Public Librarianship in Communist Romania: Creating a Profession to Serve the Socialist Propaganda Cause

Claudia Șerbănuță

Abstract

The Romanian communist state constructed a public library system as one of its national propaganda instruments. Within the context that encouraged the development of a public library national system, this paper presents the history of library and information sciences education programs and directions established during the communist era. Using oral-history interviews with librarians who worked in the public library system in the 1970s and 1980s, the paper discusses the effects these programs had on the professional knowledge and practices within public librarianship. During the last decades of the regime, public librarians employed alternative practices and resources in their education as the state's official training became limited and eventually obsolete. However, these alternatives created only a narrow professional-development opportunity for librarians. In spite of librarians' personal efforts, there was no significant change in the way that public libraries were defined and used by the communist society.

Introduction

After World War II and up to 1989, the Romanian Communist Party (PCR)[1] put in place a public library system that instilled at the very core of libraries characteristics that define their activity to this day. The National System of Public Libraries (NSPL), developed as a by-product of the communist regime, had little chance to adapt to postcommunist realities after 1990 (Anghelescu, 2001, p. 235). Library education and training were important aspects of the NSPL's process of development. This paper will delve into the evolution of the NSPL, presenting the professional education and training opportunities that were available, as well as how librarians recall the influence these had on professional development.

The legacy of half a century of the Romanian communist regime is still under investigation. Among the lasting creations of the regime is an NSPL of almost 4,000 public libraries (Iordachescu, 1972, p. 403). In a country with low literacy rates (as Romania was during the years after World War II), the PCR had from the beginning a clear vision for what public libraries were and how they could help the cause of advancing socialism in Romania. The PCR's interest allowed for the creation of numerous public libraries of various sizes, and the establishing of a centralized library system that was sustained by new library science education programs.[2] While the vision of the PCR for public libraries changed slightly over the years in accordance with the vision of its leader, the NSPL continued to grow until the downfall of the regime in 1989. Although the statistics related to collections, numbers of libraries, and so on are obvious sources for mapping this history, it is a history that has important undiscussed nuances and thus calls for a less traditional approach. Library education offers one key to this history, because it illustrates the state's vision of libraries with well-organized book collections, but with little professional training for librarians.

At the moment, public libraries are struggling worldwide to redefine their purpose and adapt their services to new informational needs of communities. At the same time, Romanian public libraries are struggling to find a reason and meaning for their existence. In 1990 formal library and information science (LIS) education was resumed in Romania after an absence of two decades; college-level programs and professional-training options diversified. However, the efforts made in this direction are coordinated with neither libraries' nor the public's needs. With the implementation of decentralization policies in the 1990s, the NSPL survived mostly as a historical structure that perpetuates significant similarities for public libraries throughout the country. Heavy traces of the communist NSPL are still visible to this day in spite of current LIS educational and training efforts. Learning about the ways in which the communist state implemented the NSPL and trained the people working in the system are essential for providing better medium- and long-term development solutions, because the transformation of Romanian public libraries into relevant community and local-memory institutions is not possible without understanding how they were created and functioned for decades.

Methodology

The empirical research for this paper draws on the work that the author carried out as part of her doctoral dissertation project, which documents the development of Romanian public library services within the context of the cohabitation of the communist state and its public librarians during the last two decades of the communist regime. Mixed historical methods were used in conducting the research. Archival sources and analyses of

documents from the era being studied formed the basis of the research. Documents used came from the following sources and repositories:

- Personal archives
- Archives of local libraries
- Archives of central institutions like the Center for Continuing Education (the institution that inherited the archive of the institution that was in charge of training librarians)[3]
- Archive of the Ministry of Culture (the institution that took over the Council of Socialist Culture and Education [CCES])
- Archive of the National Library of Romania (the institution that continued the work of the Central State Library, but under a different name)

Analyses of these documents were important for an understanding of the official ways in which public libraries were established and expected to function. Documents analyzed also included those about public libraries that were produced by a number of local and central institutions, such as various county cultural and educational committees and the CCES.

The archival work was complemented by oral-history interviews with librarians who worked in public libraries during the 1970s and 1980s. I conducted, coded, and analyzed twenty-eight oral-history interviews that focused on librarians' understanding of their profession, and on details about the everyday practices in public libraries at that time. I conducted the interviews in four different counties across Romania, in libraries of different sizes (county libraries, branches of county libraries, city libraries, and rural libraries).[4] In the process of finding the interviewees, I was helped by people who were still working in various county libraries. For the selection of interviewees, I used the snowball sampling method.

Confronting the official discourse about the educational programs and training practices for librarians with these recalled memories about the process of becoming a librarian and learning the craft throws light on key details concerning the structure of the NSPL, as well as its actors and implementers. Because of the methods employed, the paper is able to detail the practices related to professional education that allowed for public librarianship to be defined and internalized by the library administration and its staff.

Propaganda, Censorship, and Public Libraries

The characteristics of the communist regime changed over time. Education, culture, and the arts were, however, heavily targeted and handled from the early stages of the regime until its downfall (Alexandrescu, Anton, Banu, & Cătănuș, 2012, p. 155; Ceaușescu, 1971, p. 79). These fields represented a ready means of access to and influence over the population. Public libraries were identified by the Soviet rulers and considered by the PCR as valuable institutions to be used in the building of socialist states

(Richards, Wiegand, & Dalbello, 2015, pp. 45–48; Sroka, 2000); they were institutions located at the crossroads of educational, cultural, and ideological interests, and the development of the national system for them was influenced by this position.

The communist cultural–educational system was dependent on the specific formats of cultural activities for the masses; for example, spreading political, cultural, and scientific information orally, as well as through print, film, museums, folk creations, the work of amateur artists, and the protection of cultural heritage (Jinga, 1975, p. 93). A public library had the potential to be involved in multiple such cultural activities. However, within the communist cultural system the public library had a restricted range of activities, limited to "satisfying the reading needs of the public and popularizing the most valuable print productions, of forming and developing reading habits" (p. 101). Public libraries were defined in relation to books and the perceived reading needs of the public.

One activity that institutions forming the cultural system had to do, which was imposed from the top political apparatus, was the control of information through propaganda and censorship. Even though over time the tools used for these two activities changed, their longevity and ubiquity in communist society are undeniable. Given the common ideological goal they were serving, propaganda and censorship transformed all public institutions, including libraries, into agents of and for the party.

Propaganda was a powerful component of cultural and educational activity. It ensured that the masses were reached primarily by party-approved information, the goal being to present them with an idyllic image of the socialist state. All mass cultural institutions, including libraries and the CCES, were supervised and controlled by a central department responsible for party ideology (Comisia Prezidențială pentru Analiza, 2007, p. 407).

Simultaneous with the effort to create a public library system, one characteristic of the first decades of the regime in relation to public libraries was censorship in the form of "cleansing" pre–World War II library collections. There were cases where entire libraries were burned down (Corobca, 2010, p. 39), and others in which librarians intervened to save parts of those collections (Nazare, 2013, p. 224).

The fight to cleanse the cultural sector would end, according to the government, once objectionable publications "were not present except in a few documentation libraries where historians of the future will be able to study them" (Ministerul Artelor și Informațiilor, 1948, p. 11). In 1951, Decision 1542 classified library collections according to their content as

- *free* sub-collections (in line with party ideology and "useful for socialist education and cultural elevation of the masses");
- *documentation* sub-collections (not in line with the Marxist-Leninist ideology, but of possible value to future researchers);

- *special* sub-collections (hostile to the regime and not in-line with its ideology, but possibly useful to a "restricted number" of researchers) (Corobca, 2010, p. 372).

With their collections cleansed, responsibilities restricted to books that had received party approval, and their role as propaganda tools affirmed, public libraries were important to the PCR. Creating an NPLS that would support the communist ideology was a valuable item on the agenda of the communist state.

The Design of a National System of Public Libraries

The seed for a national public library system in Romania was planted during the interwar period (Anghelescu, 2000, p. 188). The PCR unified the public libraries into a national centralized system, and sustained the growth of this system in order to meet its goal. The process of creating institutional support for the communist regime required that public libraries be developed and modeled as part of the national cultural system according to the new ideology of the party.

Starting in 1949, a number of state documents were produced in order to create a functional framework for the printing, collecting, and circulation of books during the communist regime (Mătușoiu & Dinu, 2001, p. 21).[5] Decision 1542 in 1951 of the Ministers' Council was the first and most influential legal framework made for the Romanian library system (Regneală, 1997). The decision did not address libraries directly, but rather the institutions coordinating and administering them—that is, the decision nodes in the library system. Among these nodes, the Committee for Cultural Establishments (CpAC) had a central role.[6]

Following the 1950 restructuring of the Romanian territory, the established twenty-eight regions had cultural departments that, among other attributes, oversaw the public library network for their constituencies.[7] These networks were coordinated at the national level by the Department for Libraries of the CpAC.[8] Decision 1542 introduced administrative regulations for the CpAC to keep an account of libraries' existence and activity. Thus libraries became part of a national system that, in spite of having numerous actors, aimed to become a centralized system. In this process a few central actors were created to sustain the system.[9] While the activity of these actors still needs research to be better understood, the fact that they were created and functioned in the first decades of the centralized NSPL provides support for analysis of the development of a national system as a whole.

Decision 1542 provided clear instructions to local, regional, and national coordinators of libraries regarding how to help the newly created system.[10] A pyramid model was proposed for public libraries, which was subsequently refined over the following years. This decision contemplated not only the structure of the library system but also a consistent increase

for the number of public libraries in Romania (approximately 300 new libraries were to be established annually according to the CpAC's planning).[11]

Decision 1542 was more about the function of the institutions governing over libraries than about the libraries themselves. For example, the national, regional, and local people's administrative organizations (CpAC People's Councils) had to ensure that libraries were well-organized and functioning, conducted approved political activity, hired librarians with the appropriate "political, cultural and professional" training, and engaged in a "systemic" work for bringing large masses of "workers, peasant workers, intellectuals, youth and children" to the libraries (Mătușoiu & Dinu, 2001, p. 24). Thus libraries were recognized at this time as important actors that mediated the relation of the public with the book; however, they were also viewed as passive nodes of the system.

Libraries had collections, spaces, and publics, but they operated within a nonresponsive system. As the state encouraged the system to grow and the administrators were pushed to create more libraries and develop existing libraries' collections, there was little room for libraries to calibrate their offerings based on their local public's needs.

Until the 1970s, the legal regulations contributed to a more robust library system. For example, the Ministry of Culture emerged as the coordinator of activities in libraries, especially in public libraries, and was responsible for the development of library collections. In addition, new regulations were created during the following decades for rural public libraries.[12] These provided details regarding the rural libraries' role in communities and how they were organized, as well as their administration, space and furniture, financing, activity plan, and control. While these regulations were not uniform, they did follow the vision of a centralized system—a system in which the library was to be supported by local, regional, and central administrative and political actors.

Overall, there were two important characteristics of the public library within the NSPL: the "methodical" roles of larger libraries, and the close collaboration of local administrative and political influences in the coordination of library activity. Methodical roles included the implementation of professional guidelines; the help that district libraries had to provide to rural libraries within their area; and the help that the rural public library provided for other libraries within the village (for example, libraries in cultural centers and reading rooms).[13] The newly created public and rural libraries were included within this hierarchical system and under the methodical influence of district and regional libraries (Mătușoiu & Dinu, 2001, p. 80). This is how professional and administrative relations among libraries were created within the lower rungs of the hierarchical structure of the public library system.

The same type of hierarchy was defined for district and, to a greater degree, regional libraries. They had a methodical/professional responsibility for the rural libraries in communities within their district or region.[14] Similar in structure, the district library was a smaller version of the regional library, with less authority in the hierarchy of the NSPL. The regional library tended to have more roles, such as including a rare-book department and having branches (Mătușoiu & Dinu, 2001, p. 122). This demonstrates how both the middle and top rungs of the library structure were clearly defined by having direct connections with the Committee for Culture and Art (CSCA), as well as important administrative and financial resources within the local administrative and cultural party organizations.

The Central State Library (BCS) was created in 1955 (Bercan, 1996, p. 5). In addition to its national role, the BCS had a Methodical (Methods) Department that was created to provide professional assistance to all public libraries. Within the pyramidal structure of the library system, the regional and district libraries were under the direct supervision and control of the BCS while at the same time also coordinating the smaller libraries within their respective areas (Anghelescu, 2000, p. 296). This pyramidal structure for Romania's public library system, which was legalized in regulations issued during the first two decades of the communist regime, was based on a structure of professional assistance at the national level. Each library had multiple political, administrative, and professional authorities that supervised it and influenced its activities and existence (Șerbănuță, 2015, p. 46).

Among these regulations there are clear signals that the library system was, to a certain degree, aligned with the development of librarianship practices worldwide. In 1957 the People's Republic of Romania Library Association was created (Mătușoiu & Dinu, 2001, p. 67), indicating a healthy professional-development stage for librarianship. Also, in a relatively short time, the People's Republic of Romania ratified UNESCO's 1958 "Convention Concerning the Exchange of Official Publications and Government Documents between States."[15]

From the early years of communist rule until the late 1960s, the political regime in Romania aimed at designing the socialist parameters of the country's culture (Vereș [1964, p. 487], qtd. in Anghelescu [2000, p. 240]). Both the robust system that was built and the goal to create modern regulations signal a positive interest in the structural construction of the public library national system. However, these were implemented in order to align with directives set by the socialist ruling of the time. The education of the masses was a desideratum of the communist regime, and libraries were instrumental contributors to this plan. While education (especially of the masses) remained important throughout the changes brought by the regime, governmental support of libraries changed over time. The most

severe and remarkable changes to all aspects of culture and education in Romania occurred after the implementation of the 1971 July theses.

LIS Education before the Communist Era

LIS education during the first decades of the communist regime in Romania enhanced the directions of library training and education, which had been established in previous decades, and also expanded the preparation of public librarians. The need for trained librarians was acknowledged in relation to two social realities: the country's illiteracy rate, and the development of a shared Romanian national identity. At the beginning of the twentieth century the illiteracy rate in Romanian territories was high, and the educational efforts made at that time had only partial effects.[16] At the same time, there was a need for documents that illustrated a shared national identity in the Romanian territories. This is why efforts to write bibliographies (historic, thematic, national) were highly encouraged at the time (Crăciun, 1933, p. 11; Popescu, 1970, p. 395; Tomescu, 1970, p. 399). However, despite all the public and private efforts made for the creation of a national network of libraries to address these priorities, librarianship was not acknowledged among respected professions in education and culture.

LIS education was a new field in the process of defining its direction at the end of the nineteenth century and beginning of the twentieth. Along with efforts made for creating a critical mass for bibliographical information, the reality of low literacy and the existence of few readers were too vast to ignore. As a consequence, LIS education also had to include preparing future librarians for their interactions with readers rather than concentrating only on bibliographical instruments and collections (Georgescu-Titsu, 1943, p. 10).

Prior to 1945 there were efforts to spread literacy and educate the masses; these were supported through Royal Foundation, House for Schools and People's Culture, Astra Foundation, and Social Romanian Institute as new libraries were being created and investments made in the training of librarians (Georgescu-Titsu, 1943, p. 12).[17] Cultural organizations and associations were also attempting to educate individuals working in these libraries via short-term training (Tomescu, 1970, p. 399). However, the success of these programs was relatively insignificant compared to the energy that was invested in them. It was decided that libraries were not just "book depositories," as was widely believed up until that time; instead, the success of a future public library would be dependent on the synchronous development of three factors: the library space, the library collection, and the professional training of librarians (Popescu, 1967, p. 71).

The new socialist state aimed at enhancing the library network: it provided the legal and administrative ways for libraries to receive spaces and collections, but also introduced a state structure for LIS education and the training processes.

LIS Education Programs

From the beginning of the communist regime, the interest of the PCR in the role of librarians was predominantly political. A 1951 ministerial decision to enhance the activity of the system of libraries states that librarians should meet the required "political, cultural, and professional qualifications" (Mătușoiu & Dinu, 2001, p. 23). Placing the "professional" requirement at the end of this list of qualifications and highlighting "political" and "cultural" at the forefront signals the importance given to library professionalism. Thus professional education was viewed from the early years of the regime as holding far less importance than ensuring that librarians had proper political and cultural education. Not surprisingly, the efforts made in this direction failed to produce sustainable medium- and long-term solutions.

The socialist era brought books and, consequently, libraries, to the forefront of the state's propaganda—libraries were an instrument of the communist state. For this to happen, however, the system of public libraries had to be developed: to increase the number of libraries, establish library collections, and train librarians. The new librarianship that was promoted was "active, mobilizing, creator of new ways of working." The fields that were envisioned to be renewed were "bibliographies, the methods of working with the readers, universal literature and literature for children and young adults" (Simionescu, 1971, p. 50).

Technical School. During the communist era, librarians were, just like other cultural or educational professions, cultural activists, and their training reflected this new approach. From 1951 to 1956, LIS education was taught at the high school level in the Technical School for Librarianship in Bucharest.[18] It continued from 1956 as a section in the School for Cultural Activists—a school opened to educate people, one that worked in small communities in cultural centers and libraries by organizing cultural activities for the masses (Mătușoiu & Dinu, 2001, p. 22). For the first time, "the complete library sciences, with programs, complex syllabuses are introduced in formal educational programs" (Simionescu, 1971, p. 50). This school was closed in 1963.

Librarians that graduated from the school remember the program as an eye-opening experience not only related to the library profession but also to life and culture in general. Although the total number of librarians trained at the program is unknown, library directors considered staff that graduated from it as "very good professionals, dedicated to their work. They could be trusted with any job. They were trained to be librarians and they had leadership of library departments and services" (D.P., library director).[19]

Because the Technical School was a high school–level program, there were concerns that it was only a basic program, not refined enough to

provide the complex information that librarians were expected to learn. While the librarians that graduated were considered as having "good library technique," little has been written about the contribution of this program to the NSPL; however, the training of librarians was considered to be of good quality, and it enhanced the professional levels of library staff members:

> Yes, that was, I think, one of the best libraries in the country at that time and afterwards. . . . It was well-organized. I don't know if anywhere in the country there was another library with so many librarians that graduated from the Technical School for Libraries. I think I had about ten colleagues, if not more. Eight of them graduated in '63 and '64. They did, I think, only two years, but were very good—in recordkeeping and cataloging, bibliographic information, and in reading rooms or circulation; they knew everything and they were very rigorous. I practically learned from them how to catalog, to classify. Their cataloging was often impeccable. (D.R., county library cataloger)

Undergraduate LIS Education. In 1954 an undergraduate-level program started at University of Bucharest, Faculty of Letters and Philosophy. The four-year program lasted until 1958, and in 1960 was transformed into optional LIS courses for the final years of undergraduates. These optional, four-semester courses were at the time "the only form of formal academic LIS education" (Simionescu, 1971, p. 50). The short span of undergraduate LIS education seems to have been determined by a shortage of interested students and trained professors (p. 49). It is indicative that these three elective courses were taught by one professor until 1970. The communist state needed immediate results in increasing the number of trained librarians that were expected to organize and run the newly created libraries.

The Pedagogical Institute. The association of teachers to the work that had to be done in managing rural libraries was well-acknowledged. Consequently, in 1963 the Pedagogical Institute in Bucharest created a section for librarians. Up until 1970 the three-year program prepared librarians to work mainly in school and public libraries.

The number of public library staff members educated in these programs was not large when compared with those of the NSPL: "Hundreds of graduates finished the Technical School for Libraries and the Technical School for Cultural Activities—librarianship section. To this you add the two classes of graduates from the Library Science section within the Faculty of Philology, University of Bucharest and graduates from the similar section within the Pedagogical Institute, Faculty of Philology" (Popescu, 1967, p. 75). However, because of the multitude of types of libraries that existed and their low salaries, the number of people being hired in public libraries was even smaller. The section for librarians was suspended in 1970, when a new post–high school program was created.

Post–High School for Librarians. By 1969 the Ministry of Culture, through its CSCA, proposed a post–high school LIS program. Continuing the School for Cultural Activists method and having as instructors individuals who already taught within the LIS education system, the new post–high school LIS program admitted only high school graduates to prepare them for work in both medium-size and large public libraries (Simionescu, 1971, p. 51). The school was closed in 1974, and no other program replaced it until 1989.

The memories related to this program are vivid in the oral-history interviews. A large number of the individuals interviewed graduated from this program, and their reminiscences provide a rich context for it. Passing its entry exam ensured not only a place in the program but also a job upon graduating. There were also social and merit scholarships offered to students, which appears to have helped retain a large percentage of graduates in the NSPL: "In the summer there was an ad in *Red Star* local newspaper about a two-year program in Bucharest and what were the exam requirements. [The exam] was [in] Romanian language and history. There was a preselection in Târgu Mureș, I passed that and five of us went on, graduated [from] the program, and practiced" (M.S., city librarian). A distance-learning option of the program was also offered, and hence some librarians were still studying while working in the libraries.

The professors that taught there were remembered as dedicated and well-prepared, all with a gift for teaching.[20] The classes included sociology, the pedagogy of reading and readers, the methods of working with readers, the history of books, and cataloging and classification. The foreign-language classes offered were French and Russian. One interesting aspect that one interviewee recalled was that there was no political education: "Very interesting that at that school we had no political education. None of us. They were not teaching any classes on politics. I have no idea how we fended off; at that time, 1969–1971, no one talked about politics, they were training us for the profession" (A.T., public librarian). Practical work was part of the program; each summer vacation and for a full trimester these students were engaged in practical work.

In a relatively short time there were frequent changes to the programs available for educating librarians (table 1). This happened when the communist state was focused on expanding the pool of trained librarians. However, the qualifications and skills required of them in these programs varied. The administrative and legal efforts made to sustain the growth of the national network of public libraries included an interest in LIS education. Libraries were assigned a larger number of roles, but at the same time there was little success in bridging the dichotomy between special/ university and public library services. LIS education, while offered in varied formats over time, did not have a robust, standard structure. There were hopes for strengthening the programs that trained librarians, but

Table 1. LIS education programs in Romania

Starting year	Ending year	Name of library education program	Notes
1925	1950	Practical school for archivist-paleographer	Section on librarianship* (two years)
1932	1960	Library science course, University of Bucharest	Conference (four years, one class/year)
1932	1939	Library science course, University of Cluj	Docent (conference) (four years, one class/year)
1951	1956	Technical School for Librarianship in Bucharest	High school level (four years)
1956	1963	Technical School for Cultural Activities in Bucharest	Reorganization of the Technical School for Librarianship, high school level (two years)
1953	1958	Library science section within the Faculty of Philology, University of Bucharest	Bachelor's degree (four years)
1960	1970	Faculty of Letters and Philosophy, University of Bucharest	Library-related courses (optional)
1963	1970	Faculty of Philology of the Pedagogical Institute in Bucharest	Bachelor's degree (three years)
1969	1974	Post–high school for librarians	Two-year program

Note: *Preparing librarians for special and research libraries.

the PCR's priorities on sustaining the library network changed after the early 1970s.

LIS Practical Work

Early in the process of establishing a NSPL there was the need for a large number of staff to be hired in the new libraries. As a consequence, special regulations were passed to establish the framework for how people with no library experience and education were to be hired for public libraries. The Order of the Minister of Culture 546/1954 mandated two months of preliminary practical work in one of the regional or district libraries for all new employees. This was followed by a mandatory qualifying exam— another requirement for being hired to work in a public library. These requirements were mandated for people with no formal education in cultural activism or librarianship, were older than age 18, and had a minimum of seven years of schooling (Mătuşoiu & Dinu, 2001, p. 51).

A set of required readings were also provided for new librarians, especially those inspired by Soviet practices in the field.[21] Also required was

knowledge of the "Constitution of the Popular Republic of Romania and the last decisions of the party and government related to agricultural development, literature, and agriculture books" (Mătușoiu & Dinu, 2001, p. 51). The training materials for new librarians were focused on covering all aspects of working with books and collections; the public's needs were always secondary and marginal among training topics.

Practical work experience acquainted these new librarians with all "operations related to collections' record-keeping, preparing books for library use, shelving, creating catalog entries, and especially making book suggestions to various categories of readers." This practical work also included being involved in "mass manifestations, preparation of wall panels, [and] book exhibits" (Mătușoiu & Dinu, 2001, p. 52). While the need for practical experience was deemed essential, the way this work was organized at the library level created occasional problems due to its being a time-consuming (Bărbulescu, 1969, p. 541).

Nevertheless, practical work experience was considered crucial in the education of future librarians and an integral part in the educational process and evaluation of LIS students (high school, post–high school, and undergraduate levels). The practical work requirement for students in Bucharest was completed at Central University Library, BCS, and Bucharest Public Library either during the summer vacation or in a dedicated semester as part of one of the programs. The libraries were selected based on students' personal preferences and the availability of instructors.

The practical work that was mandatory for new librarians was hosted by large regional libraries. These libraries' involvement established them as training providers. As Gheorghe Popescu (1967), who was responsible for the training of public librarians for the next two decades, anticipated, these regional libraries would reach a "maturity and professional conscience" that allowed them to be leaders in the field (p. 75). While the training programs were diverse in form and requirements, they indicate how the education of librarians was a priority for the country. The development of a large national network of public libraries was understood as being possible only with the support of trained librarians.

The consequences of Ceaușescu's 1971 "July Theses" would, however, affect the ways in which LIS education and professional training would develop during the last two decades of the regime.

Characteristics of Education in the NSPL
Interest in supporting the development of LIS education was clear during the first decades of the communist regime. The development of the NSPL in Romania was influenced by the Soviet model, which built public libraries as crucial institutions in the education of the new communist man and the spreading of socialist ideology. However, the variety of these LIS pro-

grams created a rather small number of educated librarians; among them, only a few had college degrees that would grant them professional recognition. Some librarians continued their education for another two years and received an undergraduate degree in a different field (for example, Romanian literature or history). While there was no significant difference in what librarians with degrees and those without practiced, there was a significant gap in their respective salaries.[22]

The development of LIS education that aimed at training librarians for public libraries could be considered successful for that particular time. Based on the interviews, library directors and even department heads were actively searching for trained staff; they wanted to hire individuals who were well-trained, as the students doing practical work in their libraries were, or those with recommendations from their LIS professors. While these prospective librarians were tempted to accept positions in larger libraries, their decision was strongly influenced by the location of their family; few individuals relocated to a different county or city for a good job alone.[23] On the other hand, students from rural communities were happy to land jobs in the capital cities of their respective counties.

The ending of the post–high school LIS program in 1974 was not specifically targeted as such, but occurred as a consequence of the cancellation of all paid rural-librarian positions. Some of the students that graduated in that year were left without jobs and had to retrain themselves for others.[24] The NSPL was large enough at that point to be able to hire all the graduates, but given the general unwillingness to relocate for jobs, this did not happen.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF ROMANIA'S PUBLIC LIBRARY SYSTEM IN THE 1970S AND 1980S

The 1960s were considered a period of the "relative liberalization" of education, culture, and the arts in Romania (Cioroianu, 2005, p. 489; Hitchins, 2015, p. 293). This reality was drastically changed after Ceaușescu imposed on both the PCR and the country at large new restrictions on national culture. In 1971 he visited a number of socialist/communist Asian countries (China, North Korea, Vietnam, Mongolia), and these experiences profoundly influenced the cultural retrenchment that followed. Consequently, in 1971 Ceaușescu called for a "cultural revolution" in his "July Theses" (Cioroianu, 2005, p. 143; Tismăneanu, 2003, p. 241). The proposed changes were intended to create a stronger presence for the party in all cultural and educational activities by using the arts and literature, media and print production for the promotion of socialist activism and to reflect the socialist realities of ordinary people (Ceaușescu, 1971, p. 14).

In the years that followed, this resulted in the continued censorship of books and new lists of proscribed authors, the removal of sociology

as a field of study in universities, the decline in numbers of students at nontechnical universities, the diminishing of the publishing industry, and further reductions in the privileges of intellectuals (Chirot, 1994, p. 246). The July Theses increased the PCR's coordination and control of education, culture, and the arts by mandating policies enforcing conformity with the ideology and "shared" beliefs of the socialist society. In 1978 a new education and learning decree was issued: the "principle of integrating learning with production" (Rusan, Boca, & Ion, 2011, p. 105). Learning a profession now had to have a practical component. In the case of public librarianship, this principle meant that formal education in librarianship was ended; henceforward, the education of librarians was reduced to periodic training called "recycling."

The Training of Librarians

In 1970 the direction in which LIS education was set to develop was followed by the leading figures in Romanian librarianship. Acknowledging that LIS was a growing discipline and that the NSPL had the PCR's support for furthering its development, the hope was that LIS education would continue to expand. An anticipated next step was the creation of a four-year undergraduate program at the University of Bucharest. Simionescu (1971, p. 50) asserted that the Minister of Education approved this, and Tomescu (1970, p. 402) presented a plan for such a program in an article about LIS education in Romania.[25] The undergraduate program, however, was never created; moreover, as previously mentioned, the post–high school LIS program was terminated in 1974. All LIS education was reduced to a national program of professional-development training: "recycling."

Starting in the early 1970s, a five-year training plan for librarians was developed and implemented. This was a national training program (NTP) coordinated by the Special Center for Continuing Education, which was part of the Council for Socialist Culture and Education,[26] and implemented with the assistance of BCS and some of the regional and county libraries. Every four or five years the NTP was updated in order to ensure coverage of all the professional-development needs of public librarianship. Librarians were expected to complete the training program every five years or so. The initial plan for the NTP will be briefly described below. The discussion of how the program developed through 1989 relies upon how the librarians involved remember it and its results. Documentation of these library trainings is scant, because the archives of the Special Center for Continuing Education, which bore the responsibility for training the individuals working in cultural institutions, were partially destroyed during relocation and because of an inadequate storage environment. There are very few references to these trainings other than from the instructors themselves, or else they were consistent with the propaganda agenda

of the time. However, for the librarians interviewed, these trainings were part of their professional development and as such intrinsic to their work. Therefore it is safe to say that while the plan for the NTP was not fully implemented, it was an important part of professional education during the 1970s and 1980s.

The manner by which this national program was implemented illustrates how the communist plans were adapted to meet the needs of professionals. The NTP, as described by Iordachescu (1972), included training for four different groups: rural librarians, regional trainers (that is, librarians working in public libraries), librarians (nontrainers), and library directors. Similar to the "train the trainer" model, the NTP used trainers from former LIS programs in Bucharest, in addition to others from the larger public libraries. The program covered, through periodic training, the professional needs of those working in the NSPL. One of these periodic training segments could last up to eight months and included lectures, workshops, practical work, and a final project to be completed by the trainee. The variety of topics on offer were assigned based on the perceived professional needs of participants. Rural librarians would be guided on how to plan their work and develop, describe, and perform inventories for their collections. The librarians from larger libraries would attend training sessions to sharpen their skills for the necessary work in their home institutions. The trainers from libraries would review their professional work and be given instructions on how to train other librarians. Finally, library directors were trained in "the science of organizing and management of libraries" (p. 405).

The recollections shared during the interviews about this professional-development training clarify how the NTP was implemented. It was an important part of the initiation process for new librarians.[27] For example, rural librarians were trained mostly at the regional level, usually in county libraries. Their participation was not only part of the NTP, but also of their county library's methodical work. These rural librarians were often trained and also evaluated by librarians from larger libraries within their own regions.

According to one librarian from a large village, she moved her library twice, with assistance from the county library, before she went to a training session organized in Bușteni. This librarian was asked: "Did you move your library before or after you went to the training?" She answered as follows:

> Both moves were before the training. I first went to classes after five years. I knew almost everything [by then]. I did not know cataloging, because we were not practicing at that level . . . but other than that, I knew it all. . . . At that time we were receiving very little [professional] information; we were getting books, every trimester, for our collection, so we had books. (V.B., city librarian)

Relevant professional training and information were difficult to obtain in the official system, but these needs were met by personal relations with individuals from both the NLPS and NTP.

In the memories shared by the interviewees, the presence of Gheorghe Popescu—the leading trainer and organizer of the training—was a vivid one, because he took care of the participants and ensured that they had everything necessary to learn: "There was a trainer very . . . Mr. Popescu—God, what a person! You learned for his sake. And we were really learning" (V.B.).

Librarians that periodically participated in the program at the training center in Bușteni were mostly from larger libraries. The costs of training and housing were covered by the library, but librarians had to pay for their own meals. Librarians were selected to attend the type of training related to their work, and there were different levels given for each type of training. The certificate granted after completing such training was important for their future evaluation, promotion, and salary increase.[28]

The first two sessions in a five-year training plan focused on a chosen topic. Such topics included cataloging, classification, activities for the public, and relations with readers. Each participant would plan and complete a project on the chosen topic, then present it at the third session.[29] Additional required practical work was completed in a nearby library. The exams varied based on the level of training of the participants.

The trainers in the NTP, especially at its main training center in Bușteni, were well-known, because they were former professors in previous LIS education programs. The trainers who came from other libraries throughout the country did not mention in their interviews anything about having gone through special training or screening in order to teach. Rather, they were recognized locally as competent instructors and hence asked to present to their peers on topics of interest.[30] Both trainers from the training center and the ones from libraries throughout the country traveled to libraries where they had been invited to teach; some of them brought their own pedagogical materials. One city librarian said that

> between '75 and '76—after I went to Sweden—and until 2000 I was a lecturer, I was hosting trainings in Bușteni on public relations, I was doing practical demonstrations, audio presentations. . . . I went to Bușteni many times, probably ten times. I carried the equipment with me since they did not have any. I showed slides—I liked it. I was young and I was carrying that large luggage with me.…
>
> They would tell me what kind of librarians were coming: beginners, librarians working with the public, bibliography, from information service, and so on. I presented my offer [to the Special Center for Continuing Education]. Last time, I had seven options for training that I could host. And if they considered some of them to be of interest, they requested them for other groups as well. (S.A., city librarian)

The NTP was created to address the need for LIS training of the people entering and working in the NSPL. When originally planned in the early 1970s, the NTP used the regional libraries already involved in the training of librarians. These regional/county libraries, however, were already implementing the methodical role required by law, but the expertise of their instructors was insufficient to cover the training needs of the entire country. As the NTP developed, significant differences became apparent on how theoretical topics were presented at the Bușteni training center and at the regional libraries (Popescu, 1980, p. 3). Moreover, during the following decades the NTP was forced to adapt to unfavorable realities, such as a smaller number of rural librarians and less trainers with a LIS education. With no such education programs in the country and few connections with international library practices and LIS programs, the training offered through the NTP was reduced to only introductory matters and opportunities for the sharing of good practices. However, the social aspect of these training sessions was valued by participants: "Summing up the hours for lectures and the breaks, the time in dorms, at dining—those were opportunities to make meaningful [professional] exchanges" (L.T., county librarian).

The participation of librarians in this periodic training had beneficial results for the profession. However, the NTP was not developed enough to respond to the needs for the latest in professional training. Moreover, in addition to learning and practicing the profession in public libraries, there were other professional-development opportunities available. In order to obtain a more comprehensive understanding of how librarianship was learned at the time in Romania, these opportunities are described below.

Personal Strategies for Professional Development

By studying the NTP and the education of librarians, it becomes clear that professional development was only partially a systemic program in Romania. The NTP's training and the practical work required were influenced by local and personal variables that affected their results. Personal motivation and the willingness to learn and the presence of librarians with an LIS education, as well as the willingness of these experienced professionals to teach and mentor are important factors that influenced the results of library training.

Individuals being hired to work in Romania's public libraries during the late 1970s and 1980s recalled being placed in positions they did not know anything about. These individuals had to learn on the job and take advantage of the instruction and mentorship offered by their colleagues. This type of learning was even greater for librarians from rural or small-city libraries. For example, one participant (V.B.) recalled that "at the beginning it was very hard. To be alone in the library, with no one around,

sixty kilometers away from the closest larger library that could coordinate your work—it was terribly hard. Learning from my own mistakes, that is how I learned most—from mistakes."

Lacking transportation or budgets for professional development, small libraries were dependent on the larger libraries for guidance. For the most part, these larger libraries provided this guidance as part of their methodical work: "They taught me this profession. They came from Galați and taught me and together we organized this library twice. They were staying here for two weeks. They commuted and stayed here for weeks. A team of five people came here every day and this is how we succeeded" (V.B.).

The colleagues that influenced and helped new librarians were those educated in LIS during the initial decades of the regime. Directors of libraries would proudly declare how many individuals trained in LIS they had on their staffs, or that a certain department head was very good because she/he graduated from a LIS program. Being accepted as an apprentice by a more experienced mentor was certainly not mandatory; it required active cultivation and participation by the new librarians.

The more experienced librarians were active in LIS programs both before 1974 and afterward through their involvement in the NTP's practical work requirement. These activities were coordinated at the library level by at least one experienced librarian. The practical work requirement that was part of the NTP was a more intense experience, because it involved multiple library functions. This was especially true for new librarians and students; for the former, this practical work mostly involved better cataloging and classification practices, because all participants were urged to improve at "working with the book." Occasionally, such practical work required the more experienced librarians themselves to learn new practices and skills. The interviews reveal that rather than working toward gaining new skills, most librarians preferred to stick to their regular, known activities (Popescu, 1980, p. 3).

These practical activities taught new librarians about a library's work, but without being allowed to question it. Because more experienced, senior librarians were teaching these practices, the unexperienced ones were not expected to challenge them—contributing to an environment that fostered not only the sharing of good practices, but also preserving problematic ones.

A discussion of practices in public libraries of communist countries and how they became part of the profession will be presented in a future article. However, it is clear that well-trained librarians had the power to instill good practices within their libraries (Șerbănuță & Chițimia-Nutiu, 2014a, 2014b). Moreover, through national conferences and the sharing of good practices through training programs, their introduction into other libraries was possible as well. Conversely, by learning from more experienced individuals, it was also possible to spread questionable practices. Among

these, inflating statistics seems to be the most widespread. The fact that circulation numbers were falsely reported with the knowledge of department heads and library directors is an aspect of library services during communism that requires in-depth analysis. In librarianship, what is of interest here are how the practices of inflating statistics and false reporting became normalized through practical work in the library alongside more experienced librarians. As one participant recalled: "The director was not saying anything directly. Just this: be careful with the readers. And the more experienced ladies knew already . . . they knew what it was about" (M.P., branch librarian).

Learning the profession was done in a restricted environment: predefined by the NTP, limited in the number of trainers and mentors, and little access to resources from outside the country. All these greatly impeded new librarians to develop professionally. The cases in which there was access to resources from outside the national system were rare, but significant within this context. For example, Romania's Hungarian-speaking population could access LIS journals from Hungary, which were allowed in the collections of public libraries in regions with such communities. Also, a small number of librarians traveled outside of the country to visit foreign libraries. Upon their return they published articles or presented to their peers what was learned.

The personal efforts made in learning the profession of librarianship, or even teaching it, might be considered limited in scope, but they were meaningful. These efforts demonstrate that the shortcomings of both the NPLS and the NTP were recognized within the system. Moreover, they also indicate the continued importance of professional development despite the state's reduced support for it. The efforts made for professional development within the NSPL, however, sustained the survival of the country's library system, but their results were not incorporated into it. In the end, these personal efforts failed to produce any significant changes in how the communist state envisioned and expected public libraries to function.

Conclusion

The communist regime created a national system of public libraries to serve its political and propaganda purposes. The efforts put in place for this were considerable, unique in the history of libraries in Romania. The NSPL developed and existed in order to create libraries that would contribute in a meaningful way to the country's propaganda agenda. The communist state and the PCR valued libraries with large book collections over both the professional development of librarians and the establishing of relevant library services. These priorities created impotent institutions in which restricted book collections and inflated statistics were the norm. Librarians, driven less by professional education and training and more by personal interests and efforts that bolstered their professional advance-

ment, were trapped in an obsolete "professional" system. Therefore, after the fall of the communist regime in 1989, public librarianship had no clear purpose and no means to change.

NOTES

1. PCR in Romanian is Partidul Comunist Roman. PCR was the name the party commenced using in 1965. However, the party changed its name over time. The original Communist Party of Romania was created in 1921, and the Party of Romanian Workers was created in 1948 through unification of the Social Democratic Party with the Communist Party. The Party of Romanian Workers existed from 1948 until 1965 (Alexandrescu, Anton, Banu, & Cătănus, 2012, p. 413).

2. During the early years of the communist state, "public library" was defined loosely. It included small reading houses, union libraries, and libraries of local cooperatives, among other things. In this paper only the public libraries that were under local or regional administrative control are considered. These libraries are the only public libraries in Romania that survived after 1990.

3. After 1990, the center changed its location a number of times, and at one point the archive was flooded. An unindexed collection of files located in a small room in the basement of one of the center's buildings outside of Bucharest survived and is accessible.

4. The interviews' structure included questions that covered topics like "the personal journey toward working in the library," "education means as preparation to work in the library," and "professional activities, procedures, professional changes and trajectories, and partners for the activities that took place in the library" (for example, local and national institutions, the public or local library's administration, local party representatives, and so on).

5. Most important were Decree 17 (1949) and Decision 1542 (1951) and their mandates.

6. In Romanian, Comitetul pentru așezămintele culturale (Anghelescu, 2000, p. 290).

7. The country was organized as follows: 1940–1950, fifty-eight counties; 1950–1952, twenty-eight regions; 1952–1956, eighteen regions; 1956–1968, sixteen regions; 1968–1981, thirty-nine counties; and 1981–1997, forty counties (Săgeată, 2013).

8. In Romanian, Direcția biblioteci.

9. The list of actors included: Fondul de Stat al Cărții (FSC), which was a department under the CpAC that provided new public libraries with books, and until 1970 it administered the book collections nationalized by the state (Regneală, 1997); the Press and Printing General Direction (DGTP) under the Ministers' Council helped the CpAC with the identification of "dangerous" and "unwanted" books that existed in both the marketplace and the libraries; regional workshops for the binding and repairing of library books were created, along with special instructions for publishers of children's books; the Book Room was created by the DGPT of the Ministers' Council to record all new titles published in the country in order to issue periodic bibliographical bulletins; and the Central State Library (BCS), which was to assume a national bibliographical role (Mătușoiu & Dinu, 2001, p. 25).

10. Articles 11, 13–15, and 17 of Decision 1542.

11. Article 11 of Decision 1542.

12. The Ministry of Culture's Order 980 (1955) and Ministry of Education and Culture's Order 174 (1958). In Romanian, Regulamentul de organizare și funcționare al bibliotecilor sătești aprobat prin Ordinul Ministrului Culturii no. 980 din 31 august 1955 (Mătușoiu & Dinu, 2001, p. 55) and Ordinul Minsiterului Învățământului și Culturii no. 174/1958 privind reorganizarea bibliotecilor din mediul sătesc (p. 79).

13. These were public collections available in private homes—in Romanian, case de citit.

14. *Methodical service* was expected to "direct, control, and provide professional assistance to public libraries from the district in all areas of their work" (Mătușoiu & Dinu, 2001, p. 113). This methodical activity was supposed to be coordinated by a special department, but it was often carried out by librarians from all departments (pp.114, 120).

15. Decrees 835 and 836 (1964). In Romanian, Decretul 835/1964 pentru ratificarea Convenției privind schimburile internaționale de publicații, întocmită la Paris, la 5 de-

cembrie 1958 (Mătușoiu & Dinu, 2001, p. 87) and Decretul 836/1964 pentru ratificarea Convenției privind schimburile de publicații oficiale și documente guvernamentale între state, întocmită la Paris, la 5 decembrie 1958 (p. 95).

16. In 1930 the illiteracy rate was 43 percent (Tomescu, 1964, p. 5).
17. In Romanian, Institutul Social Roman.
18. Middle school was finished after tenth grade, followed by high school–level classes in technical schools.
19. In order to ensure privacy, quotes from the interviews are identified only by initials and job title or library type.
20. Among them were Florica Câmpeanu, Corneliu Dima Drăgan, Gheorghe Popescu, and Ilie Stanciu.
21. The titles of these required readings were: *Manualul bibliotecarului sătesc* (1951); *Munca bibliotecii de masă* (1952); and *Minimum de tehnică de bibliotecă* (1953).
22. "Up to 10 percent in salary" according to an interviewee (D.R., county library cataloger).
23. Of all the individuals interviewed, only one moved to a different county for a job.
24. "In 1974, through a decree, the rural libraries were closed down. Many of our colleagues were left out. They completed library school, were sent to work in rural libraries, and were left out. Some were lucky, as they were brought to work in cities or in larger libraries, but some had to retrain" (V.B., city librarian).
25. The educational plan for the four-year program was included: social-political courses (mandatory in university departments); library-related courses (library science, bibliographies, documentation, and so on) and practical seminars; courses in at least two foreign languages; and courses in scientific specialization (for specific academic libraries).
26. In Romanian, Centrul special pentru perfecționarea cadrelor de pe lângă Consiliul Culturii și Educației Socialiste.
27. As one interviewee recalled: "I came on August 1st, 1978, it was the first working day. And at the beginning of November I went to training for three weeks. . . . There were trainings for beginners—we were all together in the same pot, so to speak. . . . Everybody was interested in this. No one was skipping lectures. It was a nice feeling to see that people wanted to learn something. We were all ears" (E.D., city librarian).
28. "The county library was auditing the activity of libraries from that county, the work plan, and other reports that confirmed what activities took place there. They were querying the staff, planning our professional development, and engaging us in various trainings. Just like everyone else, every two to three years we were expected to go to trainings or events organized by the county library. I owe the Galati Library a lot, since it took care of our professional development. They would be testing and grading us every three to four years. There were some test papers, with fifteen to twenty user cases we were supposed to solve in a given time to verify whether or not we deserved to stay in the library. There were those who did not get the minimum score and after a while, during the professional evaluation for that year, they could have been fired" (V.B.).
29. "When we went to exams we were supposed to prepare a project. For those with a college degree it was a written paper, and for us it was a project and practical work. My project was about a topographical catalog; it was a handwritten project" (V.B.).
30. "Back then, even if I was not a head of department, I was responsible for a group. I taught what was required, including cataloging and classification, and I was also testing them at the same time" (D.R.).

REFERENCES

Alexandrescu, A., Anton, M., Banu, F., & Cătănuș, D. (2012). *România 1945–1989: enciclopedia regimului comunist: instituții de partid, de stat, obștești și cooperatiste* [Romania 1945–1989: encyclopedia of communist regime: party, state, public and cooperative institutions]. București: Institutul Național pentru Studiul Totalitarismului.
Anghelescu, H. G. B. (2000). *Public libraries in modern and contemporary Romania: Legacy of French patterns and Soviet influences, 1830–1990.* Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Texas at Austin.
Anghelescu, H. G. B. (2001). Romanian libraries recover after the cold war: The communist legacy and the road ahead. *Libraries & Culture, 36*(1), 233–252.

Bărbulescu, C. (1969). Este suficientă numai practica de bibliotecă? [Is the practical work in the library enough?]. *Revista Bibliotecilor* [Libraries' Journal], *9*, 541.

Bercan, I. G. (1996). Biblioteca Națională a României. Scurt istoric [The National Library of Romania. Short history]. *Revista Bibliotecii Naționale* [National Library Journal], *2*(1), 5–13.

Ceaușescu, N. (1971). *Propuneri de măsuri pentru îmbunătățirea activității politico-ideologice, de educare marxist-leninistă a membrilor de partid, a tuturor oamenilor muncii, 6 iulie 1971; Expunere la Consfătuirea de lucru a activului de partid din domeniul ideologiei* și *al activității politice* și *cultural--educative, 9 iulie 1971* [Proposed measures for improving the political-ideological, marxist-leninist education activity of the party members, of all working people, 9 July 1971]. București: Editura Politică.

Chirot, D. (1994). *Modern tyrants: The power and prevalence of evil in our age.* New York: Free Press.

Cioroianu, A. (2005). *Pe umerii lui Marx: o introducere în istoria comunismului românesc* [On Marx's shoulders: an introduction to the history of Romanian communism]. București: Curtea Veche.

Comisia Prezidențială pentru Analiza Dictaturii Comuniste din România. (2007). *Raport final* [Final report]. București: Humanitas.

Comitetul pentru Așezămintele Culturale din R. P. R. de pe lângă Consiliul de Miniștri, & Direcția Bibliotecilor. (1951). *Manualul bibliotecarului sătesc* [Rural librarian's textbook]. București: s.n.

Comitetul pentru Așezămintele Culturale din R. P. R. de pe lângă Consiliul de Miniștri, & Direcția Bibliotecilor. (1952). *Munca bibliotecii de masă* [The work of the mass library]. București: s.n.

Comitetul pentru Așezămintele Culturale din R. P. R. de pe lângă Consiliul de Miniștri, & Direcția Bibliotecilor. (1953). *Minimum de tehnică de bibliotecă* [Minimal technique for the library]. București: s.n.

Corobca, L. (2010). *Epurarea cărților în România (1944–1964): documente* [Purging books in Romania (1944–1964): documents]. București: Tritonic.

Crăciun, I. (1933). *Bibliologia: o știință nouă în învățământul universitar din România* [Bibliology: a new science in the university education from Romania]. Cluj: Cartea Românească.

Georgescu-Tistu, N. (1943). Domeniul si insemnatatea bibliologiei [The domain and the importance of bibliology]. *Scriptum Buletin bibliologic* [Scriptum bibliology bulletin], *1*, 1–12

Hitchins, K. (2015). *Scurtă istorie a României* [Short history of Romania]. București: Polirom.

Iordachescu, E. (1972). Coordonarea perfectionarii profesionale [Coordination of professional training]. *Revista bibliotecilor* [Libraries' Journal], *25*(7), 403–405.

Jinga, I. (1975). *Cultura de masă: activitatea cultural-educativă de masă și conducerea ei științifică* [Mass culture: mass cultural-educational activity and its management]. București: Editura științifică și enciclopedica.

Mătușoiu, C., & Dinu, M. H. (2001). *Istoria bibliotecilor din România în legi și documente* [History of Romanian libraries in laws and documents]. Constanța: Ex Ponto.

Nazare, D. (2013). Press, libraries and secret funds in Romania (1945–1989): Case study. In A. Fâtu-Tutoveanu & R. J. Álvarez (Eds.), *Press, propaganda and politics: Cultural periodicals in Francoist Spain and communist Romania* (pp. 213–226). Newcastle upon Tyne, UK: Cambridge Scholars.

Popescu, G. (1967). *Formarea concepției biblioteconomice românești* și *pregătirea profesional*ă *a bibliotecarilor. Probleme de bibliologie* [Formation of the Romanian library science and the professional training of librarians. Bibliology problems]. București; Consiliul așezămintelor culturale.

Popescu, G. (1970). *Formarea concepției biblioteconomice românești și pregătirea profesională a bibliotecarilor. Comunicări și referate de bibliologie* [Formation of the Romanian library science and the professional training of librarians. Bibliology communications and reports]. București: Asociația Bibliotecarilor din Republica Socialistă România.

Popescu, G. (1980, December 4). Realizări și perspective în informarea și perfecționarea profesională a bibliotecarilor [Achievements and perspectives in professional information and training of librarians]. *Biblioteca* [The library], *4*, 2–5.

Publicațiile interzise până la 1 mai 1948. (1948). București: Ministerul Artelor și Informațiilor.

Regneală, M. (1997). Legislația românească de bibliotecă în perioada 1948–1989 [Romanian legislation for libraries in the period 1948–1989]. *Studii de bibliologie și știința informării* [Studies of bibliology and library science], *3*. Retrieved from http://ebooks.unibuc.ro/StiinteCOM/bibliologie/12.htm

Richards, P. S., Wiegand, W. A., & Dalbello, M. (Eds.). (2015). *A history of modern librarianship: Constructing the heritage of Western cultures.* Santa Barbara, CA: Libraries Unlimited.

Rusan, R., Boca, I., & Ion, V. (2011). *România în timpul războiului rece: Scurtă cronologie a evenimentelor, instituțiilor și mentalităților (1945–1989)* [Romania during the cold war: Schort cronology of events, institutions and mentalities (1945–1989)]. București: Fundația Academia Civică.

Săgeată, R. (2013). *Organizarea administrativ-teritorială a României. Evoluție. Propuneri de optimizare* [Administrative orgaizations of Romanian territory. Evolution. Proposals for optimization]. București: Ministerul Dezvoltării Regionale și Adminsitrației Publice. Retrieved from http://advocacy.ro/sites/advocacy.ro/files/files/depozitie/anexe/2013-03/organiza rea_administrativ-teeritoriala_a_romaniei.pdf

Șerbănuță, C. (2015). Memory exercises in public libraries. *History of Communism in Europe, 6,* 39–63.

Șerbănuță, C., & Chițimia-Nutiu, R. (2014a, August). *Mapping professional development: A technical library story.* Paper presented at IFLA WLIC 2014, Libraries, Citizens, Societies: Confluence for Knowledge, Lyon, France. Retrieved from http://library.ifla.org/932/

Șerbănuță, C., & Chițimia-Nutiu, R. (2014b, July–August). The technical public library: Popularizing science vs. offering specialized services. In E. Helerea, M. Cionca, & M. Ivănoiu (Eds.), *41st ICOHTEC Symposium, 2014: Technology in Times of Transition,* Brașov, Romania (pp. 429–436). Brașov: Editura Universitatii Transilvania. Retrieved from http://goo.gl/bxLqAs

Simionescu, D. (1971). Învățământul bibliologic în România [Library science education in Romania]. In M. Vulcu (Ed.), *Biblioteca Centrală Universitară București: 75 de ani de activitate* [Bucharest Central University Library: 75 years of activity] (pp. 47–53). București: Editura BCU.

Sroka, M. (2000). "Soldiers of the cultural revolution": The Stalinization of libraries and librarianship in Poland, 1945–1953. *Library History, 16*(2), 105–126.

Tismăneanu, V. (2003). *Stalinism for all seasons: A political history of Romanian communism.* Berkeley: University of California Press.

Tomescu, M. (1964). *Cartea și biblioteca în Republica Populară Romînă. Ilustrarea și ornamentarea cărții românești din secolul XX: Vol. 1* [The book and the library in the Popular Republic of Romania. Illustration and ornamentation of the Romanian 20th-century book: Vol.1]. București: Extras din Probleme de bibliologie.

Tomescu, M. (1970). *Învățământul bibliologic universitar. Comunicări și referate de bibliologie* [University library education. Bibliology communications and reports]. București: Asociația Bibliotecarilor din Republica Socialistă România.

Claudia Șerbănuță is a doctoral candidate in the School of Information Sciences of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. She holds a MS in LIS from the same university, and during 2014–2016 was the interim manager of the National Library of Romania. Her main research interest is in understanding how information cultures are transformed by prolonged and severe information-control and information-censorship practices. Memory institutions in communist Eastern European countries during the second half of the twentieth century are the main focus of her current research. She is also interested in understanding how these information cultures are adapting and contributing to the global information ecology of our times. Her publications include articles on information history and the usage of new technologies within the Eastern European context.