

UNIVERSITATEA DE MEDICINĂ ȘI FARMACIE

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ȘCOALA DOCTORALĂ

DOMENIUL MEDICINĂ

PERSPECTIVE

TRANS- ȘI INTERDISCIPLINARE

ÎN ISTORIA MEDICINEI DIN ROMÂNIA

REZUMATUL TEZEI DE ABILITARE

CANDIDAT:

BUDA OCTAVIAN IOAN,

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Abstract of the habilitation thesis

The habilitation thesis entitled “TRANS- AND INTERDISCIPLINARY CONCEPTS IN HISTORY OF MEDICINE IN ROMANIA” presents my scientific, didactic and professional activity, done since finishing my PhD Thesis, in 2002, entitled “*Medico-Legal Criteria of Irresponsibility*”, defended within the Doctoral School of the Carol Davila University of Medicine and Pharmacy, Bucharest, and also my carrier development plans. Due to the particularities of my didactic activities, which includes aspects related to three distinct disciplines - History of Medicine, Psychiatry and Legal Medicine, I will present by activity and my future plans (where relevant), by interlinking these three disciplines in the field of scientific and intellectual history.

Taking into account that both disciplines have a significant trans- and interdisciplinary character, I will present my activities in both, by focusing my attention (whenever it is needed), upon their interconnections, but also on their interactions with related scientific fields. I will show that history of medicine fully benefits, in both academic (didactic and research), and professional activities, from them, irrespective that they are medical or non-medical.

The thesis will contain, in its first part, succinct and documented, my main original scientific results, centered upon those obtained after defending my Ph.D. They were structured in an interdisciplinary way, even though some scientific papers developed within this timeframe were at the interface of these two specialties:

History of medicine is currently undergoing a remarkable transformation, one defined by society’s need to engage with scientific advances and the ethical dilemmas they raise on the one hand, and the inclusion of hitherto ignored case studies on the other. Largely neglected until 1989, Eastern European medicine is gradually being rediscovered. The proposed project contributes this burgeoning historiography by concentrating on the development of Romanian social medicine, psychiatry, forensic medicine, and evolutionism between c. 1800 and 1945.

During this period, Romania experienced profound political, social, and economic upheavals, including its independence from the Ottoman Empire (1878), the Balkan Wars (1912-1913), territorial aggrandizement following the First World War, the rise of far right (1930s), loss of territories (1940) and the end of the Second World War (1945). The history of Romanian medicine mirrored these historical changes as much as it reflected the role of medical professionals in creating a modern nation state. Welfare of the nation was conterminous with the creation of a modern health system. By creating a network of hospitals, asylums, institutes of research, and university chairs, psychiatrists, forensic doctors and evolutionists hoped to provide remedies for the social and medical illnesses prevalent in Romania. This process of institutionalisation also played a fundamental role in changing the

social position of psychiatry and forensic medicine from peripheral disciplines of uncertain scientific status to a socially sanctioned profession able to provide the state with a standardized language to address medical and social concerns. It was customary for Romanian physicians, to receive their medical education in France and be influenced by French medical practices and ideas. With respect to interpretations of social medicine, public hygiene ideas still flourished in the 1850s and 1900s, encouraging the view that environmental modifications could influence certain diseases.

Psychiatrists and hygienists accepted that mental diseases were often a biological reaction to specific environmental conditions. Psychiatrists accepted that mental diseases were often a biological reaction to specific environmental conditions. By the beginning of the 20th century, however, these interpretations of social and biological degeneration - which still found supporters among many French psychiatrists - receded in Romania. Contrary to other countries in Europe and Latin America where the Latin tradition of France and Italy was strong, and which embraced the modern theories of human body constitution or bio typology, the predominant view in Romania was rather that of biological determinism, upholding the idea that heredity traits were transmitted from generation to generation independently of the environment.

The First World War marked a turning point in the transition from social medicine as a diffuse elitist discourse to a nationally wide programme. This transformation was corroborated with the fact that, after 1918, the medical profession in Romania gained visibility and prominence. Evolution, Heredity and Social Medicine, initially adopted by a handful of medical doctors, was now transmitted to broader audiences. New and more powerful organisations emerged, like the Romanian Society of Legal Medicine, initiated by Nicolae Minovici and Anthropological Section of the Romanian Social Institute, Institute of Anthropology, initiated by Francisc Rainer. Between c. 1830 and 1945, psychiatrists and forensic doctors in Romania campaigned for the implementation of a professionally controlled and biologically based form of national belonging, both externally in conjunction with similar developments in Western Europe, and internally as a direct response to local social and economic conditions. An analysis of the medical profession's appropriation by the Romanian state offered a substantial insight into the process of medicalisation experienced by various discourses on society, the nation, and the body in this country.

My research addressed the relationship between forensic medicine, psychiatry, and Darwinism in modern Romania on the basis of a jointly refined set of methodological precepts; namely, the disentanglement of European symbolic geography (the East vs. West division); secondly, the introduction of an asymmetric comparison, that is evaluation of different national contexts which shared similar eugenic practices; in other words the originality of Romanian medical traditions versus the influence exercised by Western European medical and scientific models.

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Next, I have detailed my future plans of developing my academic carrier, divided in research plans, where I have synthesized a few projects that I wish to implement in the following years. I will focus on exploring the evolution of medicine in the modern Romanian society, by looking into the social modernizing discourses of the medical elite, and the evolution of sanitary regulations during 1830-1945. By looking into detail to the Romanian case, I will concentrate on themes aiming to contribute to a largely uncharted chapter of social history in Romania during a century, by analyzing concepts of medical standards improvement and modernity ideals through the complex interchanges between medicine, scientific discourse, law enforcement and social needs in modern Romania. By analyzing the emergence of the concepts of enhancing the medical scientific standards and modernization in the social and professional discourses in Romania, I will try to enlighten the social dynamics, scientific networks and cross-fertilization formed around the medical elite and the patient.

Future historical investigation will be done chronologically along three main lines that define the medical discourse and subsequently, the patient in modern society: an epistemological level, an institutional network, and the legislative frame, in other words, the range of activities that assembled the medical practice and the status of the patient as the subject of rights in the modern Romania society, 1830-1945. Hopefully, my investigation will contribute to a better understanding of the mutual nurturing of medicine, politics, society and scientific ideas in the context of modern Eastern Europe, Romania

For the latter, I wish to organize my research results on a series of general objectives, namely: (1) analysing the complex contexts of Romanian medical history and the scientific international networks; (2) publication of medical biographies, still in very much need in Romania; (3) to maximize the involvement of young researchers/physicians in didactic, research and dissemination activities; (4) enhancements of online activities on history of medicine, improvements of IT tasks on teaching activities - on line courses, web systems related to history of medicine, digitalisation of archival resources on medical history.