

Imagining Communities: A Biological Approach of Identity Construction in Interwar Transylvania

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Introduction

THE AIM of the present study is that of analysing the structural conditions that contributed to shaping the most significant Romanian racial discourse in interwar period. The label attached to this discourse was “biopolitical eugenics”. Transylvania (especially the city of Cluj) represented the centre from where this discourse was spread, its authors and promoters being prominent personalities affiliated to the “Astra” Society. Both the purpose of this discourse and those who conceived it are still marked by exoticism. I will enumerate here a few names: Iuliu Moldovan, Mihai Zolog, Gheorghe Preda, Leon Daniello, Dominic Stanca, Iuliu Hațieganu, Iordache Făcăoaru, Ovidiu Comșia, Petre Râmneanțu. A part of them are known rather as names of streets and public spaces or institutions in Cluj Napoca and Timișoara than as personalities who made a difference for better or worse. Nevertheless, after the publication of Maria Bucur’s book, *Eugenics and Modernization in Interwar Romania* (University of Pittsburgh Press, 2002), there has been a growing interest for the eugenic preoccupations of interwar Transylvanian citizens. Among the most prominent figures interested in this topic, I would like to mention scholars such as Marius Turda from Oxford Brookes University and Vladimir Solonari from University of Central Florida, Orlando, who have revisited, completed and corrected Maria Bucur’s research. Consequently, one could also see the emergence of criticism about disregarding this episode of interwar Romanian history.

This criticism is partially justified, because any subject is worth analysing, and the present case raises a number of interesting issues: for instance, this is one of

the very rare cases when the periphery acted as centre¹ - Cluj provided Bucharest with last-minute issues, ideology and solutions appropriate to the context, as well as with qualified personnel for the technocratic implementation of this ideology. Also, from a sociological point of view, the impact of eugenic ideas on defining Transylvanian identity was stronger than that of other discursive traditions that nonetheless received more attention. To support this argument, we could consider the authors' prolific output, their attention to distribution, the conscious propaganda and the aggressive promotion campaign through all available distribution channels. Or, we could also consider the fact that nowadays, Transylvanians often define themselves from an ethnic point of view by calling upon percentages and proportions, counting their ancestors. This is the racist heritage filtered through Mendel's theory by the "school of Cluj". This oddity, which nowadays appears harmless and natural, exists because the supporters of eugenics made "great efforts" in constructing these ideas.² This aspect is evident in the spirit of any text they published; if we want, we can provide exact quotes in this respect from the methodological recommendations given by eugenicists: "When intermarriages occurred in a family, then the kinship of a member of that family is established in direct relation to the ethnic patrimony."³ A series of agreements concerning birth rate issues and their connection to the ethnic fabric of a region, issues concerning heredity and associated diseases, etc. have been maintained as components of the baggage of misconceptions. These elements, although originated in the efforts of the Cluj eugenicists, are the product of many decades of more or less naïve subsequent circulation, which did not subside in the communist period and appears to be continuing today. For instance, the majority of university textbooks I have consulted on the topics of genetics and heredity contain traces of racist or sexist thinking.

Nevertheless, the criticism concerning the unjust neglect of this subject, expressed by Marius Turda, are exaggerated, and the same is true of the importance given to racism in the interwar identity construction.⁴ These are exaggerated because we find ourselves in one of the numerous cases in which everyone is at least partially right. The historians who studied the issues of identity or xenophobia, favouring Benedict Anderson's culturalist view, as well as those who adhered to the traditionalist view, were not too wrong in ignoring Transylvania's eugenic ideology, because the Transylvanian scholars were also somewhat ignored by their xenophobe contemporaries. They were not quoted, they were not the subject of gossip and they generally returned the favour, by ignoring the authors who dealt with similar subjects from different perspectives. Also, their influence in shaping government politics should not be exaggerated. Iuliu Moldovan served as undersecretary of state in the *Ministry of Labour, Health and Social Protection* (1928-1930) in the successive National Peasant

Party governments led by Iuliu Maniu and G. G. Mironescu, respectively;⁵ but, according to his colleagues, his legislative contributions were too moderate in theory and too inadequate in practice: Moldovan's project "became law for the most part, with the exception of the chapter on eugenics."⁶ Iordache Făcăoaru also felt lonely in the insignificant public position he occupied in the brief legionary government of 1940. This fact is noted also by Marius Turda in one of the critiques addressed to Maria Bucur.⁷ Făcăoaru was dissatisfied because the philo-Nazi regime "pushed the biological policy issues to the background"⁸ and formulated a series or more or less veiled reproaches against the new "legionary" social policies. A particular case is perhaps that of Transylvanian Sabin Manuilă, a protégé of Iuliu Moldovan, who spent enough time in Bucharest and had enough contacts with those in power⁹ so that his wife could become a subject of gossip. Veturia Manuilă was sometimes regarded as one of the three Veturias who exercised their evil influence, together with Veturia Goga and Veturia Barbu. Even though they seem frivolous, the references to gossip, street names or other daily matters, old or new, are worth considering, as they shed light on the way in which one regarded (or still does) the attention to and the memory of people and events. These are part of the political memory of the past.

Structural conditions

THE ROMANIAN eugenicists were primarily active in Cluj (1927-1940) and Sibiu (1940-1945), under Iuliu Moldovan's guidance and the umbrella of *Astra Society*. The "biopolitical" and "medical" section of *Astra* was one of the privileged ones – given Iuliu Moldovan's position as *Astra* president, and the need to redefine the purposes of the association after the changes in the cultural and political environment following the union of Transylvania to Romania.¹⁰ Although it was rather evident, the author could not help making a cynical remark that, "although it was initiated by the medical section, it was not determined by sanitary considerations."¹¹

The activity of the eugenicists was carried out primarily within the Cluj Medical School, especially the Institute for Social Hygiene. This activity was made up of lectures, biometric research, theoretical studies, conferences and scientific or, sometimes, popular papers that were usually published monthly in the *Buletinul eugenic și biopolitic (Eugenic and Biopolitical Bulletin)*, in *Transylvania (Buletin de tehnică culturală) (Cultural Technology Bulletin)* or other similar publications. The *Astra Association* initially provided both the funding and the distribution network of the *Eugenic and Biopolitical Bulletin*,¹² distributed to its members. Iuliu Moldovan, due to his position and personal relations, also

provided some additional funds, research or study grants abroad, as well as academic titles and positions. The most extravagant example of academic title endorsed by Iuliu Moldovan was that of “Ph. D. in medicine and surgery”¹³ bestowed to Gheorghe Vornica for a thesis in which he dissected the poet Mihai Eminescu’s “biopolitical” thought. The more respectable researchers, such as Petre Râmneanțu or Iordache Făcăoaru, who made a name for themselves by measuring and comparing limbs, skulls and other items of strategic interest, were rewarded with didactic positions. Also, their compromising nature and good connections with various political decision-makers, from the National Peasant Party to the Royal Family, paved the way for many administrative careers. One should add to these funding that supplemented the ordinary money sources. Thus, with the exception of the difficult period between 1929 and 1934,¹⁴ the eugenics received various funds, sometimes from the government¹⁵ and the Royal Cultural Foundation,¹⁶ some other times from private sources – such as the *Rockefeller Foundation*.¹⁷

Their strategic positioning options reveal many of the determinations imposed by the structure of power relations imposed by the corresponding financial sources and institutional relations. Thus, their gratitude for the *Rockefeller Foundation* grants and financing led to a relative self-censorship, on account of the fact that the institution was somewhat reserved on the issues of classical racism and antisemitism. The same happened because of the need to maintain a good relationship with the National Peasant Party that had a more democratic orientation. These elements can explain the overall moderate tone, with few references to the “Jewish race” that “did not exist”,¹⁸ - or even the common sense recriminations against the local antisemites expressed by the *Astra* vicepresident, Gheorghe Preda: “Our national education cannot be achieved by a few national storms with broken windows, destroyed synagogues and shorn beards.”¹⁹ And, when self-censorship did not work, the cautious management took its distance from extravagant opinions:

*“Our bulletin, in its desire to provide its readers with several points of view on the main issue on its agenda, gave space in the current issue to the article of dr. I. Făcăoaru, although it disagrees with his conclusions concerning the ‘hierarchy of ethnicities.’”*²⁰

Also, the fact that Hitler’s ideology was seen as part and parcel of revisionism meant that the central administrative authorities were weary of accepting such a discourse, as least as long as they still had something to lose to revisionism. The revisionists’ enthusiasm and courage seemed to be correlated to a great extent with the official explorations of international politics. The oscillations

in the name of an enthusiasm with unknown cause are best seen in the case of people like Ovidiu Comșia, who could play to any tune. Comșia could speak like a layman or like a pretentious scientist. And, if necessary, he could act like a priest who, after discovering “a biological basis for immortality”,²¹ proceeds to “biologically accomplish the biblical paradise.”²² He was thus a moderate eugenicist until 1933, the year that shattered European politics, following in the footsteps of Iuliu Moldovan in the criticism of the “zootechnical aspect”²³ of various eugenic legislations and those of Mihai Zolog in the pessimism regarding the implementation of eugenics in a hostile traditional environment.²⁴ But, in 1934, he was unashamedly reproducing Gobineau’s ideas, trying to attribute an “Aryan (northern) component” to Romanians.²⁵ In his 1936 articles, Comșia reproduced undisturbed the criticism of racism according to P. P. Negulescu and Lucian Blaga. But this change did not remain unaltered, because, starting at the end of 1938, when Hitler was paralysing everyone’s imagination, “biological nuancing”²⁶ and “ethnic adjustment”²⁷ became fashionable imperatives. Comșia died in 1944, when Hitler’s influence in Romania was over,²⁸ without having to prove his vigour and biopolitical wisdom to the new leader. But others took the place of the biopolitical fiddler. Thus, the articles published after 1944 show an elegant language twist in agreement with the Soviet political and theoretical successes,²⁹ and racism was demoted, becoming a doctrine from which “genuine” eugenics needed to distance itself.³⁰ The more radical ones, or those who possessed a minimal sense of ridiculous, compensated by silence.

The space of possibles of the Romanian academic and political field becomes fully intelligible if we consider, besides the determinations concerning power relations and positions, the structural conditions existing inside the discourse – those that outlined its issues and limits of plausibility.

As far as the issues were concerned, there were possibilities for expansion. The impressive success of Darwinism, owing to the hundreds of thousands of books sold by Ernst Haeckel³¹ facilitated the gradual expansion of biology into the fields of sociology and politics, “darwinising”,³² to a certain extent, Western society after 1900. This was a significant opportunity for biologists, doctors and the so-called anthropologists dealing with biometrics who did not waste time all over the world. Darwin’s cousin, Francis Galton, and his followers, created journals, institutes, provided counselling to governments concerning immigration, fight against poverty, criminality, alcoholism, colonised academic institutions by proposing courses and securing academic chairs. Afterwards, private or governmental financing poured in. This “biological bubble” seemed never-ending, because the results of the research were not quantifiable, being projected in a long, even indeterminate period of time, although they served extremely palpable short-term interests – from birth rate control and support for

the “elites” to cutting down social security and medical expenses. This situation was welcome in Romania and especially in Transylvania. Doctors brought their small contribution to the politically active intellectual elite. Moreover, the specific local problems left considerable space to the new scientific and political directions. The future of those dealing with human reproduction was ensured both politically, due to the principle of minorities promoted after World War I, as well as academically, owing to works such as that of A. C. Popovici, who credited the “ethnographic maps” with playing a major role in the conception of sovereignty. The new buzzwords of the day were census, studies, diagnoses and prognoses. Nevertheless, the much-awaited institutionalisation of physical anthropology was possible only in 1943, after Cluj became part of Hungary.³³

As far as the limits of plausibility are concerned, we deal with restrictive determinations in which science and politics combined to the point of indistinction. First of all, the German-inspired racist bibliography raised serious acceptability issues, because the Romanian “race” was inferior even to the Hungarian one. Consequently, all Romanian intellectuals were bothered by the already traditional hierarchies. Those like Făcăoaru (in Cluj) or Sanielevici³⁴ (in Bucharest) criticised the hierarchical order, while those like Blaga³⁵ and Negulescu³⁶ criticised hierarchy in general. But, regardless of the type of criticism, the result was somehow similar. The imposture of German racists began to be seen as “pretentious in form, dangerous and naïve in essence”.³⁷ Moreover, the pitiful image of the Romanian peasant, degraded by poverty and alcoholism, did not exhibit the traits of a superior race at all. Ignoring or disregarding the peasants ran against the common sense created by the Romanian intellectuals who had understood better the political commandments of the time. And any science is based on the common sense of the reader – which either produces or supports it. In the present case, neither of these two possibilities could be adopted; so, in order to ensure that this endeavour was minimally successful, one needed a form of racism that referred more to the biological potential of a “profoundly altered [ethnic body] by millennial Asian or Eurasian combinations”³⁸ than to purity and superiority. Consequently, the Romanian peasant, miserable though he was, he still remained the “blood spring of the people”³⁹ even for the most radical Transylvanian eugenicists. Secondly, the Transylvanian eugenicists favoured the Anglo-Saxon bibliography, due to their relations with the financiers that were perfectly moulded on the need for legitimacy provided by the assimilation of the latest scientific trends (such as Mendel’s genetics). After World War I, the American or British scientists felt the need to distance themselves from the science that had supported Wilhelm II’s policy.⁴⁰ Suddenly, racism proper became superficial and vulgar. Unlike racism proper, eugenics laid a smaller emphasis on overcoming racial barriers and a greater one on the individual overcoming

them,⁴¹ namely on the “racial” or “biological” features of the individual. Races were “unequal” not because of the quality of their members, but because of the number of quality members they included.⁴² Racial concerns became more refined, focusing on the different reproduction rates among groups.⁴³ Entering the territory of statistics, eugenic racism represented a climax of racism in a double sense. On the one hand, through such an adaptation to the new demands of creditability, racism gained a much more solid scientific basis and a larger technical and bureaucratic applicability. On the other hand, we are dealing with a climax in the sense of having reached the upper limit. Through eugenics, the racial discourse was applied to the whole society, “the laws” of biology allowing the state mechanisms to selectively apply the *laws proper*. But racism lost its violence once the targeted groups were less clear and as long migrating from one category to another was possible.

Shaping the discourse

THE ROMANIAN eugenicist discourse was shaped by the determination outlined above, by the interests and preoccupations of the authors who produced and promoted them, by the problems that needed solving with adequate instruments, as well as by the rapid solutions that could be imagined and implemented. Thus, at least until World War II, both the extravagances of racism proper, as well as the more audacious eugenic elements were left in the background. Few authors focused on the “urgent” issue of the dysgenics or on immediate solutions such as their sterilisation or euthanasia, confining themselves to a few lamentations and hopes. But the directive of the *Astra* president, Iuliu Moldovan, was clear: the national issue cannot be solved with the “scalpel of the sterilising surgeon.”⁴⁴ The problems, as well as the solutions, were of a different nature.

The immediate problem, the palpable enemy, was the “revisionist ghost.”⁴⁵ And this ghost could only be defeated by study and propaganda. And they proceeded to do just that. They started the biometric measurements. *Făcăoaru* dealt with facial and cranial measurements, even proposing a methodology⁴⁶ that was successful in the sociological campaigns of the “Gusti school”. Thus, the Romanian sociologists listened mesmerised to folk songs, afterwards measuring the bards’ heads. Petre Râmneanțu also tried his hand in biometrics, but in a more systematic way, measuring everything that could be measured. In the end, he succeeded in obtaining the ideal Romanian prototype. Râmneanțu’s man was obtained by calculating the serial average of the men he measured, weighed and counted in Turda county. And this man was handsome, like “Apollo of

Belvedere”,⁴⁷ only with shorter limbs. This man closely resembled the Italian man, who featured prominently among the author’s preferences. The “Average Normal Romanian Man” was some sort of live guideline that was supposed to serve as “basic element in the struggle to create the new man.”⁴⁸ Nevertheless, these measurements seemed to open a way leading nowhere. They only served to occupy one’s free time, which was plentiful after 1940. Still everything was not lost in the 1930, when one could still work productively for the cause. Thus, because the “somatometric methods” did not yield very conclusive results, the comparative statistical analysis of the blood type distribution in various population groups remained the last resort for dispelling the mystery of origins. Făcăoaru and Râmneanțu remained champions in this field as well. And, in order to keep the mystery mysterious enough, it was not the presence of a certain blood type that gave a verdict regarding race, because that would have seemed simplistic in form – and too complicated when it came to the practice of designing a “kin” in which the parent and the child could belong to different races. That is why, the proof of Romanian continuity and prominence should have been sought in the recurrence statistic averages. The conclusion that could be drawn from here was one that undermined common sense, postulating that the language, culture and feeling of belonging of cultural groups (for instance, the fact that the Szeklars identified themselves and were identified as Hungarians) were of secondary importance.”The blood was the real, even the only spring that remained untouched by the vicissitude of times and could clarify the ethnic origin of the Szeklars.”⁴⁹ So, the Szeklars themselves were Romanians, they just did not know it. And the irredentists made use of their biopolitical ignorance, which argued that language was more important than blood type. Iuliu Moldovan deplored this fact when the research was in full swing: “they used Romanian blood to build a fortress to challenge our rights on this land.”⁵⁰

Propaganda was the only remedy in such cases – or, as they liked to call it, “careful propaganda”.⁵¹ In the short run, propaganda could support international negotiations with demographic arguments, spreading results favourable to the Romanian state. Thus, some of the most spectacular results of the field research were published in international languages, the German version being perhaps the most meaningfully charged. In the long run, propaganda could assist the building of a solid identity construction. Our eugenicists knew that “propaganda, in the true sense of the word, was an educational system”⁵² by which they could shape the mentality of a population. In this sense, Vaida-Voevod put forward as early as 1927 the idea of forming teams of “biopolitical propaganda”,⁵³ while Gheorghe Preda suggested that the most appropriate means of propaganda so were conferences and publications, the most efficient channels for spreading information being our doctors, priests, educators and other respectable members

of the village.⁵⁴

However, for the most part, propaganda did not have the immediate desired effect, which emphasised once again the fact that ideology in international relations can at best serve as an excuse for many other purposes, but rarely as an end in itself. We could argue that the role played by the endeavours of Romanian eugenicists was primarily that of calming oneself. The result of their efforts, after tough internal negotiations, was a kind of proposal concerning the imagining of a community that would serve as basis for national sovereignty. The respective community was supposed to be based on the concept of “Kin”. This concept, intensely promoted by Iuliu Moldovan, maintained the traditional ethnic view, based on the notion of “people”, in the background, but was firmly rooted in the concept of “family”. This latter notion, although apparently more restrictive, could have been subjected, if need be, to scrutiny. According to this view, the nation was a large family, properly speaking, because it seemed impossible from the point of view of genetic statistics for a member of the national community not to have at least an ancestor (no matter how distant) with any other member of the nation:

“No other language has such an appropriate name, such a precise concept to render blood relations, the process of becoming, the inclusion in a large family generating new life. [...] There is no Romanian family nowadays that does not have, at some point through the ages, common ancestors with any other Romanian family.”⁵⁵

The preoccupations regarding family, its biological and moral “health”, its roles in the local or larger national community, or in the imagined transnational community as “receptacle of ancestral plasma”,⁵⁶ as well as the roles of individuals within the family (especially the submissive, domestic and reproductive women’s role) were one of the eugenicists’ constant preoccupations. The references to these issues are so numerous that there is no point in quoting a selection.⁵⁷ Moreover, these preoccupations were somehow inevitable, given the *space of possibles* in the conservative thought of the time, which could not argue something regarding society at a local or general level without considering the family as the basic societal unit, without celebrating the village and despising the city, without paying homage to tradition and criticising the individualist, materialistic civilisation, regarded as levelling and harmful regardless of its forms of manifestation (capitalist or socialist). Nevertheless, compared to the usual approaches of this issue, which could lead to spontaneous metaphorical extrapolations of the type “tomorrow, the family is gone; the day after tomorrow, the nation dies out”,⁵⁸ the metaphor of the nation as a form of social organisation among cousins contained a new and daring element: “even from a

scientific point of view we can consider the nation as a large family⁵⁹ because, according to Iuliu Moldovan's teachings, a single couple could have "two billion descendants"⁶⁰ in two thousand years' time. This meant that anyone could be considered a member of a large family, if need be, "regardless of whether he still speaks our language or not, if he belongs to our faith or not, if he preserved or not the memory of the natural connection with the Romania kin."⁶¹ This view, besides solving the control issues present in similar conceptions regarding family with which it was interconnected, provided a flexible framework for sketching the nation – a framework that enable inclusion, if necessary, or exclusion, if possible.

Conclusions

THE ROMANIAN eugenics discourse requires a little deconstruction. It is almost enough to summarise it. The only difficulty is faithfully following the succession and the dynamic or arguments in parallel with the multiple determinations that influenced their negotiation. The more or less involuntary cynicism of the authors and promoters of this discourse provides enough transparency so that this could speak for itself. The aims of the biopolitical programme and the means for enabling it were programmatically assumed, and their practical feasibility was often subject for debate. Issues that are now approached by philosophers and sociologists in a refined manner were manifested openly in the discourse of earlier mediocre thinkers. The fact that biopolitics meant the control of the individual, his subordination and direction for his own good, or the fact that any identity construction implies the mobilisation of its members, and the sketching of a community means negotiation its space of manifestation, were implicitly and explicitly present in their manifestations. That is why researching this issue can still be very interesting for the contemporary reader who lives in a political context still occasionally haunted by the ghosts of the past.

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Notes

1. Vladimir Solonari, *Purifying the Nation: Population Exchange and Ethnic Cleansing in Nazi Allied Romania*, Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, 2009, p. 62.
2. Lucian T. Butaru, *Rasism românesc. Componenta rasiala a discursului antisemit din*

- România pâna la Al II-lea Razboi Mondial*, Editura Fundatiei pentru Studii Europene, Cluj-Napoca, 2010, p. 198.
3. Iuliu Moldovan, Petre Râmneanțu & Iordache Făcăoaru, “Înregistrarea etno-biologică a populației”, *Buletin eugenic și biopolitic*, vol. X, Cluj, 1939, p. 5.
 4. See Butaru, *op. cit.*, p. 309 and *passim*.
 5. Mircea Mușat & Ion Ardeleanu, *România după Marea Unire*, vol. II, Editura Științifică și Enciclopedică, București, 1986, pp. 1147-1148.
 6. Iordache Făcăoaru, “Privire critică asupra legii finlandeze de sterilizare în comparație cu legea germană”, *Buletin eugenic și biopolitic*, vol. VIII, Cluj, 1937, p. 341.
 7. Turda, “The Nation as Object...”, p. 439.
 8. Idem, “Norme eugenice în organizațiile legionare”, in *Cuvântul*, XVII no. 69, 21 decembrie, 1940, p. 1.
 9. Solonari, *op. cit.*, pp. 75-80.
 10. *Ibidem*, pp. 63-64.
 11. Iuliu Moldovan, “Cuvânt la deschiderea Adunării generale din Satu-Mare”, in *Transilvania (Buletin de tehnică culturală)*, Year 66, Septemvrie-Octomvrie 1935, no. 5, p. 279.
 12. Maria Bucur, *Eugenie și modernizare în România interbelică*, Editura Polirom, Iași, 2005, p. 66.
 13. *Buletin eugenic și biopolitic*, vol. XIII, Sibiu, 1942, p. 68.
 14. *** “Administrarea averii Asociațiunii”, in *Transilvania (Buletin de tehnică culturală)*, Year 67, Iulie-August 1936, no. 4, p. 266.
 15. See *Buletin eugenic și biopolitic*, vol. I, Cluj, 1927, p. 1. One should mention that this *Eugenic and Biopolitical Bulletin* was financially supported upon its publication in 1927 (see p. 1, “Acknowledgements”) by Goga’s collaborators who were members in the Goga-Averescu government: Vasile Goldiș and Ioan Lupaș.
 16. Moldovan, “La jubileul de 75 de ani al Astreii”, in *Transilvania (Buletin de tehnică culturală)*, Year 67, Iulie-August 1936, no. 4, pp. 190-191.
 17. See the presentation of some research financed by the Rockefeller Foundation in *Buletin eugenic și biopolitic*, vol. V, Cluj, 1934, p. 4. In the thanks addressed to the *Rockefeller Foundation*, the sums mentioned as sponsorships vary between 3. 000 and 21. 000 USD for the years between 1931 and 1935.
 18. Făcăoaru, “Criterii pentru diagnoza rasială”, *Buletin eugenic și biopolitic*, vol. VI, Cluj, 1935, p. 355.
 19. Gherge Preda, “O concepție biologică și psihologică asupra idealului nostru național”, *Buletin eugenic și biopolitic*, vol. IV, Cluj, 1930, p. 260.
 20. *Buletin eugenic și biopolitic*, vol. XIV, Sibiu, 1943, p. 352.
 21. Ovidiu Comșia, “Biologia familiei I”, *Buletin eugenic și biopolitic*, vol. V, Cluj, 1934, p. 198.
 22. *Ibidem*, p. 199.

23. Idem, "Prostituția. Definiția, originea și aspectele ei istorice", *Buletin eugenic și biopolitic*, vol. III, Cluj, 1929, p. 380.
24. Zolog & Comșia, "Consultațiunile prenuptiale și certificatele prenuptiale", *Buletin eugenic și biopolitic*, vol. V, Cluj, 1934, p. 129.
25. Comșia, "Biologia familiei II", *Buletin eugenic și biopolitic*, vol. V, Cluj, 1934, p. 303.
26. Idem, "Biologia în interpretarea istoriei", *Buletin eugenic și biopolitic*, vol. IX, Cluj, 1938, p. 256.
27. Idem, "Din evoluția doctrinei sanitare", *Buletin eugenic și biopolitic*, vol. XII, Sibiu, 1941, p. 10.
28. *Buletin eugenic și biopolitic*, vol. XV, Sibiu, 1944, p. 124.
29. Moldovan, "Cronică eugenică", *Buletin eugenic și biopolitic*, vol. XVI, Sibiu, 1945, p. 166.
30. Salvator P. Cupcea, "Biologia teoretică și aplicată în U. R. S. S. ", *Buletin eugenic și biopolitic*, vol. XV, Sibiu, 1944, p. 316.
31. Howard K. Kaye, *The Social Meaning of Modern Biology*, Yale University Press, 1986, p. 38.
32. André Pichot, *La société pure. De Darwin à Hitler*, Champs-Flammarion, Paris, 2000, pp. 75-88.
33. *Buletin eugenic și biopolitic*, vol. XIV, Sibiu, 1943, p. 350.
34. Henric Sanielevici, *În slujba Satanei?! . . .*, Editura „Adevărul” S. A. , București, f. a. [1935].
35. Lucian Blaga, "Despre rasă ca stil", *Gândirea*, Year XIV, No. 2, Februarie, 1935.
36. P. P. Negulescu, *Geneza formelor culturii*, [1934], Editura Eminescu, București, 1986.
37. Blaga, *op. cit.*, p. 73.
38. Făcăoaru, "Norme eugenice în organizațiile legionare", p. 1.
39. Făcăoaru, "Forma capului (indicele cefalic) la români, săcui și unguri", *Buletin eugenic și biopolitic*, vol. VI, Cluj, 1935, p. 66.
40. Frank H. Hankins, *The Racial Basis of Civilization. A Critique of the Nordic Doctrine*, New York & London, Alfred A Knopf, 1926, p. VIII.
41. *Ibidem*, p. 48.
42. *Ibidem*, p. IX.
43. *Ibidem*, p. 138.
44. Moldovan, "Cuvânt la deschiderea Adunării generale din Tg. -Mureșului", in *Transilvania (Buletin de tehnică culturală)*, Year 65, Septemvrie-Octomvrie 1934, no. 5, p. 314.
45. Alexandru Dima, "Înfăptuiri în despărțământul Sibiu al Astrei", in *Transilvania (Buletin de tehnică culturală)*, Year 65, Ianuarie-Februarie 1934, no. 1, p. 47.
46. Făcăoaru, *Din problematica și metodologia cercetării eugenice și genetice în cadrul monografiei sociologice*, Institutul Social Român, Piața Romană 6, București, 1937.

47. Râmneanțu, “Bărbatul Român Medionormal. Determinare metrică pe 1177 de bărbați din Plășile Iara și Baia-de-Arieș, județul Turda”, *Buletin eugenic și biopolitic*, vol. XIII, Sibiu, 1942, p. 35.
48. *Ibidem*, p. 35.
49. Râmneanțu & David, “Cercetări asupra originii etnice a populației din Sud-Estul Transilvaniei pe baza poziției serologice a sângelui”, *Buletin eugenic și biopolitic*, vol. VI, Cluj, 1935, p. 40.
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60. *Ibidem*, p. 22.
61. Moldovan, “Cuvânt la deschiderea Adunării generale din Tg.-Mureșului”, p. 311.

Abstract

Starting from the various determinations they were faced with, the scientists grouped around the Iuliu Moldovan, the president of “Astra” Society, imagined a type of model community to address the challenges of the interwar period, which at the same time needed to meet sufficient plausibility conditions. The aims of this undertaking that they termed biopolitics, are rather transparent: to mobilise the population so that they could be controlled – or, at least directed towards a predictable future. The cynical self-reflexivity of these authors reveals that biology was the best means to serve these ends, while propaganda was, among other things, the most appropriate way of turning them to account. Generally speaking, the somewhat paradoxical result was an inclusive racial conception that rejected the notion of race and the immediate political extravaganzas of Nazism, remaining completely faithful to racial discourse.

Keywords

Anthropology, Astra, demography, propaganda, Transylvania.

