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## The University of Vienna and the Intellectual Formation of Romanian Elites in the Interwar Period

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### Abstract

*This article examines the academic interests and intellectual formation of Romanian students at the University of Vienna during the interwar period. The study aims to analyze the main disciplinary orientations pursued by these students and to highlight the role of the Viennese academic environment in shaping their intellectual, cultural, and professional trajectories. Particular attention is given to the attraction exercised by fields such as philosophy, art history, psychology, medicine, law, and other areas of higher learning that contributed to the formation of Romanian intellectual and professional elites.*

*Methodologically, the article adopts a historical-analytical approach based on biographical evidence, archival sources, and specialized literature in order to reconstruct the educational options and formative experiences of Romanian students in Vienna. The analysis shows that the University of Vienna functioned not only as a prestigious center of higher education, but also as a space of intellectual legitimization, disciplinary specialization, and cultural self-definition. The study also underlines that the Viennese academic environment played an important role in shaping personalities who later became influential in Romanian cultural, scientific, and professional life. It concludes that the interwar presence of Romanian students at the University of Vienna represents a significant chapter in the broader history of academic mobility, elite formation, and intellectual exchange in Central and Eastern Europe.*

**Keywords:** academic mobility, interwar period, Romanian elites, Romanian students, University of Vienna.

## 1. Introduction

It is impossible to completely understand the history of Romanian academic migration during the interwar period without considering the ongoing appeal of the major university centers in Central Europe. The University of Vienna was one of the most significant ones. Even after the Habsburg Empire fell apart, Vienna was still a prestigious place to study that could draw in Romanian students and young graduates who wanted not only advanced specialization, but also intellectual refinement, scientific legitimacy, and access to a wider range of European cultural experiences.

For Romanian students, Vienna served many purposes. It offered chances for choice specialization in areas like philosophy, psychology, art history, anthropology, medicine, law, Byzantine studies, and the natural sciences, among others. Conversely, it provided an intellectual environment where discipline selections may gain enhanced cultural and professional relevance. In this regard, the university should be perceived not solely as a formal institution of higher education, but also as a milieu for academic transition, personal development, and intellectual self-definition.

This article analyzes the academic pursuits and developmental paths of Romanian students who attended the University of Vienna during the interwar era. The objective is to ascertain the primary disciplinary tendencies of these students and to underscore the importance of the Viennese academic milieu for their subsequent intellectual, scientific, and professional advancement. The research contends that Vienna served not merely as an academic institution, but as a significant locus of intellectual development and scientific validation for a notable portion of the Romanian interwar elite.

There is a lot of focus on specific people from different fields, such as Tudor Vianu, Nichifor Crainic, Virgil Vătășianu, Ion Chelcea, Aurel Pampu, Theodor Burghel, Aurel Moga, and others. Their time in Vienna shows how diverse Romanian academic interests were at the time. The article endeavors to rebuild the disciplinary breadth that drew Romanian students to Vienna and the broader relevance of this university center for the cultural and scientific advancement of interwar Romania.

## 2. Methodology

This article adopts a historical-analytical approach in order to examine the academic interests and intellectual formation of Romanian students at the University of Vienna during the interwar period. The study is based on the assumption that academic mobility must be understood not only as an educational process, but also as a mechanism of intellectual specialization, social advancement, and elite formation.

Methodologically, the paper combines elements of institutional history, intellectual history, and the social history of education. It investigates the disciplinary preferences of Romanian students in Vienna and the significance of the Viennese academic environment for their later cultural, scientific, and professional development.

The analysis is based on three main categories of sources. The first consists of specialized literature dealing with Romanian intellectuals, the history of education, and the role of the University of Vienna in the training of Central and Eastern European elites. The second includes biographical and memorial sources, which provide evidence concerning educational trajectories, academic choices, and formative experiences. The third category is represented by archival materials, which make it possible to

document institutional affiliations, personal files, and the educational careers of selected Romanian students.

Particular attention is paid to the relationship between disciplinary orientation and intellectual formation. The article therefore seeks not only to identify the main fields of study pursued by Romanian students in Vienna, but also to explain how the university environment contributed to the shaping of broader intellectual profiles that later influenced Romanian cultural and professional life.

## 3. Academic Interests and Disciplinary Orientations of Romanian Students at the University of Vienna

In the period following the First World War, Vienna became a space of selective specialization, intellectual transition, and, in certain cases, disciplinary reorientation. This transformation is clearly reflected in the trajectories of Romanian intellectuals who arrived in Vienna not as beginning students, but as graduates or young researchers in search of a decisive completion of their training. One of the most relevant examples in this respect is Tudor Vianu, who arrived in Vienna in 1920, at a moment of both personal and historical turning point. Initially oriented toward Leipzig, Vianu changed his plans and chose Vienna, where he attended courses for four semesters with the intention of specializing in psychology<sup>1</sup>. This formative stage unfolded under the direct influence of Wilhelm Jerusalem, whose reflections on the function of judgment, critical idealism, and philosophical aesthetics left a lasting mark on the intellectual horizon of the future Romanian theorist.

Even though his Viennese stay did not result in an academic certification in the strict sense, it was of decisive importance for the crystallization of Tudor Vianu's intellectual profile, constituting a space of theoretical exploration and conceptual maturation<sup>2</sup>. After the four semesters spent in Vienna, Tudor Vianu continued his academic path in Germany, at the University of Tübingen, where he defended his doctoral dissertation in philosophy in 1923<sup>3</sup>. This sequence—Vienna followed by Tübingen—is characteristic of the trajectories of Romanian intellectual elites in the interwar period: Vienna represented a space of disciplinary exploration and of the accumulation of theoretical instruments, whereas the German university was the place of academic legitimization through the doctoral title. Later studies on the history of academic mobility explicitly confirm this chronology and underline Vianu's integration into a Central European circuit of university formation.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ion Biberi, *Tudor Vianu* (Bucharest: Editura pentru Literatură, 1966), 28–32.

<sup>2</sup> see also the various references to the Viennese period in Tudor Vianu, *Literatura universală în amfiteatru*, ed. Vlad Alexandrescu and Ruxandra Câmpeanu (Bucharest: Editura Muzeul Literaturii Române, 2025).

<sup>3</sup> Lucian Nastasă, *Itinerarii spre lumea savantă. Tineri din spațiul românesc la studii în străinătate (1864–1944)* (Cluj: Limes, 2006), 242.

<sup>4</sup> Ionuț Nistor, Marian Hariuc, „Akademische Mobilität. Rumänische Studierende an deutschen und österreichischen

Tudor Vianu did not transform travel into an exuberant autobiographical program. On the contrary, a study published in *Revista de Istorie și Teorie Literară* underlines his rather sedentary character and the fact that the written traces of his travels are few. However, the impressions from Vienna in 1957 were placed in direct relation to the memories of his student years, superimposed in the article *Popas la Viena*<sup>5</sup>. The methodological relevance of this late return is indisputable, since it shows that the Viennese moment remained a sufficiently dense memorial matrix to function, decades later, as a term of comparison and as a screen onto which the transformations of Central Europe were projected. Tudor Vianu's work in stylistics and literary theory preserves, among the traits critically discussed, an attachment to a psychologizing approach to the text<sup>6</sup>. Without forcing a mechanical causality, the persistence of the Viennese experience may be formulated as follows: the Viennese orientation toward psychology and toward authors who articulated aesthetics around the functions of judgment and value provides a framework of intelligibility for the persistence, in Tudor Vianu's mature work, of an interest in the relationship between expressive structures and the evaluative mechanisms of culture.

A much more ambivalent relationship with postwar Vienna can be found in the case of Nichifor Crainic, who arrived in the Austrian capital in the autumn of 1920. His Viennese experience stands out within the landscape of Romanian interwar academic mobility because of its non-institutionalized character. Far from following a standardized university path, Nichifor Crainic assumed, from the moment of departure, the status of a free student, oriented toward an intense self-formation calibrated to the needs of his future journalistic and doctrinal activity rather than to the accumulation of degrees. This intention is expressed in his memoirs, where he states that his journey to Vienna aimed at personal formation and preparation for a future career as an independent publicist, without being constrained by any official function<sup>7</sup>. A recent study confirms and nuances these data, showing that Nichifor Crainic pursued specialization studies both at the Faculty of Catholic Theology and at the Faculty of Philosophy of the University of Vienna between 1920 and 1922. His choice of Vienna was also influenced by the suggestion of his friend Lucian Blaga, who was there working on his own doctorate.<sup>8</sup>

For Nichifor Crainic, Vienna was no longer the brilliant metropolis of the empire, but a city in decline, a "symbol of the liquidation of

an empire."<sup>9</sup> This representation, frequently reiterated in the specialized literature, acquires the value of a major interpretive framework, suggesting that the Viennese experience unfolded under the sign of a profound historical crisis, characterized by the disintegration of a former political and cultural model once invested with normative authority. For an intellectual formed in a recently consolidated national state, the encounter with an imperial capital in the process of losing prestige did not generate admiration devoid of critical spirit, but rather a productive tension favorable to ideological and spiritual reflection.

This critical perception did not, however, prevent him from intensely valuing the cultural ambiance of the city, even if not through the university in the strict sense. For him, Vienna functioned more as a space of living culture, of journalism and personal reflection, than as a formal academic framework. This experience, lived "with an intensity sufficient for twenty years,"<sup>10</sup> contributed decisively to the crystallization of his ideological and cultural profile, illustrating another way of valuing the interwar Viennese environment. It demonstrates that Vienna did not function exclusively as a factory of diplomas or as a stage in a conventional academic path, but also as a space of intense self-formation, in which direct contact with the university, metropolitan cultural life, and the ideological climate of the period could generate forms of intellectual capital later convertible into influential public positions. In this sense, his Viennese experience completes, by contrast, the classical models of academic formation followed by other Romanian intellectuals of the period and confirms the plurality of elite typologies produced through interaction with the same major Central European university center.

In the field of art history, Virgil Vătășianu offers an example of pluricentric academic mobility in which Vienna occupied a strategic position. After a first year of study in Prague, from 1920 to 1921, Virgil Vătășianu arrived in Vienna in 1921–1922, at a moment when the Austrian capital, although affected by the collapse of the Habsburg Empire, continued to exert a major attraction in the field of art history.<sup>11</sup> Josef Strzygowski's methodology, centered on the analysis of architectural forms, on the comparative study of ornamental motifs, and on the reevaluation of the role of the Orient, Byzantium, and South-Eastern Europe in the constitution of European art, proved particularly fertile for scholars coming from regions perceived as peripheral. By deliberately shifting the axis of art history away from Italy and Western Europe toward the eastern and south-eastern zones of the continent, Strzygowski offered an intellectual legitimation to the efforts aimed at valuing regional and national artistic traditions.<sup>12</sup> It is precisely within this theoretical framework that Virgil Vătășianu's formation must be situated, for in Vienna

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Universitäten", in *Transylvanian Review*, vol. XXXI, nr. 3, Autumn 2022, 88.

<sup>5</sup> George Gană, "Tudor Vianu în două călătorii," in *Revista de Istorie și Teorie Literară*, year XLV, nos. 3–4, Academia Română, Institutul de istorie și teorie literară „G. Călinescu” (1997), 212.

<sup>6</sup> Gabriela Duda, "Actualitatea stilisticii lui Tudor Vianu," in *Revista de Istorie și Teorie Literară*, year XLV, nos. 3–4, Academia Română, Institutul de istorie și teorie literară „G. Călinescu” (1997), 205.

<sup>7</sup> Nichifor Crainic, *Zile albe, zile negre. Memorii*, vol. I (Bucharest: Casa Editorială „Gândirea”, 1991), 175.

<sup>8</sup> Alexandru Nicoară, "Nichifor Crainic – infatigabilul apologet," in *Teologie și viață*, nos. 1–4 (2019), 69.

<sup>9</sup> Nichifor Crainic, *Zile albe, zile negre. Memorii*, vol. I (Bucharest: Casa Editorială „Gândirea”, 1991), 175.

<sup>10</sup> Nichifor Crainic, *Zile albe, zile negre. Memorii*, vol. I (Bucharest: Casa Editorială „Gândirea”, 1991), 180.

<sup>11</sup> Matthew Rampley, "The Strzygowski School of Cluj: An Episode in Interwar Romanian Cultural Politics," *Journal of Art Historiography*, no. 8 (2013), 1–2.

<sup>12</sup> Idem, *The Vienna School of Art History. Empire and the Politics of Scholarship, 1847–1918* (Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania State University Press), 158–165.

he found the conceptual instruments appropriate for the investigation of Romanian artistic heritage.

The first stage of his Viennese training had an initiatory character, followed by phases of consolidation in Cluj and Bucharest. Between 1923 and 1925, Virgil Vătășianu continued his studies at the University of Cluj. That city had quickly become a major intellectual center for the study of medieval art history and religious architecture, largely due to the activity of Coriolan Petranu, himself a former student of Josef Strzygowski and Max Dvořák. Petranu played a decisive role in the transfer and adaptation of Viennese School methods to the Romanian university environment, defining art-historical research in Cluj as an extension of the Strzygowskian tradition.<sup>13</sup> During this period, Virgil Vătășianu attended courses at the Faculty of Letters and Philosophy and also worked as librarian at the University Library of Cluj, this dual anchoring contributing to his methodological rigor.<sup>14</sup>

His return to Vienna for the completion of the doctorate represented the culminating moment of his formative itinerary. On 23 March 1927, Virgil Vătășianu defended his doctoral dissertation under the supervision of Josef Strzygowski and obtained the qualification *summa cum laude*. His dissertation anchored the research in the Romanian space while methodologically placing it within an international framework.<sup>15</sup> The publication in 1930, in Cluj, of an expanded version of his doctoral thesis under the title *Vechi biserici de piatră românești din județul Hunedoara* ensured the circulation of his Viennese research in Romanian academic circles and contributed decisively to the consolidation of studies on medieval religious architecture in Romania.<sup>16</sup> The choice of topic is emblematic for the Strzygowskian program of reevaluating the peripheries of Europe as zones of autonomous artistic creativity.<sup>17</sup> By analyzing the ground plans and morphology of edifices such as the churches of Densuș and Strei, Virgil Vătășianu identified complex syntheses of Byzantine, Armenian, and Ottoman influences, creatively integrated into local architecture. Through rigorous surveys and detailed morphological analyses, he demonstrated that these monuments cannot be interpreted as degraded imitations of canonical models, but rather as original architectural forms adapted to local material conditions and to the liturgical needs of Romanian Orthodox communities.<sup>18</sup> Contact

<sup>13</sup> Ioan Opreș, “Coriolan Petranu (1893–1945) – Primul muzeograf profesionist din Transilvania,” in Goman, Ioan, Sipos, Sorin, and Moisa, Gabriel (eds.), *Crișia*, LI, 2021, Supplement, *Vocație și devotement profesional: studii în onoarea lui Aurel Chiriac*, no. 51 (Oradea: Muzeul Țării Crișurilor, 2021), 510–511.

<sup>14</sup> Stelian Mândruț, “Virgil Vătășianu and the University Library in Cluj,” in *Philobiblon*, X–XI (2005), 427–432.

<sup>15</sup> Matthew Rampley, “The Strzygowski School of Cluj...,” 1–2.

<sup>16</sup> Vlad Țoca, “Old Romanian Art in Virgil Vătășianu’s Works Between the Two World Wars and His Choice of Method,” in *Studia Universitatis Babeș-Bolyai. Historia Artium*, vol. 57, no. 1 (2012), 115–116.

<sup>17</sup> Vlad Țoca, “Romanian Art Historiography in the Interwar Period. Between the Search for Scholarship and Commitment to a Cause,” in *Artium Quaestiones*, XXX (2019), 107.

<sup>18</sup> Vlad Țoca, “Old Romanian Art in Virgil Vătășianu’s Works Between the Two World Wars and His Choice of Method,” in

with Strzygowski and his intellectual milieu was essential for Vătășianu’s methodological formation, facilitating the integration of Romanian art-historical research into contemporary European debates.<sup>19</sup> The continuity between the doctoral dissertation and his mature works confirms the role of Viennese formation as the methodological matrix of his scholarly output.<sup>20</sup>

In this case, Vienna appears not only as a place for the accumulation of knowledge, but also as a space of international scientific legitimization. A similar role, that of a center of applied specialization, can be observed in the case of Ion Chelcea, who arrived in Vienna in 1934 to study for one semester disciplines such as museology, ethnography, and anthropology. Under the supervision of Arthur Haberlandt, director of the *Museum für Volkskunde*, and of Victor Lebzelter, director of the Natural History Museum, Ion Chelcea entered into direct contact with modern methods of research and museum organization.<sup>21</sup> This experience contributed to the later professionalization of his activity in Romania, where he became assistant at the Ethnographic Museum in Cluj, head of research at the Institute of Social Studies of Romania in Bucharest between 1940 and 1942, and later head of department at the Central Statistical Institute beginning in 1942.<sup>22</sup> In his case, Vienna functioned as a laboratory of applied scientific practices.

In the psychological and social sciences, the case of Aurel Pampu is especially relevant for understanding Vienna as a node of international intellectual connection. A graduate of the Faculty of Letters in Cluj, with a degree in sociology, pedagogy, and psychology, Pampu arrived in Vienna in 1933<sup>23</sup> for a short but extremely intense specialization, working with Anna Freud at the *Psychoanalytische Ambulatorium* and with Alfred Adler, while also entering into contact with the environment of the Institute of Psychology dominated by the figure of Karl Bühler.<sup>24</sup> Even though this Viennese stage lasted only six months, its impact on Pampu’s formation was major, later preparing his orientation toward Paris and the French academic milieu, where he would prepare his doctorate with Wallon at the Collège de France and with

*Studia Universitatis Babeș-Bolyai. Historia Artium*, vol. 57, no. 1 (2012), 116.

<sup>19</sup> Virgil Vătășianu, *Studii de istoria artei românești* (Bucharest: Editura Academiei, 1969), 5–9.

<sup>20</sup> Aurel Chiriac, “Virgil Vătășianu – promotorul metodei și metodica cercetării în istoria artei românești,” in Marius Porumb and Aurel Chiriac (eds.), *Sub zodia Vătășianu. Studii de istoria artei* (Cluj-Napoca: Ed. Nereamia Napocae, 2002), 17–20.

<sup>21</sup> Georgeta Țurcanu, “Etnomuzeologul Ion Chelcea – cercetător, publicist, fondator al Muzeului Etnografic al Moldovei din Iași,” in *Acta Moldaviae Meridionalis*, Vaslui, XV–XX, 1998, pp. 215–222. Spiridon Cristocea, *Argeș. Dicționar de istorici*, Pitești, Editura S. C Tiparg S. A., 2003, 62–63.

<sup>22</sup> See his personal file in Arhivele Naționale ale României, Direcția Județeană Iași, Universitatea „Al.I. Cuza”. Rectorat, dos. 2281/1943.

<sup>23</sup> Mihai Aniței (coord.), *Dicționar de psihologie*, Bucharest, Editura Univers Enciclopedic, 1997, 578.

<sup>24</sup> Radu I. Petrescu, “Începuturile psihanalizei în România,” in *Revista de Psihologie*, vol. XXX, no. 2, 1984, 129–131.

Guillaume, Halbwachs, and Fauconnet at the Sorbonne.<sup>25</sup> Vienna appears here as a space of intersection between the Central European psychological tradition and newer Western directions, Pampu later working in Cluj in the Laboratory of Pedology and Experimental Pedagogy. Nicolae Mărgineanu also specialized in Vienna in 1928, later becoming lecturer in applied psychology in Cluj.<sup>26</sup>

In the case of the medical sciences, the Viennese experience continued to play an important role in the professional perfection of Romanian physicians initially trained in universities in the country. Theodor Burgehele, a graduate of the Faculty of Medicine in Iași in 1929, continued his specialization in urology in Vienna between 1930 and 1931.<sup>27</sup> Contact with the Viennese clinical school allowed him access to modern methods of diagnosis and treatment, an experience that would later be capitalized in his university career in Bucharest, where he became professor and, for a period, rector of the Institute of Medicine and Pharmacy.

Similarly, Aurel Moga, after a specialization in cardiology in 1929, passed through Vienna before continuing his training in Paris, a trajectory that reflects the complementarity of European academic centers in the interwar period. Upon his return to Romania, Moga distinguished himself as professor at the Faculty of Medicine in Cluj, contributing to the consolidation of a modern medical school.<sup>28</sup>

A different but equally relevant profile is that of Traian Pop, doctor of law in Vienna, who later became professor of criminal procedure at the University of Cluj. His doctoral formation in the Viennese environment, characterized by a strong tradition in continental law, contributed to the professionalization of Romanian legal education during a period of profound institutional reorganization.<sup>29</sup> Caius Bredeceanu also benefited from legal studies in Vienna. After a stage in Paris, he went to the Austrian capital, where he obtained a doctorate in law and political sciences, and then became secretary of state at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 1919, delegate of Romania to the Paris Peace Conference in 1919–1920, representing the interests of Banat, minister of state in the government of Take Ionescu between 17 December 1921 and 5 January 1922, minister plenipotentiary in Rio de Janeiro in 1928, later in Vienna, and from November 1936 in Helsinki; he was also a member of the National Peasants' Party and deputy in 1919 and again in 1926–1927.

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<sup>25</sup> Arhivele Naționale ale României, Serviciul Municipiului București, Ministerul Instrucțiunii Publice, dos. 912/1939, fols. 287–289; Arhivele Naționale ale României, Direcția Județeană Cluj, Facultatea de litere-Corespondență, dos. 500/1942.

<sup>26</sup> Arhivele Naționale ale României, Direcția Județeană Cluj, Facultatea de litere, dos. 532/194.

<sup>27</sup> Arhivele Naționale ale României, Serviciul Municipiului București, Ministerul Instrucțiunii Publice, dos. 1014/1940, fols. 119–122. Nicolae Angelescu, "Theodor Burgehele (1905–1977)", in *Chirurgia*, 101, no. 3, May–June 2006, 221–222.

<sup>28</sup> Nicolae Baltă, "Memories of the First President of the Academy of Medical Sciences – Professor Aurel Moga," in *Clujul Medical / Medicine and Pharmacy Reports*, 86, no. 3, 2013, 286–289.

<sup>29</sup> Mircea Duțu (coord.), *Dicționarul juriștilor români*, Bucharest, Editura Universul Juridic, 2011, 406–407.

In the spheres of church history and medieval studies, Nicolae Popescu (1881–1963) represents an example of the academic value of Vienna for specialized humanistic disciplines. His doctorate in Byzantine studies, defended in Vienna, became the basis of a solid university career at the Faculty of Theology in Bucharest, where his contributions marked the study of church history and Romanian medieval culture.<sup>30</sup> After obtaining a degree in philosophy in Bucharest in 1920, Alexandru Busuioceanu studied for four semesters at the University of Vienna between 1920 and 1922, only later becoming a member of the Romanian School in Rome between 1923 and 1925. Grigore Nandriș continued his training in Slavonic and Indo-European philology in Vienna for two semesters immediately after the end of the First World War, after which—between 1920 and 1923—he went to Kraków, where he also obtained his doctorate in Slavic studies. Francisc Pall attended courses in medieval history in Vienna in 1935 and 1938.

In the natural sciences as well, Vienna continued to offer relevant frameworks of specialization. Virgil Ianovici, although initially trained in Iași, completed his education in Vienna, later becoming professor of petrography and metallic deposits. Similarly, Vintilă Șiadbei, after a Parisian specialization under the guidance of H. Andoyer, chose Vienna between 1931 and 1933 for further training in stellar photometry, working with Cazimir Graff. This stage contributed to the consolidation of a prestigious university career in Iași.<sup>31</sup> Josif Silbermann obtained a doctorate in chemistry in 1938, and so on.

Finally, the less documented presences, such as those of Grigore Nandriș, Nicolae Mărgineanu, or Victor Iancu, complete the picture of a constant, even if dispersed, academic mobility that confirms the role of Vienna as a space of intellectual reference in the interwar period.<sup>32</sup>

These trajectories show that Vienna was not abandoned by Romanian elites after 1918, but rather reintegrated into a wider system of European academic circulation. Overall, the Viennese experiences of these Romanian intellectuals highlight the multiple function of the Austrian capital during the interwar period: a space of advanced specialization, scientific legitimization, cultural self-formation, and intersection of European intellectual traditions. The added value of Vienna did not reside so much in the uniformity of academic trajectories, but in its capacity to offer flexible frameworks of formation, adaptable to the needs and individual strategies of Romanian elites undergoing an accelerated process of professionalization and international affirmation.

#### 4. Conclusion

The cases examined in this article show that the University of Vienna played a significant role in the intellectual and professional formation of Romanian elites during the interwar period. For Romanian students and young graduates, Vienna was not merely a place of formal study, but also a space of specialization, scientific refinement, academic legitimization, and, in certain cases, disciplinary reorientation.

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<sup>30</sup> Șerban Papacostea, "Bizantinologia românească în secolul XX", in *Studii și materiale de istorie medie*, vol. XII, 1978, 25–27.

<sup>31</sup> C. Oprescu, *Istoria astronomiei în România*, Bucharest, Editura Academiei, 1981, 201–203.

<sup>32</sup> Lucian Nastasă, *Itinerarii spre lumea savantă...*, 270.

The diversity of the academic interests pursued there — from philosophy, psychology, and art history to ethnography, medicine, law, Byzantine studies, and the natural sciences — illustrates the broad attraction exerted by the Viennese academic environment. At the same time, these examples demonstrate that the value of Vienna did not lie only in its institutional prestige, but also in its capacity to provide flexible and intellectually stimulating frameworks of formation.

For figures such as Tudor Vianu, Nichifor Crainic, Virgil Vătășianu, Ion Chelcea, Aurel Pampu, Theodor Burghele, and Aurel Moga, the Viennese experience became an important stage in the construction of later intellectual and professional trajectories. In this sense, the University of Vienna must be understood as one of the major academic spaces through which the Romanian interwar elite was shaped, disciplined, and connected to wider Central European traditions of knowledge and scholarship.

More broadly, the Viennese experience reveals the mechanisms through which foreign university centers contributed to the making of modern Romanian cultural, scientific, and professional elites. The significance of Vienna resided not in the uniformity of the trajectories it generated, but in its ability to offer diverse and adaptable forms of academic formation, capable of responding to the individual strategies and ambitions of Romanian students in search of higher specialization and international recognition.

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