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## PRE-UNIVERSITY EDUCATION IN THE ROMANIAN PEOPLE’S REPUBLIC (1947–1965)

After the establishment of the communist regime on 30 December 1947, the great Soviet-inspired political, economic and cultural transformations began in Romania. The education system also experienced important changes compared to the interwar period, being heavily politicised and transformed into an important communist propaganda tool.

In the 1950s, the changes were brutal, trying to create an education system as close as possible to the Soviet one. An important goal was the definitive removal of the interwar educational ideal, which emphasised the patriotic and spiritual education of students. The communist type of education proposed other coordinates regarding the education of future citizens, eliminating the religious, mystical and humanistic elements. At the same time, numerous teachers and students were removed based on political or social criteria.

From 1 September 1951, the education reform deepened more and more along the lines of the Soviet model: the school year was divided into four parts, the Russian catalog was introduced, and from 1952, students were graded from 1 to 5.

Only since 1956 have some aspects of the Romanian education system been corrected: the education plans were improved, grading from 1 to 10 returned, urban education became mixed, the numbering of elementary schools was changed and the constituencies related to them were divided.<sup>1</sup>

The period 1956–1965 was marked by the attempts of the communist authorities to return Romanian education to the traditional interwar model, gradually removing Soviet influences and adding the elements of a new type of communism, the nationalist one.

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<sup>1</sup> P. Popescu, *Ploiești-mileniul II. O istorie în date și imagini* (Ploiesti: Ploiesti-Mileniul III., 2003), p. 264.

## THE EDUCATION REFORMS OF 1948

The first education law from the communist regime was adopted on 3 August 1948, by Decree no. 175 of the Grand National Assembly (the new name of the country's Parliament). Moreover, the year 1948 was decisive regarding the consolidation of the new communist power, by adopting a constitution and important laws in the economic, social and political areas, as well as by establishing the *Securitate* the dreaded political police of the Romanian People's Republic (the name of Romania during 1947–1965).

The new law produced big changes in the Romanian education system: the secularisation and unification of all education; the abolition of private and denominational schools, with all schools being supported and controlled by the state; access to education was ensured for all children, regardless of nationality, sex, race or religion; as well as the realistic-scientific orientation of education, based on the dialectical and historical materialist conception of nature and society.<sup>2</sup>

Also in the education law of 1948, all private and confessional schools were abolished. The Hungarian minority was the hardest hit by this decision, with over 1000 confessional school units (Catholic, Reformed, Evangelical) being confiscated. However, Article IV of the law provided for the existence of education in the minority language in schools of all grades.<sup>3</sup> That was why the schools with teaching in the Hungarian language continued to exist, all of them being secular state schools.

After the revolution in Hungary in 1956, according to a decision of the Central Committee of the Romanian Workers' Party, Romanian and Hungarian schools were merged, and Romanian-language departments were established in Hungarian elementary, high school and university schools. This measure led to the reorganisation of the school administration, with all directors being of Romanian nationality; additionally, the use of the Hungarian language in writing school documents was abandoned. As a result, the number of students in Hungarian-language pre-university education steadily decreased, especially after 1965.<sup>4</sup>

Another problem was the non-existence of professional education in the language of the minorities throughout the studied period. We also do not know of the existence of any schools in the language of minorities other than Hungarian, in the period 1948–1965.

The new structure of public education was divided into four:

1. Preschool education.
2. Elementary education.
3. Secondary education.
4. Higher education.

<sup>2</sup> *Decret nr. 175 pentru reforma învățământului*, „Monitorul Oficial”, no. 177, 3 August 1948, 6322–6324.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibidem*, 6322.

<sup>4</sup> *Raport final*, coord. V. Tismăneanu, D. Dobrinu, C. Vasile (Bucharest: Editura Humanitas, 2007), p. 533.

In addition to these schools, literacy courses were established for illiterate people, aged between 14 and 55, as well as two-year special schools for workers (their graduation being equivalent to secondary education).<sup>5</sup>

Preschool education was optional, and elementary education was compulsory and free. For elementary education, the textbooks were unique, and starting from the 4th grade, the Russian language was compulsory. Admission to secondary education was based on an exam, and high schools were unique throughout the country in terms of organisation, curriculum, and teaching method. Pedagogical schools had the role of training teachers for preschool and elementary education, and high schools aimed to prepare students for higher education. The technical schools could be industrial, agricultural, commercial, sanitary, juridical-administrative, etc., They lasted four years and were aimed at training mid-level technical personnel needed for production. Vocational schools were organised next to enterprises, with the aim of "training qualified personnel", and a special law was to regulate their organisation and operation.

The new regime considered the education sector as a priority for building and consolidating communism in the Romanian People's Republic. That is why the education law adopted in 1948 represented a total break with Romanian public and private education system, as it had evolved in the last 80 years. The detachment from the old Romanian education model was also done by repealing all the laws on education from the interwar period.<sup>6</sup> The manuals were most often translated from Russian without adaptations. In terms of content, duration and grading, as well as objectives, the new law followed the Soviet model of education.

## PRESCHOOL EDUCATION

This was aimed at children between 3 and 7 years old, it was optional and within it there were kindergartens with a reduced schedule, normal, seasonal or weekly. Kindergartens existed before 1948, but they were very few in number, as were the number of children attending them. Since 1948, nurseries were also established, called day or seasonal homes, for children whose parents worked in industry or agriculture. They were established in areas with state farms where there was a large number of working peasants.

The children of peasants who were part of the socialist agricultural units, as well as the children of poor peasants, were received in these homes. Such a seasonal home could not operate with less than 15 children, and if there were more than 35 children,

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<sup>5</sup> „Monitorul Oficial”, no. 177, 3 August 1948, 6323.

<sup>6</sup> *Istoria românilor*, vol. X, coord. D. Giurescu (Bucharest: Editura Enciclopedică, 2013), p. 583.

two groups were organised.<sup>7</sup> Neighbourhood day homes were established for children from the cities, where children whose parents were in production and those from poor families with several children were received. Through the establishment of these homes, parents began to take their children to kindergartens in increasing numbers.

## ELEMENTARY EDUCATION

This comprised of two cycles: grades 1–4 (cycle I) and grades 5–7 (cycle II). Cycle I was free and compulsory. And in this sector, the changes were quite important: unique textbooks, following the model of those in the Soviet Union, the lustration of teachers and students based on political and social criteria, the study of the Russian language from the 4th grade, as well as the beginning of politicisation in a communist spirit of subjects taught in schools.

The students of the 1st, 2nd and 3rd grades did not take exams, they were passed or remained repeaters based on their annual grades. For admission to the 4th grade, there was an exam, written and oral, in the Romanian Language and Mathematics. In order to be graduates of the first cycle, students of grades 1–4 had to obtain a minimum general grade of 5 across the study subjects, with the exception of the subjects Sport, Music, Practical Applications and Drawing.<sup>8</sup>

Classes began in September and finished at the end of May, with approximately 200 school days. The winter holiday was the Christmas period, and the spring holiday was the Easter period. Classes were not held on Sundays and on holidays that marked important events in the country's past or in the history of the Communist Party. The courses were held over three terms. The month of June was dedicated to exams, the end of the school year, trips and artistic, cultural and sports events.<sup>9</sup>

The second cycle included grades 5–7, and from 1965 its duration increased to four years (grades 5–8). The 1948 law provided for these classes to be free of charge, therefore the number of children who continued their studies after the first four classes increased greatly compared to the interwar period. Students who graduated from primary classes could enroll in the second cycle without an exam. At the end of each class, however, there was an exam, in June, as follows:

- a) written exam in Romanian, Russian and Mathematics – in the 5<sup>th</sup> grade.
- b) written exam in Romanian, Russian, Mathematics and physics – in the 6<sup>th</sup> grade.
- c) at the end of the 7<sup>th</sup> grade, there was a graduation exam, which had two stages: a written exam in the Romanian Language and Mathematics, then an oral exam in the

<sup>7</sup> Direcția Județeană Prahova a Arhivelor Naționale, fond Sfatul Popular al Regiunii Ploiești. Secția Învățământ (further DJPAN-SPRPSI), 5/1951, 93.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibidem*, 2/1950, 187.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibidem*, 2/1950, 99.

Romanian Language, Russian Language, Mathematics, Physics, History, Geography, and the Constitution of the Romanian People's Republic (adopted in 1948).

The graduation exam at the end of the 7th grade was given before a committee chaired by the school director and made up of the teachers who had taught in that year. No fees were charged for these examinations. Graduates of the seven elementary classes could enroll in secondary education based on an entrance exam.

In the period 1948–1956, the subjects studied weekly in the 5th grade were the following: Mathematics – 7 hours, Romanian Language – 7 hours, Russian Language – 4 hours, Natural Sciences – 3 hours, History – 2 hours, Geography – 2 hours, Drawing – 1 hour, Hygiene – 1 hour, Gymnastics – 1 hour, Music – 1 hour, Educational activity – 1 hour, Manual work – 2 hours, Sport – 2 hours. So, 5th grade students studied at school 34 hours a week from Monday to Saturday.

In the 6th grade they studied: Mathematics – 6 hours, Romanian Language – 6 hours, Russian Language – 3 hours, Natural Sciences – 2 hours, History – 3 hours, Geography – 3 hours, Physics-Chemistry – 3 hours, Activity educational – 1 hour, Sport – 2 hours, Manual work – 2 hours, Drawing – 2 hours, Music – 2 hours. In total there were 37 hours per week.

In the 7th grade they studied: Mathematics – 6 hours, Romanian Language – 5 hours, Russian Language – 3 hours, Chemistry – 3 hours, Natural Sciences – 2 hours, History – 3 hours, Physics – 2 hours, Geography – 2 hours, Music – 1 hour, Drawing – 1 hour, Constitution of the Romanian People's Republic – 1 hour, Sport – 3 hours (one being theory), Practical activities – 1 hour, Educational activity – 1 hour. In total, 34 hours were studied over six days a week.<sup>10</sup>

One can observe the rather busy schedule of the students, the presence of a significant number of Russian language classes, the absence of studying other foreign languages, as well as the large number of mathematics classes. It is obvious that this timetable copied the Soviet model, which focused on the study of the exact sciences at the expense of the humanities (that were much more studied in interwar Romania), in order to perfect the future workers in the country's factories, and here the study of the exact sciences was needed.

## SECONDARY EDUCATION

If before communism there were two types of lyceums, theoretical and industrial, both with the duration of studies of four years, after 1948 four types of secondary schools appeared: lyceums, pedagogical schools, technical schools, and vocational schools.

The aim of the high schools was to provide a base of scientific knowledge necessary for continuing studies in higher education. They depended on the Ministry of

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<sup>10</sup> *Ibidem*, 2/1950, 188–189.

Public Education and were unique in organisation, curriculum, and teaching method throughout the country. Pedagogical schools were supposed to train educators and teachers, technical schools trained midlevel personnel “necessary for production”, and professional schools were organised near enterprises and trained skilled workers. High schools and pedagogical schools were organised, managed, financed and administered directly by the Ministry of Public Education, and technical and vocational schools by the relevant ministries.<sup>11</sup> In 1954, a new reorganisation of secondary education took place, when high schools became secondary schools, and from 1956 high school education became mixed.

Admission to high school was based on an exam, and at the end of the four years of study there was a graduation exam. In addition, at the end of the 8<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grades, written (in Romanian and mathematics) and oral (in Romanian, Russian, Mathematics and Physics, plus History at the end of the class) exams were held at the 10<sup>th</sup> grade. The graduation exam was held at the end of the 11<sup>th</sup> grade and included two tests:

- a) written exam in Romanian language and Mathematics, plus Latin in classical high schools.
- b) oral exam in: Romanian language, Russian language, Mathematics, History, Physics, Geography, Constitution of the Romanian People’s Republic and Biology.

This graduation exam was given in front of a committee, chaired by the school director, and made up of the teachers teaching courses in that year.<sup>12</sup> Starting from 1960, the graduation exam changed, in the sense that it returned to the methodology of the pre-1948 baccalaureate exam.<sup>13</sup>

Secondary technical schools lasted four years and trained technicians for industry, agriculture, commerce or administration. Those who wanted to attend these schools had to be graduates of the 7<sup>th</sup> grade and take a written entrance exam in the Romanian language, Mathematics and the Constitution of the Romanian People’s Republic. According to information from 1951, more than 80 percent of the students received scholarships depending on the material condition of the parents and the students’ school situation. Those with limited opportunities also received free clothes, textbooks and supplies (about 25 percent of the scholarship holders).<sup>14</sup> From 1954 these schools become secondary schools, and from 1956 they transformed into vocational schools, according to a government decision.<sup>15</sup>

Vocational schools were organised near factories and trained skilled workers for industrial and agricultural fields. The duration of studies was 2–3 years, depending on the specifics of the job. Education in these schools was free, and the students were supported by the state. This maintenance consisted of: allowance for food, clothing, personal hygiene items, books, school supplies, a monthly allowance for personal needs and travel expenses during holidays. Within the limits of available places, students who came from

<sup>11</sup> *Decret nr. 175 pentru reforma învățământului*, „Monitorul Oficial”, no. 177, 3 August 1948, 6323.

<sup>12</sup> DJPAN-SPRPSI, 2/1950, 188–189.

<sup>13</sup> Popescu, P. *Ploiești-mileniul II...*, p. 269.

<sup>14</sup> *Flamura Prahovei*, no. 143, 16 June 1951, p. 2.

<sup>15</sup> I. Dumitru *Învățământul preuniversitar ploieștean*, (Ploiesti: Karta-Graphix 2007), p. 216.

other localities could be accommodated in boarding schools<sup>16</sup>. In order to be admitted to these schools, candidates had to meet several conditions: be between the ages of 14–16, be graduates of at least four primary classes and pass the entrance exam.

Vocational school graduates were to be assigned to production at enterprises where they would work for at least four years<sup>17</sup>. Interest in these schools gradually grew, especially among the children of workers and peasants, who were attracted both by the freeness of these schools and by the prospect of a secure job.

In addition to industrial vocational schools, there were also agricultural vocational schools, with the following specialties: agriculture, vegetable growing, viticulture, fruit growing, veterinary medicine, forestry and tractor driving.<sup>18</sup> Admission was also based on an exam, and candidates had to be between 14–16 years old and graduates of seven elementary classes. Here, too, students received free accommodation, food, clothes, textbooks and school supplies, and the transportation of students during vacations and to practice was borne by the school.

From 1954, evening schools of general culture were also established, which functioned as separate units or as evening sections of seven-year and secondary schools. Workers from cities and villages who were in the workforce could enroll in the evening classes, being exempt from school fees.

### ADULT LITERACY CAMPAIGN (1945–1963)

Romania was a country with great problems regarding the education of the adult population, the literacy rate being 43 percent in 1930. With over 6.2 million illiterates, the majority from the countryside, especially among women, the initiation of a large literacy campaign became necessary in the new context that appeared after 1945. That is why the communist authorities started the plan for the definitive elimination of illiteracy starting from the school year 1945–1946, and the end of the campaign took place in 1963.

Chronologically, there were four stages of the literacy campaign: 1945–1948, 1948–1951, 1951–1955 and 1956–1963. The peak of the literacy action was reached during the first five-year plan (1951–1955), when the goal proposed by the authorities was the total elimination of illiteracy. Timidly started in December 1945, the literacy campaign gradually streamlined its legislative and institutional mechanisms, but social, administrative, human, and financial barriers remained constant throughout. The apathy of people over the age of 40 towards their own education, the lack of school premises and teachers, the hard life of people caused by the consequences of the war and the drought of 1946–1947, but also the weak involvement of local party organisations in this endeavor, all contributed to a difficult, complicated and long course of the literacy campaign.

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<sup>16</sup> *Flamura Prahovei*, no. 153, 21 July 1951, p. 3.

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

<sup>18</sup> *Flamura Prahovei*, no. 796, 13 September 1954, p. 3.

Literacy courses were aimed at youth and adults aged 14–55 and lasted two years. Graduates received a diploma equivalent to completing the first four classes (i.e. the first cycle of elementary education). The school year began in October–November and ended in April, and starting from 1949. Summer courses for the illiterate in the cities were also introduced, in the period July–October. The Ministry of Education coordinated the entire literacy campaign, by establishing organisational and control institutions. At the county level, literacy was the responsibility of the county inspectorates, and, at the school level, the director.<sup>19</sup>

The lessons were taught by teachers, but also by literate volunteers, in schools, private homes, cultural homes, factories, etc. The teachers were not paid for these lessons.<sup>20</sup> This fact made literacy difficult, as teachers considered it an extra burden and did not have a major interest in their involvement and attendance in classes.

The literacy campaign entered a new phase with the adoption of the education law of 3 August 1948. In the three previous campaigns, literacy courses were not organised under a specific legislative framework, their operation being regulated only by addresses, orders and ministerial circulars. In the new law of 1948, adult literacy appears mentioned in Section V, art. XXV: “In order to eliminate illiteracy, literacy courses will be organised for people aged 14–55, with a duration of 1–2 years, with analytical programs and unique special manuals. Completion of these courses is equivalent, based on the exam, to the completion of the first four years of elementary education.”<sup>21</sup>

The communist authorities wanted a revival and an acceleration of the literacy campaign, with the adoption of the new law of 1948, but the problems related to the organisation and operation of the courses remained as numerous: the economic difficulties caused by the drought, the lack of specific textbooks, the disinterest of the illiterate and teachers, the lack of compulsory course attendance, the difficulty of improving the literacy of the floating population from different cities and those over 40 years old, the weak involvement of mass and party organisations in the counties, etc.

The first five-year plan of the Romanian People’s Republic, carried out in the period 1951–1955, also provided for the total liquidation of illiteracy. The authorities considered illiteracy an obstacle to the development of socialist industry and agriculture, requiring skilled workers and technicians in industry as well as literate peasants to cultivate the land according to scientific methods. Despite all the efforts of the authorities, at the end of the five-year plan the results were still below expectations, leaving approximately 360,000 illiterates in the 14–55 age group who were to become literate in the following period.<sup>22</sup>

After 1955, the literacy campaign continued with a reduced intensity compared to that during the first five-year plan, and the last literacy courses operated in 1963. After

<sup>19</sup> *La liquidation de l’analphabétisme dans la République Populaire Roumaine* (Bucharest: Întreprinderea Poli-grafică nr 4, 1962), p. 22.

<sup>20</sup> Arhivele Naționale Istorice Centrale, fond Ministerul Cultelor și Instrucțiunii Publice, 58/1948, 24.

<sup>21</sup> *Decret nr. 175 pentru reforma învățământului*, „Monitorul Oficial”, nr. 177, 3 August 1948, 6323.

<sup>22</sup> Arhivele Naționale Istorice Centrale, fond C.C. al P.C.R. Secția Propagandă și Agitație, 8/1959, 18–19.



18 years, with annual literacy campaigns (with two sessions a year, starting since 1949), the communist authorities ended the subject of literacy.

Analyzing the implementation of the literacy campaign, we can state that its impact on the economy and society of the Romanian People's Republic did not have the effect desired by the authorities. The effort put into the operation of literacy courses by the Ministry of Education, local cultural and party institutions and societies was inversely proportional to the subsequent benefits. Very many of the newly-literate soon forgot how to read and write, and only a small proportion of them were helped by the certificate of completion of two years of on-the-job literacy (as was the case with factory workers, who needed this certificate to attend qualification courses).

With minimal costs (in the sense that the teachers were not paid, the textbooks were not free in the first years of the campaign, and the material part – premises, wood, light, etc. – was always left to the local authorities and the management of the factories on the last plan), the state organised the literacy courses for predominantly propaganda reasons. It was a test of the communist regime regarding the mobilisation of the central and local organisational apparatus in an area where the losses were not quantified, nor subject to the criticism of the population, but from which one could learn in the future for the initiation of other far-reaching national campaigns.

## PROPAGANDA AND POLITICISATION IN THE EDUCATION SYSTEM

As we mentioned above, the period 1947–1956 was marked by the accentuation of the politicisation of Romanian education, following the Soviet model. The communist propaganda machine spread its tentacles into the educational space as well, using various and brutal methods, which wanted to create a new type of man, totally different from the interwar one. This "new man" had to be built from school, according to the Stalinist Soviet pattern, with the main features being total obedience to the authorities, the desire to work until exhaustion for the construction of the communist world and specialisation in a job in the industrial and agricultural fields.

An order of the Ministry of Public Education in 1950 clearly specified that the Soviet school was the only one leading to "the development and flourishing of education, being the most progressive in the world". Compared to the "bourgeois school", the Soviet school was in the service of peace and trained "active builders of communism, of hydroelectric plants, of canals, etc."<sup>23</sup> Soviet pedagogy was considered the most advanced in the whole world, being guided by Lenin and Stalin, and its goal is "the formation of a new type of people, Soviet people, with a high ideological level, educated in the spirit of love for the Socialist Country, of love and friendship towards the working people of the whole world". To achieve this goal, the communist party and government made available to teachers "a wealth of Soviet pedagogical material: pedagogic works and brochures, methods for

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<sup>23</sup> DJPAN-SPRPSI, 2/1950, 44.

elementary and secondary education, etc.” Also, the editing of the most important works of the Soviet pedagogue Anton S. Macarenco constituted “an invaluable aid for the fulfillment of the tasks of the communist education of the youth.”<sup>24</sup>

A strong indoctrination offensive in the communist spirit was unleashed on the teaching staff, they were forced to participate in training courses, called Courses for the Guidance of the Didactic Corps, starting in the summer of 1948. The purpose of these courses was “to help raise the ideological level, political and pedagogical, of teachers”, studying the works of the great Soviet revolutionaries and pedagogues, as well as the effective lesson teaching methods used in the Soviet Union.

Other methods regarding the change of the didactic paradigm among teachers were Pedagogical Meetings and Teachers’ Meetings, participation of which were mandatory in both cases. The Teachers’ Meetings, held at the beginning of September, were also Soviet-inspired. Pedagogical Meetings were held both at the beginning of the school year and during it, and the activities were in the form of demonstrative lessons, the presentation of reports with various themes or trips in the county to various tourist, industrial or agricultural objectives. One of the aims of the Pedagogical Meetings was to raise the “ideological, political and professional level of teachers.”<sup>25</sup>

The control of textbooks and teaching materials used in class was very strict. It was forbidden for teachers to recommend their own or foreign books or texts to students, which did not have the approval of the Pedagogical Cabinet of the Inspectorate, and teachers who wanted to publish or put into school use personal works were obliged to submit the manuscripts for approval to the same Pedagogical Cabinet.<sup>26</sup> There was also a list of banned books and textbooks, and their use in school was obviously strictly prohibited.<sup>27</sup> At the same time, the directors had the task of checking whether “books unsuitable for the communist education of children” had been introduced into the school library.<sup>28</sup>

Pupils received a new, Soviet-inspired education at all levels of education, including literacy classes and orphanages. Indoctrination started from kindergarten, as evidenced by the end-of-year celebration programs from the beginning of the regime. The books recommended to the students were carefully selected, the vast majority of them being written by Soviet authors. These propaganda books had an important role in the formation of young students, their reading being mandatory.

Propaganda in schools was also done with the help of cinematography, this being approved by the Ministry of Education, film screenings were to be made in the classrooms of elementary schools and it was recommended that schools “give all their attention to the cinema caravans.”<sup>29</sup>

<sup>24</sup> DJPAN-SPRPSI, 2/1950, 45.

<sup>25</sup> *Flamura Prahovei*, no. 2539, 06 April 1960, p. 2.

<sup>26</sup> Direcția Județeană Prahova a Arhivelor Naționale, fond Prefectura Județului Prahova (further DJPAN-PJP), 49/1948, 65.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibidem*, 49/1948, 66.

<sup>28</sup> DJPAN-SPRPSI, 2/1950, 242.

<sup>29</sup> DJPAN-PJP, 153/1949, 63.

After 1956, a process of de-Stalinisation also began in the field of education, by removing the Russian language from the first cycle, the Soviet bibliography from the list of students' reading books and bringing back into the system some former teaching staff previously purged on social and political criteria. At the same time, an attempt was made to build an educational framework based on national coordinates and to rehabilitate some components of interwar education (such as the reintroduction of the baccalaureate exam). Education was, however, entering a national-communist period, which reached its peak after 1965, during the time of Nicolae Ceaușescu. Educational values remained subordinated to communist ideals.

## CONCLUSIONS

Starting with 1948, pre-university education in the Romanian People's Republic experienced sweeping transformations, which left their mark on many generations of Romanians, in the sense of training in schools a new type of man, according to the Soviet model. That is why the communist authorities intervened directly by adopting a Soviet-inspired education law in 1948, which canceled all the achievements of the Romanian interwar school and completely changed the vision and purpose of children's education.

After 1956, relations with the Soviet Union began to change timidly in the political field, but the changes were more evident in education. The return of education to the national direction, close to the traditional one, was done gradually, by eliminating the Soviet elements from the structure and subjects of pre-university education. However, the politicisation, ideologies and indoctrination in Romanian schools have not changed, this time with national-communist and anti-democratic elements.

Regarding investments in education, the communist regime in Romania managed to develop this field, by building numerous school buildings and offering scholarships to students from working-class and agricultural backgrounds. At the same time, through a long literacy campaign, a massive reduction in the percentage of illiterates was achieved. That is why, in 1965, with the coming to power of Ceaușescu, Romanian schools were attended by the vast majority of school-aged children, and illiteracy remained only a problem for those over 55.

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## Pre-University Education in the Romanian People's Republic (1947–1965)

The objective of the article is to briefly present the functioning of the education system in Romania under the leadership of the Romanian Communist Party. This article tries to capture in general terms the structure and functioning of schools during the first part of the communist regime, *i.e.* during the period 1947–1965. There were two distinct periods that marked the evolution of pre-university education: 1947–1955 and 1956–1965.

The first period was characterised by the adaptation of the Soviet model, made concrete by the adoption of the education law of 1948, which laid the foundations for a se-

cular education system, coordinated entirely by the Romanian state authorities. In the second period, an attempt was made to break away from the Soviet model and restore Romanian education to a structure close to the interwar one.

The achievements were significant (many schools were built, the enrollment and attendance of students in elementary and secondary schools increased, as well as the elimination of illiteracy), but the politicisation and control of the education system by the communist regime was permanent throughout this period.

#### KEYWORDS

education system, Romanian People's Republic, elementary and secondary schools, education law, illiteracy, Romanian Communist Party

## Edukacja przeduniwersytecka w Rumuńskiej Republice Ludowej (1947–1965)

Celem artykułu jest krótkie przedstawienie funkcjonowania systemu edukacji w Rumunii kierowanej przez Rumuńską Partię Komunistyczną. W opracowaniu podjęto próbę ogólnego uchwycenia struktury i funkcjonowania szkolnictwa w pierwszej fazie reżimu komunistycznego, w latach 1947–1965. Na ewolucję edukacji przeduniwersyteckiej składały się dwa odrębne okresy: 1947–1955 i 1956–1965.

Pierwszy z nich charakteryzował się przyjęciem modelu sowieckiego, wprowadzonym ustawą o oświacie z 1948 r., która położyła podwaliny pod świecki system edukacji, koordynowany całkowicie przez rumuńskie władze państwowe. W drugim okresie podjęto próbę oderwania się od wzorca sowieckiego i przywrócenia rumuńskiej oświacie struktury zbliżonej do tej z okresu międzywojennego.

Osiągnięcia systemu edukacji tego czasu były znaczne (wybudowano wiele szkół, wzrosła liczba uczniów w szkołach podstawowych i średnich, wyeliminowano analfabetyzm), ale jego upolitycznienie i kontrola przez reżim komunistyczny trwały przez cały omawiany okres.

#### SŁOWA KLUCZOWE

system edukacji, Rumuńska Republika Ludowa, szkoły podstawowe i średnie, prawo oświatowe, analfabetyzm, Rumuńska Partia Komunistyczna

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