Theater Institute in Cluj were

²²On February 20, 2022, it was 180 years since the birth of the legendary actor *István Szentgyörgyi*. The son of a notary, István Szentgyörgyi was born in Diósjenő (Hungary) and studied at the famous Cantus in Debrecen, where he was considered a "noisy child". In 1870, at the suggestion of Gyula E. Kovács, Antal Fehérvári hired him at the theater in Farkas Street in Cluj. From that moment, he only plays in Cluj. In 1904, during his first months as director, Jenő Janovics gave him the distinction of permanent member of the National Theater in Cluj, thus recognizing his extraordinary acting talent.

²³Andrei Florin Sora, *Evolution of qualifications in Romanian university education 1968-2011*, ANC, 2011, p.33.

transferred to *the Institute of Theater and Cinematographic Art "IL Caragiale"* from Bucharest, and the acting specialization of the Hungarian section, while keeping the institution's initial title, in Târgu-Mureș. Thus, the wealth of the city of Târgu-Mureș was enriched with a second higher education institution. In 1962, the Studio Theater was inaugurated, with 200 seats, equipped with the necessary infrastructure, which quickly became a theater with artistic achievements recognized in the country.

IP 3 from Târgu-Mureș (Institute of Higher Education/Institute of Sub-Engineers). The IP3 in Târgu-Mureș, which was established in 1960, with a total of 153 students, included in two faculties, that of Philology, *with* the Romanian-Hungarian section and that of *Physics-Chemistry*. It was the third higher education institute founded in Târgu-Mureș after the IMF and the Theater Institute. Later, the Pedagogical Institute was transformed into the Institute of Higher Education in Târgu-Mureș (1977-1984), the Institute of Sub-Engineers (1984-1990).

During the communist period, there were two types of 3-year Pedagogical Institutes: those that operated alongside a university, which were integrated into universities, and those that operated independently, known as Pedagogical Institutes from regional centers. IP3 from Târgu-Mureș also belonged to the second category.

Thus, the Târgu-Mureș university center was established during the communist regime, through the three institutions: Institute of Medicine and Pharmacy, "Szentgyörgyi István" Theater Institute, 3-year Pedagogical Institute/Institute of Higher Education/Institute of Sub-Engineers.

The specializations of higher education in Târgu-Mureș also aimed at adapting to the realities of the territory. Thus, there was the specialization Romanian language and literature - Hungarian language and literature, but also an education taught in Hungarian.

All these data are contained in the 3rd chapter - a synthesis regarding *university education in Târgu-Mureș* during the communist period.

The school network, the professional profile of high schools represents the title of the 4th chapter, which contains an evolution of the school network created in the spirit of the party's policy of massive industrialization, with historical analysis contained in the following subchapters: high school education, day courses; evening high school education; the professional profile of some high school education units in Mureș county.

During the studied period, 1965-1989, the school network evolved a lot. Many buildings were built, which gave birth to new school groups and high schools, of great

importance today. For Mureș county, we mention the new buildings, classrooms, school workshops or sports halls, in some cases added to the existing ones since the pre-war period for: Târnăveni Chemistry School Group, Gurghiu Forestry School Group, MIU School Group - *Industrial High School "Metalotehnica" from Târgu-Mureș, "Bolyai Farkas" High School from Târgu-Mureș, "Unirea" High School from Târgu-Mureș, Agroindustrial Iernut High School, Sighișoara Agroindustrial High School, Miercurea Nirajului Agroindustrial High School, Târgu-Mureș Agroindustrial High School, Mathematics-Physics High School "Al . Papiu Ilarian", Târgu-Mureș Economic High School, "Electromureș" Industrial High School from Târgu-Mureș, Deda Industrial High School, Luduș Industrial High School, Industrial High School No. 1 Reghin, Industrial High School No. 2 Reghin, Sângeorgiu de Pădure Industrial High School, Industrial High School No. 1 Sighisoara, Industrial High School No. 1 (Chemistry High School) Târgu-Mureș, Industrial High School No. 2 (Forestry) Târgu-Mureș, Industrial High School No. 4 (Construction School Group) Târgu-Mureș, Târgu-Mureș Pedagogical High School, Târgu-Mureș Sanitary High School and Sports School.*

In the 5th chapter, ***School and propaganda***, the defining aspects of the period are presented: communist propaganda through school, which was found, in fact, in all aspects of life. This propaganda appears extensively analyzed in the sub-chapters: social life and Romanian education during the Ceaușescu regime, particularities; the chronicle of Mureș education reflected in the archives and in the communist press.

Education in Mureș County was aligned during the period 1965-1989 with the politics of the Romanian party and state. Massive investment was made in the educational infrastructure, this bringing major changes with the two education laws and culminating in its polytechnicization through the establishment of specialized high schools that prepared the youth through work, for work. In the conditions of the strong industrialization of the years 1965-1980, a great deal of attention was paid to the exact school subjects. The main work of pupils and students during the Ceaușescu regime was teaching, through the conscious and persistent acquisition of the basics of science, this representing one of the characteristic features of the new type of school student. For students, the main source of knowledge was the classroom lesson. Along with knowledge, the students acquired skills and abilities during the lessons and learned to apply all this in practice. Listening to the teacher's advice and exhortations, the students had to show conscientiousness in the lessons, show a special interest in the knowledge they were taught, be attentive, disciplined and show creative initiatives. Propaganda is analyzed in the 5th chapter, where UTM/UTC political education is

analyzed, the activity of student circles and their practice in local production and, last but not least, the contribution of schools and parents' committees in achieving the tasks of communist education.

School practice demonstrated, however, that in some classes of students things did not happen this way. There were cases in which school discipline was lacking, being frequent cases in which students or teachers were not punctual to class or the classroom was not prepared for the conduct of classes in good conditions. There were students with an *improper attitude* towards learning, manifested by whispering the answers, copying from colleagues, etc., attempts to deceive the teacher.

The student collectives had the duty *to combat with severity such manifestations foreign to the communist morality*. Here, an important role was played by the Organizations of Pioneers and the Falcons of the Fatherland. These were the result of the regimentation of young people from totalitarian states in mass organizations, with an important role in educating the young generation in the communist spirit.

"The Singing Romania", as a way to educate the masses in the communist spirit through a national festival, was specific to the period 1976-1989, when the cult of personality had reached its peak. The defining elements of this cultural-proletkultist mass manifestation are presented in the sixth chapter.

The 7th Chapter, *Teachers and students under the security lens*, includes the defining elements that were the basis of the surveillance of pupils, students and teachers by the political police of all actors in the educational system during the Ceaușescu regime.

The last chapter represents a reconstruction analysis of the way in which the Securitate infiltrated the world of education and the way in which the educational process was influenced by it. Based on testimonies and archival documents, we tried to give a real picture of *the World of Education*, with its layers and implications in the life of the individual and with the influences it had on the education of the young generation. In this chapter I opted for three ways of access inside Mureș education, starting with the Security - as a control tool over it and continuing with the CNSAS documents and accounts from communism, the last two chapters having the role of completing the picture of the school *from 1965-1989*.

Education went through the crisis characteristic of the period 1984-1989, when the authorities took the decision to *tighten the belt to the maximum* for the payment of the external debt. This fact led to the halting of investments and funding from education and

research, economy to utilities, resulting in inadequately lit and heated classrooms. Young people and teachers no longer benefited from information from the outside, travel abroad and access to the international press being suppressed. In the '80s, the country only needed specialists for industry, people with humanistic training and the creations of writers being put on the sidelines and through the filter of censorship. Nothing was published without being carefully analyzed beforehand, and most of the writings had to contain odes to the beloved leader and highlight the role that Nicolae Ceaușescu had in the construction of socialism, which ended up occupying an important place in history, even among the creators who contributed to the creation and formation of the Romanian people and language.

The two education laws developed during the Ceaușescu regime (the Education Law of 1968 and the Education Law of 1978) reflect the ever-increasing subordination of the educational system to party politics. Thus, the Education Law no. 11 of 1968 was prefaced by a statement of reasons on three pages, which emphasized the training of students in the communist spirit. In the same ideological spirit, the first paragraph of the Education Law no. 28 of 1978 emphasized the purpose of education in the communist school: *Training and educating the new man, continuous improvement of the professional, scientific, and technical training of working people, ensuring the conditions for the development and affirmation of the creative capacities of the members of society, raising the general level of culture and knowledge of the people.*²⁴

The doctoral thesis ends with **Conclusions**, **Bibliography** and **Appendices**. The bibliography includes the sources (unpublished and published sources, books, articles, web resources, legislation, archival documents and oral history) that were the basis for making an X-ray of education in Mureș during a difficult period for Romania, the years 1965-1989.

Through the research activity carried out during the years of study for the doctorate, we believe that we have managed to portray an image of education in Mureș during the *Nicolae Ceaușescu Era*, in the context of the three laws of education under which the educational process took place (1948, 1968, 1978), which includes both aspects of pre-university and university education, calling on a rich and varied range of sources: press, archives, bibliography, but also oral testimonies. The testimonies in the work were selected from an archive of official documents of IȘJ Mureș, of the National Council for the Study of Security Archives - CNSAS - but also from a series of articles published in the press of the time, articles that present us with data and points of view of the officials of those in the

²⁴ *Education Law no. 28/1978*, published in B. Of., I, year XIV, no. 113, p. 1.

management of education in Mureș. In addition to these unpublished documents, I also used a source of edited documents, from the Romanian or Western bibliography and various works necessary for such an approach.