

The Party School of Social Sciences “A. A. Jdanov”, 1948-1958

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Keywords: *Communism; Romanian Communist Party; the Party School of Social Sciences “A. A. Jdanov”; Political Elites; Marxism-Leninism*

The research studies that have targeted the postwar period in Romania, when the countries of Central and Eastern Europe entered successively under the Marxism-Leninism ideology, have avoided the area of communist schools party. So, we can not talk now about complete monographs of the institutes where they were trained communist cadres in the period between 1945 and 1989.

The higher schools of communist parties, political and intellectual institutions also, have been an international prototype of training the communist elite. These schools were reserved for party cadres and intellectuals, acquiring up to a point the tradition of the popular universities founded in the nineteenth century. Regarding the criteria for selection of future students, the social background and seniority in the party were decisive. Also, party political loyalty is an indicator of students progress in the institute, while intellectual criteria (academic performance) were secondary factors¹.

In the current stage of research, we conclude that historical studies have revealed very little of the way the school system and institutional transformation of the communist party in Romania worked.

Therefore, the proposed subject of this scientific study, the Party School of Social Sciences “A. A. Jdanov”, has an important and a genuine novelty level, treating thus legally monograph, a part of the true mechanism of sovietization, set in motion in Romania and accelerated after the election results of November 19, 1946, by the Romanian communists.

This paper reconstruct, based on archival research of P.C.R. party documents – the activity of the Party School of Social Sciences “A. A. Jdanov” and the transformations of which the institution suffered during its existence, as a main component of the Romanian school-party system. We also received valuable support, during the drafting work, provided by Mr. Ambassador Constantin Vlad, a graduate of the School “Jdanov”.

Thus, our research recompose elements that belonged to an ideological training institute of a new generation of teachers, who lacked experience during the illegality period of Romanian Communist Party, but from who were required as compensation, in addition to the party-loyalty and unconditional commitment to

¹ Mihai Dinu Gheorghiu & Mihăiță Lupu, *Mobilitatea elitelor în România secolului XX*, Pitești, 2008, p. 217.

Soviet Union, some training and cultural skills. Under these circumstances of social metamorphosis, it was very important to create a recruitment and connection machine to the communist ideology of a contingent of people who will gain the job to keep the party lively and the auspices of the ideological struggle in operation in future². In other words, the emergence of party schools was undoubtedly necessary.

Therefore, tracking the historical moment when the Party School of Social Sciences "A. A. Jdanov" functioned, we find our attention directed towards the first period under the leadership of Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej, the period known from Vladimir Tismaneanu as the period of "stalinism unleashed". This period marks its beginning, when PCR came in power; following the example of Russian bolsheviks, the Romanian communists were preoccupied with work that was most important and urgent: replacement of existing society with a new society.

And to manage the process of sovietization was necessary undoubtedly a well-defined organizational and hierarchy structure, required to make feasible the objective of process³.

Thus, this project aims primarily to analyze the information found in the files of Propaganda and Agitation from the Fund CC of P.C.R. (Section who coordinated school "Jdanov") to reconstruct the institutional history of The Party School of Social Sciences "A. A. Jdanov", and to establish the criteria of recruitment, selection and promotion/exclusion, owned by Propaganda and Agitation department.

Road to sovietization

After taking over political power by the communists, Romania entered the process of sovietization, similar situation with to the other countries from Central and Eastern Europe ascribed in the Soviet sphere of influence. Basically, after three years when was allowed the coexistence with the democratic structures, in the second half of 1947 was triggered the liquidation process of the old regime. In other words, "Soviet leaders and their local subordinates spared no effort to establish one-party systems, based on ideological dogmas arising from the interpretation that Stalin gave to bolshevism."⁴

The subordination of Romania to the Soviet Union manifested not only by agreements or treaties between the two countries, but also by emergence of institutional forms that imitate the Soviet ones: economic companies or associations of friendship as ARLUS.

Another Romanian communists' motivation was the desire to follow with zeal the bolshevik tradition, to successfully eliminate the differences between socialist sector and non-socialist. Being very fierce in the pursuit of this goal, the impact that collectivization had on the Romanian peasantry was very stout, with unfortunate consequences for farmers in Romania⁵.

² Vladimir Tismăneanu, *Stalinism pentru eternitate: O istorie politică a comunismului românesc*, Jassy, 2005, p. 148.

³ Adrian Cioroianu, *Pe umerii lui Marx*, Bucharest, 2007 [second ed.], p. 44-46.

⁴ Vl. Tismăneanu, *op. cit.*, p.145.

⁵ Stelian Tănase, *Elitele și societatea. Guvernarea Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej*, Bucharest, 1998, p. 140-143.

Otherwise, another issue of institutionalizing arrangements proposed by "popular democracy" in Central and Eastern Europe after World War Two was to eliminate the former political, economic and intellectual elites from the public life of the new regimes⁶.

To replace the old society with a new one, the communists believed that it takes a well-defined organizational and hierarchy structure as well. So, the party Central Committee departments responsible for selection and allocation of staff have taken an important part of the process, to train future party people and their launching activity. Therefore, the establishment of party schools became necessary to ensure the continuity of Soviet cultural import, Romania faced since the second half of 1947.

So, party schools appear shortly before Petru Groza became the head of the first communist government guidance from Romania. At the request of Ana Pauker, on March 21, 1945 is placed, symbolically, the cornerstone of Workers University of Romanian Communist Party (PCR).

Finally, for the process of building a new society to the Soviet model, to be quick and without slippage, the communist authorities in Bucharest needed a better prepared staff to help in the "ideological front struggle". Therefore, more attention will be ensure by the party, in many ways and at different levels, for the formation of new activists, dedicated to the well-proven cases of Party work.

The Party School of Social Sciences "A. A. Jdanov"

In Romania, from the school year of 1949/1950, party-education was reorganized and divided on three levels (after previously, when it was divided into two):

a) basic party-education, b) secondary party-education and c) higher party-education, represented by: five evening universities and seven of Marxism-Leninism evening-schools (courses are going after working hours, participants are not taken out of production), University "Ștefan Gheorghiu" and The Party School of Social Sciences "A. A. Jdanov"⁷.

The University of the Party "Ștefan Gheorghiu" was established in March 10, 1945, as the Workers University of PCR, and in February 1946 will be converted into a high school party, receiving the name of a former socialist militant from Romania at the beginning of the 20th century, Ștefan Gheorghiu. The institution's main task was the preparation of party personnel responsible for the mass organizations and state apparatus.

In October 1948, the Central School of lecturers "A. A. Jdanov" was established. Situated in a central area of Bucharest⁸, School "Jdanov" celebrated the memory of the former Soviet ideologue Andrei Aleksandrovici Jdanov, died on

⁶ M. D. Gheorghiu & M. Lupu, *op. cit.*, p. 234-235.

⁷ The report of the results in 1949/1950 school year in the party education is published in Camelia Ivan Duică, *Rezultatele anului școlar 1949/1950 în învățământul de partid*, in *Arhivele Securității*, 4, Bucharest, p. 683-688.

⁸ School "Jdanov" worked in a new building in the University area, where a nuns' high school functioned before the World War II.

August 31, 1948. This institution offered courses of a duration of six months to prepare school leaders and teachers of the schools party, editors of the party press and the ideological magazines, teachers and lecturers of social science departments of higher schools or scientific institutions lecturers⁹.

After the board decided at the end of the first cycle, that the six-month courses is too small, in July 1949, the Politburo of the Party Central Committee decided to transform the Central School of lecturers "A. A. Jdanov" in the Party School of Social Sciences "A. A. Jdanov" lasting two years of courses. The institution was to contain two sections - the propaganda department and the press section. The recruiting of students would be made from among party activists with ideological and cultural training, preferably graduates of schools of the party. The prerogative of the party also, provided that the school will prepare a total of 200 students (100 in each year) and will start the working formula with the academic year 1949-1950¹⁰. Later, in autumn 1951, it was decided that the time course at School "A. A. Jdanov" to increase from two to three years. Thus, students in first year at that time were to be placed in two sections, one section of two years and one lasting three years, and those from earlier years will be following the initial cycle¹¹.

As from the school year 1954-1955, period of the study was extended to four years, with the following specialties: history of Soviet Communist Party, P.M.R. (Romanian Communist Party) history, political philosophy and economy.

Finally, a new amendment materialize in 1953, when the leaders of Jdanov decided opening the post-graduate course of study section, whose purpose was to prepare students to obtain the title of "candidate of sciences".

An interesting detail is the fact that the title of "candidate of sciences" was the counterpart of the "doctoral student", a term that was replaced by the communist authorities under the pretext that it supposedly would be bourgeois.

This section functioned in the first year (1953-1954) with 17 candidates in the frequency section and 60 of aspirants in the distance learning section and the duration of the courses was proposed to three years¹². A new amendment makes that the following year the study period would increase to four years¹³, period over which it will return with the CC of P.M.R. decision nr.113/1954 from 17.03.1954, when the period of study is fixed at five years¹⁴. The post-graduate course of study section had a Scientific Council, whose role was to discuss and submit for approval to CC of P.M.R. dissertation topics, research plans or approve the curriculum and lists references. The only thing that was not in powers of the Council was granting

⁹ Decision of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the Romanian Working Party regarding the transformation of the "A. A. Jdanov" School of lecturers in a higher school of social sciences with term of two years, July 1949, in *Rezoluții și hotărâri ale C.C. al P.M.R., I: 1948-1950*, Bucharest, 1952 [second ed.], p. 124.

¹⁰ "România Liberă", July 24, 1949.

¹¹ ANIC, fond C.C. al P.C.R. *Secția Propagandă și Agitație*, file 58/1951, f. 33.

¹² *Ibidem*, file 27/1954, f. 12-13.

¹³ *Ibidem*, file 23/1954, f. 10.

¹⁴ *Ibidem*, file 27/1954, f. 8.

scientific degrees and academic degrees. This responsibility falls under the authority of "Ștefan Gheorghiu".

During the communist regime in Romania, a comparative analyze of conditions for obtaining the status of academy (with the right to grant the academic doctoral degrees) by various institutions in the field show that the origin is also a constrained-opportunity phenomenon (multiplication of management positions due to economic development, so its determined the rearing of members in the party apparatus), as well was the search of prestige¹⁵.

Further, according to the decision of the Politburo of the Central Committee of P.M.R., no.151 from March 31, 1954, The Party School of Social Sciences "A. A. Jdanov" became the Institute of Scientific Cadres Training, having attached also an Institute of Social Sciences¹⁶.

The archival document confirming this change, "*On the transformation of The Party School of Social Sciences «A. A. Jdanov» in Institute of Scientific Cadres Training*" has as signatories Iosif Chișinesvschi and Constantin Pârvolescu and dates from the date of March 31, 1954.

Therefore, document from C.C. of P.M.R. from 26 February 1954, decided that from the academic year 1954-1955, The Party School of Social Sciences "A. A. Jdanov", to stop recruiting students for the first year and move the students from the other years to the homologous sections of the School "Ștefan Gheorghiu", claiming the importance given to the post-graduate course of study section.

Later, a few weeks away, it was decided that in the next school year the post-graduate course of study section will frame 30 of the best graduates of higher institutions of state, plus 10 to 15 party activists with appropriate training, while canceling the provisions of the circular from February 26, 1954 (regarding moving students in homologous sections from "Ștefan Gheorghiu"¹⁷), so after, the Party School of Social Sciences "A. A. Jdanov" would continue with the years 2 and 3, until the complete cycle, originally imposed.

On the other hand, in 1951, was founded the distance learning department at the Party School of Social Sciences "A. A. Jdanov" which would receive students by the recommendations made from the regional party committees, however, they were able to register at their own initiative, but to have the approval of the regional party committee.

However, the decision of the Central Committee from October 10, 1951 claiming the poor organization of the course, was to unify its with a counterpart course from "Ștefan Gheorghiu", which should have taken place in the building of The Party School of Social Sciences "A. A. Jdanov", with professors from both institutions, while the director of this course was appointed Petre Grosu. Further, from the academic year 1953-1954, these courses unified will be moved permanently to the building of School "Ștefan Gheorghiu" triggering a phenomenon of institutional-swinging of functions between the Party School of Social Sciences "A.

¹⁵ M. D. Gheorghiu & M. Lupu, *op. cit.*, p. 228.

¹⁶ ANIC, fond C.C. al P.C.R. Secția Propagandă și Agitație, file 27/1954, f. 12.

¹⁷ *Ibidem*, f. 12-13.

A. Jdanov" and "Ștefan Gheorghiu", practically announcing, further development of institutional conduct of the two schools.

This circumstances remained fixed until 1958, when the last generation of students of the Institute of Social Sciences "A. A. Jdanov" graduated, following that the Institute of Social Sciences "A. A. Jdanov" will be absorbed by the Party School "Ștefan Gheorghiu".

Besides, apart from the proper training, institution run teacher training courses for those who generally crossed the public higher education or who come from the party ranks, government or various organizations.

One of the documents relevant for the moment when the Party School of Social Sciences "A. A. Jdanov" had entered an early form of absorption by "Ștefan Gheorghiu", was as follows:

"The Directorate affairs C.C. of P.M.R.

In response to the Ministry of Education material submitted by you to consultation we communicate the following: By stopping the courses this year (1956), The Party School of Social Sciences "A.A. Jdanov" not restrict its activity, but rather, by organizing the post-graduate course of study section, the school becomes more developed.

We note also that in addition to the school a number of party courses (lecturers, journalists, etc.) permanently operates.

Consequently, the school is unable to release the boarding school from Str. Matei Voievod, No. 75¹⁸."

Date of this notice is issued July 9, 1956.

Otherwise, in addition to the Party School of Social Sciences "A. A. Jdanov" has functioned courses to prepare the base asset of propaganda and agitation of the county committees since 1951. Another course of propagandists and journalists has been established since 1953, in addition to School of Social Sciences "A.A. Jdanov", recruiting of students being made among regional, district or town propaganda sector committees. The importance granted to the Party School of Social Sciences "A. A. Jdanov" is highlighted by the fact that it was coordinated by the Department of Propaganda and Agitation from C.C. of P.M.R., having as its principal even the architect of the section, Leonte Rautu.

Besides, we can also found in the management of the institute "Jdanov" Grigore Kotovschi occupying the position of director of studies, G. Lușă (who would become president after 1958), Ștefan Cruțeru, both on the post of deputy director and also the teachers of the institute like L. Rachmat (professor of Economics), S. Stirbu, and A. Romen. The seminar leaders were: I. Vesa, V. Oprea, C. Borgeanu (which will become professor of philosophy at the Institute since 1953), G. Stoian, V. Petrus, E. Sugar, E. Dimitriu and Titu Georgescu.

¹⁸ *Ibidem*, file 23/1956, f. 22.

Other teachers going through "Jdanov" were: T. Bugnariu (Professor of Philosophy), A. Joja (professor of logic, the future Minister of Culture), I. Banu (history of philosophy). And of those who have graduated we could mention Ion Stănescu (future member of CPEx of P.C.R., Minister and Chairman of the State Security Council of the RSR) and Dumitru Popescu (future vice president of the State Committee for Culture and Art and President Council of Socialist Culture and Education)¹⁹.

Other important names from "A. A. Jdanov" were those from the Scientific Council of the post-graduate course of study section: P. Niclescu-Mizil, A. Segorjevschi, F. Arhiptev, B. Zaharescu, Z. Brâncu, L. Tismăneanu, M. Frunză, C. I. Gulian, S. Știrbu, L. Simardean, T. Graur, V. Văleanu.

In other thoughts, Party School of Social Sciences "A. A. Jdanov" conducted regular specific experience exchanges to the Soviet bloc and the school had a few teachers coming from the USSR, but after the death of Joseph Stalin, amid resettlement relations with Moscow their number began to decrease²⁰.

Thus, we conclude that due to resettlement of relations between Romania and the USSR, arising from de-stalinisation process, or dissolution of the Cominform, the party school system from R.P.R. had become more autonomous; This matter between the school "Jdanov" and "Ștefan Gheorghiu" remained until the year of withdrawal of Soviet troops from Romania, 1958, when graduated the last generation of students of the Institute of Social Sciences "A. A. Jdanov". So, Secretariat C.C. of P.M.R. decided in autumn of 1958, to eliminate any overlap, and the Institute of Social Sciences "A. A. Jdanov" to be absorbed by "Ștefan Gheorghiu".

Regarding the educational program proposed to students, the existing information conduct to that it worked in accordance with the party thought. While this research recompose the elements that belonged to an ideological training institute of a new generation of communists, lacking the experience gained during the illegality²¹, it is interesting to note, as it was the educational program of the institute for the school year 1948-1949. The table that follows contains a package of materials from the School "A. A. Jdanov", which largely could be found themselves in the schedule of other institutions in the country at that time, and especially since 1950, when the unique education program got a much higher validity:

Course	Lessons	Studies	Papers
History of Romania	12	-	13
Life of the party and party policy issues	29	4	19
History of P.C. (b) U. S.S.R.	22	4	9

¹⁹ Information resulting from a discussion that I personally had with Ambassador Constantin Vlad, graduated of School "Jdanov".

²⁰ See note 19.

²¹ Vl. Tismăneanu, *op. cit.*, p. 148.

Political economy	17	1	9
Dialectical and historical materialism	26	3	8
World politics	12	1	11
Russian language	48	-	-

Beside the actual materials, the doctrinal training of students was supplemented with a series of regular lectures by characters of the communist party at that time, Ana Pauker (propagandistic lesson held at School "Jdanov" on January 17, 1952 titled "Selection, growth and distribution of staff"²²), Iosif Chişinevschi, etc.

No doubt the defining features of the curriculum aimed at targeting the elements of Soviet study, trying to move students gradually away from any notion that might be related to Western Europe. However, as I mentioned at the start of this study, higher schools of communist parties, both political and intellectual institutions, have been a prototype of international school at training the elite. So, sometimes, the true quality of some of the teachers from "A. A. Jdanov", enabled study of lessons that did not only preserve the ideological line of the party, I am referring here to the authors and thinkers who were not supporters of communist propaganda²³.

And an evidence of this reality remains the future intellectual quality of some graduates, as it was Ambassador Constantin Vlad.

Moreover, the option to establish the communist doctrine can not be questioned in the Party School of Social Sciences "A. A. Jdanov", this is demonstrated very suggestive of a wish made by one of the teachers at Jdanov, Puiu Simion to Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej:

"On behalf of Jdanov school students, we wish to comrade Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej, first secretary of the P.M.R., our dear leader, many years to support our constitution and lead us to socialism. We undertake our own knowledge of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin, to us as our education to become good ideological leaders of communism, to spread the marxist-leninist knowledge among party members. We wish to comrade Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej to lead us to new victories, to socialism"²⁴.

In conclusion, we can say that along with "Ştefan Gheorghiu", the two institutions were the most important structures of party education in the first decade of communist rule in Romania (1948-1958).

Conclusions

We started this research in order to reconstruct what it meant the Party School of Social Sciences "A. A. Jdanov" during the stalinist period, taking into

²² ANIC, fond C.C. al P.C.R, Secția Propagandă și Agitație, file 32 /1952, f. 1.

²³ See note 19.

²⁴ ANIC, fond C.C. al P.C.R. Cancelarie, file 160/1950, f. 1-2.

account that in cultural life, stalinism meant above all, total subordination of creativity and intellectual function to the ideology of communism.

The Party School of Social Sciences "A. A. Jdanov" was an ideological training institute for a new generation of communist teachers who lacked the experience during the anti-fascist war, but who also was alleged beside the unconditional commitment to the party, some cultural training.

In Romania, the party education appears in 1945, with the Workers University of Romanian Communist Party (PCR). School party system was organized by the communists first in two level. Thus, that higher education could operate in addition to the Central Committee of P.M.R., and the secondary school education in addition to local party organs. School "Ștefan Gheorghiu" was placed under the coordination of the Organizational Department, preparing personnel responsible for the party, mass organizations and state apparatus²⁵. Instead, the Party School of Social Sciences "A. A. Jdanov" was coordinated by the Department of Propaganda and Agitation.

But as we demonstrated in this study, we are talking about a system in a permanent process of efficiency and in Romania, since the school year 1949/1950, party education was reorganized and divided on three levels.

Referring to the system of recruitment, as we presented in the body of this study, profile of those who studied in schools of communist party, had to be first, the alleged cause of people loyal to the communist movement.

Therefore, at the beginning of stalinization, because the selection was summary, the disciples reached in the position of such an institute were connected to pillars of the communist phenomenon in a lesser extent. In time, however, the recruitment system has become more rigorous.

For example, in 1948, when the school activated as the Central School of lecturers "A. A. Jdanov", shows a relatively permissive recruitment system for selecting prospective students, compared with subsequent years. From the 47 students, aged between 23 and 40 years, 15 were categorized as workers, 17 were part of the petty bourgeoisie, one had a bourgeois background, and the remaining 15 were peasants²⁶.

But with the transformation in the Party School of Social Sciences "A. A. Jdanov" in 1949-1950 was implemented a new system of recruitment of students, better organized. Following the 5th judgment plenary of the C.C. of P.M.R. in January 1950, which abolished the staff department, the task selection and distribution of staff in education departments was directly accounted to the sections of C.C. where the institutes belonged²⁷. Criteria that the future student had to fit were those to be holding a clean political past, to be an honest man, have developed political sense and be confident and devoted to the cause of the working class.

²⁵ *Ibidem*, fond C.C. al P.C.R. Secția organelor conducătoare de partid, sindicale și de U.T.C. (Secția Organizatorică), 1921-1975, p. 1-9.

²⁶ *Ibidem*, f. 1-3.

²⁷ *Ibidem*, fond C.C. al P.C.R. Secția Propagandă și Agitație, file 1/1950, f. 9-10.

Interesting is that it was specified that "women must necessarily propose", which comes to strengthen the idea that once the elections of 1946, the females were seen as an increasingly important element in building the communist society²⁸.

Otherwise, constant changes of personnel occurred in schools, reflecting the fact that they were less a result of well thought out plan, implemented in stages, but rather followed the proper process of stalinization and extending the new model of society on all areas.

Thus, the case of the Party School of Social Sciences "A. A. Jdanov" is suggestive in this regard, while the institution (from its foundation in 1948) saw further changes in those 10 years of existence.

The Party School of Social Sciences "A. A. Jdanov" was closely connected with the Academy of Social Sciences from Moscow, an institutional corresponding, making constantly exchanges of students, while Leonte Răutu signed many of the proposals gender, but also with the Higher Party School "A. A. Jdanov" from Leningrad.

Recruitment at the Party School of Social Sciences "A. A. Jdanov" was done strategically (like the Soviet model), but this process was not followed by coercion of future students, but rather by offering a 'springboard' for the individual's personal career.

It should also be noted that although in many party schools the distance between teachers and students was often reduced (when some students have occupied in the hierarchy of the party superior positions to those of the teachers), report between teachers and students remained at the Party School of Social Sciences "A. A. Jdanov" in a form similar to one from a normal, traditional university²⁹.

School The Party School of Social Sciences "A. A. Jdanov" has been identified in terms of time with the stalinist period, and its existence can not be dissociated from the evolution of the party, despite its elitist character, because in the end was only one instrument attesting the communist system, contributing to its reproduction.

²⁸ *Ibidem.*

²⁹ See note 19.