

SCIENTIFIC LIFE

THE PORTRAIT OF GREAT ROMANIA IN THE PHOTOGRAPHIC WORKS OF E.O. HOPPÉ

On the 21st of May 2019, at the Library of the Romanian Academy, in “Theodor Pallady” Exhibition Hall, the public encountered the exhibition-document “The portrait of a country: Great Romania in the photography of E. O. Hoppé, 1923”, organized by the Institute of Art History “George Oprescu” of the Romanian Academy. *Emil Otto Hoppé* (1878-1972) was a prominent photographic artist in modern Europe. He was equally renowned for his documentary and art photography, for his portraits, landscape and travelling works. *Emil Otto Hoppé* travelled on five continents, in USA, Cuba, Jamaica, New Zealand, Japan, Indonesia, Singapore, India, Poland, Germany, Czechoslovakia and Romania (in Transylvania, Dobrudja, Wallachia, Bucovina, Danube Delta, Sibiu, Brashov), where he also visited the Royal House and took a series of portraits of Queen Mary, King Ferdinand I, Princess Ileana, Prince Nicolae, as well as photographs of Peleş Castle and Bran Castle. The exhibition was preceded by the conference “*A Londoner Wandering in Romania. E.O. Hoppé’s Portrait of a Country*”, sustained by Graham Howe, PhD, in the Auditorium “Ion Heliade Rădulescu” of the Romanian Academy Library. Graham Howe, PhD, was also the curator of the exhibition, director at Curatorial Assistance and E.O. Hoppe Estate Collection, in Pasadena, California. Professor Adrian Silvan Ionescu, PhD, director of the Institute of Art History spoke at the occasion about the importance of the event.

“ROMANIAN ACADEMY – PRESENT CONTINUOUS”

On Saturdays at 13:30, starting 18th April 2019, a new series from the events gathered under the theme “Romanian Academy – present continuous” retain the public attention. Producer: Daniela Mitache. On the 18th of May 2019, the first guest of the new series was Academician Alexandru Surdu, President of the Section of Philosophy, Psychology, Theology and Pedagogy, director of the Institute of Philosophy, and Psychology “Constantin Rădulescu-Motru” of the Romanian Academy.

**THE PUBLIC OPINION POLL
THE LABORATORY FOR THE ANALYSIS OF THE
INFORMATION WAR AND STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION
(LARICS IN THE ROMANIAN ABBREVIATION) OF THE
INSTITUTE OF POLITICAL SCIENCE AND
INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS “ION I. C. BRĂȚIANU”
OF THE ROMANIAN ACADEMY AND INSCOP
SPRING 2019**

This unique project within Romanian society realized by the Laboratory for the Analysis of the Information War and Strategic Communication (LARICS in the Romanian abbreviation) of the Institute of Political Science and International Relations “Ion I. C. Brătianu” of the Romanian Academy and INSCOP was launched on the 13th of May 2019 and it provides a general and comprehensive view on the Romanian society. The data were collected during the period 12th April – 3rd May 2019. The volume of the sample was of 1050 people and it is representative for the non-institutionalized population of Romania aged 18 and over. The maximal admitted error is $\pm 3\%$, for a degree of trust of 95%. The type of the sample was multi-layer, probabilistic. The method used was that of the opinion poll took on the basis of a questionnaire applied by the interview operators at the domicile of the respondents in all the counties of Romania and in all the sectors of Bucharest City. The sample was validated on the basis of the official data provided by the National Institute of Statistics. The chapters of the opinion poll were: The general evolution of the country: the direction, collective fears/ worries/ sources of disquietude; The presence and the intention of the population in the elections for the European Parliament; Referendum; Trust in personalities; Trust in national and international institutions; The chapter “National values”: Romanian identity, reunion with Moldova Republic; The chapter “Banks”; Foreign Policy; National Security; Cultural Consumption; The Church.

As Professor Dan Dungaci, director of the Institute of Political Science and International Relations “Ion I. C. Brătianu” of the Romanian Academy noticed “There is no by default overlapping between the citizen’s agenda and the agenda of the politician, except in an ideal world. But even major discrepancies are not natural in a democratic society. Such a situation is an abnormality, an unnatural thing that expresses itself in a single way: the rejection of the political offer and the poor participation in voting of the category of audience which seems to be ostensibly ignored by those who are supposedly representing it. In nowadays Romania, according to sociological research, the political issue with a high level of public expectation, but the least discussed in the public space – including in the current campaign for the European Parliament – is the Hungarian issue. The public opinion barometer presented on the 13th of May 2019 in the Romanian Academy Auditorium reveals this flagrant contradiction and gives an ample picture of the perception of the Hungarian issue to the public in Romania. This is, after all, the stake and the mission of a Public Opinion Barometer that depicts the most extensive and profound picture of present day’s Romanian society.” Cf. <https://fumn.eu/cealalta-rusie-chestiunea-maghiara-in-barometrul-de-opinie-publica/>

For more details see

<https://larics.ro/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/Raport-INSCOP-Barometru-aprilie-mai-2019-1.pdf>.

THE CONFERENCE OF SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH AT THE ROMANIAN ACADEMY

On the 6th of May 2019, in the Romanian Academy's grand Auditorium the Conference of Scientific Research took place. There were presented the outstanding results obtained by the researchers and the members of the Romanian Academy during the year 2018.

The topics of the Conference of Scientific Research were provided by the main directions of academic research: Natural Sciences (Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry, Biology), engineering, Informatics, Economics Sciences, Law Sciences, Sociology, Philosophy, Psychology, Philology, Literature, History, Archaeology, Art History, Folklore, Medical Sciences, Agricultural and Forestry Sciences, Genomics Sciences.

The Institute of Political Science and International Relations "Ion I. C. Brătianu" of the Romanian Academy completed two fundamental research programmes ("The Encyclopaedia of International Relations" and "The Encyclopaedia of Romanian Political Thought, 1821-1948) within a total research activity consisting in four fundamental research programmes (run by three research departments) and six individual projects of research.

Within the Programme entitled "The Encyclopaedia of International Relations" (2018-2020) research activity led to the successful publication of a first volume, in 2018, "The Encyclopaedia of Worldwide Romanians: Communities, Personalities, Concepts" edited by Dan Dungaciu, George Grigoriță, Bucharest, RAO Publishing House, 2018, 544 pp., ISBN: 978-606-006-175-5

Other important collective works published in 2018 were *An Encyclopaedia of Romanian Political Thought*, Volume I: 1821-1918 within the programme "The Encyclopaedia of Romanian Political Thought, 1821-1948, volume edited by: Cristian-Ion Popa, with an *Introduction* by Ion Goian, Bucharest, The Institute of Political Science and International Relations "Ion I. C. Brătianu" of the Romanian Academy Publishing House, 2018, 858 pp. and *The Discourses of Ion I. C. Brătianu*, Vol. I, ed. D. Dungaciu, Stelian Neagoe, Bucharest, The Institute of Political Science and International Relations "Ion I. C. Brătianu" of the Romanian Academy Publishing House, 2018, 500 pp.

The collective works under preparation in 2018: *The Encyclopaedia of Diplomacy*, Bucharest, RAO Publishing House, 2018, undeprint.

AWARD: Professor Dan Dungaciu, PhD, the Director of The Institute of Political Science and International Relations "Ion I. C. Brătianu" of the Romanian Academy and President of the Black Sea University Foundation was awarded the "General Henri Mathias Berthelot" Medal by the Romanian Academy for special contributions to the of the Centenary celebrations of the Great Union – November 9, 2018.

Other publications include ISI studies abroad (Dan Dungaciu, Lucian Dumitrescu, Sebastian Văduva, "Managing the Security of the Railway System by the Black Sea: Rivalry and State Building in Romania", in *Journal of Transportation Security*, 2018; ISI studies published in Romania (Dan Dungaciu, Darie Cristea, Diana Alexandra Dumitrescu, Stefan Pop Zaharie, "Stratfor vs. Reality (1995-2025): Dilemmas in Global forecasting", in *Romanian Journal of Economic Forecasting*, Vol. 21, Issue 1, 2018 http://www.rjef.ro/rjef/rjef1_18/rjef1_2018p167-178.pdf and Darie Cristea, Diana Alexandra Dumitrescu, "Endemic representations of security culture in the Romanian public sphere", *International conference RCIC 2018 – Redefining Community in Intercultural Context – Bucharest, 17-19 May 2018* in ISI Proceedings volume <http://www.afahc.ro/ro/rcic/>

2018/rcic%2718/volum_2018/133-137%20Cristea%20Dumitrescu.pdf); articles published in BDI abroad (Tatiana Cojocari, Radu Cupcea, "Aging in Moldova: A country with Orphan Older Adults", *The Gerontologist*, Volume 58, Issue 5, 14 September 2018, pp. 797-804 <https://doi.org/10.1093/geront/gny055>; Carmen Burcea, '68 en la pantalla. Una mirada caleidoscópica: Die Reise mit Vater – studiu predat spre publicare în Actele congresului *Historia y Cine*, Barcelona University), 80 articles published in Romanian BDI journals; books published abroad (*Romania: 100 Years Since the Great Union*, ed. by Dan Dungaciu and Viorella Manolache, Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2018, under print, Bogdana Todorova, Henrieta Anişoara Şerban, Nina Dimitrova co-eds., *The Balkans as Reality. Democratization, Religious Identity And Fundamentalism in Romania and Bulgaria*, Veliko Tarnovo, "St. Cyril and St. Methodius" University Press, 2018), also, many chapters in volumes published abroad and numerous contributions to national and international conferences.

ALONE TOGETHER – A THOUGHT PROVOKING SYMPOSIUM AMONGST THE LAST OF THE DAFFODILS

John Macmurray once said, "We must communicate with one another; we must, it would seem, be alone together."

York St John has a beautiful campus with a particularly attractive quad, part of the original teacher training college. With its ethos of curiosity, generosity and intellectual rigour, where people are put first, it is perhaps is the perfect place to contemplate solitude. This excellent symposium took place from the 10th to the 12th April as a joint venture arranged by Professor Julian Stern of York St John University and Dr Malgorzata Walejko of the University of Szczecin in Poland with far ranging contributions from Poland, Romania, USA, Canada, Belgium, Sweden, Australia, and of course the UK.

Julian Stern has a longstanding interest in the study of solitude, sparked in part by a discussion with schoolchildren, one of whom said he felt most connected with his fellow students when he was alone.

Lasting for one evening and two days, the symposium started with some Canadian research on how children and adolescents acquire the skill of working out what others must be thinking, perhaps the most important social skill. Interestingly the most skilled were also the most solitary. Next was the philosophy of the uncommunicable, of things that we can experience in solitude but can never be fully conveyed to others: "From pure sensation to the intuition of beauty, from pleasure and pain to love and the mystical ecstasy and death – all the things that are fundamental, all the things that, to the human spirit, are most profoundly significant, can only be experienced, not expressed." (Aldous Huxley in 1950)

This progressed to a discussion of the uncommunicable in education. There are uncommunicable things inside a child which if left unfettered by conformity, can lead to great creativity and originality.

The session overflowed with ideas with one powerful educational idea that I particularly remember being to create silent spaces when teaching, giving pupils the chance to consider things in solitude.

For most of the symposium there were sessions running in parallel, with about thirty sessions in all to choose from. There was a huge variety, with some of the more unusual that I attended including: how texture could be used as a metaphor for Maurice Merleau-Ponty's philosophy on things that exist beyond what is said; how solitude as part of mindfulness can further the wellbeing of individuals and communities; how Brexit is an example of the need of a nation for solitude; how storytelling creates listeners all aware of each other's presence but wandering separately; the solitude of Ovid; the vicious cycle of loneliness in dementia aggravating the disease which then increases the loneliness; and the solitude of artists painting rather beautiful shop signs in Africa. There were also a number of talks on loneliness, isolation and rejection, all far too much to discuss here.

One of my favourite quotes from the symposium was: 'in D.D. Rosca (1895-1980), another Romanian Philosopher, the spirit and the nature, the good and the evil, repel each other eternally, catching man in between, showered by uncertainty, solitude, mystery, metaphysical disquietude, which man has the chance, ability, and, we may say, privilege to transform into creativity and creations, rejecting resignation.' Mystery is also an important part of the philosophy of Lucian Blaga (1895-1961) who believed that through our thinking we are "sending flamed arrows into the metaphysical darkness (of the mystery)". This makes mystery itself is a quasi-solution to solitude, because although we are alone in front of the mystery, thinking and creativity (intrigued and stimulated by mystery) are bringing the human person closer to humanity and her own humanity, too.

Our Polish visitors were an absolute pleasure to hear, they were also most generous, providing snacks and wine before the symposium dinner (which, unfortunately, I was unable to attend) as well as other gifts including a fine book about the architecture of the beautiful University of Szczecin with a copy available for anyone who wanted it.

As ever, it was also good to meet old friends and have the chance to make some interesting new ones, but not forgetting friends who would very much have liked to come but were unable to make it.

Some of the papers at the symposium are planned to be published in the free access journal 'Paedagogia Christiana' in 2020.

<http://apcz.umk.pl/czasopisma/index.php/PCh/index>

A Polish journal, it is available on the internet with an option on the home page to choose English. Bloomsbury are also interested in publishing a handbook of solitude, silence and loneliness which may have contributions based on ideas presented at the symposium.

The daffodils were out around the medieval walls of York and there was a rather pleasing exhibition of Turner and Ruskin at the art gallery to make a good trip even more unforgettable, and as memories of an excellent symposium fade there is promise of a second event in Szczecin in Poland between the 16th and 18th April 2020 – a date for your diaries!

David Jewson

David Jewson is a member of the British Personalist Forum which is based in the UK and publishes the personalist journal 'Appraisal'. Appraisal has been a subscription only journal but is moving to open access. The Forum website is at: <http://britishpersonalistforum.org.uk/>

The Forum exists to talk about philosophy and all the important and interesting things in life and we would very much like contributions from anyone in Romania (or elsewhere!)

with something to say. You can either submit articles to *Appraisal* or short pieces and comments to our blog via the website. This piece can also be accessed on our blog at:

<https://britishpersonalistforum.blogspot.com/2019/05/conference-report-thought-provoking.html>)

- *Henrieta Anișoara Șerban* from the Institute of Political Science and International Relations “Ion I. C. Brătianu” of the Romanian Academy, Department of Political Science and Institute of Philosophy and Psychology “Constantin Rădulescu-Motru” of the Romanian Academy presented the paper entitled *The faces of solitude in philosophy, society and politics* at the international conference “Alone Together – An International Pandisciplinary Symposium on Solitude in Community”, University of York, 10th-12th April 2019.

**THE REGIONAL CONFERENCE
“DISINFORMATION AS PROPAGANDISTIC INSTRUMENT:
TENDENCIES AND REGIONAL IMPACT”
24th of January 2019**

More than 300 participants from different regions of the country were present in the Regional Conference with the theme “*Disinformation as propagandistic instrument: tendencies and regional impact*”. The event was organized by the Independent Press Association within the framework of the Campaign against false and tendentious information “STOP THE FALSE!” Notorious experts and journalists from Poland, Latvia, Estonia, Romania, Armenia, Ukraine and Moldova Republic have discussed the tendencies and the impact of the phenomenon of fake news, especially in Eastern Europe and in certain countries from the Eastern Partnership. Also the themes regarding the possible counter-measures against disinformation were approached, as well as those pertaining to the consolidation of the capacity of resilience in front of any type of propaganda and the training of the abilities related to information check. The experts invited have spoken about the impact of the external and internal propaganda during the parliamentary elections in Latvia (October 2018) and Armenia (December 2018), or during the referendum related to the intention to redefine family in Romania (October 2018) and the electoral “frightening spurs” in Moldova Republic. In this conference took part also, invited as speaker, expert Nicolae Țibrigan from the Laboratory for the Analysis of the Information War and Strategic Communication (abbreviated in Romanian LARICS) of the Institute of Political Science and International Relations “Ion I. C. Brătianu” of the Romanian Academy, who has analysed the disinformation campaign during the family referendum in Romania, in October 2019, concerning the redefinition of the concept of family in the Romanian Constitution. According to the perspective of the researcher, the pro-Kremlin propaganda was not directly involved into the pro-referendum campaign, but it succeeded to penetrate the network of the supporter through intermediary agents. At stake in the pro-Kremlin propaganda and disinformation were the influences of the public perception and the referendum result against the sexual minorities in Romania and toward more anti-European views.

**PUBLIC DEBATE CONCERNING THE SOURCES
AND THE FORMS OF EXPRESSION OF
THE FAKE NEWS IN ROMANIA**

Following a careful research of the structural sources of the fake news phenomenon, the Institute for Public Policies (IPP) and G4media.ro organized on the 18th of January 2019, at the Intercontinental Hotel, an information and debate session concerning the manifestation of this new reality. The research concentrated, on the one hand, on the understanding of the main mechanisms that sustain the phenomenon and, on the other hand, the understanding of the particularities and the Romanian stakes in the issue. At this debate took part as well research assistant member in the Council of Experts of the Laboratory for the Analysis of the Information War and Strategic Communication (LARICS) of the Institute of Political Science and International Relations “Ion I. C. Brătianu” of the Romanian Academy Nicolae Țibrigan, PhD, who emphasized the idea that on the fake news realm Kremlin activates through a network of internet sites, which are functioning as switch-offs, exploiting a specific category of the public (“the useful idiots”) and speculating as primary material the syncope from society and the political environment: “Pro-Kremlin propaganda uses whatever it is going on in society and I do not avoid to affirm that the most disinformation is produced at a domestic level”. The LARICS expert also underlined that the “Soros theme” was at the fore on the radar of the Moscow specialists in disinformation a while before it exploded in the public and political space in Romania, namely in 2013, and another “exercise” that serves the interests of Kremlin is the avalanche of online materials regarding the “wondrous weaponry of Putin“. “I do not believe that it is recommended to become the spokespersons for the Russian Minister of Defence”, concluded Nicolae Țibrigan. IPP places at the core of its research concerns in 2019 the understanding of the fake news phenomenon (digital disinformation) in Romania. The institutional approach stays in the presentation and dissemination of results via information materials, research reports, debates etc., with the purpose of emphasizing the operational mechanisms of disinformation in this new reality, as well as the manners in which one may identify disinformation and which are the instruments at hand in fighting it efficiently. (www.ispri.ro)