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THE MONOGRAPHIC SCHOOL OF BUCHAREST (1910-1948) ON THE CENTENNIAL OF ROMANIAN SOCIOLOGICAL RESEARCH (1925-2025)¹

Bogdan BUCUR*

Abstract

The year 2025 marks the centennial of the first sociological field research campaign conducted by the Monographic School of Bucharest in 1925, in Greater Romania, specifically in Goicea Mare, Dolj County, Oltenia. This campaign can be regarded as the birth certificate of Romanian sociology, not solely in terms of academic practice and fieldwork, but also in its theoretical approach and methodological innovation. With the establishment of Romania's first and only school of sociology, by Dimitrie Gusti, Romania – alongside the United States of America, France, Germany or the United Kingdom – became one of the few countries in the world that developed a national school of sociology closely connected to the international scientific community. Field research has been regarded, within the Gustian paradigm, as a foundational component of sociology and the essential mechanism for developing a descriptive discipline capable of investigating contemporary social realities. Without fieldwork, sociology risks being reduced to a prescriptive science, focused on interpreting past realities. Of course, forms of sociology existed in Romania before Gusti: it was referred to as so-called *armchair sociology* and involved compiling books written by a small number of gifted writers (primarily philosophers and social historians of the nineteenth century). Obviously, those who engaged in this activity went as far as to proclaim themselves professors of sociology before their students. In this context, under the name of Monographic School of Bucharest, Dimitrie Gusti's achievement – as the founding father of Romanian sociology – was widely regarded by contemporaries as extraordinary, given the complex institutional and political context of interwar Romania, and has continued to be acknowledged in similar terms by subsequent generations of scholars.

*Department of Sociology, Faculty of Political Science, National University of Political Studies and Public Administration (SNSPA), Bucharest, ROMANIA. E-mail: bucur@politice.ro.

Keywords: Sociological School of Bucharest, Monographic School of Bucharest, Dimitrie Gusti, Greater Romania, centennial of Romanian sociology, *sociologia cogitans*, *sociologia militans*, armchair sociology.

Introductory Remarks on Monography

The Sociological School of Bucharest, placed at the crossroads between the European monographic tradition (particularly French and German) and the modernist orientation of American sociology (epitomized by the Chicago School, which made empirical research the cornerstone of social science), was, during the interwar period, one of the leading intellectual movements in Greater Romania and a defining landmark in twentieth-century academic sociology. Founded by professor Dimitrie Gusti and energized by a generation of young intellectuals who combined speculative sociology (*sociologia cogitans*) with applied sociology (*sociologia militans*), the Monographic School of Bucharest was not only the starting point for modern empirical research, but also a model for embedding social science into the service of local communities, as well as into the ideal pursued by the social and political reform (represented by the nation-wide project to consolidate Greater Romania).

This article argues that the Gustian monographic program decisively shaped the institutionalization of interwar Romanian sociology through theoretical interdisciplinarity (as reflected in the multidimensional configuration of the *frames* and *manifestations*), methodological innovation (beyond the elaboration and refinement of what are today considered classical methods and techniques of sociological research, the Gusti School was the first in the world to systematically integrate into fieldwork the new technologies of its time: photography and cinematography for the recording of static or moving images, and the wax-cylinder phonograph for the preservation of sound), systematic fieldwork (sociology was no longer conceived, as in the pre-Gustian period, from the confines of a library armchair), and applied social reform (empirical data collected by sociologists informed public policies designed to improve community life). Remarkably, no other school of sociology of that period managed to integrate all these components into a coherent system and a unified approach. For public sociology, this Gustian legacy remains fully relevant to contemporary debates, a legacy that may be regarded as an exceptional achievement after one hundred years.

At the same time, this article draws on both primary sources (which were given priority, especially the published works of Dimitrie Gusti and his disciples, as well as unpublished archival documents consulted during my extended research over the past fifteen years) and secondary literature (with particular

attention to recent reassessments, notably those produced by the research group coordinated by Professor Zoltán Rostás). The inclusion criteria privileged works or documents authored by members of the Monographic School of Bucharest or by Gustian research institutions. Where divergent interpretations exist, these are indicated in the notes and contextualized rather than harmonized. The scope is limited to the period 1910-1948, with an emphasis on the interwar decades. This approach seeks to ensure both transparency and scholarly rigor, while acknowledging that a fully comparative treatment with other national sociologies lies beyond the remit of this article. Furthermore, the article aims to provide the contemporary reader with direct access to the breadth of the Gustian enterprise, synthesized mainly from primary sources. In this sense, it may serve as a starting guide for the current generations of scholars in their engagement with this fascinating intellectual heritage.

Monographic Community

Beginning with 1920, when Professor Dimitrie Gusti transferred from the University of Iași² to the capital of the Greater Romania, the Sociological School of Bucharest emerged as a distinctive presence in both Romanian and international intellectual life³. As Romania's first and only school of sociology, it was polycentric⁴ in nature and extended well beyond the influence of its founding father (Sandu, 1993; 2012b). Alongside Professor Gusti's pivotal role, the School was shaped by his assistants in the Department of Sociology, Ethics, and Politics at the University of Bucharest (among them Gheorghe Vlădescu-Răcoasa, Mircea Vulcănescu, Henri H. Stahl, Traian Herseni and Anton Golopenția), by leading monographers (such as Dumitru Cristian Amzăr, Ernest Bernea, Harry Brauner, Lena Constante, Xenia Costa-Foru, Brutus Coste, Ștefania Cristescu, Gheorghe Focșa, Marcela Focșa, D.C. Georgescu, Ion Ionică, Octavian Neamțu, Mihai Pop, Victor Rădulescu-Pogoneanu, etc.) as well as by collaborators who also worked in the regional subsidiaries of the Romanian Social Institute in Timișoara (including Cornel Groșorean, I. Nemoianu, E. Botiș, I. Negru etc.) and Chișinău (such as P. Ștefănuță or V. Știrbu). As Director General of the "Prince Carol" Royal Cultural Foundation (1933-1938), Dimitrie Gusti selected key supporters from among his closest assistants (particularly Henri H. Stahl, Octavian Neamțu and Anton Golopenția). The School of Social Work, founded in 1929 with Dimitrie Gusti's participation, was initially led by Veturia Manuilă and later by Xenia Costa-Foru, while collaborators including Christina Galitzi, Henri H. Stahl, or Mircea Vulcănescu (Golopenția, 2012a). Remarkably, all of Professor Gusti's disciples

went on to train intellectually and professionally subsequent “contingents of sociologists” in Romania throughout the second half of the twentieth century⁵.

The Sociological School of Bucharest was a unique academic fellowship. The monographic field campaigns not only provided opportunities for scientific research, but also created an environment for building friendships, intellectual partnerships, and even lifelong romantic relationships (Stahl, 1936). Research teams were often organized both by academic criteria and through bonds of affection and personal ties. Hence, Ernest Bernea points out the *coteries* existing within the Sociological School of Bucharest (Rostás, 2003). The first such circle was composed of senior monographers – Mircea Vulcănescu, Henri H. Stahl, Traian Herseni and Dumitru C. Georgescu –, who worked with a degree of independence under Gusti’s supervision. A second group, marked by Iron Guard sympathies, included Dumitru Cristian Amzăr, Ernest Bernea, Ion Ionică, and Ion Samarineanu, who together published the legionary sociological journal *Rânduiala*⁶ [*The Order*]. A third group, Victor Rădulescu-Pogoneanu, Octavian Neamțu, Brutus Coste and Anton Golopenția were Anglophiles: they were recognized as capable of conducting independent fieldwork (Rostás, 2003). A fourth group, strongly cohesive, regularly gathered in Bucharest between campaigns and organized dinner parties; this circle included Henri H. Stahl, Dumitru C. Georgescu, Gică Dumitrescu, Ion Zamfirescu, Mircea Manolescu, Harry Brauner, Xenia Costa-Foru, Lena Constante, Paula Gusty, Miți Dărmănescu, Marioara Negreanu, Domnica Păun, Nel Costin, Traian Herseni (but only after his marriage to Paula Gusty), Victor Rădulescu-Pogoneanu and Marcela Focșa (Rostás, 2003).

For many of Gusti’s young collaborators, the field campaigns also became the setting for lasting romantic relationships. Thus, many monographers married colleagues or their close relatives. As such, Traian Herseni married Paula Gusty, Anton Golopenția married Ștefania Cristescu, Mircea Vulcănescu married Anina Rădulescu-Pogoneanu, the sister of Victor Rădulescu-Pogoneanu (Rădulescu-Motru, 1999; Rostás, 2003). Henri H. Stahl’s first marriage was to the sister of monographer Ion (Nel) Costin, while Harry Brauner married Lena (Elena) Constante, Dumitru Cristian Amzăr married Maria Bernea (Ernest Bernea’s sister), and Mac Constantinescu married Floria Capsali-Dumitrescu (Rostás, 2003; Golopenția, 2004). After his first marriage, Henri H. Stahl fell in love with Xenia Costa-Foru. The relationship between the two was described by Marcela Focșa as an “extraordinary passion” (Rostás, 2003). Henri H. Stahl’s second marriage was to Margareta Stahl, Marcela Focșa’s cousin (Rostás, 2003). Two very good friends, Dumitru C. Georgescu and Gică Dumitrescu, married two sisters – though neither was a monographer – Olguța and Floricica (Rostás, 2003). Marcela Focșa and Nicolae Argintescu-Amza also formed a couple (Rostás, 2003). Mihai Pop married Irina Sturza, who participated in the monographic research of the Dâmbovnic Plasă (a territorial

subdivision of Argeş County), coordinated by her husband in 1939 (Rostás, 2003; Golopenția, 2004).

Monographic Theory

In a communication delivered at the 13th International Congress of Sociology, held in Paris from 1 to 6 September 1937, Dimitrie Gusti (1939c, 38) noted that the monographic sociology practiced in Romania was not merely a descriptive science; far beyond description, it is an explanatory science, since, in addition to studying social units and manifestations, monographic sociology also investigates the underlying frameworks on which social life depends. The peculiarity and, simultaneously, the key originality of the Romanian monographic sociology lies in the fact that the theoretical system must be closely connected to the social reality and to people's needs (Golopenția, 1934).

Consequently, for Dimitrie Gusti (1938c, 26), social reality consists of *social units*, representing concrete aspects of people's lives who are capable of, and committed to, forming a community. Thus, the *science of social reality* (Gusti's definition of sociology) means the *science of social units*. Nevertheless, Gusti's social units are not merely statistical realities; rather, on the contrary, they imply a certain internal dynamic (as *social processes* aimed at changing or transforming their own structures) or external dynamic (as *social relations* among various units), operating under the direct action of the *social will* (the independent driving force and substance of all social processes and relations). Social units, relations, and processes together constitute the society's phenomenological existence⁷.

On those grounds, social reality – in the Gustian sociological system – is in a state of constant transformation (change or social reform), conditioned in two ways: ethically (in reference to the requirements of the social ideal) and politically (in terms of the means for realizing social values and ethical ideal) (Gusti, 1934). Depending on the development level of the frameworks (cosmological, biological, psychological, and historical) and of the manifestation of the social will (spiritual, economic, ethical-legal and political-administrative), Dimitrie Gusti (1946, 57) identifies four general types of perspectives or trends as to the probable social evolution: static-type social unit (frameworks provide limited opportunities for development and the social will is weakly manifested); revolutionary-type social unit (frameworks provide limited opportunities for development, but the social will is strongly manifested); regressive-type social unit (frameworks provide extensive opportunities for development, but the social will is weakly manifested); progressive-type social unit (frameworks

provide extensive opportunities for development, and the social will is strongly manifested).

In summary, the theoretical apparatus developed by Dimitrie Gusti (1946) for studying the frameworks (cosmological, biological, psychological, and historical) and the manifestations (spiritual, economic, ethical-legal and political-administrative) of the interwar Romanian society, as presented in a communication event held at the Romanian Academy on 14 May 1943, consists fundamentally of three theories (*the Theory of Social Will, the Theory of Social Frames* and *the Theory of Social Manifestations*) and five principles (*the Principle of Sociological Parallelism, the Principle of Causality, the Principle of the Ideal, the Principle of Justice, the Principle of the Circuit Between Ideals and Values*). As the *Principle of Causality* and the *Principle of Sociological Parallelism* pertain to *Principles of Social Reality*, the *Principle of the Ideal* and the *Principle of Justice* pertain to *Principles of Social Ideal*⁸.

Monographic Methodology

Whereas the monographic theory provided the conceptual framework, the monographic methodology represented its operational expression. The originality of the Monographic School of Bucharest lies in the fact that it transformed Gusti's theoretical system into a coherent curriculum for the empirical study of the interwar Romanian village, while such knowledge was generated through interdisciplinary sociological field research campaigns conducted across the country. Another innovative aspect of the monographic methodology was the applied nature of its outcomes. Thus, the social data collected by monographers were not only intended for theoretical purposes or for the publication of academic articles (*sociologia cogitans*), but they also served as the basis for social and political reforms, practical interventions, rural education programs, cultural initiatives, and economic improvements (*sociologia militans*). Thus, monographic methodology was embedded in a continuous circuit between scientific research (*sociologia cogitans*) and practical action (*sociologia militans*), remarkably anticipating what we now call *applied sociology* (*sociologie aplicată*) or *action research* (*cercetare-acțiune*).

For Dimitrie Gusti, the subject-matter of monographic sociology is the comprehensive knowledge of social reality, developed through a research method grounded in direct observation (understood in a broader sense in interwar sociology⁹ than in its current use), while its practical aim was the gradual improvement of social reality through social reform, moral development, and political action. Monographic sociology emerged as an autonomous scientific

discipline, empirical and realistic in nature, designed to objectively investigate, document, measure, and explain social reality (Gusti, 1934; 1939c). In this regard, the Gustian monography developed its own set of methodological toolkit, which included, among other techniques, field investigations (using standardized questionnaires and individual interviews), direct observation, statistical analysis, collective discussions initiated by researchers, analysis of social documents (such as parish records, municipal archives, civil status registers, historical records), longitudinal studies¹⁰, ethnographic descriptions, as well as photographic and cinematographic documentation¹¹. As one can easily notice, a feature of originality in respect to the monographic methodology developed by the Sociological School of Bucharest was its indissoluble unity between *quantitative* and *qualitative* approaches, as well as between *macrostructural analysis* and *microsocial detail*.

Furthermore, a central element of monographic sociology was the principle of totality, also known as the principle of collective exhaustiveness, applied at methodological level, by structuring the research of each social unit along the diagram of frameworks and manifestations (structuring both the methodological plan for data collection, and the theoretical reporting of results)¹². Thematic or summary research (focused on a single issue) appeared later and exerted little influence on the dynamics of the monographic methodology (as a result of Professor Gusti's opposition).

Generally speaking, the legacy of the Monographic School of Bucharest is paramount for the Romanian society, if one would merely take note of the blatant contrast between the methodological realism of the Gustian sociology (with its empirical investigation of rural social realities) and the dismissive and arrogant attitude of the urban cultural elite (based on Romanian village-related traditional stereotypes). Rightfully referred to as *terra incognita* by Henri H. Stahl, the Romanian village was scarcely known, if not entirely unknown, in scientific terms in interwar Romania. In this context, Professor Gusti's monographers set out *on a quest into the unknown village* (Butoi, 2012), in an ambitious attempt to chart the *sociological map of Greater Romania*. Initiated but left incomplete during the interwar period, Gusti conceived this project to serve a dual purpose: preserving Romanian cultural heritage and providing a practical tool for public administration¹³.

Monographic Research

Understood in this way, Gustian monographic sociology is a school of scientific objectivity that brought together diverse technicians and specialists (theologians, geographers, physicians, historians, psychologists, economists,

legal experts) from particular (specific) social sciences¹⁴, into an academic fellowship for research and fieldwork, primarily operating in the rural area and aiming to overcome the underdevelopment of the Romanian village and to foster the concept of *peasant state*¹⁵. It was precisely that structuring of cross-disciplinary monographic research teams that represented one of the defining innovations of the Sociological School of Bucharest, anticipating contemporary forms of collaborative structural research.

In 1925, Professor Gusti's Chair of Sociology, Ethics and Politics within the University of Bucharest, together with the Seminar of Ethics, Aesthetics and Sociology, led since 1 November 1923 by his assistant, Gheorghe Vlădescu-Răcoasa, organized the first monographic campaign in Goicea Mare village, Dolj County, Oltenia, between 20 and 24 April 1925. The second monographic campaign took place in Rușețu village, Brăila County, Wallachia, between 12 and 26 June 1926. Subsequent campaigns included: Nereju village, in the interwar county of Putna, Moldavia, between 16 July and 16 August 1927, in the former Vrancea Land; Fundu Moldovei village, in the interwar county of Câmpulung, Bucovina, in 1928; Drăguș village, in the former Olt Land, the interwar county of Făgăraș, Transylvania, between 13 July and 16 August 1929; Runcu village, Gorj County, Oltenia, between 29 June and 18 August 1930; Cornova village, in the interwar county of Orhei, Bessarabia, between 25 June and 13 August 1931. A follow-up campaign was conducted in Drăguș village in the summers of 1932-1933 and, finally, in the summers of 1935-1936, a monographic research study was carried out in Șanț village, in the former Năsăud Land, the interwar county of Năsăud, Transylvania (Gusti, 1938c).

In December 1933, once Professor Dimitrie Gusti (1938c, 29) was appointed Director General of the "Prince Carol" Royal Cultural Foundation by King Carol II, the Royal Student Teams (1934-1938) took over the Monographic Teams' (1925-1936) duties of conducting documentation and sociological research. Consequently, within certain constraints, most of the rural research undertaken by the Royal Student Teams (1934-1938) and by the Social Service Teams (1939) can be considered monographic campaigns¹⁶. Based on this argument, it may be considered that twelve field research teams were operating in 1934; their numbers increased exponentially each year to 27 in 1935, 48 in 1936, 74 in 1937, 59 in 1938, reaching a historical peak of 128 teams in 1939. Between 1934 and 1939, these campaigns engaged 4,827 students, graduates, technicians, volunteers, and administrative staff, offering the most reliable estimate of the scale of the Royal Student Teams (1934-1938) and the Social Service Teams (1939) at their peak. These are, most probably, the most reliable figures estimating the scale of the phenomenon known as the Sociological School of Bucharest during its period of greatest flourishing (1934-1939) (Bucur, 2019).

Between December 1941 and February 1944, some of the monographers employed by the Central Institute of Statistics were formally tasked by Ion Antonescu's government with the *Identification of Romanians East of Bug* (known under the acronym IREB and under the leadership of Anton Golopenția). In addition to this official census of the Transnistrian population, some monographic research was also conducted on this occasion, in line with the Gustian tradition. Such a sociological study, coordinated by Anton Golopenția, was conducted between January and March 1942, in Valea Hoțului village (Valehotsulove), Ananiev County (under Romanian military occupation during the Second World War), in the former Moldavian Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic (interwar Transnistria).

Once the Second World War ended, Dimitrie Gusti resumed the monographic research conducted under the auspices of the Romanian Social Institute, partly funded by the National Scientific Research Council of the Romanian Academy¹⁷. In August 1945, and again between March and April 1947, Hodac village, in Mureș County, Transylvania, was the subject of a monographic investigation under the direction of Anton Golopenția (BAR, ADG, m. XII, v. 28, f.d. 20). The monographic research conducted in 1930 in Runcu village, Gorj County, Oltenia, was resumed between 5 August and 20 September 1946, under the direction of Henri H. Stahl (Rostás, 2000, 205; BAR, ADG, m. XII, v. 28, f.d. 20; ANR, FFR, m. 7/1927, f. 68). Drăguș village, in the former Olt Land, the interwar county of Făgăraș, Transylvania, was investigated by Gheorghe Foça in July 1946 and March 1947 and by Dumitru Șandru in August 1946. Between 26 August and 12 September 1946, Constantin Săndulescu studied the issue of dwellings in the villages along the banks of the Gurghiu River. Between August and September 1946, under the scientific guidance of Traian Herseni, Nicolae Marin-Dunăre investigated the Romanian-Hungarian relations in three mixed villages in Cluj County, Transylvania; in addition, the emigration process to Bonțida, Cluj County, was examined between October 1946 and April 1947 (BAR, ADG, m. XII, v. 28, f.d. 20-21).

It has been argued that between 1925 and 1947, Dimitrie Gusti served, overall, as the scientific coordinator of the (comprehensive or summary) monographic research in 62 villages located across all the historical provinces of Romania (Popoiu, 2010), even though the number of rural communities accessed by the Royal Student Teams (1934-1938) and by the Social Service Teams (1939) was considerably higher (a minimum of 348, according to official records). The primary methodological aim of the Sociological School of Bucharest was the scientific selection of rural communities for monographic investigation, with the intention of ensuring their representativeness for the diversity of the Romanian cultural realm¹⁸. However, beyond the field research per se, a monographic campaign also involved sustained organizational activities. The

travel of the monographers and the transport of luggage from Bucharest to the village and back, the housing and maintenance of 50-80 people for a period of four to six weeks, the setting-up of a kitchen, accommodation in peasants' households (often neither comfortable nor sanitary), the organization of daily meals - all these aspects required considerable effort and sacrifices that should not be overlooked (Herseni, 1932).

Monographic Organizations

In this chapter, we aim to present the operation of the most important organizations founded and directed by Dimitrie Gusti, particularly those that had a significant impact on Romanian society during the interwar period, such as the Romanian Social Institute¹⁹, the “Prince Carol” Royal Cultural Foundation²⁰ and the Social Service²¹. The lesser-known aspects of the Gustian network of schools²² (which included rural higher education establishments and schools for team members) as well as the network of community cultural centers²³, are also addressed. All such initiatives – developed by the Sociological School of Bucharest – served as active instruments for professional training or reskilling and for the regional development policy of the Romanian state.

The historical relevance of the Gustian organizations lies in the fact that they persisted over time, even under different names, and were later considered models by succeeding communist organizations, which sought to emulate them. The engagement of students in various productive activities in rural areas, the policy aimed at developing Romanian villages through community cultural centers and the acquisition of practical know-how by fostering an educational system responsive to the needs of the rural population and operating alongside the public educational system, were all concerns that extended beyond the interwar period. For instance, the notion of patriotic duty in communist Romania was anticipated by the Royal Student Teams²⁴ (1934-1938) and by the Social Service Teams²⁵ (1939) operating in the interwar years. Later, the national program for establishing community cultural centers – well known from the communist era – was originally launched by the “Prince Carol” Royal Cultural Foundation²⁶ and, after 6 September 1940, continued by “King Michael I” Royal Cultural Foundation²⁷.

On the other hand, it should also be noted that the Gustian organizations, in turn, drew inspiration from the activities of similar organizations operating both domestically and abroad. For instance, regarding community development, it is worth highlighting the insightful observation made by Dumitru Sandu (2004; 2012a), according to which the movement aimed at the cultural betterment of villages (initiated by Dimitrie Gusti), understood as an effort to overcome

underdevelopment through modernization, was not exclusively characteristic of the interwar period. In fact, the initiatives of the founder of Romanian sociology represent a continuation of the social, cultural, and educational reforms initiated in the pre-war rural areas by Spiru Haret and Constantin Angelescu, two of Professor Gusti's most respected predecessors in the position of Minister of Education²⁸.

A similar pattern is evident in relation to the Gustian concepts of *higher rural school* (*școală superioară țărănească*), *rural university* (*universitate țărănească*) or *folk high school* (*universitate populară*), all of which were modeled on the Danish rural school known as Grundtvig²⁹ (Rostás, 2000). In Romania, this educational model was theoretically elaborated, among many others, by Leon Țopa (in 1935) and was also adopted by the legionary-inspired sociological group of Cernăuți³⁰, led by Professor Traian Brăileanu (Dungaciu, 2003). Therefore, it can be argued that the Sociological School of Bucharest, even when it did not innovate, deserves recognition for adopting functional models of Western social organization and appropriately adapting them to the Romanian social context.

Monographic Publications

The first publication initiated by the Sociological School of Bucharest³¹, edited by Dimitrie Gusti, is *Arhiva pentru Știința și Reforma Socială* [*Archive for Science and Social Reform*] (1919-1943). This generalist magazine, subsidized, in part, by the American Rockefeller Foundation (Golopenția, 2004), published articles covering several areas of scientific interest (including economics, sociology, culture, geopolitics, and political science). Later, as sociology became established as a fully-fledged social science and monographic field research achieved outstanding development, the need arose for a magazine dedicated to the studies of the Romanian monographers. It was only in 1936 that the journal *Sociologie Românească* [*Romanian Sociology*] was launched and continued until 1943. The dissident Iron Guard group within the Gusti School – composed of Dumitru Cristian Amzăr, Ion Ionică, Ernest Bernea, and Ion Samarineanu – published the legionary sociological journal *Rânduiala* [*The Order*] (1935-1938) (Golopenția, 2004). Alongside *Arhiva pentru Știința și Reforma Socială* [*Archive for Science and Social Reform*] and *Sociologie Românească* [*Romanian Sociology*], other Gustian publications featuring sociological studies or monographic research reports included *Curierul Echipelor Studentești* [*Student Teams Courier*] (1934-1938), *Curierul Serviciului Social* [*Social Service Courier*] (1938-1939), *Revista Institutului Social Banat-Crișana* [*Journal of Banat-Crișana Social Institute*] (1933-1946), *Buletinul Institutului Social Român din Basarabia* [*Bulletin of the Romanian Social Institute of Bessarabia*] (1937), the latter being converted, in

1938, into the *Buletinul Institutului de Cercetări Sociale al României - Regionala Chișinău* [*Bulletin of the Social Research Institute of Romania - Chișinău Branch*].

According to monographer Octavian Neamțu – a view also shared by Anton Golopenția and Brutus Coste –, the publication *Dreapta: foaie de cultură, informație și luptă* [*The Right: a Gazette of Culture, Information, and Struggle*] (1931-1934) could have become the Gustian sociology journal. It was precisely for this reason that the magazine's contributors included many of the young monographers, such as Octavian Neamțu, Mircea Vulcănescu, Henri H. Stahl, Anton Golopenția, Ernest Bernea, Ion I. Ionică, Ion Samarineanu, Dumitru Cristian Amzăr, Lena Constante, Emil Buznea (Golopenția, 2004; 2010). The editorial board of *Criterion: revistă de arte, litere și filozofie* [*Criterion: a Magazine of Arts, Letters and Philosophy*] (1934-1935) included, among others, Petru Comarnescu, Henri H. Stahl and Mircea Vulcănescu (Golopenția, 2004). Petru Comarnescu and Anton Golopenția contributed articles to *Azi: revistă lunară de literatură, critică și artă* [*Today: Monthly Magazine of Literature, Criticism and Arts*] (Bucharest, 1932-1938 and 1939-1940), as well as to *Vremea* [*The Times*] or *Rampa* [*The Ramp*] (Golopenția, 2010). Between 1935 and 1936, Octavian Neamțu acted as editor of the legionary magazine *Sfarmă Piatră* [*Stone Crusher*] (1930-1940). Petru Comarnescu edited the economic magazine *Excelsior*, briefly financed by his father-in-law, the minister Ion Manolescu-Strunga (Golopenția, 2004). Emanoil Bucuța was the manager and founder of *Boabe de Grâu: revistă ilustrată de cultură* [*Grains of Wheat: Illustrated Cultural Magazine*] (1930-1935). Petru Comarnescu and Traian Herseni collaborated with the magazine *Stânga: linia generală a vremii* [*The Left: the General Direction of the Times*] (1932-1933), the latter also collaborating with *Însemnări sociologice* [*Sociological Notes*] (Cernăuți, 1935-1938; Bucharest, 1940-1941), *Frăția de cruce* [*The Brotherhood of the Cross*] (1940-1941), *Gând românesc* [*Romanian Thought*] (1933-1940) and other publications following the same political orientation of a legionary nature.

In the field of international relations, Dimitrie Gusti founded and directed the magazine *Affaires Danubiennes* (1938-1944) and *Revista româno-americană* [*Romanian-American Magazine*], published by the Friends of the U.S.A. Society with the goal of promoting knowledge of America in Romania and strengthening Romanian-American relations (issue 1: December 1945; issues 2-3: 1946; issue 4: winter of 1946-1947). Petru Comarnescu was, among others, a member of the editorial board of the *Revista româno-americană* [*Romanian-American Magazine*], while Anton Golopenția served on its editorial committee. Other Gustian sociologists were members of the editorial board (Sabin Manuilă, Mircea Vulcănescu, Ion Conea, and Anton Golopenția) or editorial committee (D.C. Georgescu) of *Geopolitica și geoistoria. Revistă română pentru sud-estul european* [*Geopolitics and Geo-history. Romanian Journal for South-Eastern Europe*] (1941-1944).

The analysis of Gustian publications must also include *Revista Fundațiilor Regale* [*Review of Royal Foundations*] (1934-1947), *Albina: revista enciclopedică*

populară [*The Bee: A Popular Encyclopedic Magazine*] (1897-1947) and *Căminul Cultural: revistă de cultura poporului* [*The Community Cultural Center: A People's Cultural Magazine*] (1934-1947), edited by the Royal Cultural Foundations, especially during the period when Dimitrie Gusti served as Director General of “Prince Carol” Royal Cultural Foundation (1933-1938) and as President of the Social Service (1938-1939).

Monographic Limitations

The remarkable achievements of the Monographic School of Bucharest under Dimitrie Gusti were possible only through the mutually beneficial relationship forged between sociology and politics in interwar Romania. A close connection undeniably existed between the Sociological School of Bucharest and the political system of King Carol II³². During the interwar period, the Monographic School of Bucharest consolidated itself academically through a strategic compromise with the Romanian state, and thus public funding and support provided by the Royal House – particularly through “Prince Carol” Royal Cultural Foundation (under the patronage of Carol II and directed by Dimitrie Gusti as Director General) – ensured the resources necessary for the development of the first and only Romanian school of sociology. Beyond its declared purpose (that of raising awareness and overcoming the underdevelopment of the Romanian village), the Gusti School also functioned as a tool of social engineering and political propaganda in favor of King Carol II's regime, while the outcome was a mutually beneficial relationship between science and politics: the state obtained the expertise required for the modernization process, while sociology gained legitimacy, access to public infrastructure and the institutional support needed to establish itself as an academic discipline in Greater Romania³³.

However, despite all (political and financial) public resources outstandingly mobilized by the Sociological School of Bucharest – partly thanks to the political support extended to Dimitrie Gusti by King Carol II – for the benefit of the interwar Romanian village and despite all tireless efforts by the founding father of the Romanian sociology in the academic, cultural, social, and political-propaganda spheres, through his leadership, during the interwar period, of the Sociological School of Bucharest, the Faculty of Letters and Philosophy within the University of Bucharest, the “Prince Carol” Royal Cultural Foundation, the Social Service or the Ministry of Education, Religious Affairs and Arts, the overall Romanian social reality remained, nevertheless, largely unchanged.

Monographic Legacy

One century after the pioneering Romanian sociological field research campaign in Goicea Mare village in 1925, the legacy of the Sociological School of Bucharest continues to stand as a cornerstone of the discipline. Gusti and his disciples developed sociological methods and techniques of investigation, coordinated cross-disciplinary field research campaigns, established academic institutions, built community cultural centers, and fostered dialogue between Romanian sociology and the international scientific community. Beyond contextual boundaries, the Gustian lesson endures: sociology cannot exist without direct engagement with the social reality, and social reality cannot be improved without a reform project aimed at the well-being of the community. In the age of globalization and emerging social crises, this vision offers benchmarks for the *glocal* reinforcement of Romanian sociology to be necessarily anchored in local culture yet firmly engaged in the global scientific debate.

Notes

¹The ideas conveyed in this article are, partly, a summarized, synthetized, revised and supplemented version of chapters I had previously published, mainly in the volume *Sociologia proastei guvernări în România interbelică* [Sociology of Bad Governance in Interwar Romania] (2019), but also in other scientific articles (referred to in the References and Notes sections). Against this background, it is essential to revisit and resume such fundamental ideas concerned with the structural achievements of the Monographic School of Bucharest, since such achievements constitute irrepressible landmarks in the history of Romanian sociology. In this article, the Monographic School of Bucharest is used as a secondary and alternative designation for the Sociological School of Bucharest.

²Between 1910 and 1920, Dimitrie Gusti was a professor of sociology at the University of Iași. In 1920, following Professor Gusti's transfer to the University of Bucharest, the leadership of the Chair of Sociology and Ethics at the University of Iași, no longer under his direction, passed to Petre Andrei, who "continued the Gustian system without any significant break (apart from his reservations about monographic research)" (Golopenția, 2012a).

³A lesser-known indication of the international recognition enjoyed by the Sociological School of Bucharest is the participation of foreign scholars in its monographic research campaigns on Romanian villages during the interwar period. Among those, a group of German students from the University of Leipzig and from the Pedagogical Academy of Halle, who joined the Gustian teams in 1930 for the monographic research conducted in Runcu village, Gorj County, Oltenia. Subsequently, other foreign scholars also came to Romania, namely: Guillaume Jacquemyns, a Belgian professor at the Free University of Brussels and researcher at the Solvay Institute of Sociology; Gábor Lükő, a student from Budapest who, between 1931 and 1932, "under the impetus of monographers, conducted two additional years of fieldwork and produced an important paper that included research

carried out in Romania” (Stahl, 2015); and Philip Mosely, an American specialist in Eastern Europe, who, in 1935, participated in the monographic campaign out in Șanț village, Năsăud County, Transylvania (Salamon, 2014; Stahl, 2015). The French citizen Jacques Lassaigne and the Austrian citizen Erna Piffel also need to be mentioned (Salamon, 2014). Furthermore, Martin Ladislau Salamon (2014), in his book *Un aliat uitat: relațiile româno-maghiare în sociologia interbelică [A Forgotten Ally: Romanian-Hungarian Relationships in the Interwar Sociology]*, examined the in-depth and very little known collaboration between the Sociological School of Bucharest and the groups of young Hungarian intellectuals in Transylvania during the interwar period; the group was clustered around the *Erdélyi Fiatalok [Tinerii Ardeleni]* magazine, was keen on Gusti’s sociology and was interested in the monographic method-based exploration of Hungarian villages in Transylvania. As absurd as it might seem, the Gusti School had the most fruitful influence – outside the Romanian cultural realm – over the Hungarian intellectual environment in Transylvania (Salamon, 2014).

⁴The differences in sociological approach between the maestro (Dimitrie Gusti) and his main disciples – Mircea Vulcănescu, Henri H. Stahl, Anton Golopenția, Traian Herseni, Gheorghe Vlădescu-Răcoasa or Octavian Neamțu –, who served as his assistants or close collaborators, were significant, yet not necessarily discouraged by the professor even when, at times, such differences were not to his liking (particularly the Golopenția case). It is not no coincidence that Sanda Golopenția (2012a) described the interwar monographic movement with the expression *the Gustian Archipelago* (a term that highlights the diversity of its approaches). In fact, precisely in order to reconcile diverging opinions and to strengthen the sense of fellowship among the leaders of the monographic movement, Professor Gusti regularly hosted – even during his tenure as minister (when he was extremely busy) – cordial gatherings with his principal collaborators in the scientific field (Vulcănescu, Stahl, Golopenția, Herseni), whom he regarded as “good old friends” (Golopenția, 2012b, 337-345). For instance, in a letter dated 5 February 1940, Anton Golopenția (2012b, 452-455) reproached Professor Gusti for the isolation to which he was consigned within the monographic movement, as a result of his daring to present a scientific critique grounded in the modern concept of the representative sample, a view rejected by Dimitrie Gusti, who instead held unrealistic belief that all 15,000 villages in interwar Romania could be studied exhaustively. As the professor questioned the *scientific loyalty* of Golopenția (2012b, 458), who wanted to refine the *Gustian sociological system*, Golopenția was limited to serving only as an honorary assistant at the University of Bucharest and was generally relegated to administrative duties within Gusti’s organizations.

⁵Henri H. Stahl instructed Dorel Abraham, Iancu Filipescu, Dumitru Sandu, Andrei Stănoiu, and Maria Voinea. Traian Herseni and Vasile Caramelea instructed Cornel Constantinescu, Gheorghică Geană, Nicolae Radu, Cătălin and Elena Zamfir. Anton Golopenția instructed Nicolae Betea, Miron Constantinescu, R. Moldovan, Constantin Pavel, Gh. Reteganul, and Mircea Tiriung (Golopenția, 2012a). All those prominent figures of the Romanian interwar and postwar intelligentsia brought their fundamental contribution to the creation and consolidation of a Gustian-type and monographically-rooted sociological system, properly structured in terms of theory and methodology.

⁶On the legendary sociological journal *Rânduiala [The Order]*, see Dan Dungaciu (2003, 39-42).

⁷The examples of *social units* proposed by Dimitrie Gusti (1939c, 16-24) include: family, church, school, household, neighborhood, district, mill, sheep pen, pub, mayor's office, county (or a subdivision thereof) and nation (the largest of Gusti's social unit). Depending on the degree of consistency, objectivation and sustainability, the social units are categorized into communities, institutions and clusters (Larionescu, 2007). When discussing *social relations*, Gusti refers not only to the relations among neighbors, friends and enemies, but also to different age groups and genders. Regarding *social processes*, he refers phenomena such as citification (urbanization), individualization, socialization, centralization and differentiation. The social units are structured under a complex system of constituent or substantive (spiritual or cultural and economic) manifestations and regulatory or operational (ethical-legal or moral-legal and political-administrative) manifestations for the social life. They depend on natural or asocial (cosmological, biological) frameworks and social (psychological and historical) frameworks and they are grounded in the social will. In the Gustian sociological system, social will emerges as the core of the social reality, since all social phenomena and processes are its products and creations (Gusti, 1939c, 15-16). Accordingly, in the Gustian sociological system, social reality is interconnected with and mutually conditioned by manifestations (which constitute, organize and regulate social life), frameworks (which form the origin of social life) and social will (which justify the phenomenological existence of social life in the form of units, relations among units and social processes). In other words, social unit means social will expressed through social manifestations, mediated by the frameworks. When expressed in terms of causation, the following formula is obtained: W (will) + F (frameworks) = M (manifestations). A threefold sociological parallelism occurs, on one hand, between the extra-social (cosmological and biological) frameworks and the social (psychological and historical) frameworks and, on the other hand, between the constituent (spiritual or cultural and economic) manifestations and the regulatory (ethical-legal or moral-legal and political-administrative) manifestations and, finally, between the manifestations as a whole and the frameworks as a whole (Gusti, 1946; 1939c). By *sociological parallelism*, Dimitrie Gusti (1934, 46) refers to the existence of mutual dependency relations between manifestations and frameworks (and also within such manifestations and frameworks). In a communication delivered at the Romanian Academy on 19 January 1940 and later published in the second edition (1946) of *Sociologia Militans*, Dimitrie Gusti (1946, 56) supplemented the first two types of parallelism (within manifestations and within frameworks) with a new one: the parallelism between frameworks and will (replacing the parallelism between the manifestations as a whole and the frameworks as a whole). This is what Dimitrie Gusti (1934, 44-46) calls the *Sociological principle of social parallelism*, irrespective of the triadic configuration specific to edition 1934 or to edition 1946 of *Sociologia Militans*. Considering the aforementioned theoretical statements, human society is defined as "the standalone, social will-motivated sum of parallel manifestations: economic and spiritual (constituent), legal and political (regulatory), conditional upon the cosmological and biological (natural) frame and upon the historical and psychological (social) frame" (Gusti, 1939c, 21).

⁸As it represents the standalone sum of spiritual and economically, legally and politically regulated and cosmologically, biologically, psychologically and historically dependent manifestations, the *Theory of social will* is placed centrally in the Gustian sociological system and is deemed to be the substance of social life. In accordance with the

Theory of Frameworks and Manifestations of Social Life, in order to be settled under the Gustian monographic system, a social problem must be first “filtered through the frameworks and manifestations” (Stahl, 1936, 1133). The social frameworks determine the conditions under which the social will is manifested. Social reality, as expressed through social units, is influenced by four frameworks explaining the origin of social action and also the dynamics of social phenomena: *the cosmological framework, the biological framework, the psychological framework and the historical framework*. The first two frameworks are natural frameworks, while the last two are social frameworks. In Gusti’s view, social manifestations, together with social units, relations and processes, define the social reality and constitute the subject matter of sociology. There are as many types of manifestations as there are types of requirements or needs: *economic manifestations*, concerned with meeting the needs of a material nature (food, shelter, occupations etc.); *spiritual manifestations*, addressing the needs of the soul (science, religion, art, magic, etc.); *moral-legal manifestations*, focused on the regulating and institutionalizing economic and spiritual life (traditional and trial-based legal practices, individual and collective ownership); *political-administrative manifestations*, related to the enforcement of regulations and institutionalizations (political concepts and actions, municipal administration, etc.). Economic and spiritual manifestations are constituent and substantive, while the legal and political manifestations are regulatory and operational. Understanding a social phenomenon requires examining it both in relation to the predetermined conditions of its occurrence (the four frameworks) and in terms of its social expressions (the four manifestations). Concisely, according to Gheorghe Zapan (1936, 1311-1327), the social formula (S1) needed to understand and explain a social action involved summing all frameworks and social life determinants, according to the simple scheme below: $S1 = W + E1 + S2 + P1 + A + L + E2 + C + B + H + P2$ [where S1 = social formula; W = social will; E1 = economic; S2 = spiritual; P1 = political; A = administrative; L = legal; E2 = ethical; C = cosmological; B = biological; H = historical; P2 = psychological]. The *Principle of Sociological Parallelism* refers to the interrelation ratio, rather than the ratio of subordination among the components to the social assembly (social will, frameworks, manifestations), which develop concurrently rather than sequentially. Hence, under the Gustian concept, such parallelism exists among frameworks, among manifestations and between frameworks and will. In the view of Henri Stahl (1936, 1133), any researcher acting in good faith must embrace the *Principle of Sociological Parallelism*, since such principle considers the full range of social life-specific factors, without a predetermined hierarchy between such factors having been determined. *Principle of causality*: according to its formula, sociological causality consists of social causality together with its natural and social frameworks and it gives rise to specific types of manifestations. Legend: W (will) + F (frameworks) = M (manifestations). The *Principle of the Ideal* and the *Principle of Justice* form the *Principles of Social Ideal*. It was Gusti’s belief that one must believe in the effectiveness of action to be able to influence reality. Society must provide individuals with hope or with the opportunity to pursue their dreams. The role of society is to make the ideal attainable. Provided the purpose pursued is consistent with the means, the *Principle of Social Justice* is observed. The union between the *Principle of the Ideal* and the *Principle of Justice* leads towards the *Principle of the Circuit between Ideals and Values* (Larionescu, 2007).

⁹Dimitrie Gusti (1934, 72-80) prepared a treaty on sociological observation: such observation must be systematic and structured, honest and unbiased, precise and comprehensive, controlled and verified, collective, informed and intuitive. Dimitrie Gusti understands direct observation in a broader sense, which, in terms of modern technology, also encompasses other sociological research methods (such as the investigation or the review of social documents). Therefore, this monographic research method implied, first and foremost, the investigation of the Romanian social reality in the rural area by “door-to-door canvassing, questioning and prying and snooping in a sympathetic yet impudent manner, into the whole life of the people and their concealed sins and random arrogance” (Stahl, 1936, 1143).

¹⁰Gusti School conducts a longitudinal-type empirical research in that it returns for follow-up, several years later, to the same rural community – for instance, to Drăguș village, in the interwar county of Făgăraș (in 1929, 1932, 1946 and 1947) or to Runcu village, in Gorj County (in 1930 and 1946) – in view of capturing the dynamics of social changes.

¹¹The Sociological School of Bucharest, led by Dimitrie Gusti, was the first sociological school worldwide to employ photography and cinematography as systematic instruments of sociological research. Although the Chicago School had antecedents in the occasional use of visual materials – through documentary photography and social reportage, often in connection with reformist journalism – it nevertheless failed, during this period, to develop a constitutive methodological framework that integrated visual documentation into the core of sociological inquiry. By contrast, Gusti’s school institutionalized the use of visual media within its monographic campaigns, beginning with the emblematic fieldwork at Drăguș in 1929. Research teams included professional photographers such as Iosif Berman and Aurel Bauh, alongside filmmakers like Paul Sterian, Nicolae Argintescu-Amza, and Nicolae Barbelian, whose mandate was to systematically document village life, material culture, and social practices. For instance, Nicolae Argintescu-Amza, together with Paul Sterian, produced the first sociological film in the world during the monographic campaign conducted (between 13 July 1929 and 16 August 1929) in Drăguș, a village in the Făgăraș Mountains. The film, *Drăguș. Viața unui sat românesc* [*Drăguș. The life of a Romanian village*], is considered the first sociological film in the world because as it was produced systematically, according to a recognized sociological methodology (the monographic method developed by Dimitrie Gusti) (Golopenția, 2004). Thus, for the Gusti School, photography and cinematography were not mere illustrative tools, but essential components of the research process, designed to record, classify, and interpret the complexity of Romanian rural society within a comprehensive sociological framework.

¹²Because the sociology developed by Dimitrie Gusti entails the comprehensive study – interdisciplinary, integral, collective, applied, and systematic – of a specific social unit (most often a rural community), it is commonly referred to as monographic. The outcome of this scientific endeavor is the sociological monograph of the village, which aspires to be complete in accordance with the theory and methodology elaborated by the Gusti School. Hence, Gusti’s sociology is widely known as monographic sociology.

¹³As noted by the Sociological School of Bucharest, “the differences between the country’s regions increasingly require the attention of those in charge with the country’s administration. They are striving towards a differentiation within the administration and towards adjustment of measures in each region, as required by the current status of the

respective region. The prerequisite for such adjustment of the administration to the various circumstances in the different regions of the country is the precise knowledge of each region's particular situation. It is the sociological map of Romania" (ANR, FFCRC, m. 83/1938, vol. 2, f. 109).

¹⁴Sociology is distinctive from other specialized social sciences – such as political economy, law, ethnography, folklore, social psychology, linguistics, and social geography which each address only partial aspects of society, including its economic, legal, cultural, artistic, linguistic, and religious dimensions – as monographic sociology, in contrast, investigates society as a whole, comprehensively accounting for the full cumulative complexity of its various social dimensions. This is the reason why sociology, in the Gustian theoretical system, is depicted as *an encyclopedia of particular social sciences*. Understood as a *fully-fledged or essential social science* studying the Romanian society in its entirety, sociology aims to collect and interpret, as a unified whole, the data and insights provided by other specialized social sciences (Gusti, 1939c). In its *Sociologia militans*, apart from asserting the monographic sociology as a *fully-fledged social science*, Dimitrie Gusti (1934, 53-70) proposes abandoning the *demeaning status of servient science*, by eliminating both the practice of *armchair sociology* (a *desk-based sociology* explained in the abstract of this article), and the use of the indirect reinterpretation method with respect to data collected by the other particular (specific) social sciences (often based on the calculation formulas provided by statistics).

¹⁵For Dimitrie Gusti, the *peasant state* is a political opportunity for “rejuvenating and reviving democracy – which is rather compromised as several countries do not even want to talk about it. Unless peasants are given the opportunity to exercise their voting rights, to express a resolute acceptance, such democracy and the universal suffrage are nothing more than a joke. [...] Moreover, the concept of a peasant state also implies a new model of administration, meaning that such administration goes beyond merely executing instructions from the central authority and instead provides technical assistance to improve the social conditions and organization of each village” (ANR, FFCRC, m. 75/1938, ff. 30-31).

¹⁶In 1934, the year of the first fieldwork campaign conducted in villages by “Prince Carol” Royal Cultural Foundation, one may notice that the Monographic Teams (1925-1936) were largely similar to the Royal Student Teams (1934-1938), but over time, the lack of direct guidance and careful selection of members of the Royal Student Teams (1934-1938) and Social Service Teams (1939), which, for the Monographic Teams, was provided in person by Professor Gusti had a negative impact. In 1934, once the first campaign had been completed, Ștefania Cristescu noted, on 8 October 1934, “the premature disappointment of Professor Gusti with respect to the Royal Student Teams”, but also the fact that the professor “is again dreaming about a monograph he himself should lead, with people of his own choosing” (Golopenția, 2010, 37). The founder of Romanian sociology was aware that “cultural monographs of this summer [1934] (rather a king's dream – he said) had failed and he was sorry about it” (Golopenția, 2010, 37). Moreover, beginning with 1934, the adversity between the senior monographers (1925-1936) and the new team members (1934-1939), caused, on one hand, by the “discontent of the former as to the increased visibility of the royal teams”, and, on the other hand, by the concern that the royal teams would fully replace the monographic teams (Golopenția, 2010) was increasingly manifest.

¹⁷The complete list of sociological field research projects financed by the National Scientific Research Council of the Romanian Academy between 1946 and 1947, along with those planned for the following years, was published in the *Information, Scientific and Administrative Bulletin* of the Romanian Academy, printed under the supervision of Dimitrie Gusti and Traian Săvulescu (1948, 168-187).

¹⁸The criteria for selecting a village in Bessarabia for monographic research by the Sociological School of Bucharest were outlined in an unusual letter dated 21 June 1931, addressed by Dimitrie Gusti to the Academician Ștefan Ciobanu: “We are looking for an old freeholder village, where the inhabitants address one another with the honorary title *Captain (Căpitane)*, situated near a monastery” (Botezatu, 2011). With regard to the rural communities in which the Royal Student Teams conducted their monographic research, these settlements had to meet one key requirement: “to be a locality inhabited by Romanians for generations, where customs, traditions, and folklore remained entirely intact; such villages can be specifically found in the foothills of the mountains in Oltenia, Wallachia and Moldavia; but also in the mountain regions of Transylvania, with the exception of the following interwar counties: Trei Scaune, Ciuc, Mureș and a few more other. To make possible the study of life and traditions in the Land of the Moți (Țara Moților), subjects about which very little is known. In the interwar county of Caraș, Banat, with the exception of industrial towns, the Romanian component has remained largely intact” (ANR, FFCRC, m. 19/1934, f. 142v).

¹⁹The Romanian Social Institute (1921-1938, 1944-1948) was established in February 1921 through the reorganization of the Association for Study and Social Reform (created in Iași in April 1918 and transferred to Bucharest in November 1918). In October 1938, the Romanian Social Institute was converted into the Social Research Institute of Romania (1938-1939) and then, based on Decree-Law no. 4090 of 16 November 1939, became The Institute of Social Sciences of Romania (1939-1944). All the aforementioned organizations were committed to and pursued two primary goals, namely, to investigate the social condition of the population and to strengthen the social sciences in Greater Romania. Moreover, based on their studies, the Romanian Social Institute and its successors were equipped to submit practical proposals necessary for implementing social reform in Greater Romania, without engaging in any militant political agendas. They could contribute by disseminating the results of sociological research through scientific journals (I.S.R., 1921, 3; *Institutul...*, 1940, 3-6). After the Second World War, for a brief period, the social research activity carried out by the Gustian organizations were continued by the Romanian Academy, directed by Dimitrie Gusti between 1944 and 1946. On 19 January 1945, Dimitrie Gusti established the National Scientific Research Council (1945-1948) within the Romanian Academy. The purpose of the National Scientific Research Council, as determined by the Romanian Academy, was “to contribute to the progress of theoretical and applied science” (Gusti, & Săvulescu, 1948). However, for a more detailed examination of the Romanian Social Institute’s history, see Dimitrie Gusti (1942) and Dietmar Müller (2013). Regarding the National Scientific Research Council, consult the *Information, Scientific and Administrative Bulletin* of the Romanian Academy published by Dimitrie Gusti and Traian Săvulescu (1948). A detailed presentation of organizations directed by Dimitrie Gusti can be found in the works of Zoltán Rostás – *O istorie orală a Școlii Sociologice de la București [An Oral History of the Sociological School of Bucharest]* (2001) and *Atelierul gustian: o*

abordare organizațională [*The Gustian workshop: an Organizational Approach*] (2005) – and Dan Dungaciu (2003, 16-21).

²⁰The cultural activities carried out in villages by the Royal Student Teams (1934-1938) were initiated by King Carol II and implemented through “Prince Carol” Royal Cultural Foundation, led from December 1933 by Professor Gusti, as Director General. To improve both the material and spiritual conditions of the Romanian village, King Carol II proposed, in May 1933, the creation of work teams composed of at least five students (usually in their final year of study) or university graduates, recruited based on voluntary basis, to live and work among peasants for three months each year, during the summer academic vacation, while simultaneously contributing, to the development of the community they served. In addition to this goal, the sovereign also sought to establish an intellectual link between the academic social sphere and the rural world. Moreover, the monarch sought to ideologically engage Romanian youth in order to create a political alternative to the Legionary Movement. Over time, the Royal Student Teams expanded to include pupils and high-school students acting as scouts (*cercetași*) or sentinels (*străjeri*), whereas King Carol II was regarded as the Commander-in-Chief of the Scout Movement and the Supreme Sentinel of the Motherland. Because they targeted the same electoral pool, the Royal Student Teams (1934-1938) – instrumentalized for propagandistic purposes in promoting the cult of King Carol II – were sometimes met with hostility from the Legionary Movement and negatively portrayed in its discourse. The operating costs of the Royal Student Teams, were “covered from the King’s personal funds”, which also supported the “Prince Carol” Royal Cultural Foundation (Gusti, 1939c; 1936b, 1936c, 1936e; Constantinescu-Mircești, 1935; Măgureanu, 1935; 1936; Goia, 1936; Rostás, 2000; Popu, 1937; Ududec, 1938; Capagea, 1936). The social reality of the Royal Student Teams – under the royal patronage of funding – was aptly summarized in a brief phrase by Traian Herseni (1936, 35) and Dimitrie Gusti (1939c, 159-160): “a royal thought, brought to life by the know-how of a scholar and the willingness of its collaborators”. After the Second World War, and until the complete dissolution, in 1948, of “King Michael I” Royal Cultural Foundation – the successor of the “Prince Carol” Royal Cultural Foundation after 6 September 1940 – monographic research and fieldwork in villages were greatly reduced, particularly in the context of the Soviet military occupation and the establishment of a Moscow-aligned communist government in Bucharest. Despite these adverse conditions, the collection and scientific processing of folk songs, carried out by the Foundation’s Folklore Archive, in collaboration with the Society of Romanian Composers, continued (ANR, FFR, m. 7/1927, ff. 68-69). Specialized publications were produced (such as *Monografia muzicală a comunei Orăștioara din județul Hunedoara* [*The Musical Monograph of Orăștioara Commune, Hunedoara County*]) and musical conferences were organized at Radio Romania (for example, through the radio show *Geografia muzicală a României* [*Romania’s musical geography*]). In total, over 1,600 discs and more than 3,000 traditional songs were recorded on wax cylinders (ANR, FFR, m. 7/1927, f. 69). For a brief period, the Foundation’s editorial work (comprising thirty publications with a total circulation of 69,735 copies) was partially revived, both for older collections (such as *Cartea satului* [*The Village Book*], *Cartea de rugăciuni* [*the Prayer Book*], *Cartea Căminului Cultural* [*Community Cultural Center Book*]) and for newer collections (such as *Natură și Cultură* [*Nature and Culture*], *Cartea Muncitorului* [*The Laborer’s Book*], *Ardealul nostru* [*Our Transylvania*] – the former series *Cartea*

Refugiatului Ardelean: Biblioteca de Sociologie, Etică și Politică [the Book of Transylvanian Refugee: the Library of Sociology, Ethics and Politics] (ANR, FFR, m. 7/1927, ff. 69-70). Additionally, the Foundation printed three periodicals: *Albina* [The Bee] (with a circulation of 30,000 copies per issue), *Căminul Cultural* [The Community Cultural Center] (4,000-5,000 copies per issue) and *Ramuri* [Branches] (ANR, FFR, m. 7/1927, ff. 70-71). At the time of its dissolution in 1948, “King Michael I” Royal Cultural Foundation employed approximately 400 staff members (including teachers and professors seconded from the Ministry of National Education) and engaged several thousand of collaborators (ANR, FFR, m. 7/1927, f. 71).

²¹On 18 October 1938, following the adoption of the Decree-Law establishing the Social Service, graduates of higher education in Greater Romania were required, upon completing their studies, to perform fieldwork in villages. Otherwise, their bachelor’s or graduate degree would not be conferred, and the graduates would be ineligible for employment in either public or private service. In addition, they would be unable to obtain a license to practice a liberal profession (*Instructiuni...*, 1939, 8). It was during this time that the Royal Student Teams (1934-1938) were reorganized as the Social Service Teams (1939), transforming fieldwork in villages turns from optional activity into a mandatory requirement (Gusti, 1939c). In this context, in the monographer Sergiu Ataman regarded the law establishing the Social Service as the optimal framework for organizing the academic youth to educate the Romanian nation. To support this goal, in addition to the Social Service, other organizations were created to educate the populace and *elevate public life*, such as *Straja Țării* [the Sentinel of the Motherland] (for pre-academic youth), *Pregătirea Premilitară* [Pre-military Training] and the National Renaissance Front. Consequently, “despite all disappointment caused by the political parties to rural life”, the “Prince Carol” Royal Cultural Foundation remained the public institution responsible for organizing Romanian students and providing the administrative framework for Social Service, ensuring that “this social and political reorganization would benefit from the collaboration of all the nation’s productive forces” (ANR, FFCRC, m. 119/1939, ff. 202/424).

²²Given that peasant education was traditionally minimal as a result of insufficient schooling, the “Prince Carol” Royal Cultural Foundation emphasized the need to establish – in the villages where the Royal Student Teams (1934-1938) and the Social Service Teams (1939) were active – rural higher education institutions, vocational trade schools (for boys), agricultural schools and courses, peasant or household courses, cooking, weaving, dyeing, sericulture, sowing (of national costumes) and silkworm cultivations (for girls) (ANR, FFCRC, m. 1/1936, ff. 24-37).

²³Regarding the creation of community cultural centers, their distribution across the country was uneven, meaning that, during the interwar period, the “Prince Carol” Royal Cultural Foundation prioritized less prosperous regions in eastern Romania (Bessarabia and Moldavia) over the more developed western regions (Banat and Transylvania were the most developed Romanian regions).

²⁴Organized by the “Prince Carol” Royal Cultural Foundation, financed and overseen by King Carol II, directed by Professor Gusti, and composed – initially through voluntary recruitment (1934-1938) and subsequently through mandatory participation (1939) – of students or graduates from diverse specializations (agronomists, medical doctors, veterinarians, household masters, sociologists, theologians), the Royal Student Teams

(1934-1938) and the Social Service Teams (1939) pursued a threefold objective: 1. To provide effective assistance to Romanian villages, in accordance with eight components of practical action (artistic and cultural, household management, human health, utilities, cooperative, sanitary-veterinary, religious): establishment of local medical clinics offering a swift improvement of local population's health condition, by providing free medical and veterinary examinations, fruit tree caring and grafting, weed removal, sanitation of peasant households, construction of sports facilities (equipped with showers), building community cultural centers, libraries and Orthodox churches (especially in the newly integrated provinces after the First World War), pre-military instruction of youth, improvements to local utilities in coordination with local public authorities (repair road, bridge, fence, steeple repairs; cleaning communal ditches, building and cleaning water wells, village cemeteries upkeep, house painting, establishing animal cemeteries and rural lavatories), organization of public lectures and conferences on topics of general interest, sewing bees and practical cooking lessons, provision of advice for improving agricultural production, formation and organization of community cooperatives; 2. To collect sociologically and politically significant monographic materials enabling awareness and knowledge of the Romanian interwar rural environment; 3. To provide field training for students acting as team members, as such students "will be Romania's leaders of tomorrow" (Gusti, 1936d, 1; 1939c, 185-186; Manuilă, 1935, 3; Neamțu, 1937, 318).

²⁵In a letter dated 10 October 1935 and addressed to Professor Gusti, Anton Golopenția proposed, for the first time, that the Royal Student Teams' activities be made universally applicable by legislating their mandatory nature and making participation in at least one summer fieldwork campaign a condition for the awarding of academic degrees to higher education graduates in Romania. Anton Golopenția (2002, LXXI-LXXII) recognized, from the outset, the significant political advantages King Carol II could accrue as the patron of the Sociological School of Bucharest. Neutralizing the legionary, communist and (party-affiliated) student organizations, along with the ideological reorientation of the youth (towards the King Carol II's social monarchy) were regarded as the two principal political objectives underpinning the Social Service project. Even at that time, the project of enrolling entire Romanian youth into a single mass organization (under royal patronage) was regarded as fully consistent with the broader orientation of Carol II's political agenda, which reached its maturity on 10 February 1938 with the establishment of the monarchical authoritarian regime. In the magazine *Sociologie Românească* [*Romanian Sociology*] (2nd edition of February 1936), Dimitrie Gusti (1936a, 5), taking up Anton Golopenția's proposal of 10 October 1935, launched for the first time in the Romanian public sphere the radical idea of introducing mandatory social service in the villages, which implied legislating the cultural work activity in rural areas that, until 1938, had been carried out voluntarily by the Royal Student Teams. On 18 October 1938, King Carol II promulgated the Decree-Law establishing the Social Service, which made rural work compulsory for all Romanian university graduates, while, at the same time, completion of a rural work placement became a prerequisite for obtaining or validating an academic degree, for appointment to a public office, or for securing a professional license – in the case of liberal professions (Gusti, 1939c; 1939a; Social Service, 1939). By legislating the Social Service, the Sociological School of Bucharest finally gained formal recognition from the state. In practical terms, the school was regarded as the equivalent of a ministry, receiving public funding and enjoying

the monarch's unconditional support. As president of the Social Service, Dimitrie Gusti assumed the role of minister for the second time in his career, as this position conferred upon him the status and responsibilities of a state minister. He also enjoys tenure and may attend – when summoned – the meetings of the Council of Ministers. On 12 October 1939, due to budgetary constraints (considering the outbreak of the Second World War in Europe and that Romania's budgetary resources were directed towards military expenditures), and as a result of intrigues orchestrated by Prime Minister Armand Călinescu concerning the infiltration of individuals suspected of Legionary sympathies into the Social Service Administration, King Carol II suspended the implementation of the Decree-Law establishing the Social Service (Golopenția, 2002).

²⁶Even though the construction of the first community cultural centers on the Romanian territory began prior to the First World War, the sustained development of such centers is primarily attributed to Professor Gusti. Thus, immediately following Professor Gusti's appointment as Director General of the "Prince Carol" Royal Cultural Foundation, Romania had only 549 community cultural centers at the village, municipal, or county level in 1934. By 1939, when the Social Service was suppressed, Dimitrie Gusti had increased the number of community cultural centers to 3,085. Even during the Second World War, an additional 1,000 establishments were constructed in Romania; thus, in 1946, a total of 4,116 community cultural centers were in operation (*Realizările Serviciului Social...*, 1939, 2; ANR, FFR, m. 7/1927, f. 60). Pursuant to Article 10 of the Decree-Law establishing the Social Service, adopted by King Carol II on 18 October 1938, the premises of the community cultural centers would accommodate: the healthcare department (clinic, pharmacy, lavatory, maternity), the economic department (cooperative, bakery, butchery, agricultural tools shed) and the cultural department (festivity hall, conference room, radio station, library with reading room, museum, room for peasant schools, weaving and peasant craft workshops). Understanding the particular importance attributed to community cultural centers in Greater Romania requires knowledge of their members, which can be broadly summarized as the local cultural and political elite. Thus, the specific formula for community organization and development favored by Gusti School and endorsed by King Carol II was, during the interwar period, the social institution of the community cultural center (Sandu, 2012a). As evidenced by the recent memory of the communist era, this internal organization was, to some extent, maintained even after Romania came under the Soviet sphere of influence. It is self-evident that, both during the interwar and postwar periods, the managers of community cultural centers organized political propaganda activities at the local level, promoting the regime established in Bucharest (Gusti, 1935; 1938a; 1939c).

²⁷As indicated in a report prepared most likely around 1948 by Octavian Neamțu, Director General of "King Michael I" Royal Cultural Foundation, the successor of "Prince Carol" Royal Cultural Foundation after 6 September 1940, the community cultural centers nationwide, even prior to the initial period of Soviet military occupation in Romania, implemented and financed significant municipal infrastructure projects leading to substantially improved living conditions of local inhabitants' and alleviating the public administration from need to allocate considerable funds from either local or central budgets. Thus, community cultural centers served as instruments for constructing healthcare facilities and public baths, establishing and equipping primary classrooms or even entire schools, creating cafeterias for pupils and orphans, repairing churches, digging wells,

procuring firewood, maintaining cemeteries, erecting roadside crosses and other memorial monuments, repairing roads, bridges and footbridges, cleaning pastures and damming certain streams (ANR, FFR, m. 7/1927, f. 74).

²⁸The social movement initiated by Spiru Haret on 21 February 1902 aimed to elevate the moral condition of peasants through the organization of village-level cultural groups (composed of teachers and priests) as well as through the construction of school facilities in the former Kingdom of Romania. The concentration of material and human resources at the community level was continued and expanded after the First World War by Constantin Angelescu, through the establishment of school committees (Sandu, 2004, 2012a). Hence, for Dimitrie Gusti, as well as for his two predecessors as Ministers of Education, Spiru Haret and Constantin Angelescu, social reform represented the principal means of elevating the Romanian village (Sandu, 2012a).

²⁹One of the fundamental missions of the “Prince Carol” Royal Cultural Foundation and its successor after 6 September 1940, “King Michael I” Royal Cultural Foundation, carried out through rural community cultural centers, was the organization of rural schools and classes, beginning in 1931, which were designed to train lead villagers according to the Danish model of rural schooling called Grundtvig, which integrated theoretical education with practical skills acquisition. During the interwar period, Dimitrie Gusti – together with his principal collaborator on rural pedagogy, the monographer Stanciu Stoian – further developed, on the same principles, a workers’ folk high school (*universitate populară muncitorească*) and a network of cadre training schools (*școli pregătitoare de cadre*), referred to at the time as schools for team members (*școli pentru echipieri*) or schools for social guidance (*școli de îndrumări sociale*), designed to provide both theoretical and technical instruction for the personnel serving primarily the “Prince Carol” Royal Cultural Foundation and rural community cultural centers. The recipients of this educational endeavor included village notables affiliated with the community cultural centers, students involved in the Royal Student Teams movement, technicians and scholars from rural Romania, entrusted with the cultural uplifting of the peasantry. Special emphasis was consistently given to classes on monographic research, pre-military and sentinel instruction (*instrucție străjerească*), physical education, and the organization of communal cultural centers (ANR, FFR, m. 7/1927, f. 67; Golopenția, 2004; Rostás, 2000; Gusti, 1938b; 1939b; 1939c; Neamțu, 1935; O școală de îndrumări sociale, 1935; Curierul, 1935; O școală țărănească permanentă, 1935).

³⁰For more information on *Cernăuți Group*, see Dan Dungaciu (2003, 22-29).

³¹As to *Pătrunderea monografiștilor în presă* [*Ingress of Monographers into the Press*], see also Zoltán Rostás (2013, 9-11).

³²For more information, see the studies *Sociological School of Bucharest’s Publications and the Romanian Political Propaganda in the Interwar Period* (Bucur, 2016) and *The Interlinkage between Sociology and Politics in Monographic Research in Interwar Romania* (Bucur, 2020).

³³It is in this light that one should interpret King Carol II’s paternalistic attitude towards the monographic movement initiated by Dimitrie Gusti (Rostás, 2005). In interwar Romania, the relationship of dependence between sociology and politics took the form of a mutually beneficial exchange, from which sociology in particular derived substantial benefits, as this arrangement enabled sociology to consolidate and finance itself as a

legitimate scientific discipline, rather than being seen merely as the subordination of social scientists to state authority, as it might have been judged in Western academic circles. The founder of the Sociological School of Bucharest proved highly adept at attracting state resources to support his project of social research and cultural reform, a project that, during the interwar period, overlapped with the state's own political objective of strengthening Greater Romania.

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