

## The Image of Psychoanalysis in Romanian Communist Propaganda

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**Abstract:** *In 1932, a conference dedicated to Sigmund Freud was banned by the Romanian authorities, because they wanted to avoid “communist propaganda”. Twenty years later, psychoanalysis was once again officially banned, this time by the communist authorities. Because it was considered a bourgeois and a reactionary science, psychoanalysis could not be tolerated by the new regime. More than that, the psychoanalytical practice involved many risks for both psychoanalyst and patient. Not only the practice, but also the publication of works in this field was strictly forbidden. Especially in the first ten years after World War II, psychoanalysis was criticised in various books, articles and even in the press. Therefore, the progresses made by the Romanian physicians in the interwar period ceased and the most important accomplishments in this area were overshadowed by those of the communist scientists.*

**Keywords:** psychoanalysis, propaganda, press, Communist regime, medicine

### Introduction

In post-war Romania, the Communist ideology represented the main obstacle for the dissemination of psychoanalytical ideas. Especially in the

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first years after World War II, psychoanalysis was either the victim of many attacks in the specialised literature and in the press or was completely neglected. It wasn't until the end of the '60s and the '70s that psychoanalysis was able to have a discrete comeback in the cultural and medical circles in Romania. However, in the last decade of the Communist era, because of the economic, social and, especially, ideological repression, psychoanalysis had been once again put to silence.<sup>1</sup>

The paper focuses on the image of psychoanalysis throughout the whole Communist period in Romania, image that was created in order to denigrate the achievements in this field. Not only the books of Sigmund Freud and of his supporters, but also the work and activity of the Romanian intellectuals who approached the subject, were taken into consideration. Being accused of encouraging the old bourgeois methods of thinking, which were represented by Schopenhauer and Nietzsche,<sup>2</sup> psychoanalysis was not only officially banned, but also constantly criticised. In Russia, “psychoanalysis came under fire for being bourgeois, idealist, biologicistic, and pessimistic; critics charged that it was inherently tied to its bourgeois roots and, as a suspect capitalist ideology, had no place in Soviet society”.<sup>3</sup> Overall, psychoanalysis received the same criticism in Romania, too. Intellectuals, especially physicians, approached this subject in their work, but

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<sup>1</sup> Vasile Dem. Zamfirescu, *În căutarea sinelui*, Bucharest, Trei, 2014, pp. 417-418.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 419.

<sup>3</sup> Hans Pols, “The Pursuit of Psychoanalysis under Conditions of Communism“, in: *Left History*, vol. 7, no. 2, 2000, pp. 108-114, available at <http://lh.journals.yorku.ca/index.php/lh/article/viewFile/5458/4653>, accessed on 29 June 2017.

the written press also contributed to the new image of psychoanalysis. Moreover, the propaganda promoted exclusively the theories of Ivan Pavlov and, in general, those of the Soviet scientists. In this context, psychoanalysis could not be tolerated anymore and had only two options: to disappear completely or to be practiced illegally.<sup>4</sup>

### **The beginnings of psychoanalysis: Austria-Hungary and Romania**

According to Sigmund Freud, psychoanalysis is the name of a procedure used for the research of psychic processes that are not reachable in other ways, a method of treatment based on this research and the name of a series of psychological acquisitions, which form a new scientific field of study.<sup>5</sup> The beginning of psychoanalysis lies in a publication written in 1895 by Joseph Breuer and Sigmund Freud, *Studies on Hysteria*.<sup>6</sup> With Breuer and afterwards on his own, Freud discovered that the symptoms of neurotic patients can disappear only by psychic means. Initially, Freud used hypnosis, but later on he began using the method of free associations. The aim was to get to the roots of the traumatic event and to release the affect that was blocked with the event. The result was the disappearance of the symptoms.<sup>7</sup> With the development of psychoanalysis, many other fields of study were taken into consideration. The interpretation of slips and accidental mistakes,

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<sup>4</sup> Vasile Dem. Zamfirescu, *Introducere în psihanaliza freudiană și postfreudiană*, Bucharest, Trei, 2012, p. 34.

<sup>5</sup> Sigmund Freud, *Despre psihanaliză*, Bucharest, Trei, 2014, p. 97.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 75.

<sup>7</sup> Vasile Dem. Zamfirescu, *Introducere în ...*, p. 23.

the interpretation of dreams, the importance of sexual life, the sexuality of children, the libido, the Oedipus complex or the theory of repression<sup>8</sup> were studied not only by Freud, but also by his supporters. Even if the first aim was to understand and influence neurotic symptoms, psychoanalysis has been associated with human sciences and plays an important role in the history of religion and culture, mythology and literature. C. G. Jung was the first to accentuate the strong coincidence between the fantasies of people suffering from *Dementia praecox* and the mythological formations of the primitive people. Otto Rank used psychoanalysis in order to bring important aspects of mythology and literature to light, while Theodor Reik concentrated on the history of customs and religions. The priest O. Pfister gained not only the interest of his co-workers, but also of those working in education, and insisted on the importance of psychoanalysis in pedagogy.<sup>9</sup>

Even though it was born in Vienna, the capital of Austria-Hungary, psychoanalysis has spread throughout most of the countries in Europe and in the whole world. In this regard, Romania was no exception. Psychoanalysis had a very promising start in interwar Romania. The Faculty of Medicine of the University of Bucharest has awarded more than ten doctoral degrees in this field and, in the same period, around ten books and thirty articles about psychoanalysis were published. The greatest interest was shown by specialists in the medical field, whereas personalities from the literary or philosophical world remained reticent about the new science. One of the most

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<sup>8</sup> Sigmund Freud, *op. cit.*, pp. 103-111.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 119-120.

noticeable exceptions was Lucian Blaga, who used psychoanalysis in his work, for instance in the theatre play *Fapta* (“The deed”), afterwards renamed *Ivanca*.<sup>10</sup> In comparison with other European countries with a similar history like Greece or Bulgaria, where psychoanalysis did not have any echo, psychoanalysis played a more or less significant role in Romania.<sup>11</sup> However, none of Freud’s books had been translated in Romanian during this period.<sup>12</sup>

An important event that shows the contradictions of the totalitarian systems is the conference *Freud*, which took place in Bucharest in 1932. The conference was a great success and was organised several times, not only in Romania’s capital, but also in other parts of the country. One of these conferences was banned by the authorities, because they wanted to avoid “communist propaganda”.<sup>13</sup> The authorities’ fear was justified. Psychoanalysis was very popular in Soviet Russia at the beginning of the 20th century, but, along with the Stalinist regime, every psychoanalytical activity had come to an end.<sup>14</sup> Even in the Marxist circles of Romania, Freud enjoyed popularity.<sup>15</sup> Moreover, some of the biggest names in psychoanalysis, like Otto Fenichel or Wilhelm Reich, admired Marxism and tried to align Marxism with psychoanalysis.

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<sup>10</sup> Vasile Dem. Zamfirescu, *Introducere în ...*, p. 57.

<sup>11</sup> Ion Vianu, *Apropieri*, Iași, Polirom, 2011, p. 134.

<sup>12</sup> Vasile Zamfirescu, “Freud und die Psychoanalyse in Rumänien“, in: Christfried Tögel, Jörg Frommer (eds.), *Psychotherapie und Psychoanalyse in Osteuropa*, Uchtspringe, Sigmund-Freud-Zentrum, 2003, pp. 45-51.

<sup>13</sup> Ion Vianu, *op. cit.*, p. 132.

<sup>14</sup> Vasile Dem. Zamfirescu, *Introducere în ...*, p. 48.

<sup>15</sup> Ion Vianu, *op. cit.*, p. 133.

## **Incompatibility between psychoanalysis and communism**

There are a series of conceptions that prove the incompatibility between the communist ideology and psychoanalysis. First of all, according to communism, the human is a totality and the well-being of the totality defines the well-being of the human. As opposed to this, psychoanalysis sees the human as an individual and the general well-being can exist only as a result of the individual well-being. Secondly, the communist ideology considers that the human is the result of his social relationships and his environment and that society has the ability to shape the human. Psychoanalysis proved that social shaping can lead to many psychiatric diseases, such as hysteria or neurosis. Thirdly, the communist regime tried to control the people by all means, which led to the feeling of absolute dependence and to the infantilisation of adults. Psychoanalysis fights against infantilisation and helps people gain their independent thinking.<sup>16</sup> Moreover, Freud discovered the importance of sexuality for the life of the people. On the contrary, the communist regime encouraged Victorian morality and, at the same time, promoted sexuality in order to perpetuate the species. Until the last years of communism in Romania, television and the written press remained quiet with regard to the sexual problem.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Vasile Dem. Zamfirescu, *Introducere în ...*, pp. 50-52.

<sup>17</sup> *Idem*, *În căutarea ...*, p. 426.

## The communist propaganda in Romania

One of the most powerful actions of the communist regime was propaganda, which is generally used as a method of manipulating the way of thinking of an individual or of a social group. It has existed since the beginning of humanity and remains one of the most powerful weapons in the war. Over the course of time, propaganda has received many definitions.<sup>18</sup> According to Jowett and O'Donnell, “propaganda, in the most neutral sense, means to disseminate or promote particular ideas”. The word first appeared in 1622, when the Vatican established the *Sacra Congregatio de Propaganda Fide* in order to propagate Catholicism. Because the intent of the Roman Catholic Church was also to oppose Protestantism, the word lost its neutrality and began to be seen as pejorative. Nowadays, it is often associated with something negative and dishonest and with terms such as *lies*, *distortion* or *manipulation*.<sup>19</sup> A recent Romanian definition belongs to Sergiu Tămaș; according to him, propaganda is used systematically in order to spread a doctrine, an opinion, and to make them familiar and accepted. Also, propaganda uses not only facts, but also emotions.<sup>20</sup>

The communist propaganda in Romania had reached its climax in the first years after World War II, when the citizens became victims of a

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<sup>18</sup> Eugen Denize, *Propaganda comunistă în România (1948- 1953)*, Târgoviște, Cetatea de Scaun, 2009, p. 18.

<sup>19</sup> Garth S. Jowett, Victoria O' Donnell, *Propaganda & Persuasion*, Thousand Oaks, SAGE Publications Inc, 2011, p. 2, available at <http://sttpml.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/propaganda-and-persuasion.pdf>, accessed on 27 June.

<sup>20</sup> Eugen Denize, *op. cit.*, p. 18.

propaganda operation of an intensity unseen before, which affected all areas of life.<sup>21</sup>

*The institution of propaganda was designed to prepare the soldiers of the party to be fanatic worshippers of the communist ideal. Its unique concern was to turn ideological topics into active feelings, to radically change mentalities and to create the new man. As a part of a marching armada, literature worked shoulder to shoulder with the press, the radio, the army, the schools and any other institution one could think of in order to establish faith in communism.*<sup>22</sup>

In order to reach its goals, propaganda used two main control mechanisms: censorship, which had a defensive role, and the strict control of the press, of organisations of all types and of cultural actions, which had an offensive character. The most relevant methods of the two mechanisms were, among others, control exercised over mass media, the cult of personality, the demand for the purity of the people, the image of the ideology as a new science and the promotion of doctrine above anything else.<sup>23</sup> In his book about Romanian communist propaganda, Eugen Denize discusses the influence of propaganda on the Romanian people:

*Besides the atrocious repression, which targeted the subjection of the Romanian people through force and fear, there was an unencountered propagandistic offensive, whose main goal was to make Romanians give up their own value system and their own traditions in favour of those proposed by the Soviet occupant with the help of the communist agency in our country. Therefore, the communists used the most varied and diverse resources and methods [...], subjected the Romanian people to an intense russification process, marginalised their elite and offered them new moral and behavioural*

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<sup>21</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 18.

<sup>22</sup> Eugen Negrici, *Literature and Propaganda in Communist Romania*, Bucharest, The Romanian Cultural Foundation Publishing House, 1999, p. 9.

<sup>23</sup> Eugen Denize, *op. cit.*, pp. 19-20.

*references, which belonged to the philosophy and political practice of Marx, Engels, Lenin and especially Stalin.*<sup>24</sup>

As well as many other fields, education has undergone many changes. The most crucial change took place in 1948 with the introduction of the new education reform, which aimed to eliminate all the bourgeois residues from the society. The results were the elimination of the universities' autonomy, the ideologisation of the courses and the selection of students".<sup>25</sup> More than in any other country in Eastern Europe, the Romanian political regime had established a series of interdictions. The books that were considered dangerous could not be published anywhere. The only books that were accepted were those of propaganda, especially in the first ten years of communism. Even afterwards, when many concessions were made, the writers were still highly controlled.<sup>26</sup>

*In the first years of the communist regime, brought upon Romania with the help of the tanks of the Red Army, the only kind of literature that was officially accepted, distributed and vigorously imposed by all imaginable means, was that of propaganda. It had a unique repertoire, approved by Moscow and enforced from there. Any other form of literature was appropriate only in as much as it could serve the propagandistic goals of the sole party and obeyed the precepts of communist aesthetics and ideology.*<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> "Pe lângă represiunea crâncenă, care viza îngenunchierea poporului român prin forță și spaimă, s-a dezlănțuit și o nemaîntâlnită ofensivă propagandistică, al cărui principal obiectiv era acela de a-i face pe români să renunțe la propriul sistem de valori și la propriile tradiții în favoarea celor propuse de ocupantul sovietic prin intermediul agenturii sale comuniste din țara noastră. Pentru acesta comuniștii au folosit cele mai variate și diverse mijloace și metode [...] au suspus poporul român la un intens proces de rusificare, i-au marginalizat elitele și i-au oferit noi repere morale și de comportament desprinse din filosofia și practica politică a lui Marx, Engels, Lenin și, mai ales Stalin", Eugen Denize, *op. cit.*, p. 169.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 69.

<sup>26</sup> Eugen Negrici, *op. cit.*, p. 9.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 16.

In this context, it was impossible for researchers to publish books or articles regarding psychoanalysis and the progress made by physicians in interwar Romania ceased.

### **Psychoanalysis – a forbidden science**

Psychoanalysis was considered a bourgeois science<sup>28</sup> and communism struggled to eliminate the bourgeois roots from the society.<sup>29</sup> The Soviet scientists had analysed psychoanalysis from a Marxist-Leninist point of view and rejected its philosophical, sociological and medical foundation.<sup>30</sup> More than that, Freudianism was criticised for presenting the human in a false, asocial and ahistorical context.<sup>31</sup> Another reason for banning psychoanalysis was its supposed immorality, which did not match the idea of the purity of the “new man”.<sup>32</sup> These were some of the ideas disseminated by the scientists that did not approve of the psychoanalytical theories. At the beginning of the ‘50s, these ideas were also materialised.

The crucial moment for psychoanalysis was in 1952 at a meeting of the Romanian Academy, which aimed to analyse the medical sciences from the perspective of Ivan Pavlov’s theories. At this meeting, psychoanalysis

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<sup>28</sup> Vasile Dem. Zamfirescu, *Introducere în ...*, p. 47.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 49.

<sup>30</sup> F. Bassin, M. Rožnova, V. Rožnov, ”Nauka i Religija”, Nr. 5, 7, 9, 1976, in: *Aufgaben der Psychologie in der Sowjetunion*, Berlin, Berliner Arbeitsgemeinschaft für Kirchliche Publizistik, 1977, p. 27.

<sup>31</sup> Valentin N. Vološinov, *Freudianism: a marxist critique*, New York, Academic Press, 1976, p. VII.

<sup>32</sup> Vasile Dem. Zamfirescu, *În căutarea ...*, p. 419.

was officially banned,<sup>33</sup> because it was considered a reactionary science and in opposition with the Marxist-Leninist conception of the world.<sup>34</sup> During the meeting, there were several voices that criticised psychoanalysis. Professor Daniel Dumitrescu claimed that psychoanalysis was an explanation of the decline of medicine in Western countries and gave the United States as an example, where psychoanalysis was very popular. According to Dumitrescu, any real scientist or physician would be indignant at this insult to medical sciences.<sup>35</sup> Professor Vasile Mârza criticised Arthur Kreindler and Șt. M. Milcu for their attempt to conciliate Freudianism and Pavlovian theories. At the same meeting, the latter, who discussed the compensation of the sexual dissatisfaction with the eating instinct in one of his works, defended himself by claiming that he was never truly interested in the Freudian theory, which he considered to be wrong, because it approaches physiology and physiopathology only in terms of sexuality.<sup>36</sup> Maximilian Müller stated that Romanian psychiatry had a few unhealthy influences, like Freudianism, which was encouraged by the bourgeoisie throughout publications and academic activities. Müller admitted that he was once an admirer of psychoanalysis, but because of the Soviet psychiatric literature, he was able to finally see its anti-scientific nature.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> Idem, *Introducere în ...*, p. 48.

<sup>34</sup> Ion Vianu, *op.cit.*, p. 134.

<sup>35</sup> G. Brătescu, *Freud și psihanaliza în România*, Bucharest, Humanitas, 1994, p. 252.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 253.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 254.

The practice of psychoanalysis, as well as Freud's books and those of his supporters, were completely forbidden and the contact with countries from Western Europe, where psychoanalysts continued to practice, was strictly controlled. Moreover, one of propaganda aims was to provoke fear and insecurity among people.<sup>38</sup> From this point of view, psychoanalysis had much to suffer. The conditions for practicing psychoanalysis were very unfavourable. The psychoanalysts had to work in complete isolation, without any institutions and with very little specialised literature. Any psychoanalytical practice involved many risks for both psychoanalyst and patient and the method of free associations was a touchstone for both of them.<sup>39</sup> The psychoanalyst Eugen Papadima opens up about the difficulties of that period. He always had to hide, because he could not talk about his activity, not even with his colleagues. Moreover, he and his colleagues could not gather in an association and could not receive books or magazines regarding the subject. And there was always the risk of being "caught" for receiving money for therapy.<sup>40</sup> The Romanian psychoanalysts had to give up their practice or work illegally. For instance, Constantin Vlad, one of the most important exponents of psychoanalysis in interwar Romania, received only a few close people in his home, which he knew very well and was able to trust. Especially after 1958, when doctor's surgeries were officially abolished, the practice of psychoanalysis became even more dangerous

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<sup>38</sup> Eugen Denize, *op. cit.*, p. 19.

<sup>39</sup> Vasile Zamfirescu, *Introducere în ...*, pp. 48-51.

<sup>40</sup> Ioana Scoruş, *Paradoxurile psihanalizei în România*, Piteşti, Paralela 45, 2007, pp. 49-50.

because of the legal risks. Ion Popescu-Sibiu, an important Romanian psychoanalyst, gave up his psychoanalytical work in order to concentrate on his astronomical research activity. Besides his disillusionments about the social and moral negative phenomena of an abusive Freudianism, the pressure of the authorities may have played an important role in his decision.<sup>41</sup> The practice of psychoanalysis was in complete contradiction with the way of expression of that period. The society was carefully monitored and anyone could be an informer of the secret police agency *Securitate*. Apart from the reticence and the doubts of the patient regarding the therapy, there was also the fear that the psychoanalyst could be an informer.<sup>42</sup> In his book, *Apropieri* (“Approaches”), Ion Vianu covered this subject: “to talk freely during the therapy in a country such as Romania of that period was a more redeeming experience than for the patients living in a free society. [...] I had the impression, which was confirmed several times, that, in their evolution, patients became freer not only in their private, but also in their public life”.<sup>43</sup>

The written press also played a crucial role in changing the image of psychoanalysis. On the territory of Eastern Europe, there were many publications that criticised psychoanalysis and insisted on the importance of Ivan Pavlov. Not only medicine, but also psychology, pedagogy and

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<sup>41</sup> G. Brătescu, *op. cit.*, p. 263.

<sup>42</sup> Ion Vianu, *op. cit.*, p. 136.

<sup>43</sup> “a vorbi liber în cadrul curei într-o țară ca România acelei epoci era o trăire mai eliberatoare decât pentru pacienții care trăiau într-o societate liberă. [...] Am avut impresia, de mai multe ori confirmată, că, în evoluția lor, pacienții deveneau mai liberi nu numai în viața lor privată, dar și în cea publică”, Ion Vianu, *op. cit.*, p. 136.

philosophy were reorganised from the perspective of Pavlov's theory.<sup>44</sup>In one of these publications, psychoanalysis, which was called a pseudoscientific religion and a social utopia, was considered to be responsible for the barbarism in the capitalist countries.<sup>45</sup> The situation was similar in Romania, too. An article from the newspaper *Scânteia* criticised the inappropriate activity of two medical centres. The first one, the Center of Mental Hygiene, had several diagnostic papers that contained Freudian interpretations and the second one, the Center of Psycho-Medical-Pedagogical Research, used psychoanalytical methods in conversations with pupils.<sup>46</sup>In the newspaper *Contemporanul*, the academic Arthur Kreindler affirmed that psychoanalysis was a reactionary and obscurantist science, which had been popularised in the last years by the most reactionary circles of the capitalist countries. Later on, in his paper about asthenic neurosis, he added an introduction, where he stated that the Freudian doctrine was an idealistic movement in psychology and medicine and restrained the progress in the area of neurosis. As a result, the study of neurosis in the West European countries did not achieve any progress in the recent years.<sup>47</sup> The chief of the Department of Psychology of the Academy, Mihai Ralea, had approached psychoanalysis in some of his works. In his paper, "Către o nouă orientare a psihologiei în R.P.R."

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<sup>44</sup> Ágnes Berger, Franziska Henningsen, Ludger M. Heranns, János Can Togay (eds.), *Psychoanalyse hinter dem Eisernen Vorhang*, Frankfurt a. M, Brandes & Apsel, 2010, p. 115.

<sup>45</sup> \*\*\*, *Aufgaben der Psychologie in der Sowjetunion*, Berlin, Berliner Arbeitsgemeinschaft für Kirchliche Publizistik, 1977, p. 8. .

<sup>46</sup> G. Brătescu, *op. cit.*, pp. 255-256.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 257-258.

(“Towards a new orientation of psychology in the Romanian People’s Republic”), he affirmed that psychoanalysis was an ineptitude, promoted by the exploiting class and tried to connect psychoanalysis with the Romanian far-right movements.<sup>48</sup> A whole chapter from the book *Istoria psihologiei* (“The history of psychology”), which was published in 1957, was dedicated to psychoanalysis. Even if at the beginning, the authors M. Ralea and Const. I. Botez appeared to have an objective attitude, at the end of the chapter, psychoanalysis had been criticised for its amorality and its harmful influence on the people in the capitalist society and for affecting the fight for democracy and socialism.<sup>49</sup> In all the publications from the ‘50s that criticised psychoanalysis, there were no explanations regarding the psychoanalytical methods and concepts. The most popular terms, such as *instinct*, *unconscious* or *sexuality* were used with the purpose of convincing and impressing the readers, but without being explained.<sup>50</sup>

Another specific attitude for this period was to avoid the subject. At a meeting of the Medical Section of the Academy, only Arthur Kreindler mentioned the name of Sigmund Freud in the introduction of his work about asthenic neurosis. In the volume published at the scientific session of the Hospital of Neuropsychiatry Socola in Iași from 1957, there was no mention of psychoanalysis, only a simple allusion. In *Probleme de psihiatrie* (“Problems of psychiatry”), an extensive book that was published in 1957

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<sup>48</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 259.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 260.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 262.

and which was a contribution of the most important figures in the Romanian psychiatry, the term psychoanalysis was nowhere to be found. When talking about psychic diseases in the book *Actualități în terapia bolilor psihice* (“Actualities in therapy of psychic diseases”), Octav Maller did not mention anything about psychotherapy or psychoanalysis. Furthermore, in the first years of existence of the magazine *Neurologie, psihiatrie, neurochirurgie* (“Neurology, psychiatry, neurosurgery”), which was founded in 1956, psychoanalysis was neglected. The only article that approached psychoanalysis was “Character și nevroză” (“Character and neurosis”), which was written in 1959 by Corneliu Belciugățeanu. The author talked about the anti-human attitude of the psychoanalysts and about their struggle to exploit the infantile stage of the human psyche. An important event for Romanian psychoanalysis would have been the publication of the novel *Proprietatea și posesiunea* (“Property and possession”) by Petre Dumitriu, which insisted on the unconscious manifestations of the maternal eroticism. Because of his departure from Romania, the publication of the book was interrupted. Only after the revolution from 1989, Dumitriu’s novel could find its way in Romanian libraries.<sup>51</sup>

Because of the ideological terror, psychoanalysis had disappeared completely from Romanian scientific life between the ‘50s and the ‘60s. The ease with which the authorities had banished any psychoanalytical movement is proof that, despite all the struggles of the exponents of psychoanalysis, this

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<sup>51</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 264.

movement did not have strong roots in Romania yet.<sup>52</sup> In the '70s, there were some changes in this area, at both cultural and clinical levels. For the first time, some of Sigmund Freud's books were translated into Romanian and several other works belonging to Victor Săhleanu, Ion Popescu-Sibiu, Vasile Dem. Zamfirescu, Ion Vianu or Aurel Dicu were published. At clinical level, the activity of Eugen Papadima is of high importance. Papadima had practiced psychoanalysis between 1972 and 1988 at the Students' Hospital and in private. Some of his patients, Nadia Bujor, Radu Clit, Aurelia Ionescu, Ileana Talaban, Vera Șandor, Vasile Dem. Zamfirescu, began to practice themselves<sup>53</sup>.

In 1980, two translations of Sigmund Freud were published, which was a very encouraging achievement for the advocates of psychoanalysis. However, a few events did not constitute proof that the authorities were ready to accept psychoanalysis yet. The engineer Nicolae Stoian, a representative of the international movement of "transcendental meditation", was authorised to work in Romania. The Institute of Philosophy in Bucharest received the assignment of organising some experiments in this field, taking into consideration the fact that the "transcendental meditation", which promoted a "spiritual discipline", could help people become extremely efficient in their work. However, in 1981, *Securitatea*, having worked closely with Stoian until then, arrived to the conclusion that the "transcendental meditation" was actually the work of an international organisation, which

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<sup>52</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 264.

<sup>53</sup> Vasile Dem. Zamfirescu, *Introducere în .....*, pp. 52-53.

aimed to attack the Socialist regimes. Anyone connected to Nicolae Stoian became victims of the repressive actions of the authorities. They were excluded from the party, had to give up their positions or change their jobs in order to work as unskilled workers, even if some of them had important academic results. Among them were also Victor Săhleanu and Vladimir Gheorghiu, which approached psychoanalysis several times in their work. In the next year, the magazine of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and some other publications launched a campaign against those involved in “transcendental meditation”. They were considered spies and were blamed for trying to betray the country. As a result, any activity connected to psychology and pedagogy had to be stopped for a long period of time. For instance, in 1982, a meeting with the students from the Faculty of History and Philosophy from Bucharest on the subject of psychoanalysis in interwar Romania was cancelled and the administration board of the faculty blamed the organiser of the meeting for wasting their time with psychoanalysis, especially in such a delicate period. Moreover, a project that aimed to publish some new translations of Freud’s books had to be abandoned, as well as the intent to write a dictionary of psychoanalytical terms.<sup>54</sup>

There were also other areas of science banned by the communist ideology, such as genetics, sociology or philosophical anthropology, but in comparison to them, only psychoanalysis remained marginalised until the end. Sociology, for instance, was reintroduced for a short time in the higher

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<sup>54</sup> G. Brătescu, *op. cit.*, pp. 333-334.

education and genetics was able to be practiced again. Despite some noticeable progresses, psychoanalysis did not have the same destiny. The explanation is that psychoanalysis is incompatible with the communist system and with any other totalitarian system in general.<sup>55</sup> Psychoanalysis was banned not only by the communist regime, but also by the Nazi regime.<sup>56</sup> In the other countries from Eastern Europe, psychoanalysis had the same fate. In Hungary, a country with a powerful psychoanalytical tradition thanks to some important figures, such as the one of Sandor Ferenczi, psychoanalysis had to face very difficult times as well.<sup>57</sup> Not only psychoanalysis, but psychology was also banned. During the regime of Nicolae Ceaușescu, the section of psychology from the Faculty of Philosophy and the Institute of Psychology from Bucharest were dissolved.<sup>58</sup>

Psychoanalysis in Western Europe had to face difficulties, too, because of the fascist totalitarianism. However, there has been a continuity in West European countries. Psychoanalysis had an important contribution to the change of mentalities, especially regarding the sexual revolution and the youth movements from the '60s and '70s. In this case, psychoanalysis can be considered a constitutive element of the social and cultural life of these countries.<sup>59</sup> After the fall of communism, things took a turn for the better in Romania, too. The Romanian Society for Psychoanalysis was founded in

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<sup>55</sup> Vasile Dem. Zamfirescu, *Introducere în .....*, p. 49.

<sup>56</sup> Idem, *În căutarea ...*, p. 417.

<sup>57</sup> Idem, *Introducere în .....*, p. 34.

<sup>58</sup> Idem, *În căutarea ...*, p. 424.

<sup>59</sup> Idem, *Introducere în .....*, p. 59.

1990, the publishing house *Trei* publishes psychoanalytical papers regularly and psychoanalysis is now a field of study in some Romanian universities.<sup>60</sup>

## Conclusion

Undoubtedly, communist propaganda has damaged scientific life in Romania and, as it seems, psychoanalysis was one of the sciences that had to suffer the most. The progress of the Romanian physicians in the interwar period ceased and the most important achievements were overshadowed by the ones of communist scientists. The publication of books about psychoanalysis and the translations of Freud could be considered accidents and the practice of psychoanalysis remained clandestine in the communist period.<sup>61</sup> In the fifty years of communism, psychoanalysis was either strongly criticised or completely neglected. Overall, the critiques of psychoanalysis were very similar, even though they came from different people or publications. The main problem was that psychoanalysis was considered a bourgeois and, therefore, a reactionary science, which could prevent the progress of the new world. According to the critics of psychoanalysis, medicine in the Western countries, where the new science was very popular, was in a decline. In general, psychoanalysis was associated with the capitalist society, an association that could not be tolerated by the communist regime. In addition, psychoanalysis was criticised for its amorality, which led to the

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<sup>60</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 68-69.

<sup>61</sup> Vasile Dem. Zamfirescu, *În căutarea ...*, p. 418.

widespread belief that psychoanalysis focuses only on sexuality. As a result, the communist propaganda influenced not only the public opinion, but also the opinion of intellectuals who were at first admirers of Freud. Some of them were already mentioned. Ion Popescu-Sibiu gave up his practice and Maximilian Müller changed his opinions drastically due to the Soviet literature. Another opponent was Mihai Ralea, who shared his positive views about psychoanalysis in his writings from the interwar period. Later on, in the '50s, as chief of the Department of Psychology of the Academy, he was among Freud's critics.<sup>62</sup> If some individuals changed their mind, others did not have the chance to learn about psychoanalysis because of its absence from Romanian libraries and because of the constant denial of its therapeutic benefits.

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<sup>62</sup> G. Brătescu, *op. cit.*, pp. 259-260.

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