# Interwar Romania:
# Social Representation

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**T**HE PRESENT research comes to continue our previous endeavor[1]. We wanted to add some nuances to the aspects referring to the social representation of Interwar Romania. The present study and its precedent share two fundamental elements: the theoretical background (*the theory of social representations*—S. Moscovici[2], with a special emphasis on *the distance from the object*—Dany, Abric[3]) and the methodology (regarding both data collection and data processing).

**Objective**. If the first study focused on the relationship between the specialists' views on the issue of Interwar Romania and its representation to an educated public (i.e., historians and economists), the present study focuses on: 1) defining the impact of *gender* and *age* on this representation in the case of historians, and 2) observing the role the participants' *specialization* has in the representation of Interwar Romania. Put briefly, we observe the extent to which the variables of *gender*, *age*, and *specialization*[4]—as forms of influence of the distance upon the object—shape the social representation of Interwar Romania. Can they be compared, or do they have a different impact (be it obvious or subtle)? Is this impact convergent in all its measured aspects?

**Method**. From the beginning, the instrument for collecting the data regarding the representation of Interwar Romania was characterized by complementarity. It is the methodological principle of the structural approach of representation as promoted by the social psychologists from Aix en Provence[5]. It is meant to ensure the simultaneity of the information about (rational and stereotype) cognition, attitudes, values, affective status, expectations etc. This is a *sui generis* combination which makes a social representation specific and complex, within a particular context, like a micro-theory about a social object. The questionnaire used for data collection, somewhat similar to the ones used by Galli and Fasanelli[6], includes four of the techniques used in the research on social representation: (a) an associationist challenge-assessment, (b) six cognitive evaluative scale questions, (c) a semantic differentiator, and (d) an opinion question in a dichotomic form—yes/no—but with an open argument for the respondent's choice. In the following, we will present them in more detail:

1) The associative technique, designed to collect information for the identification of the content of the social representation from a prototypical-categorial perspective , involves the following stages: 1 each subject had to enumerate the first five words that came to mind at the phrase 'Interwar Romania'; 2 the subject then had to specify the quality (positive / negative / neutral) of each of the words; 3 the subject would briefly motivate the presence of each word in the list. The advantages of this technique are speed and direct access to the participants' spontaneous production, unaltered by the logic and constraints of a discursive act. Also, a word association allows for an actualization of the implicit or latent elements which, as a rule, hide behind the discursive production. From the many possibilities of using the collected material we chose to identify the *core*. This represents the most stable structure of the representation, its center, the part which essentializes the investigated object in the participants' mind. In other words, of the hundreds of resulting words, the core will include not only the most frequent, but also the *most rapidly generated* (ranking less than 2.5)[8]. In order to process this material statistically, we used the Evoc2000 program which automatically applies both of the abovementioned criteria, which thus helps highlight the structure of the core[9]. We also wanted to see the dominant quality of the evoked words.

2) The *six scales*, each with 5 stages, were used in order to establish the opinions of our sample about some of the characteristics of Interwar Romania: *area*, *population*, *education*, *neighbors*, *economic development*[10], and *politics*. These were then selected, synthesized and discussed by the first author of this paper starting from the works of expert historians. Explicitly cognitive, this section of the instrument aimed to identify the differences between the participants in terms of knowledge and assessment of Interwar Romania. It identifies both facts (the number of neighbors, the ratio of educated population) and aspects of interpretation (economic development, the quality of public life, the size in terms of territory and population) compared on a case-by-case basis to the European context ("*In your view,...*", "*In comparison to the other European countries,* ..."). In regard to processing the data, we followed the frequency of options on each scale and, based on this, the ratio of the correct answer. In order to check the statistical meaning we used non-parametric tests of distribution.

3) *The semantic differentiator*, built after Osgood's algorithm[11], was used in order to collect primary data from 89 participants during the elaboration stage. They were asked to characterize *Interwar Romania* by means of maximum 5 adjectives. From the resulting list (256 adjectives—after the flectional and semantic reduction) we retained the most frequent 25 adjectives. Each adjective was paired with its antonym so that each pair should represent the poles of a scale with seven intervals/segments i.e., from -3 to 3+ via zero. We thus created a complex and progressive assessment tool with three fields— negative (between -3 and 0), neutral (0), and positive (between 0 and 3+)—for the 25 aspects as follows: *1. poor-rich; 2. totalitarian-democratic; 3. unknown-known; 4. small-big; 5. passive-active; 6. rural-urban; 7. weak-strong; 8. conflictual-pacifist; 9. ugly-beautiful; 10. nationalism-patriotism; 11. sad-happy; 12. insignificant-important; 13. divergent-consensual; 14. anachronic-progressive; 15. tense-relaxed; 16. unfair-fair; 17. unpredictable-predictable; 18. chaotic-organized; 19. backward-civilized; 20. dependent-independent; 21. traditional-modern; 22. uninteresting-interesting; 23. Balkan-Western/Occidental; 24.*

*uneducated-educated;* 25. *lazy- hard-working.* Thus, using an agreed code (*"For each of the following polar scales, please establish the place of Interwar Romania in Europe as you see fit. For each pair of adjectives choose only one of the seven values"*), each of the participants gave their opinion on a variety of aspects. From all the various possibilities of processing this material we selected three series of results: the profile of each category of participants (based on the mean of each scale), a comparison between their profiles by the intended variables (gender, age, academic specialization), and an analysis of the dispersion of the selected values for each scale. This last series was of particular interest as we wanted to see which of the 25 characteristics show similarities between participants and which represent differences. In other words, what do our participants have in common and what they do not? Statistically, we used the Skewness and Kurtosis indicators[12].

4) *The final question* (*"Did you like living/Would you have liked to live in Interwar Romania?"*[13]) has a closed part (*Yes/No*) and an open part (*Why?*), which requires an explicit attitude from the participants and gives the opportunity of a rich discursive and argumentative material with a structure of choice. This is useful for a content analysis which, in a future article, may reflect the manner in which our participants construct the social representation of *Interwar Romania*, be they professionals or amateurs. There is also room for a psychological analysis, by correlation: To what extent can the participants' answers to the first question (the associative one), and their response to the semantic differentiator predict their choice for the last question? Does their assessment of the Interwar period in the first part of the questionnaire influence the process of self-projection in those times?

**Participants, organization, and the structure of the research.** Between May 2014 and June 2015, the methodology above was used (both face-to-face and online) to collect the necessary data for two studies generically called I – HISTORIANS and II – STUDENTS. The former, conducted on 135 participants, focused on people with a sound knowledge of history including teachers (from schools and universities), researchers, museum and archive experts, and students (both undergraduates and graduates). The gender structure was as follows: 71 men (median age: 41.4) and 64 women (median age: 33.5). The age variable generated four samples: 42 participants aged over 20 (median age: 23.1); 49 participants over 30 (median age: 35.8); 21 participants over 40 (median age: 45.9); and 23 participants over 50 (median age: 60.3). The youngest was 21, and the oldest 89. The participants were from Bucharest, Cluj, Iași, and many other cities from Wallachia and Moldova, teachers from schools and high schools. The main limitations of the HISTORIANS sample are: the unequal size of the age groups as the first two are significantly larger; the lack of homogeneity inside the age group over 50 as the gap between the participants' ages may be as wide as thirty years, which does not happen in the younger cohorts; and the age gap of almost ten years between men and women. We think these limitations are important because, according to the theory about the distance towards the object (Abric, 2001), the age gap reflects differences in social experience and the historical time they correlate with, which affects representational studies.

The second study—II – STUDENTS—included 32 undergraduate students in history (median age: 21.9); 31 students in psychology (median age: 21.3); 32 in business (median age: 21.8); and 31 in sciences (chemistry, physics, and mathematics, median age: 23.7). All these 124 students were at the time taking their degree at Alexandru Ioan Cuza University in Iași and this sample was more homogeneous in terms of age structure, number of participants per group and professional orientation. Across both studies, we can identify 10 theoretical groups[14] as follows: I – HISTORIANS with two gender groups and four age groups, and II – STUDENTS with four professional groups. The two studies included a total number of 229 participants, with the history students[15] featuring in the first group too (the group of historians aged over 20). They represent a shared group and a supplementary basis for comparison[16] between the two perspectives (trained and non-trained) on the social representation of Interwar Romania. The second study aimed just that—to take into consideration the ordinary people who are not necessarily familiar with historical details[17], but keeping record of the other variables (age, academic education, type of school/university, time, and conditions of applying the instrument etc.). If we put side by side the educated public and the common people, we only find one common point of comparison (the age group), which obviously affects the extent to which we can generalize the results.

**Results. Discussions. Interpretation.** We will only select the most relevant data in order to answer the original question: Which of the factors of the distance towards the object (specialization, gender, age) has a more substantial, complex effect? In order to facilitate the comparison, we will present the data in a synchronic manner (by topic and the techniques used in data collection) rather than chronologically. For example, we will approach the topic of cores for both studies. This means we observe the impact of the three variables in the same area of representation. Then we'll move on to another topic—the tone of representation in both studies—and so on.

a) *The cores—a sensitive barometer of the perspective introduced by the variables*. From the structuralist point of view, the core of a representation is its essence, the unchanged way in which all participants, regardless of their social features, build their representations. In order to identify the ten cores of the technical subgroups in the two studies, we used two criteria applied for over 1100 words resulted from the associative question. First, the *frequency of occurrence*, which reflects a certain degree of popularity and consensus on a particular element of representation combined with the *position (recency) in the order of reference* used as a sign of the spontaneity of cognitive processing for that particular aspect. In other words, a double check—*widespread* and *rapidly evoked*—can indicate the essential features that belong to the core. We imposed the following conditions of selection: word frequency—at least 10, with the maximum occurrence rank of 2.5. Here are, in a nutshell, the 10 cores for each subgroup (Table 1).

A few remarks are necessary: • The cores do not have a content identity, not even in the historians' group, although there are some shared points. This shows the complexity and exceptionality of this representation. • If we use the interference criterion, the impact of the variables on the convergence of cores is as follows: a) **the profile** (33.33%)—2 intersections between cores out of 6 possible (history students vs. business

TABLE 1 – Cores

| Study I - HISTORIANS | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Gender | | Age | | | |
| men | women | over 20 | over 30 | over 40 | over 50 |
| - democracy 35/1.62* -monarchy 24/ 2.25 - Great Union 17/1.94 - multi-party system 15/2.00 | - monarchy 35/2.08 - democracy 19/1.57 | - monarchy 17/2.05 | - monarchy 24/2.20 - democracy 21/1.52 - Great Union 10/1.50 | - democracy 15/1.73 | - democracy 14/1.42 - multi-party system 10/2.10 |

| Study II – STUDENTS | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Faculty | | | |
| History | Psychology | Business | Sciences (chemistry, physics, mathematics) |
| - monarchy 18/2.05 | -war 13/2.20 | - monarchy 29/ 2.48 - war 18/1.83 | |

\* The first number represents the word frequency and the second the rank of its occurrence – the smaller the number, the more rapidly the word was evoked.

students through the word *monarchy*, psychology students vs. business students through the word *war*) b) **age** (66.66%)—4 interferences between cores out of 6 possible (historians aged over 20 vs. historians aged over 30 through the word *monarchy*, and the other three pairs: 30-40, 30-50, 40-50, through the word *democracy*), c) **gender** with 100% possibilities of nucleus interference, albeit incomplete in size (two shared words—*democracy*, *monarchy*). • Specialized knowledge in history has a significant effect on the convergence of this representation. Apart from the previous arguments (inter-group interferences by age and gender in the historians' lot), we remark the absence of the core in one of the three student subgroups which represent the non-trained public—the exact sciences (31 participants). Although their associative production is comparable to that of their peers (154 vs. 158 or 153), none of the words reached a minimum 10 frequency, and thus was not included in the core. This was not the case of the history-trained public, where there was in-group convergence even in the smaller subgroups (21 participants aged over 40, and 23 participants aged over 50). • A third aspect regards the variable of specialization, namely, the valence of the words in the cores. For the non-professional group, the connotation of the cores is also negative e.g., *war* (2 out of 3 occurrences) whereas for the historians, it is completely positive (6 out of 6). •• In the case of the professional participants (study I), the two criteria of analysis (gender and age) highlight the special status of the word *democracy*, which is frequent, but especially rapidly evoked and included in five out of six cores because of its very high occurrence rank (1.57—female historians, 1.62—male historians, 1.42—historians aged

over 50, 1.52—historians aged over 30, 1.73—historians aged over 40). But this element of the cores—*democracy*—does not have the same status everywhere. For example, although it is the most spontaneously evoked for both women and men (ranking 1.57 and 1.62, respectively), almost automatically associated with the inductor "Greater Romania", the word is only spread among men, as it was only mentioned by half of the respondents. In the female historians' lot, the word *monarchy* occurs in 55% of the group and is the most frequently evoked.[18] In the case of the non-professional groups (students in psychology, business and exact sciences), there is no connection between the words *democracy* and *Interwar Romania* in the cores. An interesting situation is the partial superposition of the history students group on that of historians aged over 20. It is the only of the six educated subgroups where the word *democracy* did not qualify for a place in the nucleus because of the threshold occurrence (9). But at the same time it is the only subgroup where this word was so frequently evoked it gets to rank 1.22![19] • In the case of the specialized audience, the combination of the two factors of the distance towards the object, gender and age, allowed us to observe the sources and the nature of the differences between them. Thus, for the male historians, the core has twice the number of elements including *the Great Union* and *multi-party system*, especially due to the groups aged over 40 and over 50.

In conclusion, the analysis of the cores shows that the difference between the specialized and non-specialized public is the most significant, so professional specialization is a defining variable. This comes from a few clear indicators: the existence of the cores—even in smaller groups—, their convergence, the identity of their positive tone and the presence of an obvious link i.e., the word *democracy*. Inside the historians' group, age is the most important factor, even over gender, for the numerous differences. Despite the limitations of our sample, we can still assess the complexity of this representation if only from the uniqueness of the identified cores. They do interfere to an extent, but they are not identical even for the educated audience.

b) *A dominant aspect of multiple expression—the positive tone of the social representation of Interwar Romania*. This title brings together the presentation and comparison of three categories of data: b1) the valence of the words generated by the associative technique, b2) the answer to the question about the desire to have lived in that period, and b3) the results of the semantic differentiator, a method we used to establish an attitude diagnosis. All these aspects share an evaluative aim in terms of emotions and attitudes towards the Interwar period.

b1) This series of data comes from the beginning of the questionnaire (through the associative technique). For each enumerated word, the participants also mentioned how they perceive it: positive, negative, or neutral. The synthesis for all the 10 subgroups used in the two studies allows for a few remarks (Table 2).

• Specialization is, by far, the factor that makes the difference. The non-trained participants—the three subgroups of students reading other subjects but history—have about half of the positive words whereas the historians, regardless of gender or age, account for about two thirds. • It is interesting to notice the dynamics of the rate of positive words within the historians' group. For each age group another two percent are added even if this difference is not statistically meaningful. This trend, also expressed

Table 2: the percentage and mean of the words with positive valence for each subgroup

| Study I - HISTORIANS | | | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Gender | | Age | | | |
| men | women | over 20 | over 30 | over 40 | over 50 |
| 73%; * 3.71** | 70%; 3.57 | 70%; 3.47 | 72%; 3.67 | 74%; 3.76 | 76%; 4.00 |

| Study II—STUDENTS | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Faculty | | | |
| History | Psychology | Business | Sciences (chemistry, physics, mathematics) |
| 71% 3.25 | 46% 2.29 | 51% 2.56 | 54% 2.70 |

\* The percentage highlights the words of positive perception among those evoked;
\*\* The numbers represent the mean occurrence of the words: we divided the number of positive words by the number of participants who generated and perceived them as positive.

in the growth of the mean of positive words for each subject, shows, among other things, that in the group aged over 50, out of the five words generated per subject, 4 were positive. • Even though not very significant, there is a 2% difference in favor of the male historians; however, gender did not make a difference as to the valence of the representation.

b2) The last question asked the participants to say whether they would have liked to live in Interwar Romania. The question was closed and deliberately dichotomic so as to avoid the situation of non-answer. Thus, 99.8% of the participants selected one of the options. The analysis of the YES answers in the two studies shows the following results (Table 3):

Table 3: The percentage of options in favor of living in Interwar Romania

| Study I - HISTORIANS | | | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Gender | | Age | | | |
| men | women | over 20 | over 30 | over 40 | over 50 |
| 67% | 70% | 64% | 62% | 90% | 75% |

| Study II—STUDENTS | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Faculty (24.6%)* | | | |
| History | Psychology | Business | Sciences (chemistry, physics, mathematics) |
| 63% | 20% | 16% | 38% |

\* 24.6% - the mean of percentages in the three groups of students reading subjects other than history, those who, in Study II, represent the non-trained public.

• Again, specialization separates the trained group from the non-trained one, perhaps more than other variables. More than half of the historians would have liked to live among the people of that time. There are some very interesting arguments to this opinion, but this will be the topic of another article. By contrast, the non-trained public in our

study has a low rate of YES—24.6%, with great differences induced by their specialization: 38% exact sciences vs. 16% business. There are two main reasons for the NO answers: the two World Wars and the absence of modern technology. • In the case of historians, the gender variable does not make a great difference between the two subgroups. But the numbers show the opposite trend to those regarding valence. Now women historians gain 3% on their male counterparts. • The greatest difference comes from the age variable. With 82% YES mean as compared to 63%, the subgroups aged over 40 and over 50, respectively, are very different from the younger generations of historians. A spectacular 90% of the participants over 40 would like to live in those days. This is an exciting challenge—for a future research endeavor—if and how this difference is illustrated. It is a matter of priorities, choices, or even a special set of arguments.

b3) The semantic differentiator has the merit of offering a variety of data—some of them dry and synthetic (frequency, mean, etc.), others plastic (adjective profiles)— aiming to acknowledge and explain them. In order to make the "portrait" of Interwar Romania, the participants were given the opportunity to assess its *beauty*, *wealth*, *honesty*, *importance*, *predictability*, *organization*, *pacifism*, etc. We used 25 polar scales with three degrees in the positive register, 1-2-3, and other three in the negative register, (-1)-(-2)-(-3), as well as the point of neutrality, 0. Out of the various data offered by the differentiator, we will select three aspects: (b3.1)—a general perspective on the quantitative differences between the 10 subgroups, (b3.2)—a focused analysis by scale and variable— gender, age, specialization, and (b3.3)—a discussion on the distribution of the assessments of the semantic differentiator for each category of participants.

b3.1) If we look at the mean of the semantic differentiator for each subgroup (Table 4), we notice the following:

TABLE 4: The mean of assessment of Interwar Romania through the 25 bipolar scales of the semantic differentiator

| Study I—HISTORIANS (0.84) | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Gender | | Age | | | |
| men | women | over 20 | over 30 | over 40 | over 50 |
| 0.89 | 0.78 | 0.56 | 0.75 | 1.20 | 1.18 |
| Study II—STUDENTS (0.28*) | | | | | |
| Faculty | | | | | |
| History | Psychology | Business | | Sciences (chemistry, physics, mathematics) | |
| 0.60 | 0.39 | 0.23 | | 0.23 | |

* 0.28 is the mean of the non-history student subgroups (the non-trained public in Study II).

• The mean of the semantic differentiator does not have negative values[20] in any of the analyses, which suggests once more the positive representation of this period. The values are weakly or moderately positive with three of the mean numbers under 0.5, five under 1 and only one above this—the maximum is 3. • The fact that historians see and this period in the history of Romania with different eyes is confirmed again.

The difference between the mean of the 25 scales, between the trained (historians) and non-trained (students in psychology, business and sciences) public is significant—almost 60 subunits. • In the case of historians, gender only makes an occasional difference in the general aspect of the assessment. • Just as in previous assessments with references to attitude, age is again an important factor. The groups over 40 and 50 are different from the rest as follows: over 40—over 20 (df=-0.64, p=0.001); over 40—over 30 (df=-0.45, p=0.042); over 50—over 20 (df=-0.61, p=0.002); over 50—over 30 (df=-0.43, p=0.0492). As a matter of fact, the two groups (over 40 and over 50) often go above the value of 1 in the differentiator's scale, and they do so almost in the same way.

b3.2) A more analytical perspective of the 25 scales allows for a more focused identification of the identity and size of the zones of convergence or divergence entailed by certain variables. Thus it is possible to outline the images of Interwar Romania. Will gender or age (in Study I) reveal more differences? What additional information will result from specialization in the case of the non-trained public (Study II)?

In the case of the trained public, gender does not alter the representation of Romania dramatically; there are only two aspects that differ statistically: male historians see Interwar Romania as more *interesting* (t(134)=2.90, p=0.004) and *merrier* (t(134)=2.28, p=0.024). For all the other 23 characteristics, the descriptions converge: 22 positive and only one negative (*rural*). Between male and female historians, three characteristics are mildly positive (*strong*—on the border, *relaxed*—weak, and only a little *honest*), and nine characteristics go above the value 1: *beautiful*, *pacifist*, *independent*, *wealthy*, *diligent*, *democratic*, *active*, *progressive*, *big*. Statistically speaking, if they were presented in a succession, in a more feminine or masculine tone, the "portraits" of Interwar Romania would be only subtly different. In other words, the "painter" would not matter very much.

Things would be much more different if we were to select the "painter" by age. In this case, we would see not only differences in accent, but sometimes in polarity as well, which changes the category and meaning of a characteristic. As compared to the two portraits above, we now have four perspectives to look at, which present serious differences in over half (13) of the differentiator's scales. As a general trend, the youngest group—aged over 20—has the lowest score (0.56). In two scales, these participants assess Interwar Romania as follows: significantly less *beautiful* and less *pacifist* as in the other three groups. In other ten situations, only the gap between younger and older participants (aged over 40 and 50) is wider; younger historians[21] tend to see the period as being less: *wealthy*, *civilized*, *democratic*, *independent*, *hard-working*, *organized*, *patriotic*, *predictable*, *progressive*, and *merry*. There is only one concession: they appreciate Interwar Romania as less *rural* than historians aged over 30 or 40. The group over 30 also shows some small differences from the groups over 40 and 50. These differences refer to a weaker belief in Interwar Romania as *wealthy*, *democratic*, and *predictable*. It is even less *pacifist* than historians over 40 see it, and more *rural* than those over 20 think. However, there is no major difference among the groups of historians over 40 and 50[22], despite some local opinions. If we look at the aspects the two groups assessed as maximum on a particular scale (both positive and negative), the group over 40 describes the interwar

period in terms of: extremely high *pacifism* (2.71), great *beauty* (2.67), significantly high *wealth* (2.41), quite high *independence* (2,38), greatly *interesting* and *predictable* (1,71), with great *size* (1.57), *activism* (1.43), *Occidentalism* (1.19), limited *education* (0.57) a slight *dishonesty* (-0.14) and quite high *ruralism*. But the group over 50 tends to focus on other aspects: highly *democratic* (2.00), great *patriotism* (1.83), obviously *progressive* (1.70), *merry* (1.61), *well-known* (1.35), *civilized* (1.52), *important* (1.22), slightly *tense* (-0.09). It is also worth mentioning the results about the weakest assessments on the three scales of the differentiator. Although the four age groups "declare" almost the same thing, some times they say it in a different way. For example, the interwar period is vaguely *tense*—to those over 50 (-0.09) and over 30 (-0.06)—imperceptibly *relaxed* (0.05)—to those over 40, and weakly *relaxed* (0.52)—to those over 20. It is slightly *dishonest* (-0.14) to those over 40 and barely *honest* to the other three age groups (0.13—over 50, 0.22—over 30, 0.50—over 20).

Study II, which included students from other faculties but history, presents a different picture of Interwar Romania through the eyes of the non-trained public.[23] A few remarks: • If, in the case of historians (compared by age group), the negative register of the scales (-3 to 0) appears eight times (four times for *rural*, twice for *tense*, and once for *dishonest* and *weak*, respectively), with non-historians it occurs three times more: three times for **traditional** and *rural*, twice each for **Balkan**, *tense* and **poor**, and once each for **dependent**, *dishonest*, **divided**, **sad**, *weak*, **small**, and **totalitarian**. The bolded categories occur exclusively with these respondents. • There are differences in assessing the size of the same characteristic even though the register remains positive on the whole. In the case of non-trained students, only two features go over the value of 1: *diligent* and *beautiful*. In the case of history students this happens for four additional scales: *independent*, *active*, *big*, and *democratic*. But if we extend the comparison to the entire lot of historians we get a clear image of the divergences. For the latter, 7 scales feature values of 2 and above[24]—*beautiful*, *pacifist*, *independent*, *wealthy*, *democratic*, and other 13 go above the value 1 at least once in one or another of the four age subgroups—*diligent*, *interesting*, *western*, *civilized*, *organized*, *predictable*, *progressive*, *important*, *merry*, *patriotic*, *active*, *big*, *consensual*. As a conclusion, the social representation of Interwar Romania has only three contact points between the trained and the non-trained groups: *diligent*, *beautiful*, and *rural*. But there are many more categorial differences: *traditional* vs. *modern*, *Balkan* vs. *western*, *poor* vs. *wealthy*, *dependent* vs. *independent*, *divided* vs. *consensual*, *sad* vs. *merry*, *small* vs. *big*, *totalitarian* vs. *democratic*. And this is just about the presence of antonyms in the two groups. Besides, the non-trained students—as representatives of the non-trained public—have a more homogenous representation of Interwar Romania. Out of the 75 possible comparisons between the three subgroups—students in Psychology, Business, and Sciences—only one (1.33%) is significant (see note xxiii). By contrast, among the trained historians, 36 out of the 100 comparisons between the age subgroups (36%) were significant. So, from this series of data saturated in terms of attitude, the two categories of public (trained and non-trained) share the positive valence of the representation, but with significantly different intensity (0.28 vs. 0.89), which may go as far as opposite expression and position.

b3.3) We also gathered data regarding the distribution of the respondents' results to the semantic differentiator. It is not enough to know the mean of a scale without information about its meaning. It may indicate a convergence around certain low numbers or a considerable dispersion where some high numbers combine with a wide area of different small numbers. Thus, this analysis helps us see the trend of the respondents' choices (left, normal/Gauss-centered, right)—the Skewness indicator—, and in what predominant pattern: scattered (platykurtic), normal (mezokurtic), or concentrated in one area (leptokurtic)—the Kurtosis indicator. Obviously, a certain concentration (leptokurtic) will indicate a consensus in assessment and a predictability of expression within a subgroup as compared to a widespread (platykurtic) distribution which would indicate that no particular part can represent the whole. So the data for the 250 Skewness indicators are as follows: • The distribution of the respondents' answers in all the three groupings (trained historians by age, trained historians by gender and non-trained public) have a predominant right side orientation albeit not to the same degree of inclination. • The greatest degree appears with the historians over 40 and over 50. These two subgroups also present a polarized distribution. For some scales there is a maximum inclination of the distribution to the right,[25] for others the distribution tilts to the left, with most respondents giving negative values for the respective scales.[26] This fact in itself is interesting. Although both subgroups have a maximum number of similarities for all scales (25 out of 25), their distribution is quite different. Moreover, the scales tilted to the right or left are not the same for the two subgroups, which means that apparently similar positions are based on different arguments. This is not the case of young historians. The subgroup of historians over 20 has a mean distribution, or close to mean, with the least tilt to the right. • There are a few differences in the gender subgroups. For women, the right-hand tilt is greater for the following features: *rural*, *important*, and *educated*. For men, this occurs for nine features: *democratic*, *active*, *organized*, *merry*, *pacifist*, *patriotic*, *hard-working*, *interesting*, and *predictable*. This difference between women and men has two consequences: within the same issue (the characteristics of Interwar Romania) the zones of compatibility in their assessment can be different between men and women, and male historians seem to have established more points of convergence. • As to the non-trained students, the values are inclined to the right, but not to the same extent as in the case of history students. The latter subgroup presents differences (albeit not very dramatic) especially in the case of the following features: *honest*, *important*, *organized*, and *predictable*. The greatest difference comes for the adjective *educated*: here, the history students present a higher convergence of distribution. But the trained and non-trained students have similar patterns of distribution when they assess the adjective *hard-working*. There are few differences induced by the specialization, which means the non-trained public is fairly homogeneous. The results for the 250 Kurtosis indicators confirm our previous observations. As for the pattern of distribution of the answers to the semantic differentiator, including some position patterns, we can make the following remarks: • In the case of the gender subgroups, the patterns of female historians are more scattered than those of their male counterparts. The most noticeable differences, translated for slightly or moderately platykurtic distributions, are for the following features: *wealthy*, *democratic*, *active*, *rural*, *pacifist*, *patriot-*

*ic*, *merry*, *predictable*, *interesting*, and *hard-working*. There are also three features where men's responses are more divergent: *beautiful*, *important*, and *educated*. For the rest, the male subgroup shows a predominantly leptokurtic pattern for the following adjectives: *patriotic*, *merry*, *democratic*, *active*, *rural*, and *interesting*. In only one instance: *important*, there is a highly concentrated configuration for both men and women. • Another interesting distribution is given by age. There are clear differences between younger historians (aged over 20 and over 30) and their more senior counterparts. It is like a river separating two forms of relief: on one bank waving plains, and on the other bank high hills and mountains. This means a clear dominance of the relatively platykurtic distributions in the former subgroups (48 values out of 50) while leptokurtic in the latter two (30 out of 50!). The historians over 50 have the most concentrated patterns with 20 (out of 25) distributions in "pinpoint". For those features, the values were very close together or even superposed, e.g. *wealthy*—mostly 3, *democratic*—almost unanimously 2, *active*—mostly 1 and 2, *pacifist*—mostly 3, *merry*—almost unanimously 2, *predictable*—mostly 2, *organized*—1 and 2, *civilized*—mostly 2, *hard-working*—mostly 2, *rural*—mostly 2. For seven adjective the distributions are platykurtic, with the following most scattered: *interesting*, *peaceful*, and *honest*, followed by: *consensual*, *powerful*, *progressive*, and *patriotic*. For historians over 40, there are zones of leptokurtic options: *democratic*—mostly 2, *well-known*—mostly 1 and 2, *pacifist*—almost unanimously 3, *beautiful*—almost unanimously 3, *patriotic*—mostly 2, *progressive*—mostly 2, *civilized*—mostly 2. Obviously, power lies in unity because there are situations where an isolated truth can lose the battle. We have to insist on the manner in which the internal agreement between the two age subgroups (over 40 and over 50) pinpoints their social representation of Interwar Romania. • If we look at distribution by specialization, it is significantly platykurtic in all the student subgroups, including history students. The distribution in the group of history students is mezokurtic only for the adjective *hard-working*. The students in sciences present the most noticeable internal divergence. Clearly, the non-trained public is the least consensual.

And so, the three types of expressing the respondents' position towards Interwar Romania—the valence of the words it is associated with, the desire to live in those times, and the assessment of its characteristics via the semantic differentiator—yields complementary but convergent results. The results generated by the semantic differentiator serve not only to record certain facts, but also to interpret them. Thus, we were able to establish that the difference in positivity of the trained public and the elevated preference for living in the Interwar period is more than just intensity of assessment, it is also a matter of consensus. This particular feature of the historians' group comes from the subgroups aged over 40 and 50, homogeneous in their high degree of preference for positivity and consensus. On the other side, the non-trained public represented by the students in other sciences, have their share of specificity in terms of the lowest degree of positivity and a high level of heterogeneity in their opinions. Specialization has its own effects in distinguishing between attitudes and sometimes the direction of the two representations (trained vs. non-trained public) and when this variable is kept constant, age makes a more considerable difference than gender.

c) *Can knowledge of the period predict attitudes?* The question is an adaptation and a projection of a long epistemic struggle, initially philosophical, then psychological, between knowledge and attitude. Social representations, as *sui generis* constructs of the collective mind which include both aspects, naturally encourage the question, 'which influences which?' If, in the case of specialization as variable (trained vs. non-trained public) the answer is clear even in the strictly limited context of our research, it is interesting to see what happens within the group of historians. Are there significant differences in knowledge of the period[27]? And do these differences confirm the differences in attitude as established previously by age and gender? We remind our readers that we used six scaled questions with five options each.[28] Table 5 presents the percentage of the correct answer[29] for the ten subgroups and their mean.

TABLE 5: The distribution of the correct answers.

| | Study I—HISTORIANS (62%)* | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Questions | Gender | | | Age | | |
| | men | women | over 20 | over 30 | over 40 | over 50 |
| area | 78.1% | 78.1% | 66.7% | 80.0% | 76.2% | 95.8% |
| population | 84.9% | 84.4% | 76.2% | 84.0% | 90.5% | 95.8% |
| neighbors | 76.6% | 57.8% | 45.2% | 72.0% | 81.0% | 87.5% |
| education | 37.0% | 32.8% | 16.7% | 42.0% | 47.6% | 41.7% |
| economy | 58.9% | 56.3% | 52.4% | 56.0% | 47.6% | 79.2% |
| politics | 49.3% | 42.2% | 45.2% | 52.0% | 57.0% | 37.5% |
| mean | 64% | 59% | 50% | 64% | 63% | 73% |

| | Study II—STUDENTS | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Faculty (44.0)** | | | |
| Questions | History | Psychology | Business | Sciences (chemistry, physics, mathematics) |
| area | 73.3% | 67.7% | 46.9% | 58.1% |
| population | 75.0% | 71.0% | 56.3% | 48.4% |
| neighbors | 43.3% | 6.5% | 18.8% | 12.9% |
| education | 18.8% | 12.9% | 21.9% | 58.1% |
| economy | 56.3% | 45.2% | 28.1% | 38.7% |
| politics | 43.3% | 58.1% | 53.1% | 54.8% |
| mean | 51% | 43% | 37% | 45% |

* 62% is the mean of the trained public (historians);
** 44.0% is the mean of the non-trained public (other specializations)

We can draw a few conclusions here: • There is a considerable lack of homogeneity of performance, partially due to the topic of the questions, and partially their nature. For example, the question about the *neighbors* by far seems to indicate lack of knowledge, which explains less than 50% correct answers even among the historians. On the other hand, some questions implied a comparison with other European countries. In questions about *area* and *population*, intuition about other countries was helpful, but in other ques-

tions this cognitive resource was not enough (e.g. *economy*). And there is a third aspect regarding the sources of knowledge activated by the respondents. The age groups reflected two types of knowledge: the so-called "cold", indirect, knowledge acquired through studying and research and "warm", direct knowledge that comes from living and then remembering the period, subsequently combined with "cold" knowledge. • Gender does not greatly distinguish between the mean results to this quiz as the overall difference between men and women is under 6%. But there are two exceptions. In the questions about *neighbors* and *politics* the differences favor male historians. • Age creates a deeper gap. If we look at the mean for the six questions, except for the subgroups aged over 30 and over 40 (virtually with the same performance), the subgroup over 50 sets itself apart 20% above those over 20 and almost 10% above the rest. The subgroups over 30 and over 40 perform more than 14% and 13%, respectively, better than the younger lot. In their case there are significant differences to all the others on the questions about *education* and *neighbors*. • If we put side by side the non-trained student subgroups we notice that all the differences of performance mean fall under 8%, which means specialization does not matter significantly within the non-trained public. But if we compare these students to history students (as part of the trained public) we notice a significant gap. It is also significant to see the differences between these two groups of students in the questions about *area* and *neighbors*. • We also noticed the manner in which attitudes have a role in the way senior historians evaluate Interwar *politics*. There is an approximate 20% difference between their choices for the same answer—conflicts—but the source of this difference is interesting. The distribution of answers shows that the remaining percentage goes in opposite directions: *major conflict* (45.9%—historians over 40) and *sporadic conflict* (62.5%!—historians over 50). In other words, the former see the period as turbulent whereas the latter infuse it with moderation. The same attitude trend is visible in *economy*. The 36.3% difference between the two age subgroups in their selection of *moderate development* is found, in the case of the subgroup over 40, as *weak development*. When it comes to the gender variable in assessing interwar *politics*, the two subgroups yield relevant results. Despite the low percentage (6.8% for men and 6.3% for women), the men's choice of extreme scale value indicates *conflict* whereas women's choice suggests *harmony*. • We also want to mention the only question, i.e. *education*, where both the trained and the non-trained categories performed the lowest (albeit within proportion)—under 50% historians, and under 20% the rest. The percentage (60% in reality) is estimated lower i.e. 40% in a process of "darkening the reality", which confirms the similar placement of the two categories of respondents on the *uneducated/educated* scale of the semantic differentiator.

This last analysis shows a similar pattern of the variables as sources of differentiation: specialization does most of the work in separating the trained public from the non-trained one. Secondly, age and gender divide the lot of historians, and lastly, specialization separates the students. This third series of data shows that, in the context of a lack of in-group homogeneity, the quantitative differences are relatively small as compared to the cores or with some affective and attitude aspects. Just to give one example, the distance between the means of the trained and the non-trained public is 20.7% while the difference on their desire to live in the period is more than double (48.1%).

Besides, the semantic differentiator shows that positivity in assessing the period is over three times higher in the trained public. Clearly, the difference in attitude is not just about the knowledge of the period. The clear proof is in the subgroups of historians over 40 and over 50 who, although they display the same positivity towards Interwar Romania, do see its *economy* and *politics* with quite different eyes. As a response to our question about the predictability of attitude to, based on knowledge of the period, these observations suggest a relationship of correlation between the two rather than cause-effect.

# Final considerations

THE PRESENT article continues the research on the social representation of Interwar Romania. The first part (2015—see note i) focused on the similarities and differences in the manner the period is presented by those who do research on it and those who do not. This first research included 202 respondents—people with sound knowledge of history and economics and working in related fields. The main conclusion was that, for this type of public, the representation of Interwar Romania revolves around the concepts of *democracy*, *monarchy*, the *Great Union*, *multi-party system*, *war*, and *economic crisis*. It is a positive representation justified by the 70.7% positive words generated, in the associative quiz, by using the positive half of the 25 scales of the semantic differentiator (mean 0.67) except for the adjective *rural*, and by the desire of more than half of the participants (58.8%) to live in those times.

By contrast, the present research restricts the trained public to historians for two reasons. On the one hand, it aims to see if the gender differences (identified in the previous study) are exclusively generated by this variable or they are also side-effects of the group structure. Secondly, it aims to find what and how great are the effects of the age variable in a highly specialized public. Additionally, we wanted to see this representation for a non-trained public, too, so we used the same methods to collect new data from students in other fields than history—Psychology, Business, and Sciences. Obviously, the comparison between the trained and non-trained public is bound to be limited and somewhat indirect as the students in history feature in two comparisons: against trained historians on the one hand, and their non-trained peers on the other. The two studies included in the present research (I—HISTORIANS and II—STUDENTS) gathered 229 participants divided into 10 technical subgroups: historians-men, historians-women, historians aged over 20, over 30, over 40, over 50, students in history, psychology, business, and students in exact sciences.

The main conclusions are: • The representation of Interwar Romania is positive for both categories of public, albeit with important differences of degree. For historians, the desire to live in the period is almost three times more intense (72.6% vs. 24.5%); the same can be said about the orientation towards the positive end of the semantic differentiator (0.84 vs. 0.28) and the positive valence of the generated words (73% vs. 50.3).

• In the case of the trained public, the power of the representation derives not only from the intensity of its positive orientation, but also from consensus, which is very strong in the groups aged over 40 and over 50, moderate in the younger lots, and very weak in the non-trained public. Specialization in history, even if not in the interwar period itself, was also a decisive factor. • Among the trained public, gender does not generate significant differences for the positive valences of the generated vocabulary (men—73%, women—70%), the mean of the semantic differentiator (men—0.89, women—0.78), or for the choice of living in the period (men—67%, women—70%). This shows that the important gender differences for all three aspects pertaining to the tone of the representation as identified in the 2015 research were due mainly to the gender structure (the group of economists). • Still, the respondents' gender continues to distinguish between cores, as the two subgroups of historians (men and women) had only 50% interference. For men, the core is made of: *democracy*, *monarchy*, *the Great Union*, and *multi-party system*,[30] whereas for women it consists of *monarchy* and *democracy*. To this are added the relevant differences in one third of the questions about the coordinates of Interwar Romania. • The correlation between the concept of *democracy* and *Interwar Romania* appears only in the trained historians' group and it is characterized by a frequent occurrence and their great spontaneity in evoking it. In all the historian subgroups, the word is virtually the first to pop up, which denotes a quasi-automatic—thus very powerful—association. • Inside the group of historians, age created differences in more than one way: a) in terms of knowledge of the period. For example, the subgroup aged over 50 includes people who were born then and educated in families of that time, and these people gave the most correct answers about the circumstances of Interwar Romania.[31] b) Age also worked in terms of identifying the shared and the individual contributions of each age subgroup to defining the core of the trained public. Thus, all contributed the idea of *democracy*,[32] those over 20 and over 30 came with *monarchy*, those over 30 offered *the Great Union*, and those over 50 brought *multi-party system*. c) Age made a clear distinction in consensus in the scales of the semantic differentiator between those over 20 and over 30, and the rest. d) It also indicated differences in the intensity of the desire to live in the interwar period. 90% of those over 40 would have liked to live then. Thus, even if age did not mark the fifth parameter—valence of the words associated with the period—it is safe to assume that, at least in the case of the trained public, this variable has a serious impact on the representation—in other words, "tell me your age so I can tell you how you see Interwar Romania," which is probably less the case of gender. • If, with trained historians, gender and age revealed *individualizations* of the social representation, the third variable—specialization—also operated *discriminations*. The most important is the very low occurrence of the choice to live in the period (24.5%), followed by the nature of the characterization of Interwar Romania via the semantic differentiator. The trained public was shown to significantly use only one scale in the negative tone (*rural*) whereas the non-trained public uses several: *poor*, *small*, *passive*, *dependent*, *totalitarian*.

We might wonder if all this effort was worthwhile. If we refer to the ability to predict differences between the trained and non-trained public, the obvious answer is no but when we talk about mapping the differences, then the effort was well worth it. It also shed more light on the impact of age and gender within a category of public which is

generally perceived as homogeneous. And all the more if we include the attitude component, as is the case with the interwar period in particular. From the historians' point of view, the social representation of Interwar Romania is only slightly different for men and women, but shaped differently to each age subgroup.

❏

## Notes

1. Gheorghe Iacob, Emilia Pascal, Luminiţa Mihaela Iacob, *Interwar Romania: Historical Analysis and Social Representation*, Transylvanian Review, 25, Supplement 1/2016, 277–301.
2. S. Moscovici, *La psychanalyse, son image et son publique*. Paris, P.U.F., 1961.
3. L. Dany, J. C. Abric, *Distance à l'objet et représentations du cannabis*, Revue internationale de psychologie sociale, 20, 3/2007, 77-104.
4. The variables are as follows: *gender*—men, women; *age*—over 20, over 30, over 40, over 50; *specialization*—historians (trained public), non-historians (non-trained public as in the case of the students in psychology, business and sciences: chemistry, physics, mathematics). Thus, the field of study, as a particular aspect of the third variable, will only be activated in certain situations.
5. J.C. Abric, *L'approche structurale des représentations sociales: développements récents*, Psychologie et Société, 4/2001, 81-103.
6. I. Galli, R. Fasanelli, *Réconversion industrielle et représentations sociales: le cas de l'aire occidentale de Naples*, Psychologie et Societé 3/2001, 93-118; I. Galli, I. Markova, B. Bouriche, R. Fasanelli, M. Geka, L. Iacob, Gh. Iacob, *La représentation sociale de la crise économique dans quatre pays européens*, Cahiers Internationaux de Psychologie Sociale, 87, 3/2010, DOI: 10.3917/cips.087.0585; I. Galli, A. Neculau, R. Fasanelli, L. M. Iacob, M. A. Ianoş, *La représentation sociale du pouvoir dans la balance des dimensions identitaires genre et nationalité*, Psychology magazine, 57, 2/2011, 146-161.
7. P. Vergès, *L 'évocation de l 'argent: une méthode pour la définition du noyau central d 'une représentation*, Bulletin de psychologie, 45/1992, 203-209.
8. If frequent words signal co-sharing or familiarity with a particular aspect, the spontaneity of their occurrence, given by the order in which they are evoked, is a way to establish the stereotypical dimension of that characteristic.
9. In fact, the respective software sorts the entire vocabulary obtained from the participants into four categories: 1. high frequency – high rank (of importance/order), 2. high frequency—low rank, 3. low frequency—high rank, 4. low frequency—low rank. The first category represents the core, the one primarily used in this research. The last comprises peripheral elements, the most fluctuating and non-representative for the investigated social object. Categories 2 and 3 potentially feed the core, either on the line of sharing, or on the line of the stereotypes (if there is a high rank of the spontaneity/order). These are words which, systematically, come to mind first in most participants.
10. This portrait, with the debate of the period's experts, is presented in our first article about the social representation of Interwar Romania.
11. C. E. Osgood, *Semantic Differential Technique in the Comparative Study of Culture*, American Anthropologist, 66/1964, 171-201.
12. The Skewness indicator shows the inclination (to the right or to the left) of the distribution. The Kurtosis value indicates if the scores are widespread or rather grouped around a certain value. A value of the Kurtosis indicator which is lower than 3 indicates that the partici-

pants' answers are widespread, the distribution of the values is rather flat (platykurtic), and that their opinions are rather divergent. On the other hand, a value that is higher than 3 indicates that the participants' answers are grouped around a certain value, the distributions of the values had a pointy shape (leptokurtic), and their opinions are rather convergent. The Skewness indicator offers clues about the asymmetry of the distributions. A value of the indicator higher than 0 means that most values are concentrated on the left side of the mean which mirrors the participants' tendency to choose preponderantly answers lower than the mean. On the other hand, a value that is higher than 0 indicates that most values are concentrated on the right side of the mean, which indicates the participants' tendency to choose preponderantly answers higher than the mean.

13. The verbal variants in the question envisaged the two categories of participants: those born in Interwar Romania and those born after the Second World War.

14. These are groups of statistical analysis: in the case of historians (Study I), the same participants are regarded dichotomically by gender, and quadruply by age.

15. The group of young historians (aged 20 to 30) included 10 teachers of history and the 32 students in history; that is why in the total number they were counted once. But in the statistical analyses they appeared as two distinct subgroups whose results were similar but not identical: historians over 20 (42 participants) and history students (32 participants).

16. This additional control comparison was based on the following argument: if the youngest historians have significant differences to the other age subgroups and the non-trained students have significant differences to the history students, then the aspects where the trained public differs from the non-trained one should be all the more obvious.

17. When the comparisons between the two studies take into account the participants with knowledge of history (trained or in training), no matter how they are analyzed—i.e., gender or age—, compared against students of other specializations than history, we will be looking at the specialization variable: trained vs. non-trained public.

18. The observations regarding the differences introduced by the gender variable in the current Study I – HISTORIANS rule out the competing hypothesis (i.e., structural differences in gender within the group of historians and economists) proposed in our previous research (see note i.).

19. It is natural to compensate frequency with spontaneity as we want to probe that including *democracy* in the core of Interwar Romania makes the difference between a specialized public and a non-trained one.

20. It is interesting to see what results we could have using this technique for another period in the history of Romania—the beginning of the $21^{st}$ century.

21. The title should not be misleading as most participants of this age group are historians in training. But the group also includes young researchers or teachers, which is why we cannot reduce it to history students only.

22. This fact is also indicated by the virtually negligible difference between the means of the two subgroups: 1.20 vs. 1.18.

23. That is because, throughout all the comparisons between the subgroups of students by specialization, out of 75, there is only one significant difference (*dishonest* in business students vs. *honest* in exact sciences—df=-0.89, p=0.041), so we can consider these groups globally as representing the non-trained public.

24. The highest is 2.71—*pacifist*, with historians aged over 40, followed by 2.67—*beautiful*, within the same group.

25. Those aged over 40 for the features: *modern, democratic, well-known, beautiful*, and *patriotic*; those aged over 50 for: *active, merry, organized*, and *predictable*.

26. In the case of the participants aged over 40 it's about the features *strong* and *consensual*, and in those aged over 50 it's about *big*, *rural* and *important*.
27. On the one hand, the question is justified because we could not formally control the degree of specialization/knowledge of the interwar period for all 135 historians. As it happens everywhere, everyone has a more general area of research and a narrower one. The latter might very well come via formal education (BA/MA/PhD/project research, teaching topic, books and other works) or informally: one's passion for the period, literature, the media etc. On the other hand, it is common knowledge that the people who were involved in research on Interwar Romania on a regular basis are bound to have convergent interpretations on some aspects and divergent opinions on others. The way this is reflected in our lot of historians was a diagnostic challenge we tackled in our previous research, *Interwar Romania: Historical Analysis and Social Representation* (see note i.).
28. This could be a limitation because the odd scales favor the safe answer zone in the middle of the scale. Since in four out of six questions this is also the zone of the right answer, there is a certain uncertainty over the nature of the choice. But coincidence is still rare as the participants' performance varies.
29. We elicited factual answers and interpretation, which is why we established the standard choice based on the unanimous choices made by a group of five experts on the topic of Interwar Romania.
30. When we compared these data with the similar lot of 2015 we were able to see that the two additional elements of the core—*war* and *economic crisis*—came mainly from the economists.
31. There may be another explanation for this "warm knowledge" hypothesis. This age subgroup may well contain more participants who are professionally involved in studying Interwar Romania, so "cold knowledge" should make the difference.
32. The subgroup aged over 20 was taken into consideration with the students who closely miss (by 1 point in frequency) the qualification of *democracy* for the core. But in this subgroup *democracy* has the highest speed of association with Interwar Romania (1.2).

## Abstract
### Interwar Romania: Social Representation

Interwar Romania is not just a research object, but also a social issue. It is a topic of interest or opinion for the public, too, as it tackles it in terms of representation. Therefore, new questions have fueled the analysis initiated in 2015. But if we think of a more restricted concept of educated public to historians only—as compared to the first approach to the topic (historians and economists), can we still count on the *gender* variable? And how does the participants' *age* affect such an analysis, as an expression of the distance to the represented subject? To what extent do the differences vary between the educated public and another group with other interests? Two studies with common methodology but different participants (I – 135 HISTORIANS, and II – 129 STUDENTS) have allowed us to map out this representation and observe some interesting aspects that could require the perspective of social psychology on the perception of this period.