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**THE ORIGINS OF AN ATTITUDE.  
ON THE INTELLECTUAL PROFILE,  
POLITICAL IDEAS AND ACTIVITY  
OF THE "FOIȘOARA TELEGRAFULUI ROMÂN"'S EDITORS**

*The eighth decade of the 19<sup>th</sup> century marked the political debut of a new generation of Transylvanian intellectuals, educated in universities from Germany, Austria and Hungary. These young men became active in the political life after 1884 and had been known as Tribunists since. But during the '70s, the future politicians were still undergoing their training years in journalism, editing "Foișoara Telegrafului Român". The current study analyses their educational paths and bookish horizons, presenting and explaining the cultural bases that shaped their future political ideology and behaviour. Along with a few introductory biographies, we have considered it proper to annex a list of writings certainly read by them, in order to outline their bibliographic and intellectual background. The conclusions of the research emphasize the connection between their university education, the Junimist model taken upon and the ideas expressed in their first ideological writings, offering as well an explanation for the aggressiveness that characterized their post-1884 political ascension.*

**Keywords:** elites, Transylvania, journalism, intellectual profile, ideology.

**The editors of "Foișoara Telegrafului Român"**

During the late 1860s and the early 1870s, the cultural life of the Transylvanian Romanians was passing through a period of reorientations, beginning to shed away the etymologist and Latinist models, looking for new paradigms in the West-European area, as well as inside the recently unified Romania<sup>1</sup>. One of the local newspapers that heavily sustained the spreading of the Junimist ideas among the Romanians from Transylvania was the "Telegraful Român", the officious publication of the Romanian Orthodox Archbishopric from Sibiu. Edited by Nicolae Cristea, this paper became an important adversary for the Latinists of Blaj, partially out of denominational reasons. After 1875, a couple of young men, coming back

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<sup>1</sup> *Istoria României. Transilvania*, Vol. II, Cluj-Napoca, 1997, pp. 185-190.

from Central-European universities, became collaborators of the "Telegraf"'s editorial staff. Some of them will be part of the future editorial core of the famous "Tribuna" newspaper, which was published in Sibiu. During 1876-1877, supported by N. Cristea, they published a literary supplement, "Foișoara Telegrafului Român" – basically an extension of the newspapers' literary column<sup>2</sup>.

Due to the highly significant role these characters are going to play between 1884 and 1896 inside the Tribunist movement, and during the Memorandum years, we believe that defining their university background and intellectual profiles serves as a necessary premise for the understanding of their future conceptions and attitudes. We must note that Daniil Popovici Barcianu, Eugen Brote, Dimitrie Comșa and Ioan Bechnitz were not sole editors of the "Foișoara": Atanasie M. Marienescu, Ilarion Pușcariu and Simeon Popescu were also part of this journalistic exercise; it is yet unclear what part each of them played in editing the paper. Our choice for the first four was motivated by their future political and journalistic development, in which the experience of "Foișoara Telegrafului Român" represented the most necessary stage of doctrinaire decantation and coagulation.

*Daniil Popovici Barcianu (1847-1903)*

Son of the priest Sava Barcianu, he was born on 19 October 1847, in Rășinari, being given the name of his grandfather, former priest of the community between 1817 and 1866. After graduating the denominational elementary school, he was registered at the Evangelic-Lutheran gymnasium from Sibiu (1858-1866) and later on at the Theological-Pedagogical Institute (1866-1869), showing respect to a family tradition, as well as, most probably, to the directions of Archbishop Andrei Șaguna<sup>3</sup>.

During the school year of 1869/1870, he worked as a school teacher in his birth village. Subsequently, he received a scholarship from the Hungarian Ministry of Cults and Public Instruction, and went to Dresden, in order to study the structure of the German school system and to use the gained knowledge for the improvement of the Transylvanian education

<sup>2</sup> Gelu Neamțu, "Foișoara Telegrafului Român" și Junimismul în Transilvania, in *Procese politice de presă antiromânești din epoca dualismului. Alte studii de istoria presei românești*, Cluj-Napoca, 2004, pp. 453-469; Vlad Popovici, *Antecedentele modelului cultural tribunist: activitatea tinerilor de la „Telegraful Român”*, in "Țara Bârsei", 5, 2006, pp. 17-25; idem, *Demografie și politică în paginile „Foișoarei Telegrafului Român” (1876-1877)*, in *Om și societate. Studii de istoria populației României (sec. XVII-XXI)*. Second Edition, edited by Sorina Paula Bolovan, Ioan Bolovan, Corneliu Pădurean, Cluj-Napoca, 2007, pp. 411-415.

<sup>3</sup> Mircea Păcurariu, *Cărturari sibieni de altădată*, Cluj-Napoca, 2002, p. 206.

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methods<sup>4</sup>. Following, being the beneficiary of a scholarship granted by the Archbishop Șaguna, D.P. Barcianu studied at renowned universities (Vienna 1870/1871, Bonn 1871/1872, Leipzig 1872-1874), taking classes of Philosophy, Pedagogy and Natural sciences. In November 1874, he became a doctor in Natural sciences, in Leipzig, with a thesis concerning Botanic (*Untersuchungen über die Bluthentwicklung der Onagraceen*)<sup>5</sup>.

Back in Transylvania, he faced a series of difficulties caused by the death of Archbishop A. Șaguna, his most important supporter. Though he had been offered a seat at the University of Bucharest, he refused it, saying that *there were many fights to be fought in Transylvania and few fighters*<sup>6</sup>. Finally, in the fall of 1875, he was hired as second secretary of the Sibiu department of the *Asociațiunea Transilvană pentru Literatura Română și Cultura Poporului Român (Astra)*. Since May 1876, he was a substitute teacher at the Theological-Pedagogical Institute from Sibiu, becoming the holder of this seat in 1880. In the meanwhile he was also a principal at the girls' school managed by *Astra*, during 1880-1887. Along with D. Comșa, E. Brote and I. Bechnitz, he collaborated at the editing of "Telegraful Român" and, in 1876-1877, of "Foișoara Telegrafului Român".

### *Ioan Bechnitz (1848-1898)*

Though Ioan Slavici had an important place for him in his memoirs (compared to the portraits of other Tribunists), I. Bechnitz remained until today an illustrious stranger for the Romanian historiography, no important biographical study being dedicated to him<sup>7</sup>.

The future Tribunist was born in 1848 to the family of the wealthy merchant Antoniu Bechnitz, part of Archbishop Șaguna's circle and member of the commission for the administration of the *Șaguna Foundation*<sup>8</sup>. After going to the *Saxon High School*<sup>9</sup> (probably the Evangelic-Lutheran

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<sup>4</sup> Eusebiu R. Roșca, *Monografia Institutului seminarial teologic-pedagogic „Andreian” al Arhidiecezei Gr. Or. Române din Transilvania*, Sibiu, 1911, p. 101.

<sup>5</sup> Mircea Păcurariu, *op. cit.*, p. 206; D. P. Barcianu's PhD diploma is currently preserved in The Archives of the Orthodox Archbishopric Library in Sibiu, Ioan Lupaș Fund, Doc. No. 4376.

<sup>6</sup> Ioan Lupaș, *Luptători pentru lumină*, Arad, 1916, pp. 5-8; Sidonia Puiu, *Memorandistul Daniil Popovici-Barcianu*, in "Vatra", 22, 1992, No. 260, p. 10.

<sup>7</sup> Papers dedicated to Ioan Bechnitz: I. Mateiu, *O revelație a ziaristiceii ardelenice: Ioan Bechnitz 1848-1898*, in "Transilvania", 73, 1942, pp. 31-36; Eugen Lazăr, *O revelație a ziaristiceii transilvănene: Ioan Bechnitz 1848-1898*, in "Ziridava", 12, 1980, p. 503-510; Stelian Vasilescu, *Unul din întemeietorii „Tribunei”*, in "Tribuna", 28, 1984, No. 15, p. 4; Vasile Rusu, *Ioan Bechnițiu și Tribuna de la Sibiu (1884-1903)*, Sibiu, 1998.

<sup>8</sup> *Testamentul marelui arhiepiscop-mitropolit Andrei baron de Șaguna*, Sibiu, 1915, p. 4.

<sup>9</sup> Eugen Lazăr, *op. cit.*, p. 504.

gymnasium) from Sibiu, I. Bechnitz finalized his academic preparation in Heidelberg, Vienna and Leipzig. Though he is not to be found in the students' lists published by D. C. Amzăr<sup>10</sup> and republished by C. Sigmirean<sup>11</sup>, the young man from Sibiu is mentioned in the year book of the University of Leipzig, as registered for juridical classes during the school year 1872/1873<sup>12</sup>. In this period he was noted for his polemics with W. Wattenbach, History professor in Heidelberg, in which he supported the idea of a cultural role played by the Romanians in Transylvania. Later on, a further dispute, this time with a German traveller, changed him into a popular figure among the nationalist groups<sup>13</sup>. Back in Transylvania and financially secured, he dedicated his time to journalism working at the "Telegraful Român" led by N. Cristea and at the "Foișoara Telegrafului" during 1876-1877. Sadly, he didn't sign many of the articles wrote during these years<sup>14</sup>. His main domain of interest was Philology, thus having long polemics in the defence of phonetic orthography and publishing on this subject in the pages of "Foișoara Telegrafului"<sup>15</sup>.

#### *Eugen Brote (1850-1912)*

Eugen Brote was born in Rășinari, on 29 November / 11 December 1850, to the family of merchant Ioan Brote. His father, the son of a priest, had been for a while a teacher and school principal in Rășinari and his mother, Ana, was the sister of the priest Sava Popovici Barcianu<sup>16</sup>. So, he was D. P. Barcianu's cousin.

He concluded his primary education in Rășinari, later on going for four years at the Evangelic-Lutheran gymnasium and for other four at the State gymnasium of Sibiu, taking his final exam in 1868<sup>17</sup>. He completed his higher education at the Agricultural Academy from Magyar-Óvár (1868-1870)<sup>18</sup>. After his father died in 1871, he managed the family's fortune,

<sup>10</sup> Dumitru Cristian Amzăr, *Studentii români la Universitatea din Leipzig*, in "Cercetări literare", V, 1943, pp. 21-40.

<sup>11</sup> Cornel Sigmirean, *Istoria formării intelectualității românești din Transilvania și Banat în epoca modernă*, Cluj-Napoca, 2000, pp. 715-718.

<sup>12</sup> *Personal-Verzeichnis der Universität Leipzig für das Sommersemester 1873*, No. LXXXIII, Leipzig, 1883, p. 28.

<sup>13</sup> Eugen Lazăr, *op. cit.*, pp. 504-506.

<sup>14</sup> Stelian Vasilescu, *op. cit.*, p. 4.

<sup>15</sup> Vasile Rusu, *op. cit.*, p. 15.

<sup>16</sup> Mircea Păcurariu, *op. cit.*, p. 229.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>18</sup> *Bericht der k. ung. höhere Landwirtschaftlichen Lehranstalt zu Ungarisch-Altenburg über das Studienjahr 1868/9*, Ungarisch-Altenburg, 1869, p. 32; *ibidem*, 1869/70, Ungarisch-Altenburg, 1870, p. 18; also mentioned by Cornel Sigmirean, *op. cit.*, p. 682.

developing a prosperous business with breed cattle. The economic preoccupations can be easily noticed in his writings: he debuted with articles in the "Economul" magazine from Blaj, in 1873<sup>19</sup> and from 1877 to 1884 he published, along with D. Comșa, "Călimdarul bunului econom"<sup>20</sup> (*The Calendar of the good land worker*). He joined the editorial board of "Telegraful Român" under the direct guidance of N. Cristea and obviously influenced by Titu Maiorescu's critical style - a detail that can be noticed especially in his caustic reviews.

Even as a youth, he expressed his political ambitions, being elected member of the Central Electoral Committee of the Romanian National Party from Transylvania in 1878<sup>21</sup>. In 1881<sup>22</sup>, he unsuccessfully ran for the elections, only to forcefully come back afterwards and to have an ascending political route during the Tribunist years and the Memorandum period (1884-1896).

### *Dimitrie Comșa (1846-1931)*

Characterized by the ex-Tribunist Enea Hodoș as *one of the last laymen of the generation raised through the school of Șaguna*<sup>23</sup>, he was born in the Maieri district of Sibiu, on 29 December 1846, to a peasants' family. After graduating the primary level at the local school, he studied for six years at the Evangelic-Lutheran gymnasium from Sibiu. In 1868-1871 he went to classes at the Technological institute of Sibiu, consequently taking his exams for the last two gymnasium years, as well as his maturity exam<sup>24</sup>.

Since 1871, he was granted a scholarship by Archbishop A. Șaguna, in order to study agronomy. C. Sigmirean identified him among the students of the Royal Agriculture Academy of Magyar-Óvár (Ungarisch Altenburg), in the period of 1871-1873<sup>25</sup>. M. Păcurariu, based on an autobiography, asserted that he went to school, during the same period, in

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<sup>19</sup> Lucian Boia, *Eugen Brote (1850-1912)*, București, 1974, pp. 9-25.

<sup>20</sup> Georgeta Răduică, Nicolin Răduică, *Calendare și almanahuri românești 1713-1918. Dicționar bibliografic*, București, 1981, pp. 268-270.

<sup>21</sup> Teodor V. Păcățian, *Cartea de aur sau luptele politice ale românilor de sub coroana ungară*, Vol. VI, Sibiu, 1910, p. 636.

<sup>22</sup> ANIC, National Romanian Party (National Committee in Sibiu) Fund, File 1/I, leaf 60.

<sup>23</sup> Enea Hodoș, *Literatura zilei*, Sibiu, 1941, pp. 70-71.

<sup>24</sup> Mircea Păcurariu, *op. cit.*, p. 197; idem, *Un memorandist, etnograf și îndrumător al țărănimii: profesorul Dimitrie Comșa (1846-1931)*, in "Mitropolia Ardealului", XXVI, 1981, No. 10-12, p. 870.

<sup>25</sup> *A Magyar-Óvári Magyar Királyi Gazdasági Felsőbb Tanintézet 1873*, Magyar-Óvár, 1873, p. 40; also mentioned by Cornel Sigmirean, *op. cit.*, p. 682.

Leipzig<sup>26</sup>. E. R. Roșca, in his monograph dedicated to the Theological Pedagogical Institute of Sibiu, assumes that our character studied in Magyar-Óvár, as well as in Germany and Bohemia. Back in Transylvania, he was appointed as a teacher of Economical-Agricultural Studies at the Andreian Theological Pedagogical Institute, where he remained till 1909, teaching, for longer or shorter whiles: Fruit growing, Horticulture and Vegetable growing (later on all of them formed the Rural economy), Nature sciences, Agricultural Zootechnics, Popular Physics, Accounting, Arithmetic and Geometry, Chemistry, Physics, Geography and Calligraphy<sup>27</sup>.

In the public life, he joined the group of "Telegraful Român", editing along with E. Brote "Călimdarul bunului econom". In 1877, he published the book *Pomăritul* (*Tree growing*), the best documented treaty of this type in Transylvania at that time<sup>28</sup>. In 1878, he became a member of the Central Electoral Committee of the Romanian National Party from Transylvania<sup>29</sup>, afterwards going on the same political path as E. Brote, as his lieutenant, until the years of the Memorandum, when their divergent opinions led to the creation of certain distance between them.

### **Considerations regarding the intellectual horizon and the readings of the young men of „Foișoara Telegrafului Român”**

The biographies previously presented offer a general image on the university education underwent by the editors of "Foișoara Telegrafului Român". It became obvious that Economy, Natural sciences, Pedagogy and Philology were the focuses of interest in their training. Using the bibliographical references of their articles, I will try to give further details on the general considerations, by directly referring to the read and quoted authors and, where this is possible, by establishing their affiliation to certain intellectual tendencies and streams.

In the fields of Economics and Natural sciences, the bibliographical references are, rather unexpectedly, quite few, given the writers' education and activities. The main cause here is the lack of the habitude of always quoting the sources. Footnotes exist in only a couple of articles, otherwise being absent even in the case of extensive writings, such as D. Comșa's *Pomăritul*. By analyzing the data presented in **Table 1** (see **Annexes**), one can notice that among the readings of the future Tribunists there are ancient authors (Theophrastus, Pliny), contemporary writers, handbooks

<sup>26</sup> Mircea Păcurariu, *Cărturari sibieni de altădată*, p. 198.

<sup>27</sup> Eusebiu R. Roșca, *op. cit.*, p. 101.

<sup>28</sup> Dimitrie Comșa, *Pomăritul*, Sibiu, 1877.

<sup>29</sup> Teodor V. Păcățian, *op. cit.*, p. 636.

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and compendiums of agriculture and natural sciences (Dr. Schwab, Alois Pokorny, Emil Wolff), as well as fashionable naturalists: Alexander von Humboldt and, most of all, Charles Darwin.

The last one mentioned seems to have been one of the favourite authors of the "Foişoara Telegrafului"'s editors, with four quoted writings. Some of Darwin's correspondents have also been read - Herbert Spencer, Otto Caspari, Joseph Barbard-Davis, John Lubbock. Also some of his followers - Ludwig Büchner -, as well as his adversaries - Jean Louis Armand de Quatrefages - (see **Annexes, Table 3, Table 4**). This is a proof that the European scientific debates were not unknown to these young people, educated in German universities. Darwinism must certainly have been one of the ideological streams that influenced their perspectives.

The conservative, evolutionist model that they projected on society is the result of certain Junimist influences, of Darwinist readings and, up to a point, of Herbert Spencer's philosophy<sup>30</sup>. Especially the Darwinist concept of natural selection fitted their ideas. They were connected to this stream of thought by their intellectual pattern (the predisposition for natural sciences), as well as by their social standing: the received education recommended them as part of the Romanian high society, with an internal right to demand access to elite positions. Thus can be explained the forcefulness invested later on, during the Tribunist period (1884-1896), in taking over the national movement: they were firmly convinced that only the political model they supported was meant to transform the Romanians into a successfully active element inside Hungary's political web.

An interesting part of the research is constituted by I. Bechnitz's readings (see **Annexes, Table 3**). Due to an article named *Stărilor primitive ale genului omenesc*<sup>31</sup> (*The primitive states of humanity*), containing a large number of footnotes, his extensive readings of Ethnography and Anthropology became obvious. As the references are somehow disconnected, one can assume that many of the quoted works had been read during his university years and a decade later he only consulted his notes. Supporting this theory there is the detail of the publishing years: where they are mentioned, they rarely surpass 1870.

However, some readings, such as Johann Wilhelm Helfers, *Reisen in Vorderasien und Indien*, Leipzig, 1873 or Otto Caspari, *Die Urgeschichte der Menschheit*, Leipzig, 1873, were done after Bechnitz came back to Transylvania.

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<sup>30</sup> Walter M. Simon, *Herbert Spencer and the "Social Organism"*, in "Journal of The History of Ideas", Vol. XXI, No. 2 (Apr. - Jun. 1960), pp. 294-299.

<sup>31</sup> "Foişoara Telegrafului Român", II, 1877, No. 1, p. 4; No. 3, p. 21; No. 4, p. 27; No. 5, p. 35.



This is a sign that he remained interested in this type of scientific readings, very fashionable at the time. One must also note that O. Caspari might have been one of Bechnitz's teachers in Heidelberg. Later, at "Tribuna", one of Bechnitz's duties was to collect information from foreign journals for the varieties' column for he had, as Slavici said, a natural inclination towards trifling news from everywhere<sup>32</sup>. This might very well have been a different manifestation of the same passion that had lead him, as a young man, to read thousands of pages written by various explorers and adventurers of the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries.

Of course, having information on I. Bechnitz's readings in a single area cannot lead to forming a conclusive opinion on his intellectual formation. But considering the vastness of his bibliography – including the many journals (see **Annexes, Table 2**) – as well as his philological affinities, the image of a scholar through which Slavici describes him comes to life: a young man from a wealthy family, educated at prestige universities, with vast readings, the heir of a remarkable fortune, but, at the same time, suffering from illness, easily irritable, and, apparently, psychical instable<sup>33</sup>.

Unfortunately, the information gotten through the articles of the future Tribunists are not enough to bring to light a more ample intellectual profile. For example, there are no references made to the writings of their ex-teachers from Leipzig or Magyar-Óvár, and the writings of Philology, History and Philosophy are definitely under-quoted (see **Annexes, Table 4**).

It is obvious that the period spent in Hungarian, Austrian and German higher education institutions had a decisive contribution in the building of the group's ulterior political path, through the connection with the European intellectual environment, the enlargement of the bookish horizon, the picking up of different influences and streams of ideas, later adapted to the Transylvanian realities. All these enforced their conception about being part of an elite group and as a consequence the desire for an according socio-political status.

These effects of the university education can be regarded as premises for the ulterior evolution of the four young men. Complementary, there is to be considered their complete adherence to the Junimist ideology, an influence that they experienced constantly after 1865. Becoming part of the editorial group from "Telegraful Român" gave them the possibility to become known through their critical points of view, a preamble to the intensity employed in trying, during the Tribunist period, to become decisive political factors.

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<sup>32</sup> Ioan Slavici, *Amintiri*, Bucharest, 1924, p. 150.

<sup>33</sup> Idem, *Tribuna și tribuniștii*, Bucharest, 1896, p. 35.

**Culture, social education and politics in the thought of the “Foișoara Telegrafului Român” editors**

The way in which their university education and the Junimist affiliation contributed to the shaping of these young men's socio-political concepts can be noted in the first pages of “Foișoara Telegrafului Român”. This is the only doctrinaire text of the group prior to “Tribuna” (1884). The keywords in defining the meaning and direction of their actions are *national culture* and *progress*<sup>34</sup>. The Junimist influence is obvious, the starting ground of their theories being that, at the given time, the national culture of the Transylvanian Romanians was an empty form:

“What is currently defined by us as «culture» and what is meant to be so, is usually no more – considering the employed means – than a few fragments borrowed from other peoples' cultures, a few forms of convenience and a quantity of «spirit» that allows us to speak nicely and scholarly even on matters we can hardly understand”<sup>35</sup>.

Escaping the sphere of the empty forms was achievable only by educating the masses, as the social paradigm of the Telegrafists is an organicist one, which did not allow the elites to estrange themselves from folk culture. This solution involved a connection and implied the construction of a dependence relationship between elites and masses. The commoners offer the moral, economic and customs' minimal foundations, on which the elites are to rely on. On their turn, the elites were to impose a social discipline useful to the masses, to mould the basics they had received and to form a new substance, more evolved than the un-chiselled people's matter. Subsequently, the masses were going to be dragged up the new foundations, closing an evolution cycle. Because the distance previously created between elites and masses was partially blamed on the Latinized orthography, arguing against it became a priority, not only from a philological point of view, but from a socio-political one as well<sup>36</sup>.

So, in the imagination of the young editors, an organic connection is established between progress and national culture and thus the main

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<sup>34</sup> “Foișoara Telegrafului Român”, I, 1876, No. 1, p. 1.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>36</sup> Septimiu Albini, *Direcția nouă în Ardeal. Constatări și amintiri*, in *Lui Ion Bianu amintire. Din partea foștilor și actualilor funcționari ai Academiei Române la împlinirea a șasezeci de ani*, Bucharest, 1916, p. 24.

element of cultural elevation becomes education and implicitly school as an institution:

“Desiring to be successful in pursuing our goals, we must begin from the most natural starting point and use the most natural means: we must begin by cultivating the masses through school education, the easiest way for culture to become a spring of fresh water, from which all the people can drink”<sup>37</sup>.

The process of civilizing and educating, as well as its result – surpassing the stage of the empty forms – was conceived and planned in long period, the time unity referred to being *the generation*. This aspect links the editors of “Telegraful” even more to the Junimists and to their conservative spirit.

Relating to the popular masses and considering them an unaltered social element, the anxiety of a caesura between elites and masses, the idea that the peasant as main economic producer had to be appreciated and morally elevated, are concepts conveyed by Titu Maiorescu as well and thus proof of the lineage existing between Junimism and Tribunism:

“But in the end all these are dead concepts, claims with no foundations, ghosts without a body, illusions with no truth, and so the culture of the Romanian higher classes is empty and of no value and the abyss that separates us from the lower strata becomes deeper by the day. The only real class is the Romanian peasant and his reality is his suffering, under which breathe the phantasmagorical constructions of the higher classes. Of his daily labour we get the necessary means for sustaining the fictive edifice that we call Romanian culture (...) and not even out of gratitude we do not produce one single work talking to his heart and making him forget for a moment his daily misery”<sup>38</sup>.

Just as the Junimists, the Tribunists had an aggressive way of doctrinarian promotion<sup>39</sup>, whose roots are easily identifiable during the “Telegraful” years. The constantly critical approaches were totally fit for the promoters’ situation and can only be fully explained in the context of the political life of the Romanians from 1870s Transylvania. The dissensions

<sup>37</sup> “Foișoara Telegrafului Român”, I, 1876, No. 1, p. 1.

<sup>38</sup> Titu Maiorescu, *În contra direcției de astăzi în cultura română* in T. Maiorescu, *Critice*, Vol. I, Bucharest, 1973, p. 168.

<sup>39</sup> Sara Iercoșan, *Junimismul în Transilvania*, Cluj-Napoca, 1983, p. 53; Vlad Popovici, *Tribunismul (1884-1905)*, Cluj-Napoca, 2008, p. 50-55.

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and polemics of the future Tribunists with their adversaries were manifested on three levels: the conflict between two generations (young vs. old), the cultural conflict (Junimism vs. Romanticism) and the conflict between two political groups differently oriented inside the Romanian National Party (activists vs. passivists).

During the 1870s, the conflict took a cultural form and pealed out in the pages of "Telegraful Român" and "Foișoara Telegrafului Român". Politically, the future Tribunists, along with chief editor N. Cristea, were on the side of the activists, promoting the idea of accepting the *Ausgleich* system and entering the elections. But they had the bad luck of entering public life after 1872, when the last major battle between activists and passivists had been won by the latter<sup>40</sup>, thus remaining outsiders. Their intellectual profile and conceptions were driving them towards political involvement, but the main frame was preventing them from reaching top positions (they lacked age and support). Consequently, they have made themselves known to the public through cultural polemics, as promoters of new conceptions originated in the Junimist stream of ideas. In the meanwhile, they also became known figures in their professional fields (Pedagogy, Natural sciences, Zootechnics). One must also keep in mind the differences in university education - there were few members of the 1848 generation that had had an education as high as the young Telegrafists did.

Then, the assault took place quickly: the fact that in 1878 E. Brote and D. Comșa made it to the superior levels of the national movement proves their incisive political tactics (Brote was only 28 years old). With Nicolae Popea as President of the Romanian National Party, they have tried between 1878 and 1880 to reorient the national movement on the path of activism, but the party fusion of 1881 pushed them in the second political echelon once again. After just three years, in 1884, they came back launching the newspaper "Tribuna" and imposing themselves as a new political faction among the Romanians in Transylvania, a position strengthened through violent polemics with other Romanian factions and their journals<sup>41</sup>.

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Looking back, their constantly critical and polemical attitude on cultural matters, during the 1870s, can be explained as a manifestation of the frustrations generated by exclusion, of a group of young men that

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<sup>40</sup> Teodor V. Păcățian, *op. cit.*, p. 13.

<sup>41</sup> Vlad Popovici, *Tribunismul (1884-1905)*, pp. 93-101.

through education, political culture and in some cases through the economic status, considered themselves to be entitled to a higher position inside the national movement. Their whole activity, before and after the founding of "Tribuna", must not solely be perceived culturally, but as well as a form of ideological struggle, of revolt even, coming from a group comparable in some ways to an *intelligentsia* of the national movement. Their example is illustrative for the way in which the intellectual and professional formation can act as catalysts for a group in search of political status: first it gets them associated, and then helps them elaborate a coherent ideological program, finally playing a key role in their mutually sustained ascension and the defining of friends and enemies. The context should be always kept in mind: the presence of an inhibitory political environment, dominated by the elite of an older generation, determined a violent answer from the youth and helped the development of the group's inner cohesion.

There are three stages identifiable in their intellectual development. The first one was marked by the ideas they came across in the German and Austrian universities. During the second one, back home, their political conceptions were expressed in a sublimed way, taking cultural shapes. The publishing of "Foișoara Telegrafului Român" and of "Călindarul bunului econom" made them well-known by the Romanian society, preparing their entrance in the field of politics. Meanwhile, synthesizing ideas borrowed from Social-Darwinism and adding an important dose of Junimism, they built a true ideological program. Finally, the third stage marks their finest hour in politics and the ascension to the top of the national movement as publishers of "Tribuna" and representatives of a young and radical political faction. Until 1884, they could rarely turn theory into fact, but once they became part of a strong group, under the leadership of Ioan Slavici, they aggressively defended and imposed their conceptions. Thus, they have managed to become decision factors in the Transylvanian public life and to finally be known as the originators of the Memorandum movement.

ANNEXES

**TABLE 1**  
**Authors and papers known to the "Foișoara Telegrafului Român"'s team**  
**in the fields of Economics and Sciences**

Author	Title	Place and year of publication	Reader
Herbert Spencer			Daniil Popovici Barcianu (D. P. B.)
Franz Ritter von Hauer, Dr. Guido Stache	<i>Geologie Siebenbürgens</i>	Vienna, 1863	D. P. B.
Dr. Gustav Jäger	<i>Die Geschmacks und Geruchsstoffe in ihrer Bedeutung für die Biologie</i>		D. P. B.
Dr. Ludwig Büchner	<i>Aus dem Geistesleben der Thiere</i>		The Editors
G. Pouchet	<i>The plurality of the human race</i>	London, 1864	Ioan Bechnitz (I. B.)
Karl Friedrich Naumann	<i>Geognosie</i>		I. B.
Lecky			D. P. B.
Draper			D. P. B.
Charles Darwin	<i>Die Abstammung des Menschen</i>		I. B.

**TABLE 2**  
**Foreign journals quoted in "Foișoara Telegrafului Român"**

Journal	Year	Reader
"Gartenlaube"		D. P. B.
"Etnographie"		I. B.
"Archiv für Anthropologie"		I. B.
"Zeitschrift für Ethnologie"	1871	I. B.
"Ausland"	1866, 1870	I. B.
"Globus"	1871	I. B.
"Journal of the Anthropology Institute"		I. B.

**TABLE 3**  
**Authors and papers read by I. Bechnitz**  
**in the fields of Ethnography and Anthropology**

Author	Title	Place and year of publication	Reader
Johann Wilhelm Helfers	<i>Reisen in Vorderasien und Indien</i>	Leipzig, 1873	I. B.
Baron von Fedinand Petrovich Wrangel	<i>Reise in Sibirien</i>		I. B.
Georg Wilhelm Steller	<i>Kamtschatka</i>		I. B.
Krapf	<i>Reisen in Ostafrika</i>		I. B.
James Burney	<i>Chronological History of the Voyages and Discoveries in the South Sea or Pacific Ocean</i>		I. B.
Edward B. Tylor	<i>Forschungen über die Urgeschichte der Menschheit</i>	Leipzig, 1866	I. B.
	<i>United States Exploring Expedition. Ethnography I</i>	Philadelphia, 1846	I. B.
Oscar Peschel	<i>Völkerkunde</i>		I. B.
Otto Astawitsch von Kotzebue	<i>Entdeckungsreisen</i>	Weimar, 1821	I. B.
Gonzalo Fernández de Oviedo y Valdés	<i>Historia general y natural de las Indias</i>	Madrid, 1851	I. B.
Knoblauch			I. B.
Kuhn	<i>C. c.</i>		I. B.
Steere		in "Journal of the Anthropology Institute"	I. B.
Carl Ferdinand Appun			I. B.
Franz Felix Adalbert Kuhn	<i>Die Herabkunft des Feuers</i>	Berlin, 1859	
Hermann Schlagintweit	<i>Reisen in Indien und Hochasien, 4 vol.</i>	Jena, 1869-1880	I. B.
Otto Caspari	<i>Die Urgeschichte der Menschheit</i>	Leipzig, 1873	I. B.
Gerland Waitz	<i>Antropologie</i>		I. B.
I. I. V. Tschudi	<i>Reisen durch Südamerika</i>	Leipzig, 1860	I. B.
Herman Göll	<i>Die Geheimnisse der Vesta</i>	in "Ausland", 1870	I. B.
G. Fritsch	<i>Eingeborne Südafrika's</i>		I. B.
G. Fritsch	<i>Drei Jahre in Süd-Afrika</i>		I. B.
Emerson Tennent	<i>Ceylon</i>		I. B.

### The Origins of an Attitude

Author	Title	Place and year of publication	Reader
Lortsch			I. B.
Prinz Maximilian Alexander Philipp zu Wied-Neuwied	<i>Reise nach Brasilien</i>		I. B.
	<i>Missionsreisen und Forschungen in Süd-Africa</i>		I. B.
James Chapman	<i>Travels in the interior of South Africa</i>	London, 1868	I. B.
Hinrich Lichtenstein	<i>Reisen im südlichen Africa in den Jahren 1803, 1804, 1805 und 1806</i>	Berlin, 1811	I. B.
Joseph Barnard- Davis	<i>Thesaurus craniorum</i>	London, 1867	I. B.
Edward Burnett Tylor	<i>Anfänge der Cultur</i>		I. B.
John Lubbock	<i>Prehistoric times</i>	1869	I. B.
Frederic Mouat	<i>The Andaman islanders</i>		I. B.
W. Parker Snow	<i>Off Tierra del Fuego</i>	London, 1857	I. B.
Richard Francis Burton	<i>The City of the saints</i>	London, 1862	I. B.
James Bonwick	<i>The last of the Tasmanians</i>	London, 1870	I. B.
Alonso Zurita	<i>Chefs de la Nouvelle Espagne</i>		I. B.
Jean Louis Armand de Quatrefages de Bréau	<i>Rapport sur les progrès de l'anthropologie</i>	1867	I. B.
Pierre François- Xavier de Charlevoix	<i>Histoire et description générale de la Nouvelle France, avec le Journal historique d'un voyage fait par ordre du roi dans l'Amérique septentrionale. 1722</i>	Paris, 1744	I. B.

**TABLE 4**  
**Philology, Philosophy and History authors and papers  
known to the "Foișoara Telegrafului Român"'s team**

Author	Title	Place and year of publication	Reader
Max Müller	<i>Vorlesungen über die Wissenschaft der Sprache. Für das deutsche Publikum bearbeitet von Dr. Karl Böttger. II. Serie von 12 Vorlesungen. Autorisirte Ausgabe. Zweite vermehrte Auflage</i>	Leipzig, 1870	I. B.
R. Westphal	<i>Prolegomenen zu Aeschylus Tragödien</i>	Leipzig, 1869	I. B.
Ludwig Büchner	<i>Aus Natur und Wissenschaft</i>		The Editors



## Vlad POPOVICI

R. Avenarius	<i>Philosophie als Denken der Welt gemäss dem „Princip des kleinsten Kraftmaasses“. Prolegomena zu einer Kritik der reinen Erfahrung</i>	Leipzig, 1876	I. B.
Franz Krones	<i>Handbuch der Geschichte Oesterreichs von der ältesten bis zur neuesten Zeit</i>		
C.I. Jirecek	<i>Geschichte der Bulgaren</i>		The Editors
Henry Thomas Buckle	<i>History of civilization</i>	London, 1857	D. P. B.

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