

THE IMAGINING OF NATIONAL SPACE IN INTERWAR ROMANIA. GEOPOLITICS AND GEOHISTORY

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Anthropogeography, geopolitics, the dialogue and the polemics opposing sociology and geography are central elements in the process of imagining the national space in the interwar period. A dense network of competitions, alliances and counter-alliances is coming together in this area of scientific legitimacy and representativity.

The birth of this new disciplinary subdomain offers us the chance to track down the external influences, to see how the central scientific canon(s) are replicated and transformed at the periphery and how the romanian culture finds itself sincronized with the dilemmas, themes and tensions of the european culture. This sincronicity is taking place – it is one of the thesis of this paper – under the sign of „reactionary modernism”. This perspective has the ability of questioning the uniqueness of the modernity process. Is modernity a package deal or are there other ways of spelling modernity?

This appropriation of the „reactionary modernism” discourse for the analysis of romanian anthropogeography and sociology is, in itself, an example of translating/ transforming scientific discourses on a central-perifery axis.

Political and cultural contexts. The role of polemics

In pre-war Romania, but especially in the interwar period, there is a large and important coming together of various intellectual disciplines under the sign of romanticism and reactionary modernism, a massive scientific, intellectual and cultural redefinition and reworking of different disciplinary canons.

A number of sub-domains are being constantly formed, criticized, expanded and contracted in the quite prolific intellectual atmosphere of the period. One of these sub-domains is forming in the region between geography, sociology, ethnography, historiography etc. sometimes called, in a German manner, anthropogeography or geopolitics, or, under a French influence, human geography.

This rather new sub-disciplinary field is quite a significant element of this study, for a number of interrelated reasons. The first one consists of the fact that it explicitly integrates the discourse on national space in the construction of the national self imaging in the social, geographical, historiographic and ethnographic sciences in interwar Romania. The second reason would be represented by the fact that, analyzing the emergence of this new scientific (sub) domain, we would have a privileged access to the historic articulation of a political language (Pocock 1989, Pocock 1987). The last one is connected to the

fact that we'll have the opportunity to trace down the foreign influences, the ways in which occidental and „central” scientific canons are replicated and transformed in the peripheries, the fascinating synchronicities of the interwar Romanian culture with most of the dilemmas and tensions of European culture.

We will concentrate mainly on the interwar period since we believe that during this period a certain paradigm shift took place, or, in any case, an important mutation in the cultural mechanisms of national identity reproduction.

The 1918's, apart from its direct territorial and institutional effects, is highly significant, in the economy of this paper, as it sustains a new pattern of relations between national-culture experts on one side and state bureaucrats and political elites on the other side. A new generation of intellectuals, bred in the new Romanian academic system, deriving their legitimacy from an expertise in the national culture but also from their mastery in the occidental scientific canon, collided with the older, established generation of national-culture experts and, even more important, with the new political and state elites, less dependent now on legitimacy from this new intelligentsia, and less able to absorb the huge mass of cultivated youngsters produced by the national educational system. (Livezeanu 1998).

What seems to happen, at the level of the organization of the mechanisms of national culture, is the collapse of the old and unified *national pedagogy*. This pedagogy was unified not necessarily in the sense that we can speak of a thorough unity of cultural groups but concerning the sameness of ideological and scientific resources and the kind of cultural-academic discourse used for “educating” the nation. The pre-1918 *Teachers of the Nation* who, quite successfully, transposed the herbartian, individual pedagogy to the collective, national self, are entering now a very different, i.e. competitive, arena. The polemics on the topic of who held the right criteria for defining the “real”, the “authentic” national-identity, national spaces are multiplying and becoming very harsh.

The field of interwar anthropogeography and geopolitics is not a very homogenous one, not even by the criteria valid in this context, as a number of oppositions and contradictions arise right in the core of it. Is it a sociologically-based discourse, a geographically centered one or is it just another type of *Völkerpsychologie*? How can we understand the regions and the nation in a unique, scientifically based, discourse? The dispute is an open one as this disciplinary field will not be able to close itself in clear cut definitions; there will be different and concurrent definitions but, interestingly enough, a discursive identity will emerge.

The creation of a new image, a new national investment of space is probably the most important product of this interdisciplinary field.

A methodological point of view

According to our opinion, one of the best approaches to this „discursive formation” (Foucault 1972) or, at least, interdisciplinary field, consists in mapping the debates that structured its options and specified its major themes. These debates will be contextualized and situated in the frames of the “representative biographies” (Murphy 1997) of some of those involved.

In mapping external discursive influences I try not to use just a simple “borrowing” model – who is a potentially essentialist one, but, instead, try to reveal the strategic way the “marginal” thinkers are using the ideological and scientific discourse of the more or less “canonic” West to solve local problems and appease local concerns.

The peculiarity of thinking from the margins is, probably, that it consciously tries to keep enough resemblance to the “core” theories that legitimize the central and east-European scholars as scholars, while trying to use the same theories for purposes not always similar to the original ones.

Sometimes talking about disputes between two different scientific canons, one major, the other minor, one central, the other peripheral, can be misleading. Especially because, at the time when these disputes appeared, the “minor” tradition was quite synchronized to the major ones so these disputes became in a way internal, even if tuned to specific interests and locally centered and powered.

Anton Golopenția and the new „science of reality”

The sociological pillar

The representative biography of Anton Golopenția is an essential part in our attempt to understand the sociological pillar of interwar geopolitics. We understand by “representative biography”, according to Jerry Muller (Muller 1987), the condensed story of an individual where the study focuses on those social and cultural contexts that he shared with those who followed a similar intellectual and political trajectory, but also on the differences, the turning points and the alternative intellectual, political and cultural trajectories. The narrative will therefore shuttle back and forth between texts and contexts trying, in doing so, to illuminate a more abstract and general model without losing the connection with the concreteness of historical experience. This model, this larger European twist of mind is that of the radical conservative.

The radical conservative shares many of the *concerns* of more conventional conservatism, such as the need for institutional authority and continuity with the past, but believes that the processes characteristic of modernity have destroyed the valuable legacy of the past for the present, and that a restoration of the virtues of the past therefore demands radical or revolutionary action (Muller 1987, 19).

The defense against the cultural and political effects of modernity on the body politic is thought to require however a homeopathic absorption of the organizational and technological hallmarks of modernity.

This understanding of radical conservatism or what Jeffrey Herf calls reactionary modernism (Herf 1986), is, more or less implicitly, questioning the idea that modernity comes as a package deal. There is just one sole brand of modernity or are there alternate ways of spelling modernity, some of them not very pleasant, even abhorrent from a moral point of view, but still modern. Even if the package-theory was, and still is, very widely sustained, having its quite important theoretical and pragmatically insights, it has been attacked from different view points, starting with Hugo von Hofmannstahl, Thomas Mann and the weimarian conservative revolutionaries and continuing with Karl Mannheim to the more unpassionate analysis of Jeffrey Herf, Fritz Stern, Stefan Breuer and many others.

Geopolitics is one of the most interesting discourses of reactionary modernism. It represents more than a type of argumentation used by a group of scholars and pseudo-scholars grouped around Karl Haushofer and *Zeitschrift für Geopolitik*, being one of the important political and cultural languages of Weimar fragile democratic setting. In the case of Romanian, as we'll see below, this language is not so important, it is not so central as it was in Germany, although it blends very well in the discourse on the unity of the new Romanian state, and, typically for its pragmatic and eclectic twist, is trying to reconcile the German *Geopolitik* and the French human geography of Vidal de la Blache. The badge of geopolitics will be adopted thoroughly and enthusiastically by a larger cultural and academic group only in the context of the political crisis triggered, during the war, by the Viena Diktat and the losing of Transylvania.

A new rhetoric, dynamism, anti-positivism on some levels, trust in science coupled with anti-urban and pro-rural discourses and so-called applicability and realism are the new traits defining geopolitics (Murphy 1997, Agnew 2002 etc).

Anton Golopenția: representative biography

I will not present again Anton Golopenția's intellectual and cultural personal trajectory, the very important influence of Hans Freyer's "science of reality" and the German conservative revolutionaries, I want just to draw your attention to a few facts I wasn't able to present to you at the last workshop and who are quite interesting and important, at least from this paper point of view.

In Berlin, Golopenția attends the lectures of Nikolai Hartmann, Edward Spranger, Vierkandt, Ludwig Klages, Werner Sombart and Hans Günther. The intellectual atmosphere from the Berlin University will be quite a shock for the young neophyte. In a letter to Ștefania Cristescu, his future wife, he wrote: „The

lectures are dull, not even the better professors are doing their best, with the maybe exception of Nikolai Hartmann [...] The professors' obvious weariness, especially Sombart, made me wonder whether I really should desire for myself accomplishments on the land of scholarship." (Golopenția 1999, 114).

In this context, he considers making his PhD thesis with a professor from Bonn rather in the field of ethnography and folkloristic, than in the field of sociology. "Apparently, I'll be preparing my thesis with a professor from Bonn. We'd have there the most renowned philologists of Germany [...]. The interesting for us lies here, with the folklorists and philologists, not with the professors of sociology" (Golopenția 1999, 136).

But the journeys to the "working camps" of the German Youth Movement from Silezia, Löwenberg, at Boberhaus, the contact with an elite group from *Jugendbewegung*, were going to change his plans. We believe that he had a "geopolitical" experience *avant la lettre* in Boberhaus meetings and conferences: "Especially the Hungarians represented a great surprise for me. Now, when we, panic struck, are about to become chauvinists, they and their reviews almost openly criticize the insanity of their up-to-now politics; they strive to know their villages, their motto is: 'first a minorities regime in present Hungary, then claims of revision'. The Bulgarians made me see how neighbors we are and understand how inevitable the fight for the Cadrilater is. I heard then a young Ukrainian who displayed maps on which Maramureș, Bucovina and parts of Basarabia were places among the borders of his future country. My image of Romania enriched substantially: I saw it also through the eyes of our neighbors. Moreover, I saw both with the Bulgarians and the Hungarians, the will to have an own economic and cultural destiny" (Golopenția 1999, 148).

In 1934, Anton Golopenția moves to Leipzig, where he becomes a PhD student of Hans Freyer (Golopenția 2002, lxi-lxii).

In Leipzig, Anton Golopenția will enter a "Romanization" process of his study interests; he will be lecturing on Romania and its present problems. He considers writing for Hans Freyer (who intended to publish a "south-east" library) an analysis of the actions of The German Historical School ideas on Romanian conservative thinkers and politicians (Kogălniceanu, Eminescu), and Schopenhauer's and the neo-kantians' on Junimists. Moreover, he wanted to publish, in the same context, "a booklet on Romania as it hadn't been written ever before" (Golopenția, 1999, 156)

The first subject of his PhD thesis will be one related to the French positivism: "The problem of positive philosophy. The contribution of French positivism to a fundamentation of exploring the realities of history". He will motivate his choice saying that it is related to a personal reaction to German historicism, which he felt himself to be "soaked with" (Golopenția 1999, 177).

However, eventually, his thesis will not be dedicated to positivism and to the French school. In a letter from 1936, the Romanian sociologist considered

that he had attained a new conception on sociology that could fundament “Romania’s present situation, of the neighbouring countries, our past and other’s, the fundamentals of knowledge and the integrant features of social reality, the principles and the history of social sciences” (Golopenția 1999, 203). Social sciences appear as an arsenal of means capable of diagnosing social realities and the actual circumstances of the home country in order to facilitate its survival among neighbouring states and great powers. It is what he will later, more modestly, call geopolitics.

From the point of view of this system, concocted under the powerful influence of Hans Freyer’s¹ theoretical position, Golopenția can criticize then what appears to him as an inconsistency of the monographic project sustained by The Sociology School from Bucharest: “The professor (Dimitrie Gusti – n.n.) ascribes to the monography the mission of an informational tool for the political leaders, but our research focuses more on the folkloric issues of certain villages...We shouldn’t stick ourselves in the mud of individual actions (the monography of all villages), we should be able to balance the recording of the particular and the general, to face the stringent issues of the village (social, economic, health, representations of the state, politics, economy etc), to deal also with Romania’s towns (the workers and suburbanites, the leading bourgeoisie), to know how to gather information on our neighbouring countries and on the great powers”(Golopenția 1999, 203).

The German geopolitical discourse, especially that of the Haushofer school, is quite rarely used in Golopenția’s geopolitics who favors the freyerian construction of a cameralistic sociology in the service of the state. The reference to the European (German) scientific “canon” is creative through a selective lecture and a transformation of the discourse recognized as “geopolitical” in the European scientific space. This adjustment, translation, can be framed, when successful, in the limits of the recognizable. We have, with Golopenția but also with the entire interwar Romanian “geopolitics”, an example of the complex and ambiguous relationship wrought between the “center” and the “periphery”, of the adjustment and transformation of western scientific languages in Romanian social sciences and of the perpetual double game between the modification of the discourses and the scientific instruments and the maintaining of the criteria through which they can be accepted and recognized by the “central” western canon.

¹ In one of his letters to Tudor Vianu, Golopenția characterizes Hans Freyer: “a nietzschean of a remarkable capacity of doing what Germans called *Geistesgeschichte*, but also a skilled manipulator of statistics and sources and an alert observer” (Golopenția 1999, 334)

A few polemics

After returning from Germany, Anton Golopenția will quite rapidly reintegrate in the Bucharest Sociology School, taking an active part in the defending of its position either from certain “dissidents” such as Dumitru Cristian Amzăr, or from the critical stances coming from Celestin Bouglé or Helmut Klocke.

This paper doesn’t want to give a detailed account of the tensions and the arguments existent inside interwar Romanian sociology, however, we will briefly attempt to illustrate Golopenția’s stand in this context. The answers to the attacks started in 1937 by the former monographist, D.C. Amzăr, in *Ideea românească, Însemnări sociologice* (review published by Traian Brăileanu in Cernăuți) and in *Rânduiala*² are given by H.H. Stahl, Traian Herseni and, last but not least, Anton Golopenția. The theme of the debates is an essential one. Is monographic sociology “the science of the Romanian nation”? Is, in this respect, sociology a synthetic science made up of different particular sciences or it can directly, without the use of intermediary sciences, realize the “science of the nation”?

A. Golopenția is very careful in not being seen as sustaining the anti-gustian, socio-ethnological and philosophical dissidence that grew around D.C. Amzăr and Ernest Bernes. “D.C. Amzăr mentions in a note my article [...], considering that my interpretation of the science of the Romanian nation is quite similar to his. I believe that D.C. Amzăr didn’t take into consideration what I had said there, since I couldn’t find any resemblance between our driving ideas.” (Golopenția 2002, 80). It was a good opportunity for Golopenția to restate his “geopolitical” stand. Even if this term doesn’t appear at all, the resemblance with *Însemnare cu privire la definirea preocupării ce poartă numele de geopolitică* is obvious: “...I believe that the role of sciences is to help people and nation assert themselves. The role of social sciences, of the sciences dealing with the communities man lives in, is to help the leaders of these communities. First of all, the role of social sciences appears to me, since nation is the most important of these communities, *to help the leaders of the State of their own nation (neam), by perfect information made by specialists for the political leaders*. Social sciences fulfill their mission by clarifying through concrete research the current situation and the evolutive tendencies of the nation, both within it and in relation with the fiend and friendly nations” (Golopenția 2002, 80). The articulation between national research – that we, considering *Însemnare cu privire la definirea preocupării ce poartă numele de geopolitică* can define as geopolitics – and the general theory of social reality (the theoretical part of sociology) is performed on the concrete/abstract binome, overlapping the national/universal one: „Concrete research is national, it clarifies the situation of

² The review of the „disidence” to Gusti school, led by D.C. Amzăr, E. Bernea, Ion I. Ionică and Ion Samarineanu.

one's own nation; general theory is relatively universal, usable by all the nations which have a similar structure." (Golopenția 2002, 81). The last accusation formulated by Amzăr, concerning the impracticability, unrealism of the Gustian project is rejected by Golopenția less vividly, the Romanian sociologist having, of reasons others than Amzăr's, his own abstentions.

A. Golopenția points to D.C. Amzăr – who was during that period actively involved in The Legionary Movement (Iron Guard) – a “canonic”, external scientific discourse as template, as discourse, as syntax and common scientific vocabulary: *Wissenschaft vom deutschen Volke* (Golopenția 2002, 81). But the two use this “canon” in very different ways. Golopenția sustained cameralistic approach have little in common with the ethnographical – spiritual perspective on nation and the destiny inherent to Romanian ethnos embraced by the philosopher D.C. Amzăr.

D.C. Amzăr's perspective surely deserves a more complex approach than we'll be able to do here. His national self-knowledge project presupposes the clarifying of the bond between ‘thought’ and ‘word’, an understanding of the Romanian spirit, ethos “on the line the Greek ethos followed when it first became conscious of itself” (Amzăr 1935, 35). The difference between the ethnical – ontological tendency represented by Amzăr and the cameralistic one represented by Golopenția becomes visible when Amzăr speaks of “the young generation” and of the exceptional role that they have to play in history. Founding part of his discourse, like many other interwar thinkers, on a reformulation of the classical dichotomy form/fond, and criticizing the modern Romanian non-substantial change of political elites or of superficial laws and institutions, D. C. Amzar expects redemption through a virile embodiment of the new generation: “His thought (the personification of the new generation) is of renewing the life of the Romanian society not in its forms, but in its *spirit*, not in its external appearance, but in its *inner order* [...] This means a change in the *man himself*, in his way of being, of thinking and of working and not a mere replacing of people with other people. This means reaching, through inner growth, a new human level [...] which would take the Romanian people to their true existence and self completion in their thought and historical deed.” (Amzăr, 1935b, 421).

Anton Golopenția assumes, as we showed above, the role of defender of the monographic sociology perspective over the nation and the state in the inner disputes with various “sociological dissidences” or with the interpretation coming from the field of philosophy and ethnology or other attempts of “ethnic ontologies” (Antoși 2002). This role doesn't stop at the internal, national level as Golopenția gets involved also in answering to some external ‘threats’.

The book *Les convergences des sciences sociales et l'Esprit international*, published in Paris in 1938, contains a critique of the gustian sociology made by one of the most important representatives of the durkheimian sociological school:

Celestin Bouglé. Gustian sociology is, according to Bouglé, nationalist and not general enough, too empiric, not contributing enough to the unification of social sciences. This national phase of sociology is, in Bouglé's view, prevalent especially in Central Europe (Bouglé 1938, 13).

As far as the monographic approach is concerned, a central one for the identity of the Sociological School from Bucharest, Bouglé, who sees it as resembling Le Play's, accuses it of a folkloric-nationalizing tendency. "In village monographies, engendered in Romania mostly by Mr. Gusti, a very powerful belief manifests itself...: if village research represents for our Romanian colleagues the true center of sociology, this is surely explained only by the fact that to them, rural population, preservers of precious customs and practices, are Romania's major force, both moral and material. (Bouglé 1938: 13 apud Golopenția 2002, 86).

Golopenția's answer is very prompt. To him, the construction part of a theoretical and methodological instrument "isn't ...the only role of the scientist specialized in the study of social realities". The entire theoretical-methodological construction doesn't have (anymore) an autonomous stake because it is formed "for a reason which transcends science: making easier the leadership of social life" (Golopenția 2002, 86). Focusing sociological studies on villages doesn't represent, in Golopenția's view, "the true core of sociology", at least not in the sense of an essential and self-standing interest, as Bouglé believed, but simply the result of "applying a method...in Romania's special context" (Golopenția 2002, 86). Villages are significant for Romanian sociology neither for the ancient customs and practices they preserved, nor for being in a process of urbanization and westernization but because "they represent *the body of the Romanian people*, to the unity of which the Romanian sociologists should participate, above all, through their research. (Golopenția 2002, 87).

Consequently, the stakes of the Romanian sociology seems to be overlapping the project of a harmonious social change, of well sociologically informed social engineering. The role of sociology appears to consist in the slowing down of the dissolution of socially important traditions and in hastening the receiving of salutary innovations; it "consolidates as much as possible the country traditional spiritual culture and promotes hygiene, modern agricultural techniques..." (Golopenția 2002, 87). Besides an exaggerated optimism, the way in which A. Golopenția presents the Bucharest monographic sociology as applied science, in the service of the state and of the administration, seems to exclude from this science any question referring to values and final stakes. This science, thinks Golopenția, isn't intrinsically more "nationalistic" than durkheimian sociology, whose distinguished heir Bouglé considered himself to be.

The lack of understanding that Celestin Bouglé showed towards The Bucharest School approach is far from being only conjunctural. We will not

begin here a systematic comparison between the Durkheimian School and Gusti's School, even though this approach is worth emphasizing. However, we find ourselves in front of an apparently more complicated situation. Anton Golopenția, one of Dimitrie Gusti's students, defends the Bucharest school with arguments coming from Hans Freyer, in front of one of Emile Durkheim's most distinguished heirs.

The sociology of modernity, as the master from Sorbonne instituted it, may be understood like a communitarian defense of liberalism (Cladis 1992, Stedman 2001) and as a critique of Tönnies's theories (Durkheim 1889), nevertheless there are several important aspects which are not very well articulated in durkheimian sociology. Modern society, grounded on the organicity of the social division of work and having individualism – a specific product of modern society – as its sole legitimate morality and ideology, is kept together by a moral order related to citizenship, education and professional groups but the reintegration of modern society, unlike the traditional or segmented one, implies, necessarily, the background of a homogenous and closed space.

Organic solidarity, as structure of the society, and corporatism, as a solution for the modern crisis, imply the existence of a national state, of a homogenous social national space that provides the background for anomie's drama and the complementarities induced by the social division of work. The fact that Durkheim's sociology emerges after that immense social, cultural, economic, military and communicational process that Eugen Weber dubbed as "the transformation of the peasants into Frenchmen" (Weber 1966) is probably not accidental. Durkheimian sociology is the sociology of a homogenous national state where traditional regionalisms were completely defeated and where nationalism became "common" (Billig 1995); "the national" being obscured behind the unfolding of "the social" forces. The founding of the Sorbonne sociology, the fight for education and the imposing of a new type of intellectual, artfully presented by Lepenies (Lepenies 1990), are pieces from a necessary "destructive analysis" (Handler 1988, Handler 1985) to which the entire European sociology should be probably subjected in order to gain access to the national implicit that often hides beyond very "positivist" formulations.

Due to the different phase in the "national construction" process and the different modality in which social sciences intervened in articulating this process, monographic sociology à la Gusti will show a relative indifference to durkheimian sociology. The lack of understanding will be reciprocal. The attempted monographic accomplishment of a science of the nation through the study of Romanian villages couldn't appear as realistic to a sociologist for whom a synthetic science of sociology was far from being entirely constituted³.

³ „Mais pour qu'on en puisse juger, celle-ci est-elle d'ores et déjà intégralement constituée? Nous en sommes loin. Et le sociologues ne sont pas les derniers à le proclamer. Qu'on mesure plutôt l'étendue du programme que lui

From this point of view, of great interest are the adverse reactions of the group of young scholars who went to study in France after a more or less prolonged monographic experience: Bernea, Brauner, Cristescu and Ionică. Their partial inability of adjusting to the sociological and ethnological French model is obvious in their letters sent to Romania (Golopenția 2005).

The group of “primitive” texts, cultures and populations on which French sociology fed (Mauss 1974) was completely uninteresting both for D.C. Amzăr and for A. Golopenția, even if for very different reasons. The distance between Trocadero in Paris and The Village Museum in Bucharest measures accurately the distance between the Durkheim’s school and Gusti’s school.

If, describing the dispute with D.C. Amzăr, we have the same national-institutional context but opposite discourses of construction and/or national consolidation (one – cameralistic, the other – spiritualist/ethnic), in the case of Celestin Bouglé’s critique, the differences in articulating social sciences with the national project made the lack of understanding inevitable at the very level of fundamental vocabulary.

“National”, from A. Golopenția’s explicit⁴ point of view, simply means the local application, on a space legitimated by the existence of a national state, of a general theoretical corpus. The problem of a possible incompatibility between social sciences’ two levels of action is obscured by the creation of an instrumentalist image, through which sociology doesn’t built nation through knowledge as it partly was the case with the Gustian *Sociologia Militans* but rather helps the state in this process.

“National”, from the durkheimian sociologist’s point of view, means the existence of a *particular* case, in a context in which the French *sociologism*, due to Marcel Mauss and his students, attempted a broad comparison of the diverse “particulars” with the future aim of accomplishing a synthetic sociology. The study of one’s own national particular wasn’t that interesting in a moment in which French sociology’s national particular roots were almost obscured in an objective-scientific knowledge corpus which seemed capable of embracing the entire world, or at least the one marked by what was left from the French empire (Stocking 1983).

Anton Golopenția’s stand towards Helmut Klocke’s study, an ex-colleague of his, student of H. Freyer’s and G. Ibsen’s and assistant at the Hungarian Institute from Berlin University, (Landvolk und Dorf in madjarischer und rumänischer Sicht, in *Deutsches Archiv für Landes – und Volksforschung*, an

trace M. Mauss dans son article sur les ‘Divisions et proportions des divisions de la sociologie’ (Année sociologique, nouvelle serie 1924-1925). Elle aurait à coordonner les résultats de recherches sociologiques spéciales – économiques, juridiques, religieuses etc. – en les rapportant toujours à ces tous que sont les groupes. Elle mettrait en lumière ce qui constitue les systèmes sociaux et ce qui est dû à leur influence, elle relèverait la propagation des faits de civilisation par-dessus les frontieres des groupes. Toutes tâches qui supposent d’immenses enquêtes, des responses à des questionnaires méthodiquement établis, des études ‘sociographiques’ de toutes sortes, un travail cyclopéen” (Bouglé 1938, 93).

⁴ We believe that there is different, implicit, level.

I, 1937, 4, 990-1023) published in 1939 in *Sociologia românească*, is interesting because Klocke seems to accuse gustian sociology of the same flaw that C. Bouglé underlined; that is its “ethnicism”. However, the German rural sociologist’s position is quite different from that of Durkheim’s disciple. It isn’t the existence of an abstract and systematic science which forms the criterion according to which the monographic approach of Romanian sociology is judged by, but “the etatic principle”.

Hungarian rural sociology, strongly influenced by the sociology of Gusti School, is, says Klocke, ethnicist. The two rural sociologies, Hungarian and Romanian, are, in Helmut Klocke’s view, interested only in their own kindred, indifferent toward the state which includes pieces of other nations (Klocke p. 1000 apud Golopenția 2002, 89). This time, there is a direct attack and it indirectly reveals, in an oblique way, we believe, through the lapidarity of the received answer and even through a certain clumsiness and aggression rarely to be found in the texts of the Romanian sociologist, a difference between the Golopenția’s geopolitical cameralism and the monographic-cumulative science of the nation coming from Gusti. The only answer that Golopenția was able to find, was the following: “we began with a series of Romanian regions because they are of great interest for us. But we will continue just like both professor Gusti and some of us said, with the study of foreign infiltration villages and the other social layers from Romania, for the sake of our dear state” (Golopenția 2002: 90).

In the case when at least one of the roots of the nation can be traced, in what Anton Golopenția, following Hans Freyer, defined as the *ottocento Geist*, its disappearance in a world which became geopolitical – in the peculiar sense of this term attributed by the Romanian sociologist – leads to a change in the intimate structure of the nation itself. If the nation is seemingly absorbed by the national state, “the radical imaginary” of the nation and nationalism disappears completely in front of its “institutional imaginary” (Castoriadis 1987).

However, A. Golopenția’s position appears to be rather one of ignoring the changes that the emergence of a geopolitical world implies in the very constitution and reproduction mechanisms of the nation. The nation is understood as having a strong natural-organic setting and as existing behind scientific discourses. Thus, the primordial national community is implicitly constructed as a substrate which sustains and nurtures the scientific discourses; in this process they become tainted with meanings different from the explicit arguments. This un - or under-formulated stances can be seen and deciphered either in the context of arguments, or in the context of unexpected agreements between different scientific positions, behind which one may guess this diffuse, common ideology, of the organic, primordial character of the nation.

Ion Conea, geohistory and geopolitics

Following the discordances, but mostly the understanding and the recognition between apparently irreconcilable positions, we believe we may reach a certain episteme (Foucault 1972) that would offer a broader comprehension of the inter-war national construction type in social and geographical sciences. I will not present you in any detail, Conea's position, as I've already done that at our last workshop, but I want to point out how our analysis can enrich itself and gain depth by comparing the cameralistic - geopolitics with the Geohistory-geopolitics

In the late 30s, as far as the disciplinary field of Romanian geography is concerned, the references to geopolitics gain importance and enter in an area of common, even if at some times still silent, acceptance of the term.

As early as 1935, in an article dedicated to one of the leading characters in Romanian geography, Vintilă Mihăilescu speaks about the "antropogeographical and geopolitical research" (Mihăilescu 1935, 15) made by George Vâlsan.

The same author, in a "Report on the geographical sciences in Romania during the past ten years" (1925-1935), writes a column called "Issues of geopolitics and anthropogeography" in which he includes a relatively large number of books and authors. "Le pays et le peuple roumain" (Simion Mehedinți, Bucharest 1972), "Dacia pontică și Dacia carpatică" (Mehedinți, Bucharest 1928 in *Buletinul Societății Regale Române de Geografie*, volume XLVII), "Cadrul antropogeografic al țărilor de peste munți" (Simion Mehedinți Bucharest 1929), „Mediul fizic extern și capitalul biologic național” (G. Vâlsan, in *Buletinul eugenic și biopolitic*, 1-2, Cluj 1928), „Transilvania în cadrul unitar al pământului și poporului românesc” (G. Vâlsan, in *Transilvania, Banatul, Crișana, Maramureșul 1918-1928*, Bucharest 1929), „Basarabii din Argeș” (Ion Conea, in *Rânduiala*, București 1935), „Țara Loviștei” (Ion Conea, in *Buletinul Societății Regale Române de Geografie*, volume LIII, Bucharest 1935), „O hartă a principalelor tipuri de așezări rurale din România” (Vintilă Mihăilescu, in *Buletinul Societății Regale Române de Geografie*, tom XLUI, Bucharest, 1928. Other books regarded as of antropogeography and geopolitics are those of Gheorghe Năstase, Victor Tufescu etc. (Mihăilescu 1935b).

Apparently, we find ourselves in front of a retrospective action of geopolitical re-defining and re-naming a certain part of the foregoing geography and of contouring new expectancy horizons, based on these themes. Actually, Vintilă Mihăilescu will be one of the most diligent contributors, coming from the field of geography, to *Geopolitica și Geoistoria* review. As far as the issues discussed here are concerned, an interesting renaming may be found in the first number of this review, when an older article belonging to Simion Mehedinți - *Chestia orientală, din punct de vedere geografic și etnografic* („The oriental issue, from a geographical and ethnographic point of view”) – published in

Buletinul Societății Regale Române de Geografie in 1914, becomes: *România în marginea continentului. O problemă de geopolitică românească și europeană* (“Romania on the border of the continent. A Romanian and European geopolitical issue”).

The adoption of a geopolitic terminology seems to coincide with the broader European (German) tendency. In the early 20s, the term “geopolitics” was still an exotic one, connected to Rudolf Kjellèn’s translations from Swedish into German. The geopolitical sciences and the ideas related to it “were largely confined to a small circle of writers and thinkers on the fringes of the German geographic establishment” (Murphy 1997, IX). In 1928, geopolitics and the related themes become common among the German cultivated public milieus. According to Otto Maul, one of the famous *Zeitschrift für Geopolitik* founders, “there may not have been a time, maybe neither that of the great discoveries, when geographical thinking were regarded with so much interest among those outside geographical sciences as it is today, a result of the high market value owned by geopolitics.” (Otto Maul, 1928, Geopolitik, in *Zeitschrift für Geopolitik*, 61 apud Murphy 1997: x).

On the other hand, in an essay published in 1932 in *Buletinul Societății Regale Romane de Geografie*, on “The military view point in geography study”, essay in which we would have expected to encounter a harsh, haushoferian German geopolitical use of the term, general Al. Rizeanu, member of The Major State of the Romanian Army, doesn’t show any sign that he had heard of general Karl Haushofer, writing a military geography entirely *à la française*.

Geopolitics isn’t mentioned at all and everything is defined in the framework of a military geography. This may seem odd and may represent an argument against our hypothesis on the emergence of a new, “geopolitical” sub-theme in “the political language” (Pocock 1987) that gives shape to the imaging of the nation during the inter-war period. Nevertheless, I believe that this article doesn’t necessarily imply the inexistence of such a sub-theme, but, instead, it provides us with a temporal and structural limit of this supposed language. We might say that, in 1932, geopolitics’ “political language” hadn’t been yet widely propagated in Romania. From a structural point of view, we may perceive here a breach between the academic and the political-military decisional milieus, a breach that we cannot demonstrate in this context, but which seems plausible in inter-war Romania. In the geopolitical field, this breach will be mediated after The Vienna Treaty of 1940 through an attempt to use a common language with those who were thought to be responsible for the decision leading to losing Transylvania: the German state and the German geopolitics.

He believes that the transformation that takes place in the formation of geopolitics as self-standing disciplinary discourse may be noticed in the transition from the geopolitical considerations present in books of political geography, to books and studies having as their main theme geopolitics itself.

This transition is closely related to the emergence in Germany of a constant interest in colonialism and to the emergence of German *Weltpolitik*⁵. *Geopolitik* or *Weltpolitik* are one and the same thing. The foundation of *Deutsche Kolonial Gesellschaft* in 1887 and Wilhelm II obsession with the central role that Germany should have in world politics were, according to Ion Conea, the instances that made possible the emergence of the geopolitical discourse in Germany. Referring to the founding instance of geopolitics, accomplished with the Uppsala professor Rudolf Kjellèn's writings, Conea believes that : "Swedish geopolitics had been drawn towards Germany and naturalized (almost monopolized there) by the *Weltpolitik* phenomenon ostentatiously announced and inaugurated by Wilhelm II" (Conea, 1937, 37).

However, geopolitics is, according to Ion Conea, a legitimate science. There are three general tendencies which play a role in the formation of the possibility and legitimacy space for the emergence of this new science.

- First, there is the tendency towards globalization. The earth becomes smaller, but no "global village" appears, as the subsequent idealists and utopians will believe. Nor is there a communitarian utopia in the way in sight. The main result of this "decrease" of Terra is the emergence of "frictions zones" of global importance and scope.
- Secondly, there is the tendency of nationalization. The nations are spreading in the entire world. One of the most important consequences of the nationalization of the world, says Conea, is the fact that people become strongly emotionally attached to marginal economical, cultural and geographical spaces.
- The third tendency represents the increasing importance held by geography in the public space. The entire world is fascinated with the local and the localization, with comparing countries on the maps, with spatial projection of the tensions and dilemmas which were once felt rather on a temporal level. Geography becomes, Conea says, "a daily nourishment for our spirit, the modern man's" (Conea, 1937, 33).

According to Ion Conea, globalization has even a psychological-cognitive side. The continuous tension resulting from the possible dangers, the continuous fear that "somewhere, can take fire the spark which may start at once burning and girdle the entire earth" (Conea 1973, 23) are all results of the cultural and political way of thinking which prevails over the new world: "pensée de peur" (Conea 1937). Unfortunately, the Romanian geographer doesn't insist on this revolutionary aspect which will transform the political thinking and practices in the world (see also Sloterdijk 2005).

A significant importance in the emergence of a globalized world seems to have, according to Ion Conea, the First World War: "...beyond the borders of

⁵ The importance of German colonialist discourse for the emergence of geopolitics was recently brought in the fore ground by David Murphy's studies (Murphy 1997)

Europe, on the most backward continents, the world war came with a sum of influences and circumstances that favored the emergence of the idea of country in the conscience of the natives.” (Conea 1937, 24). But this idea of a well defined territorial country also meant the idea of emancipation from the rule of the yesterday’s or today’s master. The notion of “territorial country” was born out of the junction of numerous and apparently heterogeneous factors which actually blend and intensify one another, in a world whose novelty fascinates all geopoliticians. This fascination with dynamism, the acute consciousness of the novelty of the world we live in, are the features that reunite the European sensitivities, also being one of reactionary modernism’s most important features (Herf 1986).

Geopolitics isn’t just a creation of this new world, its role consists also of activating it, passing it beyond the scientific research towards action and propaganda. It is not a mere science of determination, through earth, of the political events, but is also similar to an “arena of sportive competitions” (Conea 1939, 2). Passion, force, youth are words which appear in the attempt to legitimize geopolitics as a unifying discourse of scientific perspective and political implications: ”...the interest in geopolitics fills more and more the minds and souls of young people around the world. It is about time to start filling also those of our youngsters. We live in a profoundly geopolitical time and the young people must be geopolitical too. The context, the period, the country demand it” (Conea 1939, 111).

This process of interdependency between the political, economic and ideological life of the states is a new phenomenon and has to be studied, the Romanian geographer says, by a new science. Political sciences, in their old meaning, or political geography, aren’t able to assume this task, to explain these new ranges of phenomena.

Political geography represents only the geographical science of the state, of mankind in its politically compartmented appearance. Political sciences, working with uncertain typologies, are too abstract and too general. A science of inter-state relationships and tensions is needed, a science of the planetary political milieu. This science would have as legitimate and autonomous object of study the political and economical problems that appear in regions representing the great natural personalities of the planet (straits, isthmuses, commercial routes etc.) To Ion Conea, this science is the geopolitics (Conea 1937). Globalization or, as Ion Conea puts it: “the phenomenon...of interdependency in the political and economical life of the states...being a phenomenon *new* on the planet, it should require a new *specific* discipline for its study (Conea 1937, 68).

If for Anton Golopenția the confluences and the differences between sociology and geopolitics had to be highlighted, as far as Ion Conea is concerned, the problematic connection is that between political geography and geopolitics.

The paradigm shift, represented in geography by Fr. Ratzel's writings, is one of the benchmarks of political geography from where, due to a "reactionary-modernist" approach (Herf 1986), geopolitics begun (Farinelli 2001). Even if the notion "political geography" is present even as early as Turgot (Nordman 1998), only with Ratzel "the state makes geography its property and becomes its supreme object" (Farinelli 2001, 44). The way in which Fr. Ratzel succeeds in creating an explosive combination between and idealist perception of the state and a positivist-materialist theoretical shell taken over from biological evolutionism (Agnew 2002, 66) will mark political geography's and geopolitics' subsequent development.

The difference between political geography and geopolitics isn't related, Conea believes, to the absence or the presence of the dynamic feature, but rather to the existence of a new and autonomous object of study. If political geography studies the state from a geographical perspective, geopolitics will study rather *the globalization process* than *the state* (Conea 1937).

The interesting part for us in Conea's attempt to give a history of the concept of geopolitics, attempt setting him apart from Anton Golopenția, as they both connect to a western scientific canons, is the massive presence, and the continuous attempts of paralleling French political and human geography to German geopolitics.

The French political geography - which is almost totally absent from Golopenția's understanding of geopolitics - plays a significant part in Ion Conea's reading of geopolitics. Vidal de la Blache, Albert Demangeon, Jacques Ancel but also historians like Lucien Febvre and Ernest Granger are read, interpreted and used in showing and counterbalancing the irredentist and racist biases of German *Geopolitik*.

Ion Conea almost integrally appropriates Jacques Ancel's critique from *Manuel géographique de politique européenne* to German geopolitics as being an intensely patriotized science and therefore un-objective. This is a "justified characterization...though a little exaggerated, of the German geopolitical school." (Conea 1937, 43). In our opinion, Ion Conea has here an unbalanced stand, maybe even incoherent, we might say, trying to preserve, for his own construction of the Romanian geopolitics, the militant nature of German geopolitics together with the French school's claims for objectivity and positivist scientificity⁶.

"Should they be trustworthy in their belief and comments, German authors are too integrated in the German political conceptions and public life to be able to maintain their serenity when writing their geopolitics tomes. A totalitarian state – to use a fashionable terminology – as Germany is today, is

⁶ This does not imply that the French vidalian approach is a strictly objective one, but that, it does not have, an explicit national and racial militantism as is the case with most German geopolitics (for a more detailed discussion see also Laurent Mucchieli, *De la nature à la culture. Les fondateurs Français des sciences humaines 1870-1940*, these de Doctorat, Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales, Paris 1996)

totalitarian also in the sense of channeling all the knowledge towards German patriotic interests. Science itself is channeled [...] no other discipline, by its origin, object and methods, is as fit for this channeling as geopolitics. It serves both the German after-game spirit and racism.” (Conea 1937, 43).

Maybe the reason why this lack of coherence between passion, militantism, dynamism and scientificism doesn't seem insurmountable in the Romanian geopolitician's discourse is due to an implicitly accepted conception which establishes and grounds his scientific discourse. This conception refers to the organic nature of the national state, basic for the true coming of a science which serves it and builds upon it. Hence the absence of sensitivity towards what, to us, may seem incoherent if we embrace a vision lacking the implicit base of this discourse.

What is nowadays geopolitics will be tomorrow history as all history was geopolitics therefore, so, Conea concludes, geopolitics can be understood only together with geohistory or geographical history and has a scientific status in the same way history has a scientific status. The two discourses are not the same, but they are complementary. (Conea 1939). The globalization study appears to be also a present history study. Behind this attempt to define geopolitics and geohistory together, there most certainly is Conea's interest in “the great natural individualities” of the planet: “geopolitics' object is represented by...the political and economical issues that the regions and great natural individualities of the planet pose...analyzing...the natural regions which, at a certain time, pose world economical and political issues” (Conea 1937, 92-93).

Consequently, there is a kind of geopolitical problematic *avant la lettre* that can be found, in a still diffuse way, in history. The globalization of the world, the acceleration of history will result in the fulfillment and subsequent connection of these *membra disjecta* in a coherent scientific corpus that would eventually grow more and more scientific, passing from analogies to types and laws, as the globalization phenomena become more and more obvious. In Conea's view, geopolitics will be an organic science, growing and completing alongside with globalization, but also with the nationalization of the world.

The distance between Golopentia's and Conea's geopolitics⁷ seems quite important and not easily bridgeable. Nonetheless, the two scholars, even when disagreeing on substantial matters, such as geopolitics' appropriate object of study, acknowledge each other as speaking the same language, promoting the same discourse. For example, in Conea's ample essay, published in *Sociologie Românească*, in 1937, and explicitly referring to the definition and legitimization of the new science of geopolitics (Conea 1937), A. Golopentia is described as “a young researcher very deeply and seriously concerned with geopolitics” (Conea 1937, 30).

⁷ It is quite interesting to see how Conea is trying to keep a franco-german balance in his discourse (e.g. L.Febvre vs. Hugo Hassinger)

The answer to this seemingly paradoxical „substantial” disagreement and „lexical” agreement between two different approaches to geopolitics is, in our view, at least twofold.

First, the answer might consist of the involvement of the two Romanian geopoliticians in a common project, a review presenting geopolitical issues: *Geopolitica și Geoistoria*, which broadly debated the Transylvanian issue. Apparently, we find ourselves in front of a case of articulation of diverse utterings and discourses labeled as geopolitics almost only for external use.⁸ This is as if the Romanian authors had tried to speak German geopolitics language in order to be clearly understood by the native speakers of this language. But this is only partially true. One of the simplest counterarguments that can be formulated against this explanation of the emerging of geopolitics, seen as simply a post-Viena propaganda instrument, is the chronological counterargument. In interwar sociological and geographical milieu, discussions on geopolitics had begun as early as five years⁹ before The Vienna Treaty. We will refer further to this aspect.

The second part of the answer is a little more complex and, in our opinion, is related to the existence of a common political language that establishes the themes of national continuity and the organic nature of the nation. These play the role of a background against which both the cameralistic science of social reality sustained by Anton Golopenția, and the geographical and historiographical science of globalization and localization as defined by Ion Conea, can be expressed in a common project, mutually recognized as sharing the same meaning in this organicist context.

Apparently, we enter here a space where scientific discourses combine almost naturally objectivity, scientificity and positivist claims with nation's and national space primordialist construction pattern (see above).

Most certainly, beginning with the Swedish origins themselves of the term, or even with Friedrich Ratzel's laws of political geography, there has been a tension among an organicist and a technical discourse in geopolitics. With Rudolf Kjellèn geopolitics is a chapter of political sciences studying the positioning (*die Reichslage*), the form (*die Reichsgestalt*) and territory (*das Reichgebiet*) of the state as life form and the organicist metaphors are abundant:

“The state cannot float in the air; it is connected to a certain soil, just like the forest. From this soil it takes its nourishment and within its surface its

⁸ In the Archive of Foreign Affairs Ministry, Paris Peace Conference Fund, there is a documentary file written by Anton Golopenția, dedicated to the Csango problem and drawn for the Comission for Peace Issues Study where we can find a article by Traian Stoianovici from one of *Geopolitica și Geoistoria* issues which hadn't been yet released for the public. Consequently, we might conclude that one of the benchmarks for the operation of this review consisted of preparing analyses and useful texts for the issues stipulated by The Foreign Affair Ministry.

⁹ We can even find 1928 references, but the significant writings that attempt to define and use the term for local theoretical and practical reasons appear only later, in 1935-1937.

particular trees mingle their roots" (Rudolf Kjellèn), *Der Staat als Lebenform*, Leipzig 1917, 53 apud Conea 1937, 10).

According to Richard Henning, states are "living ethnical and political organisms, equipped not only with a conservation instinct, but also with an expansion, fuller temporally living and longer spatially extended instinct" (Henning 1931, 24). Or, as Ion Conea puts it, approvingly quoting Rudolf Kjellèn: "The Great Powers are the most grandiose of all life forms" (Rudolf Kjellèn, *Die Grossmächte vor und nach dem Weltkriege*, Leipzig & Berlin 1935, p. 3 apud Conea 1937, 11). Ion Conea will frequently use this type of organicist metaphor and we shall give here only one example – which can be multiplied *ad libitum* – from one of Conea's most interesting texts: *Corectări geografice în istoria Românilor* (*Geographic corrections in Romanians history*) (Conea 1938). Referring to the importance of the roads in the emergence of the state – a position sustained in Romanian historiography by prominent figures, such as Nicolae Iorga or the younger P. P. Panaitescu – Conea gives a geopolitical flavour when saying that "the states emerged and sprang on the roads like buds on branches" (Conea 1938, 43).

The Romanian geopolitician doesn't forget to highlight science's ethno-politic value; referring to the location of the battle of Posada, he says: "the place where it happened should become, especially nowadays, when nations experience the fever of a violent self-consciousness, a sanctuary of worship especially for the young generation...because of two reasons: first, because in that battle and, consequently in *that place* sparkled – as the Hungarian historians themselves agree – the first thrill of Romanian national conscience and, secondly, because, nowadays, this consciousness lives in paroxysm, uniting, as never before, all the Romanians" (Conea 1938, 86).

We could make this part of our argument clearer by following Ion Conea's request for a *Romanian* geohistory, similar in project to what Vidal de la Blanche did in *Tableau de la géographie de la France* or Lucien Febvre in *La Terre et l'évolution Humaine*, but also Hugo Hassinger in *Geographisches Grundlagen der Geschichte*:

"...how backward we are! Keeping pace with France in this respect would be, indeed, almost as if we had...Coressi as an author of a work called *Comentarii geografice la expedițiile lui Traian în Dacia* (*Geographical comments on Trajan's expeditions in Dacia*)! But we do not have such a work, not even today. (And what a wonderful work it would be!). But, up to this moment, we do not know even the exact location of Decebal's capital, the *Dacian Sarmizegetusa*. Neither of the Dacian citadels (or their ruins) on several Sebeș mountains peaks - and all are waiting to be studied. No one unsettles their millenary peace. We don't have yet and up to this present moment, a single historian [...] who had walked on all those peaks under which the citadels

lie...But those who walked on them were an...Ackner, a Neigebauer, an...Davies¹⁰” (Conea 1939, 20).

Because of the weakness of historiography and of the weakness of historical time itself, of the absence of documents and evidences from the Romanian Middle Ages, the destiny of historical geography and geohistory, closely connected to geopolitics, is, according to Ion Conea, to “disperse much of the historical darkness of the Romanian nation” (Conea 1939, 21).

The articulation between science and an organic, natural process that would represent the basis of nation’s historical assertion is quite clear with Ion Conea. With Anton Golopenția on the other hand, this phenomenon is more strongly obscured due to geopolitics’ - cameralistic science apparent - technicism and instrumentalism. But eventually, this instrumentalism too is grafted, maybe in a less obvious way than with Ion Conea, on the existence of an implicit organic continuity between state, nation and history.

On the other hand, Ion Conea is very cautious as far as possible mitigations that can hamper a scientific research limiting it to a national area are concerned. We saw how he attempts to absolve geopolitics of un-objectivity, accusation formulated by French human and political geography against a Germanized science, seemingly captive in a very specific and subjective national irredentist project. He will do the same thing for historical geography, the beginnings of which go back to Vidal de la Blanche, Lucien Febvre and Ernest Granger. However, the Romanian geographer will be very cautious to mention Hugo Hassinger, in order to demonstrate that he doesn’t simply represent the position of the “other side”, that the discussion isn’t about a “French” science (Conea 1939, 12).

This is as if a national, unspecified, scientific and objective instrument was needed, precisely for handling specific national issues; any lack of scientificity of the theory (meaning its exclusive German or French character) would have a negative impact on an own national project.

Setting social sciences, geopolitics and geohistory against a natural-organic background is also related to an image of an “ongoing” history fulfilling national energies. The abstract from Rudolf Kjellèn that Conea straightforwardly and enthusiastically sustains is, in our view, eloquent from this point of view.

“The People of a State resembles a plant system, is a product of nature. It flows through time like a river which always remains the same, even if the water circles and the water drops are different. The more intimate a nation strikes roots on a certain land, the more numerous the former generation that fertilized it with their blood and bones are, the stronger the solidarity with that land is, the more

¹⁰ M.J. Ackner and F. Müller are the authors of the first homogenous collection of inscriptions coming from Romanian Dacia, *Die Römischen Inschriften in Dacien*, Viena, 1865. Their work was criticized by Th Mommsen. Ackner visited Hațeg Country in 1847. K. Goos is the author of the *Chronik der Archäologischen Funde Siebenbürgens* published in *Archiv des Vereins für Siebenbürgischen Landeskunde* from 1867.(n.n.-C.C.)

people and land express more than one reality. With every generation that, after completing its work on the ancestor's land, vanishes and is buried in it, the feeling of solidarity of the people with their land increases. This land is, at the same time, its arena, its workfield and its graveyard, as well as the field supplying its food and his secured homeland." (Rudolf Kjellèn, *Der Staat als Lebensform*, p. 96, apud Conea 1941, 25).

Preliminary (and tentative) conclusions

Ion Conea's position draws heavily on a particular reading of the old and fateful disciplinary French connection, still existent in the interwar period, of history and geography, where geography is an instrument for history. The Romanian disciplinary setting is placed into a narrative of backwardness and lacking of scientific but also national responsibility towards the history and destiny of the nation. Geohistory being, as we have already seen, the most relevant aspect of geopolitics for Ion Conea.

The political geography stand is downplayed in the advantage of history. Geography is not able to assume a hegemonic position in the disciplinary field, not being able to form a self sustaining discourse about the nation. The comparison with sociology is again illuminating, as sociology is, in the interwar period, in the position of articulating all-encompassing scientific-national discourse, whose underpinnings we tried to show and even deconstruct. A. Golopentia is formulating these hegemonic pretensions in a geopolitical language understressing the technical, stately and administrative facets of Gusti's larger nation-building project and taking them to be the true synthetic and the possible rallying point of the science of the nation. His position is quite different from Conea's even if they will fully recognize each other as geopoliticians!

What unites, we believe, these 'geopolitical' men – and also the nationalist-regionalists like Ion Ionica – is a common diffuse ideology of organicity and continuity coupled with the attempt to construct a unified science of nation centered on the problematics of national space. This science, be it a la Freyer, a la Vidal de la Blache, a la Graebner etc is build around a strange mélange of monographical-sociological or monographical-geographical positivism and national history neoromantism.

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