

The Evolution of Artistic Higher Education in Communist Romania between 1948 and 1989

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Abstract: Although communist regimes gave priority to technical higher education, artistic higher education also received a small, but constant share of the allocated study places and resources. This study outlines both the general features of this field, and its statistical evolution. After 1948, artistic higher education (music, fine and decorative arts, film, theatre and television) went through many changes in order to adapt to communist requirements. This paper presents some of the most important changes, what caused them, as well as their consequences. The statistical reconstruction of artistic higher education mainly focuses on the last 30 years of communism, on full-time studies and on four important indicators: total number of students, freshmen, graduates and total number of teaching staff.

Keywords: *communist regime, Romania, higher education, artistic higher education, statistics.*

Introduction

Higher education represented an important opportunity for the communist regime to train specialized staff in order to strengthen its political control of all the aspects of society, but also to support economic development and the creation of a new society¹.

Economic development was heavily concentrated on the process of industrialization, which demanded

(technical) specialized staff; therefore, no wonder that higher education underwent important developments accordingly. The number of institutions and students in the fields of technical, agronomical and economic studies grew to unprecedented shares before communism. But how did the other fields of higher education, such as artistic higher education (AHE), develop in this context? How much did the communist regime and its

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goals to shape a 'new society' influence the development of AHE?

There are not too many studies on communist higher education and even fewer focusing on fields like arts (NG, 1964; ILC, 1966; Demetrescu, Beldiman, Bedros: 2006; Pintilie, 2006; Cozmei, 2010; Cosma, 2010).

In its first communist years, Romania adopted the Soviet model at all levels of society, including culture and higher education².

For AHE, we will take the example of music. Irrespective of whether it referred to civilian life, or the army, music composition was subordinated to political requests. Military music was developed as an acknowledgment of the need to support communist propaganda in the military field and not only, since military music bands took part in important festivities celebrating the communist mythology (Sîlea, 2006:92-110). Some of the compositions created as military music revealed the level of political influence right from their title (*În slujba patriei, Din victorii în victorii* or *Apărătorii patriei*), while those created in the field of 'civilian music' were even more ideologically corrupted, especially during the 1950s: *Slavă glorioşului partid, Veniţi cu toţii la luptă pentru pace* or *Cântecul brigadierilor (Cîntece de masă. Antologie, 1958:108, 172-178, 355-361)*³.

Another important aspect related to political interference in art was the control achieved by communists over professionals associations such as the Composers' Association or the Fine Artists' Association. Another means to influence music-related activities were the articles of the main magazine called *Muzica*. Starting with 1950, the pages of

this publication displayed similarities with the situation concerning other arts, as mentioned by Magda Cârnecki (Cârnecki, 2013) in respect of *Arta plastică* (1954)/ *Arta* (1968), magazine for fine and decorative arts: a heavy influence of communist propaganda before 1960, some sort of propaganda relaxation for almost 15 years, after which the situation returned to the 1960 situation, meaning less pure music and more texts of political propaganda⁴. For theatre and film arts an important publication was *Teatrul* (1956)⁵, another one was *Cinema*, continuing after 1963 the tradition of the discontinued publication of *Probleme de cinematografie/Film* (1951-1958)⁶.

From the onset, we have to mention that in Romania, AHE was made up of three fields: fine and decorative arts, theatre and film arts and television⁷, and music. Students of AHE studied in special institutions (music conservatories and institutes of fine and decorative arts, and theatre and film arts and television), but also in faculties of music and fine arts/ drawing within pedagogical institutes and universities.

After the reorganization of the education system in Romania on November 1948, Romania AHE was structured into five Institutes of Arts located in Bucharest, Iaşi, Timişoara and Cluj-Napoca (two institutes, with courses in Romanian and Hungarian) (CLDD, November 1948: 1124-1126), under the management of the Ministry of Arts and Information. The Institutes of Arts from Bucharest and Cluj-Napoca comprised four faculties: music, theatre, fine arts and choreography (the last two faculties

had common courses in the institutes of Cluj-Napoca in 1948/1949). The Institute of Arts from Iași had only three faculties (theatre, music, fine arts), while the institute from Timișoara, only two (theatre and music). All these faculties were organized into departments. Therefore, the Faculty of Music had four departments (instrumental, vocal, composition, musicology and folklore), the Faculty of Theatre had three (drama, directing and theatre studies), the Faculty of Fine Arts and the Faculty of Choreography were each organized in two departments (choreography and painting, sculpture and engraving; choreography and folklore). The duration of the studies was three years for the Faculty of Choreography, four years for faculties of music and theatre, and five years for the Faculty of Fine Arts. From among all the existing art institutes, only the institute from Bucharest held PhD courses at the time (CLDD, October 1948: 960-963). In fact, until 1973, in AHE there was only one PhD granted in musicology (AMed, 129/1972, unnumbered).

This structure of AHE was maintained for only a brief period, because in 1950 the Art Institutes were abolished, and AHE was reorganized into eight institutions: the 'Ciprian Porumbescu' Music Conservatory from Bucharest (CP), the 'Gheorghe Dima' Music Conservatory from Cluj (GD), the 'Ion Luca Caragiale' Theatre Institute from Bucharest, the Film Institute from Bucharest⁸, the 'Szentgyörgy István' Theatre Institute from Cluj, the 'Matei Millo' Theatre Institute from Iași, the 'Nicolae Grigorescu' Fine Arts Institute from Bucharest (NG) and the 'Ion Andreescu'

Fine Arts Institute from Cluj-Napoca (IA) (CLDhd, November 1950: 131, 132). Timișoara was the only city left without an AHE institution out of the initial four, while in Iași only drama studies were kept. In Bucharest and Cluj, the Faculty of Choreography did not survive the changes, while the other faculties, components of the former Art Institutes, were transformed into AHE institutions.

AHE institutions were organized into faculties. For example, in 1950/1951, CP was structured into two faculties (canto, piano, orchestra and theoretical studies, composition, conducting and opera direction) and six departments (piano, string, whistle and percussion instruments; canto; choir conductors, pedagogy; composition; orchestra conductors; opera direction) (CLDhd, November 1950: 131; ANIC, PCM, 243/1951, 101). GD had a similar structure, but without the department of opera direction.

The Theatre Institute from Bucharest had two faculties: direction and drama. The Theatre Institute from Cluj had only two departments: drama in Romanian, and drama and direction in Hungarian. The Theatre Institute from Iași had only one department of drama (CLDhd, November 1950: 131).

NG was organized into six departments: painting (with the specializations painting, mural painting, stage set design), sculpture, engraving and decorative arts (textiles and fabric design, ceramics) graphic art (graphic art, engraving, lithography), pedagogy and museology, similar to those of IA, the latter also with courses in Hungarian (AMed, 243/1951, 101-104; CLDhd, November 1950: 131, 132).

In 1951, after a transient existence, the 'Matei Millo' Theatre Institute from Iași was closed. The main reasons for this decision was similar to that of the 1950 AHE reform, i.e. budgetary constraints, but also because the training of the teaching staff was unsatisfactory as was the refurbishing and the low number of students (ANIC, PCM, 233/1951, 5; AMed, 243/1951, 102, ANIC, CC-PCR-Economică, 34/1951, 12)⁹. Another change was the transfer of the Theatre Institute from Cluj-Napoca to Târgu-Mureș, which left Cluj-Napoca with only two AHE institutions, while Bucharest kept its four. All these changes meant that AHE was concentrated in only three higher education centers: Bucharest, Cluj-Napoca and Târgu-Mureș. In 1954, because of new reorganization measures, Theatre and Film Institutes were united into a single institute named The 'Ion Luca Caragiale' Institute of Theatre and Film from Bucharest (ILC) with two corresponding faculties¹⁰. Thus, as of 1954, AHE comprised two Fine Arts Institutes (with Faculties of Fine Arts and Decorative Arts in Bucharest and a Faculty of Fine Arts in Cluj-Napoca), two Conservatories (structured into a Faculty of Instruments and Canto and a Faculty of Composition, Conducting and Pedagogy) and two Institutes for Drama Studies (but also with film arts studies in Bucharest). From 1957, the ILC Faculties of Film and Theatre were united (from 1974 the name of the Faculty of Theatre was changed to the Faculty of Theatre, Film and Television). These were the main structural changes of AHE institutions in the first years of the communist rule.

From 1960¹¹ on, a new stage

of development started in AHE, because this was the year when the Conservatory of Iași was re-opened.

Another important aspect is that the Conservatory from Iași was initially organized to belong to the Faculty of Instruments and Canto, but beginning with 1962, the Faculty of Composition, Conducting and Pedagogy entered its structure copying the organization of the other two conservatories. The Conservatory from Iași received the name 'George Enescu' in 1965 (CLDHD, March-April 1965: 142), the same way as other AHE institutions received their own 'patrons'.

The 1960 changes established a structure of AHE with seven institutions: three conservatories, CP, GD and the 'George Enescu' Music Conservatory from Iași (GE), two fine arts institutes, NG and IA, two theatre institutes, ILC and the 'Szentgyörgy István' Theatre Institute from Târgu-Mureș (SI) that would exist until the end of the communist regime, obviously with changes of their components (faculties, departments and specializations).

In the 1960s there was an increasing interest in AHE students and their education results, because after 1962, besides the standard scholarships and the special 'Nicolae Grigorescu' scholarship, awarded from 1957 onward to a student of a fine arts institute which allowed him/her to study for two years abroad (CLDHAAN, May-June 1968: 346), two more special scholarships were established: 'Ion Andreescu' for six students and 'George Enescu' for five students¹².

In 1969, a few other changes place in the structure of AHE: the Faculty

of Composition, Conducting and Pedagogy was renamed the Faculty of Composition and Musicology, the Faculty of Fine Arts was renamed the Drawing Faculty within pedagogical institutes, and a new faculty was established, the Faculty of Music of the Pedagogical Institute from Braşov (BO, 1969: 3). In 1974, the two GE faculties merged into the Faculty of Music, while in CP and GD, the Faculty of Composition and Musicology was renamed the Faculty of Pedagogy and Musical Composition, Musicology. From 1977 onward, the latter changed its name once more into the Faculty of Music and Musical Composition, Musicology while in Iaşi the faculty was renamed the Faculty of Music and Fine Arts.

After 1972, ILC and SI, the Faculty of Fine Arts and the departments of monumental painting and stage design from the NG Faculty of Decorative Arts, the departments of painting, sculpture and graphic from the Faculty of Fine and Decorative Arts of IA and CP, GD and GE were under the subordination of both the Ministry of Education and the Council of Culture and Socialist Education¹³, while the artistic faculties from pedagogical institutes were only under the subordination of the former (HCM, April-June 1972: 16-24).

From 1974/1975 onward, AHE included three specializations that remained until the end of the communist regime: theatre and film arts and television (specializations: acting, direction, picture film and television, art and performing methodology), music (specializations: instrumental music, canto, pedagogy and musical composition, musicology), fine and decorative arts (specializations:

painting, graphic, sculpture; monumental art – restoration, museology; tapestry, stage design; (aesthetics of) industrial forms, introduced after 1969 (Demetrescu, Beldiman, Bedros, 2006: 33), ceramics, glass and metal art) (CLD, April-June 1974: 254, 255).

An interesting aspect in the history of communist AHE is that institutions from Iaşi were discontinued for most of the 1950s (with the exception of the years 1950/1951), before being firmly re-established in 1960 with the Conservatory. Its evolution was different from that of the other two existing conservatories, with a quickly diminished structure, and with music grouped together with fine and decorative arts, the latter being organized as a department in the structure of the Faculty of Music and Fine Arts.

Back to the evolution of AHE, starting from 1982, new admission conditions were established, limiting the access to AHE institutions to only those candidates who, apart from the standard conditions (to be high-school graduates, but also other 'artistic' conditions depending on the AHE field), were able to present documents to justify that they took part in mass artistic activities, that they were awarded in the National Festival 'Cântarea României', even in artistic school contests or that they were laureates of international artistic contests (*Forum*, 1982: 86; *Forum*, 1989: 71).

In 1986, after years of decreases in the total number of AHE students, as was the case, in fact, with the entire higher education system, CP and GD underwent new important changes: the

traditional structure with two faculties was replaced with the Faculty of Music, while at NG, its two faculties were merged into the Faculty of Fine and Decorative Arts, while the number of specializations was reduced to 10 from 12 (ANIC, CC-PCR-PropAgit, 39/1986, 3; 47/1986, unnumbered).

Another important element that may assist in understanding the development of AHE in communism refers to the specializations.

In 1989, for theatre and film arts and television there were three specializations: acting (in Romanian and Hungarian), direction, picture film and television (*Forum*, 1989: 73). For fine and decorative arts there were four groups of specializations: 1) painting, (graphic art) drawing-restoration, drawing teacher; monumental art-restoration, drawing teacher; 2) sculpture-restoration, drawing teacher; glass-ceramic-metal; 3) stage design-drawing teacher, industrial forms; 4) museology-drawing teacher (*Forum*, 1989: 84). Music also comprised four specializations: instrumental music (different instruments) - music; canto-music; music; musical composition-musicology (*Forum*, 1989: 85, 86).

As opposed to most higher education specializations, those of AHE were characterized by a significantly low number of freshmen per specialization, especially in music. For example, the situation of GE freshmen in 1971/1972 was as follows: music teachers - sixty three students, composition - three, violin - ten, viola - two, cello - four, bass - two, flute - two, clarinet - one, oboe - two, bassoon - two, horn - two, trumpet - three, trombone-tuba - one, hammer - one, piano-organ - nine and canto - five (AMed, 311/1971,

unnumbered). This situation had little to do with planning decisions¹⁴, and more with the requirements of the respective specializations. However, the evolution of the number of freshmen (a sharp decline) between the end of 1970s and the 1980s, may contradict this assumption. On this point, the analysis of the admission competition would be very interesting (we also have to take into account that artistic faculties at pedagogical institutes were abolished after 1978/1979), but since for the moment we lack important data, we can only present a comparison, which is still representative, for the competition of 1978/1979 as compared to 1968/1969. In 1978/1979, the competition recorded a spectacular growth of three times more for some AHE institutions than in 1968/1969 (although during this interval fine arts faculties still existed in the structure of pedagogical institutes, except for faculties of music): 23.12 students per study places at ILC, 15.90 at SI, 10.82 at NG, 10.14 at IA, 3.21 at CP, 3.55 at GD and 6.31 at GE, for an average of 10.43 students per study places in AHE, one of the highest rate in Romanian higher education at the time, a characteristic of AHE that needs to be further researched, since in 1956 there were 8.7 candidates per study place, again the highest for that period (AMed, 227/1956, unnumbered; 299/1968, unnumbered; 113/1978, unnumbered).

We should also stress that the Theatre Faculty within SI became a department, and although there were only a few students attending its studies, completed in 1976 by a group of students studying acting in Romanian (ANIC, CC-PCR-Cancelarie, 44/1976,

94v), the SI number of freshmen remained basically unchanged until 1989.

An interesting situation is that of the specialization of AHE teachers. One of the objectives of higher education was to train teaching staff, and the same was true for AHE. Therefore, the Faculties of Music and the Faculties of Fine Arts/Drawing were established within pedagogical institutes and universities with the aim of providing the training of teaching staff in three years of studies. Faculties of Music were established in 1961/1962 in pedagogical institutes in Bucharest, Cluj-Napoca, Iași, Timișoara and Târgu-Mureș, faculties of fine arts being already established a year earlier within the same institutes, with the exception of Târgu-Mureș.

From 1964/1965 onward, the faculties of music stopped admitting new students, and from 1966/1967 onward, they disappeared from the structure of these pedagogical institutes, except for those in Timișoara and Târgu-Mureș¹⁵. In 1969/1970, a new faculty of music was established within the pedagogical institute from Brașov (from 1971/1972, the University of Brașov) (Catrina, 1995: 68; BO, 1971: 871; CLD, October-December 1971: 537). Because of the structural changes which affected the entire higher education system, in 1974/1975 the faculties of music were turned into departments in the structure of the Faculty of Natural Sciences from Brașov the Faculties of Pedagogical Education from Timișoara¹⁶ and Târgu-Mureș¹⁷. In 1978/1979, music at pedagogical institutes was dissolved.

As opposed to faculties of music, those of fine arts/drawing (the name was changed beginning with 1968/1969)

functioned between 1961/1962-1971/1972 in the structure of four pedagogical institutes (Bucharest, Cluj-Napoca, Iași and Timișoara). From 1971/1972 onward, there were still four faculties of drawing, but two functioned in the structures of NG and IA (only for two years), while the other two in those of universities from Iași and Timișoara. Beginning with 1974/1975, the faculties of drawing were dissolved, but departments continued to function in the above-mentioned universities, in the structure of faculties of pedagogical education until they were abolished in the same year, as was the case with the faculties of music. Many reasons supported this 1977 decision, which also affected other higher education sectors, but the main ones were the need to improve the nomenclature of specializations translated into a decrease of their number - the process had already started in 1974/1975, when 112 specializations remained out of 155, combined with the first measures to decrease the number of artistic teachers beginning with 1971) (ANIC, CC-PCR-Cancelarie, 68/1977, 178)¹⁸; another reason was that the training of music and drawing teachers did not 'justify two forms of training functioning at the same time' (ANIC, CC-PCR-Cancelarie, 68/1977, 181, 181v) - in pedagogical institutes/universities and in conservatories/fine arts institutes¹⁹, and even because pedagogical education did not prove useful, as already mentioned a decade before (ANIC, CC-PCR-Cancelarie, 210/1968, 29; 68/1977, 18). This measure was not so dramatic, because after 1977, all music graduates would also become

music teachers (this explains the new titles of music specializations like instrumental music-music, canto-music), similar to all graduates of fine and decorative arts (minus those from the specialization industrial forms, ceramics, glass and metal art); hence, new specialization titles appeared (such as drawing teachers-painting, graphic art; sculpture-drawing teachers) (ANIC, CC-PCR-Cancelarie, 64/1977, 50; 68/1977, 181, 181v; 71/1977, 173). The reorganization was also applied to ILC, where the specialization art and methodology of performance was abolished (ANIC, CC-PCR-Cancelarie, 68/1977, 187), but was not really implemented in Iași, where the Faculty of Drawing from the University entered the structure of GE as a department of the Faculty of Music and Fine Arts. This decision took into account the fact that Moldova 'is an area with high demography, with a high number of educated population and with an important shortage of drawing teaching staff' (ANIC, CC-PCR-Cancelarie, 71/1977, 40, 40v; 87/1969, 90). Therefore, the insufficient number of teaching staff was still a reality at the end of the 1970s, even if the political leaders acknowledged and tried to solve this problem (at least) at the beginning of the communist regime. It seems that the best solution to this problem was adopted in 1977, when students were trained to be teachers and artists at the same time, thus simplifying the structure of AHE.

As for the development of AHE within pedagogical institutes and universities, the highest number of freshmen²⁰ of pedagogical institutes was registered for the Faculties of Fine Arts in 1962/1963 (121 students in

Bucharest, 82 in Cluj-Napoca, 98 in Iași and 101 in Timișoara), while the number varied in the case of Faculties of Music (but no more than 82 students in Bucharest in 1962/1963). In these institutions, the students were mostly women. As for the share of artistic students in the total number of students of pedagogical institutes, an average of 12.72 was registered in Bucharest, 15.98 in Cluj-Napoca, 14.48 in Iași, 6.05 in Timișoara and 10.38 in Târgu-Mureș.

If the studies for music/arts teachers took three years, other studies took from four to six years depending on the form of study, profile and specialization (four years for theatre and film arts and television, daytime courses, five years for evening courses, the same for fine and decorative arts; four years for music, specializations instrumental music – music; music and musical composition, musicology, daytime courses, five years at the specialization music and musical composition, musicology for evening courses, five years for canto-music, daytime courses, or six years for evening courses).

Since we have already mentioned the forms of education, we should mention that in AHE, full-time studies were dominant, but extramural education was also common at the Faculty of Composition, Conducting and Pedagogy (CP and GD), at ILC and, for two years, at NG (Faculty of Fine Arts). From 1981/1982 onward, evening courses substituted extramural courses at ILC, but functioned together for another year at NG. At IA, evening courses were introduced in 1981/1982, while at CP they replaced extramural courses in 1982/1983 (this time for

both faculties). At GD in 1982/1983 there were only full-time studies, but beginning with 1983/1984, evening courses were also organized at the Faculty of Instruments and Canto and, from the following year, at the Faculty of Music and Musical Composition, Musicology. At GE evening courses were introduced from 1983/1984 onward at the Faculty of Music and Fine Arts, but not for the department of fine and decorative arts.

We will not cover in detail the AHE statistics for extramural and evening courses, but will focus on full-time studies, because we lack complete information regarding their evolution. Still, we have enough statistics to mention that extramural courses there attended by over 200 students enlisted at CP for each year between 1967/1968-1976/1977 and similarly at GD. Beginning with 1977/1978, their number gradually dropped. When extramural courses were replaced with evening courses, the general situation of higher education was not the same and evening courses attracted no more than 90 students at CP (1987/1988) and under 50 at both GD and GE. At ILC, on the contrary, evening courses recorded more students than the previous years due to extramural courses, while NG recorded a huge number of students enrolled in extramural courses in 1979/1980 (692), but in just two years, the extramural courses were abolished. Starting with 1985/1986, evening courses at NG recorded each year over 100 students and only half of this number at IA.

Besides the findings on the evolution of AHE institutions and specializations, our second important contribution is the presentation of

findings from the statistical data regarding AHE. The statistical data were collected from the Archive of the National Statistics Institute (INS) 1960/1961-1988/1989, but further research should focus on comparing the data with those emanating from AHE institutions, the Archive of the Ministry of Education and other institutions (the State Planning Committee). The INS indicators presented and analyzed in this paper are as follows: total number of students enlisted, freshmen and graduates, teaching personnel, foreign students, ratio between female and male students (mainly from 1960/1961). The focus of our statistical analysis is the evolution of AHE full-time studies, but, based on (temporarily) incomplete statistics, we can also express partial conclusions referring to evening and extramural courses. The collection of all these data raised a number of issues, especially because we lack data for 1969/1970 and 1970/1971. We have adopted a few solutions to these problems:

- 1) The number of freshmen for 1969/1970 and 1970/1971 was collected from the third and second year of studies of 1971/1972.

- 2) The total number of students was computed for each AHE faculty depending on its number of study years. For example, the duration of studies at the Faculty of Instruments and Canto was five years, and its total number of students for the year 1969/1970 was computed by adding the number of students from the 3rd, 4th and 5th years of study in 1971/1972 and those of the 3rd and 4th years of study in 1968/1969, while for the Faculty of Composition, Conducting and Pedagogy (six years of study), the total number was obtained

adding the number of students from the 3rd, 4th, 5th and 6th years of study in 1971/1972 and the 4th and 5th years of studies in 1968/1969. After all the data per faculty were counted, the number of students per institution was easily obtained through the corresponding addition.

3) The number of female students in the first year of study in 1961/1962 was obtained from the 2nd year of studies in 1962/1963.

Although statistics in general has a certain level of approximation and we also had to obtain data through the aforementioned methods (we still miss complete data for more than 10 years of AHE), in our analysis we have used almost 30 years of AHE statistics, which is an important period.

The first important fact resulting from statistics is that the highest number of students attending AHE, 3258, was recorded in the year 1971/1972. During this academic year, AHE counted the highest share in Romanian higher education: 3.04 per cent. If we divide the period 1960-1989 into three decades, we find out that 1970-1979 averaged 2610 students per year, the highest value from among the others (2299 in 1960-1969, and 858 in 1980-1989). The decrease in the total number of AHE students in the 1980s is significant: there were three times fewer students as compared to the 1970s. The evolution of AHE institutions and specializations in the 1980s, with a decreasing trend, but with still a functional structure, supports the findings from the statistical data. This trend in AHE is in contrast with the 1970s and the 1980s cultural movement in general, stressing the spread of cultural creation at all levels

of society and imposing different forms of artistic education (through community centers, the National Festival 'Cântarea României', movie clubs, fine arts circles, folk art circles, literary circles and so on).

After an increase of the total number of students from 1960 until 1971, the decrease was already noticeable in 1972, with almost 400 students less, and then again in 1980 with a drop of almost 300 students. If in 1960/1961 in AHE there were 1571 students enlisted, in 1988/1989 there were only 452. So there were more than three times less students in AHE towards the end of the communist rule, after the overall dramatic economic years of the 1980s.

In the academic year 1971/1972, AHE recorded the biggest number of freshmen (777 students), following two years with consecutive increases, of over 700 students admitted per year.

From the data we have collected, the biggest number of graduates²¹, 703, was recorded in 1974/1975 with an expected gap as compared to the AHE climax of 1971/1972. Although there is no connection between the two situations, starting with 1986/1987 the number of graduates dropped to well under 200, the same year with the important reorganization of not only AHE, but the entire higher education system.

The maximum number of students enlisted in music was at its peak in 1971/1972, 2101 students, while the following year was the best for fine and decorative arts with 903 students. However, for theatre and film arts and television, the maximum number of students was recorded a couple of years before (in 1967/1968, 346 students were enlisted). The lowest number of

students was attained in 1985/1986 in AHE fields of fine and decorative arts and theatre and film arts and television, while for music it was in 1988/1989.

Among the fields of AHE, the number of music students represented over half of AHE students. In average, music amassed 57.05 per cent of the students enrolled in AHE, fine and decorative arts 30.94 per cent, and theatre and film arts and television 12.01 per cent. Music also had the highest number of AHE institutions as compared to fine and decorative arts and theatre and film arts and television, although let us not forget the double role of the Conservatory from Iași.

The institution with the highest number of students registered in AHE was CP with an average of 590.86 students enlisted, followed by NG with 364.96, GD with 341.20; GE with 247.34; ILC with 192.13; IA with 185.27 and SI with 37.58. These data underscore the importance of Bucharest, frequently referred to in communism as the 'citadel of higher education' (ANIC, PCM, 224/1951, 18) for AHE in Romania. They also reveal the important share of music in AHE, with fine and decorative arts field coming second. They also show two other important facts: SI had nearly no variations in the number of students throughout the analyzed period, as opposed to the general trend of AHE after 1978/1979, when we can clearly see that the number of AHE students was set on a steep decrease with a stabilization and a slight improvement after 1986/1987, the last change being somehow strange, just after the last reorganization towards a simplified AHE structure. In these two cases, we can assume that planning had a

strong influence over shaping the AHE evolution and less over the candidates' desire, let alone the needs of society.

Regarding the number of freshmen, one of the most easily controlled indicator of higher education by political factors, the decreasing trend from 1972/1973 and until the end of communism can be divided into four stages of low variation: i) 1972/1973-1976/1977, ii) 1977/1978 and 1978/1979, iii) 1979/1980-1981/1982 and iv) 1982/1983-1988/1989. The last stage was characterized in fact by a slight increase in the number of freshmen.

The situation of AHE students by gender shows us a slight dominance of male students as compared to female students.

Another important statistical indicator of AHE refers to the teaching staff. First of all, we can easily ascertain the dominance of male teaching staff and the fact that, according to the high number of students enlisted in AHE in 1971/1972, the number of teaching personnel amounted to the highest number during the same year: 894. The following year, almost 100 teaching staff left AHE, and the number continued to decrease until 1989, with two exceptions: 1978/1979 and 1988/1989, the latter with an increase of over 60 assistant lecturers. From the transcripts of the Central Committee of PCR, statistical indicators and the reorganizations that took place, we can assume that the 1971/1972 records of AHE students drew the attention of communist leaders and thus triggered planning measures towards a decrease of their numbers, mostly because of the need to cut expenditures.

The allocation of teaching

personnel in the fields of AHE outlines the characteristics of the number of students. Music had the highest number of teaching staff, while the same indicator reveals an insignificant difference between fine and decorative arts, and theatre and film arts and television. At the peak moment of AHE evolution, 1971/1972, music teaching staff exceeded by 200 the number of teaching staff members in all the other AHE fields together (553 versus 341).

The statistical data regarding the teaching staff also show that for each teaching staff member there were six students at the most, as was the case of GE in 1965/1966, while the average was three, which is a quite good ratio for a higher education field where the improvement of vocational skills is decisive for each student (but we should mention that towards the end of the communist rule, the ratio was even one-to-one in many AHE institutions, due to a desperate urge to reduce the burden represented by higher education for the state budget, based, especially in the 1980s, on an increasingly weak economy).

As for foreign students, it seems they were not too attracted by the Romanian AHE. The highest number of foreign students was achieved mostly in the last half of the 1970s. Per AHE institution, the highest number of foreign students was 36 at NG in 1978/1979 (7.05 per cent of the NG students during that year). ILC (34 students in 1978/1979) and CP (19 in 1975/1976) enlisted an important number of foreign students, at least for AHE, while the other institutions such as GD, SI and IA had no more than five, and GE did not have any.

If we add to the statistical data of

AHE for full-time studies those for extramural, evening courses and those referring to pedagogical institutes and universities (partial data) we can detect that the highest number of students was registered in 1971/1972, namely 4351 (minimum 909 in 1985/1986, 2667 students on average), in the same year for full-time studies, while for other forms of study, the peak was reached in 1979/1980, 1129 students, and in pedagogical institutes in 1963/1964, 1410 students. In the year 1971/1972, full-time students represented 75 per cent of AHE students (mainly because of AHE students in pedagogical institutes or universities), while in 1979/1980 their percentage dropped to 63.

Using the combined data, the highest number of AHE freshmen was recorded in the year 1962/1963 (1275 students), when most AHE students in AHE were studying at pedagogical institutes (53 per cent), while the peak for full-time students was recorded in 1971/1972, 777 students, 78 per cent, the peak for extramural courses was reached in 1962/1963, 180 students.

Conclusions

AHE (music, fine and decorative arts, theatre and film arts and television) in communist Romania underwent important changes which resulted in the creation of a modern basis for AHE development. Starting with 1960, AHE comprised three conservatories, two fine arts institutes and two theatre institutes, as well as numerous specializations. AHE was present in important higher education centers such as Bucharest, Cluj-Napoca, Iași,

Timișoara and Târgu-Mureș.

Although it retained its characteristics, after 1948 AHE was subject to the influence of communist ideology in all its aspects (organization of institutions, specializations, education plans, admission and allocation of students). An important influence of ideology can be noticed in the AHE statistics in the example of the higher number of art teachers trained, although still not enough to solve the problems of a shortage of teaching staff at all educational levels.

As a conclusion on the AHE statistics, the highest number of students enlisted at full-time studies (3258) and freshmen (777 students) was attained in 1971/1972, while the highest number of graduates (703) was registered in 1974/1975. AHE students had a ratio of well under five percent in the Romanian higher education. The most important field of AHE in communism was music : the highest number of students, freshmen and graduates, the highest number of institutions and specializations, and, accordingly, it went through the most significant changes that impacted its structure and number of students; at the same time, it was an important factor in the communist decision-making process referring to higher education planning.

Endnotes

¹ Here is an example of a representative dictum regarding artistic development during the communist period : ‘The construction of socialism was, together with the elimination of the old social system, the establishment of a new model

of thinking, of understanding reality, of treasuring the values of culture, literature, music and theatre’ (ILC, 1966: 82, 83).

² A document from 1951 clearly states that in establishing higher education institutions ‘the model was taken after higher education in the U.S.S.R.’, but ‘the objectives of the Five Year Plan were also taken into account’ (ANIC, PCM, 233/1951, 52). The purge of the teaching staff at the beginning of communism, political interference in the curricula, tests for admission, the questionable condition of the artist in communism, the social category of freshmen are other interesting topics that can reveal the AHE *modus vivendi* during the communist regime and thus lead to its better understanding.

³ An interesting subject is the way in which the communist regime tried to increase the level of cultural awareness among the (working) people. For example, in the field of music, copying the higher education structure, the Workers’ Universities of Musical Culture were established in 1959-1960 in Bucharest and Cluj-Napoca.

⁴ Three examples of articles from *Muzica*: *Partidul, îndrumătorul creației muzicale* (*Muzica*, April-July 1951: 11-15), *Aportul creator al lui Mihail Jora și rolul său în evoluția muzicii noastre* (*Muzica*, October 1966: 1-12), *22 de ani de la istoricul Congres al IX-lea al P.C.R.* (*Muzica*, July 1987: 1, 2). Mihail Jora, an important Romanian composer, is an example of a persecuted artist at the beginning of the communist period, who was later ‘rehabilitated’ by the same regime and was even decorated with the Labor Order, 1st class, in 1961 (Vasile, 2011: 114). It is also worth mentioning that in the 1951 April-July issue of *Muzica*, the first three pages were taken with photos of Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej, Ana Pauker and Vasile Luca, top communist leaders of the

time

⁵ The entire collection of *Teatrul* was photographed and published on the Internet, under the coordination of the former Institut de Memorie Culturală and can be accessed at <http://revistateatrul.cimec.ro/>.

⁶ Mircea Dumitrescu, *Reviste de film*, <http://mirceadumitrescu.trei.ro/revistedefilm.htm>.

⁷ 'Television' was introduced in the title of this specialization beginning with 1974.

⁸ Managed by the Film Committee (INS, 1938-1951, 6; ANIC, PCM, 2/1951, 56), the Film Institute had 3 departments: operators, directors and actors (ANIC, PCM, 569/1952, 25).

⁹ Another reason for closing the institution (which merged with that from Bucharest, in the context of other reorganization measures meant to concentrate higher education in only several cities) was that in this way it 'restores the number of institutions to match the real needs of the teaching staff, but also improved training opportunities' (ANIC, PCM, 2/1951, 54).

¹⁰ The main reason could have been the need to cut expenditures. In 1952, spending per one student of a Film Institute was Lei 9776, more than double for the average, Lei 4667 /student. For the institutes under the management of the Arts Committee, spending averaged Lei 4981/student (ANIC, PCM, 572/1952, 12). The cost of an AHE student was a problem during communism. According to a transcript from 1971, after finding the cost of an AHE student i, Nicolae Ceaușescu said: 'We have got to conduct an analysis and take measures for a sustained reduction of expenditures in education. I cannot accept that an artist can cost me more than an engineer. We have to check the entire [higher educational] system' (ANIC, CC-PCR-Cancelarie, 118/1971, 60).

¹¹ Beginning this year, the duration of

studies at the Faculty of Theatre was 4 years (CLDHD, September-October 1961: 61, 62).

¹² In 1962, iff in technical higher education 57 per cent of the students were set to be rewarded with scholarships, in AHE there was the lowest ratio, 47 per cent (CHDCM, 1962: 396-400).

¹³ An important institution to be studied in the future research for political influences on AHE and not only as the follower, beginning with 1971, of the State Committee for Culture and Art (established in 1962).

¹⁴ In the transcript of the meeting of the Executive Committee of CC of PCR from December 16, 1968, Ion Dumitrescu, president of the Composers' Union of Romania, provided the following explanation in reply to Nicolae Ceaușescu's opinion that the rate of artistic graduates needs planning: 'We cannot plan the training of artists [...]. I have been teaching at the conservatory for 30 years and I have witnessed the most amazing planning. We do not have people in orchestras, there are no cellists, violinists because we have planned and over-planned. Here, planning does not work [...]. We have to be patient. In art there are always losses, it's an occupational hazard'' (ANIC, CC-PCR-Cancelarie, 210/1968, 37, 38). In the 1969 proposals were made and implemented for the improvement of AHE. They mainly considered an additional study period (mostly one year) of specialization in some AHE fields in order to ensure 'real artists' as opposed to mere AHE graduates. Overall, 1969 was a year of the clear separation of the two AHE directions (ANIC, CC-PCR-Cancelarie, 45/1969, 18-26).

¹⁵ As an organizational example, the Faculty of Music from the Three Year Pedagogical Institute from Cluj-Napoca was organized into two departments, the

canto and canto-instruments (*Muzica*, March 1964: 6, 7), following the binary structure of the music faculty from the structure of conservatories. Music faculties within pedagogical institutes, except for Timișoara and Târgu-Mureș, had organized admission only for three years starting with 1961/1962. At Bucharest, Iași and Cluj-Napoca, the year 1965/1966 was the last when students are mentioned in documents of the INS. For the years for which we have data, the total number of students enrolled in each music faculty within pedagogical institutes or universities was under 100 (except for Bucharest, where there were 192 students in 1963/1964).

¹⁶ In Timișoara, the university was established in 1962 (CLDHD, September-December 1962: 106), but the faculties of music and fine arts operated within the three year pedagogical institute from the same city. Ten years later, in 1972, the pedagogical institute was dissolved, and the faculty of music entered the structure of the University of Timișoara. It is worth noting that in 1968 a proposal was issued to transform the faculty of music into a conservatory (ANIC, CC-PCR-Cancelarie, 210/1968, 252; ANIC, CC-PCR-Cancelarie, 87/1969, 90).

¹⁷ Established in 1960, the Pedagogical Institute from Târgu-Mureș became an important institution with quite varied fields in higher education, and after 1978 the institution became more technically oriented (after 1984 its name was changed to the Institute for sub-engineers).

¹⁸ The AHE specialization of teaching staff was, at least beginning with 1971/1972, in the attention of political factors, which intended to decrease their number (AMed, 330/1972, unnumbered).

¹⁹ If needed, the department for training

teaching staff for which the duration of studies was three years, could be established within AHE institutions (ANIC, CC-PCR-Cancelarie, 68/1977, 188v).

²⁰ No information available from the INS for 1969/1970, 1970/1971 and 1974/1975-1977/1978. Data from 1961/1962 on female freshmen were missing and collected for 1962/1963, the second year of studies. Data on the total number of students enrolled in artistic faculties within pedagogical institutes from Timișoara and Târgu-Mureș for 1969/1970 and 1970/1971 were collected for the first year, from the third year of studies 1971/1972, and from the first and second years 1968/1969, while for the other missing year, from the second and third year 1971/1972 and from the first year of study 1968/1969. The number of freshmen was taken from the second and third years of study 1971/1972 for 1970/1971 and 1969/1970.

²¹ As in other higher education fields, AHE graduates were also assigned to working places. For example, in 1973 they were assigned to the Ministry of Light Industry, the Ministry of Agriculture, Food Industry and Water, the Ministry of Education, the Home Office, the Ministry of Defense, the Institute for Scientific and Technical Creation, the Central Union of Craftsmen's Cooperatives (ANIC, CC-PCR-Cancelarie, 303/1973).

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