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IOAN BIANU: A MONOGRAPHIC STUDY

A PHD THESIS

Summary

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TRAINER FOR A DOCTOR'S DEGREE:
IOAN-DAN DUMITRAȘ

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IOAN BIANU: A Monographic Study

(Summary)

In the process of assigning the theme of this paper I set off bearing in mind that I should expound the life and activity of an outstanding figure of the Romanian culture, somebody to have Transylvanian origins. In this context, helped by my Phd. Advisor, Ms. Eva Mârza – whom I am deeply honoured to thank on this occasion too – I've turned my attention to Ioan Bianu, an individual from Transylvania born in the village of Făget, only a short distance away from Blaj. Even if he settled in Bucharest at the age of 20, he never consigned to oblivion his native land and its people.

The endeavour to go over the significance implied by the title of the present study may raise in the mind of a dilettante pseudo-questions like: „Another monograph?” or „Who on Earth was this Ioan Bianu?” It is not really necessary to plead here for the great importance of monographic approaches; it is in fact a current trend, obstinately undergone in all the branches of culture, not only in the field of history, for the purpose of becoming familiar in detail with a particular subject (a prominent figure, an institution, a place etc.). And this subject, summarily mentioned as „Ioan Bianu”, is as contemporary and affluent as it may be, comfortably enough to deserve such a monographic approach; furthermore, one may easily notice that this aspect has been dreadfully neglected so far by the historiographic studies. In this respect, no such written approach has been dedicated to Ioan Bianu who is acknowledged as the founder and overseer of The Romanian Academy Library, the „supreme custodian” of The Romanian Academy for several decades, the author of the reference work entitled *The Old Romanian Bibliography*. An approach like this could have analysed most of the more or less well-known aspects of this personality's life and activity.

The answer to the second possible interrogation is to be found by that kind of reader who will go through this paper, which will outline the great personality of Ioan Bianu, his multifaceted activity in the cultural field, his care and preoccupation with collecting and preserving the cultural heritage (especially old books) in an institutionalized setting (i.e. The Romanian Academy Library whose librarian first and director later was for 56 years), his attachment to the Romanian people from Transylvania – which was suffering at the moment from the national

oppression exerted by the dual Austro-Hungarian regime – and whose destiny was a constant interest to him, trying to better it as much as possible.

Studying thoroughly this issue, I've realized that Ioan Bianu is the best and most inspired choice I made for such a study, binding exactly on what I was looking for: the classic pattern of the inhabitant of Transylvania, with modest origins, knowledgeable and resourceful, able to make himself useful and indispensable, managing to occupy an important position and exercise a significant influence in the cultural and political field, in a way in which few of his contemporaries would have been able to. Moreover, it wasn't something ephemeral: his personality has had great influence in the academic field for more than half a century.

To enclose a man's life in the covers of a book is not something as simple as it may appear at a first glance. And, more than this, when we refer to an intellectual like Ioan Bianu, having a prolific, prodigious and diverse activity, classified into several levels, an attempt like this of retrace becomes even more difficult. Writing this monograph-like paper required an unceasing and laborious work along which I experienced various situations: sometimes-for different aspects which I tried to expose- I was in possession of vast published documentary evidence but some other times I had to resort to untapped archival material which, in compensation, allowed me to bring to light interesting facts about the life and activity of Ioan Bianu. Concerning history, this is indeed the most important aspect for a research worker: the novelty and the allure of both information and interpretation. In this way, I hope that this paper will completely satisfy these expectations.

The tradition implying activity of some Transylvanian intellectuals in the field of culture and education from Muntenia and Moldova dates back to the first half of the XIX-th century. The succession of Transylvanian scholars who activated outside the Carpathian Arc, until The Great Union of 1918, retains Ioan Bianu as the last important representative originating from the scholarly background of Blaj, which marked his intellectual formation.

Ioan Bianu deserves a special attention and a more profound research on his life due to his activity and his work. Taking all these into consideration, he may be considered a pioneer and also a founder in the

field of culture and cultural institutions. So far, no significant work with a monographic tinge has been addressed to the study and presentation of Ioan Bianu even though he is one of the cultural personalities who really deserve it. On the other hand, there are a lot of articles and studies about him which present and analyse, extensively, different facets of his activity, but which lack into information related to biographic reconstitution and only sequentially study his activity. My study is, as a matter of fact, the materialization of an extensive project which is meant to bring together pieces of information about Ioan Bianu's life, broadly analyzing very important aspects that are related to his diverse interests and activities, trying in this way to clarify some of the less-known facts about him, even original ones. The most obscure part of his life, which happen to be poorly analysed, are said to be his childhood and his adolescence, meaning the first 20 years spent in Ardeal. On a timeline of this length, including information on his family, his native village and the 10 years spent as a student in the schools in Blaj, I will concentrate, without making it the only one, the novelty and originality of this monographic research.

The investigation is structured into four main chapters which deal with: his life and work biography with two distinct parts-the youth spent in Transylvania (until he reached 20) and the period spent in Bucharest, when his activity may be characterized as ceaseless; his contribution to the Romanian bibliography, highlighting here his main work – *The Old Romanian Bibliography*; the outlining of his activity and vision – with all related implications – in the context of the complex issue of the Romanians' national uprising in Transylvania and revealing the key role he played in the Romanian culture and academic life, as resulting from the recognition showed by his contemporaries.

I've dedicated the first chapter to some biographic aspects, entitling it **Ioan Bianu (1856/57-1935)-the biography of a prominent figure** and organizing it into two distinct parts: *A. Ioan Bianu at the confluence of his native town and the schools in Blaj. Interesting aspects from the period of youth spent in Ardeal (1856/7-1876)* and *B. The Life and activity of Ioan Bianu in Bucharest (1876-1935)*. In the first part I presented some aspects related to his family and his native village, discussing the issue related to the date of his birth (still a controversial

point) and I followed his educational course of the young Bianu in the scholar center of Blaj. I've analysed minutely the various aspects related to the school life problematic and the cultural environment, deeply influenced by the two significant scholars who greatly influenced Bianu's forming personality and intellectual basis: Timotei Cipariu and Ioan Micu Moldovan. Concerning the first 20 years of his life spent in Transylvania, the biographic information from the dedicated bibliography are extremely sketchy and mostly incomplete; taking advantage of the existence of some untapped documentary sources, placed in the Direcția Județeană a Arhivelor Naționale, I've brought to light several unknown aspect about his family and school situation over a period of 10 years, in other words, the years spent in the schools in Blaj (2 years in the Normal School and 8 years in the Greek-Catholic Secondary School). The identified archived documentary sources from the Direcția Județeană a Arhivelor Naționale the following: *Colecția de registre de stare civilă de la instituțiile de cult. Parohia greco-catolică Făget, Școala Pedagogică de Băieți Blaj și Gimnaziul Superior greco-catolic Blaj. Liceul „Sf. Vasile cel Mare” Blaj*, none of them studied and so, all of them remaining untapped so far. One of the first turning to good accounts of this information dates back to the year 2006 when I published the article entitled *Ioan Bianu – novelty aspects in his youth (1856/7-1876)*, in *Annales Universitatis Apulensis* (Series *Historica*, Alba Iulia, 2006, nr. 10/I, pp. 205-216).

For the other biographical aspects, presented in the second part, I've used bibliographic sources, some information having an autobiographic character or taken from the correspondence between Ioan Bianu and various people. Mostly, in order to reconstitute the years spent studying abroad (1881-1883), I found the letters he sent to his teacher and protector, Bogdan Petriceicu Hasdeu and his wife, extremely helpful. I've found the letters I mentioned above stored in the National Archives of Romania, from which I obtained a lot of information that comprised his life as a scholarship awarded student by the Romanian government. These letters had been published by Aurelian Sacerdoțeanu, in the raw, without interpretation, in an article published in 1970 and were partially turned to good account by the editors of the letters received by Ioan Bianu, Marieta and Petre Croicu, in a dedicated study to Ioan Bianu from *Preface* to volume I of *Letters to Ioan Bianu*.

In the second part of the chapter I've analysed the life and activity of Ioan Bianu after he settled in the capital of Romania, where he remained until the end of his life. I've retraced his life itinerary, taking into consideration the most relevant moments: his student days, the beginning of his working for the Academy, studies abroad, professional ascension after returning in the country, making up a family, friendships, the multitude of undertaken activities and functions he had in various institutional structures. After a few years, Bianu became a key-figure of the Romanian cultural life. He gained protection and help from important politicians (Dimitrie A. Sturdza, Ion Ghica) or cultural individuals (August Treboniu Laurian, Titu Maiorescu, Bogdan Petriceicu Hasdeu, Alexandru Odobescu, Spiru Haret) succeeding in expressing his intellectual capabilities appropriately, also his high working strength, his organizational skills and to make himself essential for the proper functioning of the institutions affiliated to The Academy. Starting as a librarian of The Academy, Bianu became, gradually, the person who ensured the well functioning of the most significant cultural and scientific institution for the country and Romanians from all over the world-The Romanian Academy. For more than half a century his life and activity became close-knit with the destiny of The Academy and especially with its Library, that there was a tendency to perceive them as a single unit. He started to work for the two institutions in February 1879 – year in which The Romanian Academic Society changed its name into The Romanian Academy – and he would serve them with good faith and great devotion until his death, in February 1935. The recognition and reward for his relevant capacities and worth appeared before long. The individual who used to be just a simple and insignificant clerk climbed the cultural hierarchy: he became the first director of The Romanian Academy Library (he was in fact its founder and tireless organizer), he was elected a corresponding member of The Academy and after that a full member; he was part of the numerous academic committees and dealt with the most difficult administrative and editorial tasks of the institution for several decades (in 1909 he was appointed as director of the administration of the Academy); he also had the functions of secretary of the Literary section, secretary-general of the Academy, president of the Academy for three

years (1929-1932) and then vicepresident function that lasted until his death.

I've also included the scientific research done by Bianu in the field of education, as a teacher of Romanian language at *Sf. Sava* High-School and as a university teacher at the University in Bucharest (since 1902) and in politics as a member of the National Liberal Party and as a deputy in the Romanian Parliament. His involvement in politics was due to his academic mentor, D.A. Sturdza, to whom owing a debt of gratitude, decided to follow him even in this domain. He eventually became the most important counsellor of the liberal leader.

In the II-nd chapter, **The contribution of Ioan Bianu to the developing of the Romanian bibliography**, I've emphasized the relevant contribution Ioan Bianu had concerning the Romanian bibliography which was at that moment – the end of the XIX-th century – at its very beginnings. Driven by the necessity of structuring the Academy Library on modern principles and the necessity of bringing the Romanian bibliography to the contemporary standards and achievements. Bianu elaborated an impressive multi-structured plan for bibliographic researches, mapping out the evolutionary directions of this discipline and, of course, leaving his evident mark on it for a long time.

The bibliographic plan from 1895 was accordingly made to the principles and methods of modern bibliography, following the principles established by the specialists of this domain, from abroad (Picot). Bianu divided the Romanian bibliography „thinking of the historical development of our culture and literature” into 3 types of books: old Romanian book (from 1507 to 1830); modern Romanian book (from 1831 to present day); foreign books on Romanians.

His judiciously elaborated and well structured plan – which essentially has stayed the same so far (but at the same time not entirely fulfilled due to the lack of an analysis of the period between 1918-1945) – was accepted by the general assembly of The Academy, becoming an essential project similar to the project of creating *The Romanian Dictionary*. Owing to this, it received a steady and ample finance for over a decade until shortly before the break out of the first world war when, because of the financial crisis, the proper functioning of the Romanian Academy was affected for a long time.

The first concretization of his bibliographic plan was the making and publishing of *The Old Romanian Bibliography 1508-1830* (from here on abbreviated *B.R.V.*), done in cooperation with the librarian attendant Nerva Hodoș, between 1903 and 1912 (volume I, II and fascicles 1-2 from volume III), then with Dan Simonescu (volume III, fascicles 3-8, which appeared in 1936 after Bianu's death). This may be considered the most important work of Ioan Bianu, an accurate work, profound and detailed, relevant even today. The work, though collective, makes the influence of Bianu's personality abundantly clear making also a reference to his widely acknowledged skill to trace rare old books in various unexpected places. Many of the books which are to be found in *B.R.V.* mainly owing to his searches, efforts, determination and persuasive ability. As a strong evidence in this respect one can refer to the letters he sent to his former teacher and „protector”, Ioan Micu Moldovan, in which he was asking the teacher to lend him – in order to include them afterwards in *B.R.V.* – old books (part of the local cultural treasure) about which he had been aware since he studied in Blaj.

B.R.V., written due also to being required and financed by The Romanian Academy, is not the only bibliographic work by Bianu. Taking into consideration features like size and noteworthiness, another significant work which may be mentioned, *The Catalogue of the Romanian Manuscripts*, was edited together Romulus Caracaș and Gheorghe Nicolăiasa and it comprises 3 volumes published in the course of several years (1907-1931).

But those two works are not his own contributions to bibliography; Bianu remarked himself through other contributions and initiatives regarding his own general bibliographic plan. He initiated another valuable bibliographical work and helped with its being typed: *The Catalogue of Greek Manuscripts [from the Library of the Academy]*, written in two volumes by Constantin Litzica and Nestor Camariano (1909, 1940).

Bianu also conceived a types catalogue belonging to the Library, elaborated by the heads of different services and published under the title *The Romanian Library of Academy, Gathering Collections* (53 chapters, appeared between 1907-1942). The work kept the evidence and presence of registering the Romanian and foreign books, of periodicals entered the

collections of the Academy and the evolution of special funds of the institution. Under his coordination, being headmaster of The Academy of the Romanian Library, other works having bibliographical character were realized. His bibliographical activity has a great national value, being achieved from a valuable patriotic feeling which determined him to realize the huge importance of these works, important also for persons writing history and Romanian researchers in all domains.

In the III-rd chapter, **The National Problem in Ioan Bianu's opinion. The historical-political context of the period and its influence upon his thinking**, I have resumed, for the beginning, the evolution of the Transylvanian problem in the second half of the XIX century, focusing on the relations of Romania with Austrian-Hungarian for a better understanding of the context upon which the ideas and actions of Ioan Bianu have developed. Then, I have analyzed Bianu's relations with the Transylvanian persons whom, whenever he could he gave a helping hand, and his constant preoccupations towards the Transylvanian faith and, especially, for the improvement of the Romanian people's situation in this country provincial. Like this, his dynastical conception is explained proceeding from the Transylvanian people would be attached to the yard if Vienna and the house of Habsburg; it allowed him to brand without any problems the politics of national oppression of Transylvanians promoted by the Hungarian people, after attaching Transylvania after closing the Austrian-Hungarian treaty in 1867. In the same time, his conception upon the national aim had the purpose of not tensioning the relations of the Romanian state with the government form Vienna, otherwise marked by reciprocal doubts.

Based especially upon letters, I have reconstructed the main moments of Transylvanian history its role of adviser and its relations of collaboration with the Transylvanian leaders of the national movement, mostly with those who connected him to the community of ideas (Ioan Slavici, Eugen Brote, Vasile Lucaciu, Vasile Mangra). Also, this work is focused on the continuous support which Ioan Brianu had for his Transylvanian fellow country-men, especially for the young persons who left Transylvania – like him, in 1876 – in order to have his own life beyond the Carpathians, in the Romanian kingdom. Bianu had in his mind the real example of the teacher from Blaj, Ioan Micu Moldovan, the one

who house him during his studies in Blaj and who, enormously, helped him, including money, after that having left to Bucharest for studies.

In the final part of the IIIrd chapter, I have presented the attitude of the Transylvanians towards the World War I and Ioan Bianu's official vision upon „Transylvanian issues”, based upon memorialistic writings which he left and , also, based upon two works published by him concerning this subject: *The Politics of the Romanians form Hungary. Past, Present, Future*, published in Bucharest, in 1909, collaborating with Septimiu Albini and *For Clearing Up the Situation. Words for Romanians*, published in the same place after the World War I has burst , in 15th of August 1914, under the pseudonym of Ion Frunză. The last work shows Bianu like a pure „German person” who had the place of Romania near his best allied at that time – Germany – even with the risk of renouncing at his own wish of attaching Transylvania to Romania because Transylvania belonged to Austria-Hungary, a real allied to Germany. Bianu declared himself an enemy of Russia, which represented the main threat to Romania through its own politics.

In the IVth chapter named **Ioan Bianu in the Vision the Contemporaries. His Place in the Romanian Culture (Before Conclusions)** I have proposed myself to establish the well deserved place for Ioan Brianu in the Romanian culture, the signification of his work and activity and I have tried to reconstruct his image in the vision of his contemporaries, being positive and negative, both upon the letters – between important people in the culture or personalities of Romanian political culture – and upon the works dedicated to him. I have described a Bianu with lights and shadows, praised and disparaged sometimes; what is obvious is the fact that the critical accents of the contemporaries don't spoil with anything the achievements of the Transylvanian culture man seen as „main spirit” or „chief god” of the Academy after 1920 , together with the death of those who created the institution.

The great amount of letters received by Ioan Bianu during his life from famous personalities of culture and Romanian science kept in the *Archive of Ioan Bianu* at the Romania Library of Academy shows us the possibility of noticing the value he has enjoyed from them, the moral authority he inspires, the trust he was given most of the times. The two works dedicated to the honour of Ioan Bianu when being 60 and 70 years

old form the proof that his work towards the Academy and education. This proof was well understood and appreciated by all those who knew him: colleagues, collaborators, or ex pupils or students.

Our scientific work comes to an end with some **Conclusions** which are the consequences of the deep analysis upon Ioan Bianu's life and activity. After that, one can see the **Bibliography** that was necessary for such a research, **The abbreviations list** that I used and **The appendage** with original documents and images, that I have considered illustrative and representative. I have also attached to the appendage *A general bibliography of Ioan Bianu's works*, almost 300 of titles, referring to books, articles, studies and essays which were written by Ioan Bianu during his cultural activity, almost six decades.

Our option for studying this subject is based on the special importance of Ioan Bianu's cultural activity, which is still incompletely known. The three basic institutions that his scientific activity was deeply connected to were: The Romanian Academy's Library, The Romanian Academy and the University from Bucharest. This work, entitled *Ioan Bianu: a monographic study*, has the role to complete and put together all the information that already exist about his life and activity, in order to create a representative image of his great personality, of his main scientific contribution to the Romanian culture and academic life from Romania.

This study represents a work of restoring, a plenary presentation, based on documents and taking into account many innovative and original elements of his special life and career. Ioan Bianu deserves a better coming to the fore, a general acknowledgement and a greater appreciation, according to his main role in the academic field and according to his achievements, especially from the librarian and bibliographical area.

We shall end this work, dedicated to Ioan Bianu's life and activity, using the words of one of his students, who became also his later co-worker, P. Panaitescu Perpessicius, the author of some suggestive and very actual lines about Ioan Bianu: „There will be a time, when even our memories about him will die out as the light from a candle. But, Ioan Bianu's memory will live for ever as it has solid foundations: the library [...], his scientific work of an inexhaustible usefulness and the incorruptible gold of his heart”.

KEY-WORDS: Ioan Bianu, The Romanian Academy's Library, The Romanian Academy, Făget, Blaj, Greek-Catholic Secondary School, Ioan Micu Moldovan, Bucharest, librarian of The Academy, university teacher, bibliographic plan, *The Old Romanian Bibliography 1508-1830*, president of the Academy, „Transylvanian issues”, The National Problem, dynastical conception, Letters to Ioan Bianu, National Archives of Romania, B.P. Hasdeu, D.A. Sturdza.

CURRICULUM VITAE

Name: DUMITRAȘ

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The civil status: married, a child

Studies:

- School leaver of Industrial Secondary School from Câmpeni, the mechanic profile, in 1990.

- Bachelor in History and Archaeology, Faculty of Sciences from The University „1st of December 1918” Alba Iulia; I have graduated in 1996 (after 5 years studying), having as a main work at university degree *The History of Apuseni Mountains as it is reflected in the works of Rubin Patiția* (the final mark was 9, 83)

- Master Course about *Culture, politics and society in Transylvania (XVII-XIX centuries)* at the Faculty of History and Philology, The University „1st of December 1918” Alba Iulia, graduated on February 2006 (the final mark: 9, 93)

- Trainer for a Doctor's Degree at The University „1st of December 1918” Alba Iulia, The historical profile and having as a main theme: *Ioan Bianu: a monographic study*

Linguistic abilities: French (medium level);

Professional activity:

- from September 1996 to august 2001- History Teacher at The Theoretical Secondary School or the later National College „Avram Iancu” from Câmpeni;

- from September 2001 to march 2010 (in present) – History Teacher at the National College „Lucian Blaga” from Sebeș

Scientific activity:

- permanent desire to study the national history, especially the modern and contemporary ages.

- Personal studies related to life and activity of Ioan Bianu, a great personality of the Romanian culture from the end of the 19teen century and the beginning of the 20 century. This is, in fact, the main subject of

my PhD thesis which was announced by other two historical works I have written.

- My dissertation of the Master Course, entitled *Ioan Bianu's Contribution to the Romanian Bibliography's Development* (on February 2006)
- My scientific work as a teacher, entitled *Ioan Bianu: a life for study* (on May 2006)

- I have also written three articles about Ioan Bianu and his personality:

- *Ioan Bianu – novelty aspects in his youth (1856/7-1876)*, in *Annales Universitatis Apulensis*, series *Historica*, 10/I, 2006, p. 205-216;
- *Ioan Bianu during his university studies in Bucharest or abroad the country (1876-1883)*, in *Patrimonium Apulense*, 2009, IX, (this is going to be published);
- *Great personalities of Alba District: Ioan Bianu – 75 years from his death (1935-2010)*, in *Ani de liceu*, the magazine of The „Lucian Blaga” College from Sebeș, nr. 2009-2010 (this is going to be published);

- I have also published a book review:

- Mircea Vasilescu, „*Dear reader...*”. *Reading, public and communication in Romanian old culture*, Ed. Paralela 45, 2001, in *Annales Universitatis Apulensis*, series *Historica*, 9/I, 2005, p. 345-348.

- Locally, I have published the article entitled *The Dacic Bracelets*, in *Ani de liceu*, the magazine of The „Lucian Blaga” College from Sebeș, nr. 2006-2007, p. 31. Together with my mate, Bica Gheorghe, I have coordinated a booklet that contains narrations about The Second World War and about Communism. All these were put together by some pupils from The „Lucian Blaga” College. The booklet was called *From memory to history*, Sebeș, 2008.

- I have participated to scientific debates in University:

- The study *Ioan Bianu – novelty aspects from his youth was presented to one session „History and national patrimony”* at the Faculty of History and Philology, from „1 December 1918” Alba Iulia University (1st of June 2006);

- The Study *Ioan Bianu during his university studies in Bucharest or abroad the country (1876-1883)*, was presented to another session: „Trainers for Doctor's Degree from Alba Iulia and the opportunity for the historical research”, Five Edition, which took place to The University „1st of December 1918” Alba Iulia, Faculty of History and Philology (on 13 of November 2009).

- I attended the sixth session of training in scientific authority, held at the University „1st of December 1918” Alba Iulia, 26-27 November 2009, the PhD project in schools of excellence - quality assessment of research in universities and increase visibility by publishing Research, funded by European Social Fund and coordinated by UEFISCSU, NURC and CNFIS.