



The “Matilda Effect”: Women in Interwar Romanian Sociological Research and Social Intervention

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Abstract. In the late 1920s and throughout the 1930s, several sociological monographic campaigns were carried out in a few villages in Romania. It was for the first time that a large research group from Romania investigated rural social life using an integrated theoretical system and interdisciplinary methods and instruments. In the second half of the 1930s, a different kind of rural-oriented endeavour started to be undertaken: the “royal voluntary student teams”, whose work in Romanian villages was more oriented towards social action than social research. In October 1938, the Law of the Social Service was issued, providing that all of Romania’s university graduates were compelled to participate in organized cultural work in villages. In most of the activities undertaken by the Bucharest Sociological School and coordinated by Professor Dimitrie Gusti, women participated in large numbers – yet another new feature in Romanian scientific practice. In this paper, I explore how gender, conceptualized as a social, political, and material category, configures power relations within a research group, and I provide tentative and inherently partial answers to such questions as: What combination of social, economic, and political factors led to women’s massive involvement in the sociological monographic campaigns? How did women’s participation contribute to the research endeavours? What are the disciplinary and institutional mechanisms and personal strategies that produced women’s inclusion in, and later exclusion from, the research group?

Keywords: interwar Romanian sociology, women’s history, gender in science, history of social sciences

Introduction

In the second half of the 1920s and throughout the 1930s, several sociological monographic campaigns were carried out in a few villages of Romania. Each such campaign gathered dozens of students and researchers who explored rural

life using an integrated theoretical system and multidisciplinary methods and instruments.¹ In the second half of the 1930s, a different kind of rural-oriented endeavour started to be undertaken: “the royal voluntary student teams”, whose work in Romanian villages was more focused on social action than on social research. In October 1938, the Law of the Social Service was issued, providing that all university graduates of Romania, irrespective of their subject, were compelled to take part in organized cultural work in villages. All these activities were carried out within various organizations for social research, reform, and intervention, established by Professor Dimitrie Gusti and known under the more general and inclusive name of the Bucharest Sociological School. And in virtually all these activities women participated in large numbers. Women’s significant involvement in these endeavours was unusual for that period and has so far been virtually unnoticed, much less investigated. Consequently, in this article, I want to briefly indicate the way in which gender, conceptualized as a dynamic social, political, and material category (Scott 1999a: 28–50), configures power relations within a research group.

Therefore, I explore women’s massive involvement in these activities, looking at their contributions and following their professional trajectory, and I offer possible answers to questions such as: What combination of social, economic, and political but also personal factors led to women’s massive involvement in the sociological monographic campaigns? How did women’s participation contribute to the research endeavours? What are the disciplinary and institutional mechanisms, as well as the personal strategies, that produced: a) women’s inclusion in, and later exclusion from, the research group; b) their restriction to professional areas defined as “appropriate” for women; c) even the misappropriation of their work for the benefit of their male research colleagues? How were these women’s lives and professional careers influenced by their participation in the activities of the Gustian organizations?

The objective of my research is twofold: on the one hand, I seek to follow a gendered perspective on the research experience and practice and, on the other hand, to explore how gender shaped social research and social work in interwar Romania. Certainly, the two levels are interdependent and can only be separated for explanatory purposes. It is, therefore, important to point them out distinctly. This is because each of them responds to a different theoretical and political necessity. Briefly put, women’s history is a scholarly endeavour seeking to render

1 The first series of sociological monographic campaigns took place in the following villages: Goicea Mare (Dolj County, 1925), Rușețu (Brăila County, 1926), Nerej (Vrancea County, 1927), Fundu Moldovei (Bukovina, 1928), Drăguș (Făgăraș, Bukovina, 1929), Runcu (Gorj County, 1930), Cornova (Orhei, Bessarabia, 1931) (see Stahl 1936: 1130–1165). The second series of sociological monographic campaigns took place in the following villages: Șanț (Năsăud, 1935 and 1936), Drăguș (Țara Făgărașului region), Nerej (Țara Vrancei region), Plasa Dâmbovnic (1939), beyond the Bug River (1943) (see Rostás 2006: 7–11).

visible and include women's lives, experiences, and contributions in the history record (Bock 1991: 1–23, 2002). The first aim of this paper corresponds to this understanding of the field, and therefore my investigation will contribute to the broadening and deepening of women's history in interwar Romania and to the history of sociology in Romania.

However, women's history does not function on the simplistic model “add women and stir”. It does not only aim at inserting women as an annex to history but has the objective, on the one hand, to interrogate the fundamentals of women's virtual exclusion from the historical record and the socio-political and historical categories and hierarchies that produce discriminations and inequalities. On the other hand, it endeavours to destabilize these categories and hierarchies and to eliminate discriminations and inequalities (Scott 1999b, Offen 2000, Miroiu 2004, Paletschek–Pietrow-Ennker 2004). This necessitates constant attention to other structuring axes of difference and inequality such as class, ethnicity, race, sexuality, etc. (Reinharz 1992, Smith 2000, Simonton 2006). Thus, the second aim of my paper corresponds to this epistemological and political necessity, through exploring how gender shapes and influences personal and professional relations, experiences, choices, and trajectories. It also interrogates how gender is constructed within personal and professional practices and representations. In this way, my broader research project is situated within the field of gender history and will contribute to the re-conceptualization of the relationship between gender, history as lived experience, and the historiography of interwar Romania. It does so by examining the dynamics of women's participation in and contribution to the production and dissemination of sociological knowledge, as well as to social work and in the implementation of social policies.

I proceed from the general premise that every societal project mobilizes certain gender ideas and arrangements. In any society, at any given time, there exist several projects in competition with each other. Moreover, even within the context of a given project, there can be transformations during its existence. Depending on the perceived necessities of those in power, gender ideas and conceptualizations of women's and men's roles are fluid and can be changed in such a way as to serve the objectives of that particular societal project at a given time. These ideas and conceptualizations of the gender category do not, however, function in isolation. First, they are always interwoven, locally and globally, with other axes of difference and asymmetries of power (i.e. class, ethnicity, race, etc.). Second, they are influenced by arrangements and transformations within the category of gender itself: at the local level, by the competing societal projects, and/or by the anti-systemic social movements unrelated to the societal project in question. At the global level, they are affected by the changes which occurred in the conceptualization of the category of gender in its material, political, social, and symbolic dimensions.

Consequently, I believe that there is always a constellation of available gender ideas and arrangements, from which, according to the perceived necessities of a given time, the dominant groups mobilize and deploy a particular set that they utilize in an attempt to accomplish their goals. Although gender asymmetries and inequalities are constantly (to a greater or lesser extent) produced, legitimized, reproduced, and even reframed by most societal projects, in most cases there exist spaces that allow for negotiation and movement. These spaces permit individuals and groups with no formal power to advance if only in a limited way, their own gender goals, ideas, and arrangements within the very societal project that engages them. We are talking, therefore, about a multidirectional mechanism that, by way of simplification, could be summarized as stating that both dominant and dominated groups apply the same set of gender ideas and arrangements to fulfil their own agendas.

My present investigation about women's work and their contributions to social sciences and intervention on the one hand and about their professional careers on the other hand starts from the hypothesis of a combination of disciplinary and institutional mechanisms, social necessities, and political and personal strategies. To answer the above questions, I primarily use "personal" sources, such as oral history interviews carried out with some of the participants in sociological research and social intervention, the correspondence of some of the monographers, and a few memoirs and personal journal fragments that belong to the people involved in the Gustian School. The interviews undertaken by Zoltán Rostás with Henri H. Stahl and with the first and the second generation of monographers, as well as the participants in the student voluntary teams (Rostás 2000, 2003, 2006, 2009) constitute the documentary core of my research.

I also use studies, articles, and chronicles published in the academic and organizational communication journals edited by the institutions in which members of the Bucharest Sociological School were involved, as well as archival documents. As a primary research method, I use documentary and discourse analysis, mainly from a gender perspective and with an integrative approach. Thus, I constantly refer, on the one hand, to the activities, contributions, (non-) recognition, and professional careers of the women and men who were part of the Bucharest Sociological School. Moreover, I refer to women's involvement in activities dedicated to social research and change in other countries. I pay attention and I integrate these diverse social research and intervention enterprises, as well as women's participation in the social, cultural, and political context of Romania during the first half of the twentieth century. In addition, I briefly investigate and include all these activities in the broad context of women's and feminist movements that had an ample, active, and visible character in the ante- and interwar periods in the territories (also) inhabited by Romanians.

Educational and Organizational Contexts

At the beginning of the 1920s, the proportion of women students who followed university courses in Romania was 17% (Cresin 1936: 644); however, their numbers continuously grew, doubling by the end of the third decade: from 5,101 women students in the academic year 1924–1925 (22.79%), in 1929–1930, 10,400 women students attended university and special school courses (27.86%). By the mid-1930s, the number of women students remained relatively high, constituting a little over a quarter of the total number of persons enrolled, i.e. 9,933 women students out of a total of 37,771 (Bozgan 2004: 173). At the University of Bucharest, during the academic year 1930–1931, women students represented 28.1% of the persons registered. Most attended the courses of the Faculty of Philosophy and Letters, where they constituted the majority, i.e. 58.5% of the student body, and almost 40% of the total of women attending all specializations at this university (Cresin 1936: 646). In fact, the preponderance of women students at the Faculty of Philosophy and Letters is not only typical to the 1930s; women students became the majority at the beginning of the 1920s, their proportion constantly ranging between 55% and 65% (Cresin 1936: 647).

The numerical superiority of women students who attended the courses of the Faculty of Philosophy and Letters is justified, on the one hand, by the transformations that occurred in the economic and social contexts, which drew a great number of women, predominantly from the middle urban class, to look for lucrative occupations outside the family, and, on the other hand, by the specific configurations of gender roles, which were attributed to women activities in the areas of care, social work, and education. Therefore, the outcome of these social changes – commenced at the end of the nineteenth century in the provinces also inhabited by Romanians and intensified after the First World War – was an increase in women attending higher education, particularly in the fields that would allow their access to paid professional areas, predominantly as teachers/educators. Of course, these are the general characteristics of the period that only partially justify women’s involvement in the School’s sociological research and social intervention activities (for a more detailed study, see Văcărescu 2014: 135–161).

Thus, the clarifications of women’s participation in the field investigations must be searched for at the intersection of the antecedents of social studies undertaken by women – either individually or within associations established and led by women –, the research necessities made evident during the two sociological monographic campaigns, and the scientific aspirations and personal desires of the women students. In what follows, I will show the existence of social research practices undertaken by women already at the beginning of the century, and I will point out some possible motivations of the group’s dynamic

and personal options that led to the involvement of a considerable number of women students and researchers in the sociological campaigns.

Women started undertaking studies concerning the conditions of life and work of the poor population of Romania, especially of women and children – thus educational and social work activities constituted a constant trait beginning in the second half of the nineteenth century and increased in the first years of the twentieth. This dominant feature of women's and feminist associations both shows that the inclusion of some women students and researchers in the Gustian endeavours did not take place in a vacuum and that there was a history of social studies undertaken by women, and it supports the hypothesis that Dimitrie Gusti was aware of not having assumed and integrated some of the research themes, objectives, and strategies of social intervention – at least in the areas of the family, of women's lives and work, of child-rearing, of the domestic industry – already initiated and exercised by women's and feminist organizations (see also Văcărescu 2022: 198–232).

Research activities centred on rural life and carried out by the participants in the sociological monographic campaigns were from the beginning part of a vast social change project, in which nation-building ranked high. Thus, they represented the scientific substantiation, based on studies in the field, of a set of activities and social interventions with the goal of improving the life and work conditions of the rural population and, to a lesser degree, of the urban population as well. Therefore, conceptually and organizationally, the social research and intervention activities undertaken by the institutions created and/or coordinated by Gusti were influenced by similar activities and organizations from other countries. At the same time, they were determined by the social, economic, and political context of Romania and inspired by the social change efforts existing on the territories inhabited by Romanians. Within these latter endeavours, I argue that women's and feminist associations figured high as sources of inspiration for the Gustian activities – an aspect that has not been observed, much less discussed, in the analyses of the Bucharest Sociological School.

Although they are missing from the mainstream historiographical discourse, there were numerous women's and feminist organizations, and their active and visible involvement in public debates, social work and philanthropic activities starting in the nineteenth century and during the first decades of the twentieth was a persistent feature of public life. Thus, along with the emancipatory discourse related to the change in the juridical and political status of women, the hundreds of women's associations had as fundamental objectives the betterment of life, education, and work conditions, especially those of women and children in rural and urban areas.² Space does not allow for a thorough exploration of

2 A few studies, edited volumes, and collections of documents that show the importance and visibility of women's and feminist movements in the second half of the nineteenth century

the ties between the activities of these organizations and the social research and change enterprises carried out from the end of the 1920s and during the 1930s by the broad group led by Gusti. However, I believe it is important to indicate a few points that show the areas of intersection of the objectives and strategies utilized both by women’s associations and by the Gustian institutions.

Women’s and feminist associations studied women’s life and work conditions with the aim of finding the means to improve them. Thus, there were women’s associations that not only had the goal of improving poor women’s lives through various means but also based on the necessity of their efforts and included in their programme the research concerning women’s living and working conditions. Such an example is *Asociația Femeilor Române “Sprijinul”* [The Romanian Women’s Association “Support”] founded in Bucharest in 1900 by a group of women led by Ecaterina Arbore. This organization shows the kind of social consciousness and action-orientated attitude that some of the intellectual women in Romania had before the First World War. The activities of the Romanian Women’s Association “Sprijinul” between 1900 and 1913 were numerous and had a broad reach. The Association organized periodical popular conferences in primary schools from the peripheral neighbourhoods of Bucharest on such topics as hygiene, puericulture, children’s education, women’s juridical rights, natural sciences, etc., which included sometimes concerts and had a large public.³

Along these initiatives and many others targeting women’s education and work, studies on women’s living and working conditions were carried out. Such an example is Ecaterina Arbore’s *Industria și sănătatea lucrătoarelor* [The Industry and Working Women’s Health] published in 1907. In her study, Arbore predominantly investigates women employed in industry and shows their harsh working conditions, as well as the fact that their work was exploited to a greater extent than men’s work (Arbore 1907).

Two additional interrelated areas of overlap between the activities of women’s organizations and the Gustian reformist and interventionist endeavours are those of social work and “social service” although the latter was somewhat differently conceptualized by social and feminist activists. There are already studies that confirm the predominance of associations founded and coordinated by women in the areas of social work and social care (known, especially in the nineteenth century, in Romania and other European countries under the label of “philanthropic” or “benevolent associations”) during the last decades of the nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth.⁴ I will only mention the

and in the first of the twentieth include: Botez (1920: 25–84, 1923b: 218–224), Căncea (1976), Mihăilescu (2001, 2002: 198–227, 2004), Cosma-Țărău (2002), Ciupală (2003), Miroiu (2004), Băluță (2008, 2014).

3 See, for instance, Mihăilescu (2001, 2002).

4 For other European countries, especially western countries, see Bock (2002), Fuchs–Thompson (2005). For Romania, see *L’Assistance Sociale en Roumanie* (1938), Cheșchebec (2003: 35–44),

fact that according to the publication *Indicatorul instituțiilor de asistență socială publică și privată din România pe 1924* [The Register of the Institutions of Public and Private Social Work in Romania for 1924], out of the 629 social institutions registered, 50 belonged to the state, and the rest constituted private initiatives, most being coordinated by women (*Indicator al Instituțiilor de asistență publică și privată din România pe 1924* [Summary of Public and Private Relief Institutions in Romania for 1924] 1925: 6).

The interests, goals, and means of these women's associations coincided to a great extent with those of the Gustian organizations. There was even an institutional collaboration recognized and supported by the Romanian Social Institute, through its Feminine Studies Section, the Sociology Seminar from the University of Bucharest, and the Romanian Women's Christian Association in the establishment and organization of the educational activities of the School of Social Work "Princess Ileana".⁵ However, there were also other women's associations whose goals, strategies, and activities at the beginning of the 1920s were highly similar to the Gustian social initiatives of the mid-1930s. For instance, there are remarkable resemblances between the efforts of social work and social protection undertaken by *Asociația Cercurilor de Gospodine* [Association of Homemakers Groups] and the activities of a social intervention designed and partially accomplished by *Fundația Culturală Regală „Principele Carol”* [The Royal Cultural Foundation "Prince Carol"] through the voluntary student teams and the Social Service Law.

Asociația Cercurilor de Gospodine was founded in April 1920 by Valentina Focșa and represented, according to its originator, "a manifest proof of the way in which women understand to collaborate – in this period of turmoil – to the new organization of our people" and "a tool that aims at the rising of our villages and slums through the permeation of a better existence". The Association's main ideas about the means to "raise" the life of the "people of the lower classes" will be found, albeit in a much more elaborate and systematized way, in the Gustian social intervention project (Focșa 1921–1922, reprinted in Mihăilescu 2004: 126). The practical-demonstrative activities, the integrative approach to village social life, as well as the idea of a "model household" can also be found in the social intervention projects elaborated by Gusti almost two decades later. Furthermore, *Asociația Cercurilor de Gospodine* concerned itself with promoting domestic industry through the creation of cooperatives, with proposals to syndicate production and selling, with trade exhibits, etc. A decade and a half later, the Gustian student teams would engage in the same type of pursuits.

Diaconu (2002: 11–37).

5 The Superior School of Social Work "Princess Ileana" was established in the fall of 1929, and it showed the Gustian School's institutionalization of social research, education, and intervention in the urban area (Costa-Foru Andreescu 1980: 338–346).

As a result of the positive outcomes of the social work and social relief activities undertaken by many women's associations during more than half a century, by the mid-1930s there appeared several proposals for the introduction of mandatory social service for women, modelled on the military service for men. One example is the 1934 project for organizing social work in Constanța, devised by the President of the Constanța branch of *Asociația pentru Emanciparea Civilă și Politică a Femeii Române* [The Association for the Civil and Political Emancipation of the Romanian Woman], Maria Dimitriu-Castano. She proposed a bill that would mandate the satisfactory completion of one year of social service (including courses in household economics and puericulture) by the wife, along with a certificate attesting the honourable discharge from the military by the future husband, prior to marriage (*Ziarul Nostru* 1934 and 1935 – quoted in Diaconu 2002: 20). Many other women's and feminist organizations made similar proposals, recommending laws equivalating the mandatory social service for women with military service for men.

Certainly, through these efforts to introduce a compulsory social service for women, women's emancipation movements endeavoured to construct and legitimize – based on women's contributions to society in the areas already recognized and in agreement with the gender roles prescribed by the ideological national-patriarchal discourse of the time – women's participation in the consolidation of the national state and thus in their equal political rights. Regardless of the specific goals pursued by women's and feminist organizations in their proposals, it is obvious that the idea of social service, even if somewhat different than the one promoted by Gusti at the end of the same decade, existed for at least five years in advance and was even exclusively targeting women. Consequently, the mandatory stipulation for women provided by the Social Service Law of October 1938 should not be interpreted as an absolute novelty (*Legea pentru înființarea Serviciului Social* – reprinted in Gusti 1939: 263).

Gendering “Collaborative Work”

At the first two field campaigns of the Bucharest Sociological School (the one in Goicea Mare in 1925 and the one from Rușețu in 1926), no women participated. However, starting with the third sociological campaign (taking place in Nerej in 1937), the presence of women monographers became constant and substantial. The third campaign was carried out in Vrancea County, and nine women students and one woman researcher took part in it out of a total of 41 participants, i.e. a quarter of the total number of monographers (Stahl 1936: 1146).

The next year, the monographic research took place in the village of Fundu Moldovei (Bukovina). The team comprised 60 persons, 17 being women. It

is important to emphasize that a team was formed during that campaign that investigated “the woman problem” and that other teams researched the household, domestic industry, and the family. According to the sources I identified, besides feminist or women’s organizations, this is the first attempt to explore women’s lives with an assumed, stated purpose and with scientific methods. The other topics, although partially within the private sphere, had certainly been investigated before. This time, however, the research was undertaken by a multidisciplinary team, in the context of a structured, collective effort and with scientific theories, instruments, and methods. Moreover, women participated in these campaigns, and at least one of them coordinated the work of a team.

Over 80 persons took part in the fifth monographic campaign at Drăguș (1929, Făgăraș). At least 17 students and researchers were women. The next two campaigns unfolded at Runcu (Gorj County) in 1930 and at Cornova (Orhei, Bessarabia) in 1931. Runcu gathered over 60 monographers, out of which 20 were women students and researchers, while Cornova assembled 55 persons, including 14 women (Stahl 1936: 1149–1158).

At the level of the organizational practices of the research group, I argue that the teams comprised exclusively of male researchers met with difficulties in investigating some of the phenomena, situations, and institutions of village life and realized that these could be more easily and efficiently approached by women researchers. Moreover, these areas of social life, although integrated into the conceptual system developed by Dimitrie Gusti, are likely to have appeared as less important and thus less attractive for male researchers, who chose topics that were considered “serious” and that benefited from scientific legitimacy. Henri H. Stahl, without explicitly acknowledging the difficulties encountered by male researchers in gathering data on certain aspects of rural social life, unequivocally articulates the general perceptions about gender differences in establishing research topics: “[Xenia Costaforu] was a sociology graduate. [...]. She didn’t have a [research] issue of her own; she just came to see what it was all about. I think I infected her with the idea of the family because there was no one dealing with this issue. In my opinion, this is an issue very well suited to a woman sociologist, much better than to a male sociologist. And I told her: do this topic. You will study the family” (interview with Henri H. Stahl in Rostás 2000: 245–246).⁶

Besides “guiding” women students towards specific research areas – either more difficult to investigate by men or uninteresting to them –, Henri H. Stahl identifies another type of functional necessity apparent in collective fieldwork and in which the gender component played an important part. According to the Gustian theoretical and methodological system, the social life of the village had to be documented in the totality of its manifestations and functioning. Consequently, a large volume of work was needed to gather the vast amount of data necessary for

6 Translated by the author.

the monographs. Considering, on the one hand, the gender perceptions according to which women were more suited for a detailed and repetitive but less creative activity and, on the other hand, the gender expectations and roles that defined women as less competitive and their professional aspirations and opportunities as different and inferior in comparison to men's, I argue for the utilization of women's work in the service of advancing the research goals and the careers of some of the male monographers. This gendered component of “collaborative work” was candidly expressed by Stahl in several instances during Rostás's oral exploration of the activities of the School.

There were many [women in the sociological monographic campaigns]. We worked well with them. I systematically worked with girls. I got along with them very well. None of them was brilliant, but *they were very useful in the field*. They did the job as it was supposed to be done. [...] And at some point during the campaigns, we even utilized undergraduate students from the School of Social Work. [...] And this group of girls had a significant experience in doing sociological investigations. We also used them, we used them in the Cornova campaign. Sabin Manuilă used them too in his campaigns in Fibiș. [...] They were good field investigators. But in matters of sociology, undoubtedly, they did not have a vision, a conceptual framework, nor a research question of their own. *Only executants*. One would tell them: do this, do that, and they did it. [...] First, one could work in multiple teams only in this manner, for there were lots of situations when one could not be present as an observer everywhere – things happen in various places, with various individuals, and then, when there are more investigators, you follow that one, you the other, you another one... Then you gather everything that has been collected. One needs this kind of *second-hand character*. (interview with Henri H. Stahl in Rostás 2000: 86–87; my emphasis)⁷

Marcela Focșa, a participant in the monographic research starting with the campaign from Fundu Moldovei in 1928, also notices the aspect of this type of “assistance” work for the benefit of the (male) others: “Zizi [Elisabeta Constante] at Fundu Moldovei did what I also did. They told us to do statistics, we did statistics; they told us to do family questionnaires, we did family questionnaires. That's what we did at Fundu Moldovei. What they required us to do, we did” (interview with Marcela Focșa in Rostás 2003: 128).⁸ Lena Constante recounts that she knew Mac Constantinescu from the School of Arts and that he was the one who “co-opted me in his team to make copies and to gather data” (interview with Lena Constante in Rostás 2003: 81). There existed, therefore, a gender

7 Translated by the author.

8 Translated by the author.

hierarchy well set in place with respect to the distribution of work, in which the “employment” of women and women students’ “utilization” in research “only as executants” is strikingly evident, and their position as “second-hand characters” did not constitute an unarticulated subtext, but, to the contrary, it was a manifestly affirmed and common practice.

One could easily presume the effects of this kind of group relationships and gender expectations which, combined with the virtual absence of women models in scientific research, contributed to women students’ acceptance of the inferior place assigned to them and, in many instances, their abandoning of a scientific career. Hence, the collective work and the collaboration between the monographers, idealized in the interwar texts and debates, as well as in subsequent exegeses, can be contested from a gender perspective, as I will further argue.

Contributions and (Non-)recognition

Women’s work and contributions to the scholarly output of the Bucharest Sociological School can never be determined with certainty. To some extent, this is understandable given the specific characteristics of group work, and this is particularly applicable in the case of a large research collective. Nevertheless, one cannot ignore the overwhelming predominance of volumes and articles bearing male signatures. Likewise, it is well-nigh impossible to overlook the scholarly, administrative, and political careers and positions that many male monographers benefited from – at least until 1948. By the same token, the recovery and valorization of men’s contributions to social research occurred to a much greater extent than those of women after the rehabilitation of sociology as an ideologically acceptable academic subject during the mid-1960s. Therefore, viewed through the lens of gender studies and women’s history (especially the theories and findings in the history and sociology of sciences), I consider the interrogation of the bases, mechanisms, and strategies that produced women’s virtual exclusion from the record of social scientific achievements to be imperative.

Below, I discuss the contributions of women researchers recognized through publication. I also explore some of the mechanisms and strategies that led to their marginalization and even displacement from positions that could have amounted to competition with their male research colleagues. I include these phenomena in the broader framework of disciplinary and institutional scientific dynamics. In order to investigate these aspects, I offer possible answers to questions such as: How did women’s participation contribute to and affect the activities of the Gustian organizations? What were the sociological research and social intervention areas that women researchers and “cultural activists” approached? What disciplinary and institutional mechanisms, as well as personal strategies produced both

the inclusion and, later, the exclusion of women and the restriction of certain professional areas defined as “appropriate” for women? How were women’s lives and professional and personal trajectories affected by their involvement in the activities of the Gustian organizations?

There is a vast literature that tackles the gender dynamics of science. Studies in the history of sciences and the history of disciplines and, generally, the public discourse until the 1970s were virtually blind to gender and certainly did not critically interrogate the quasi-absence of women from sciences, arts, and literature. During the second wave of global feminism, a burgeoning number of historical, socio-historical, sociological, and philosophical explorations from women’s and feminist standpoints rediscovered and reclaimed women’s participation in and contributions to various scholarly domains. These studies put forth hypotheses, theories, and explanatory models for the phenomena of exclusion, erasure, and exploitation of women’s work and contributions (Rossiter 1980: 381–398, 1982; Fitzpatrick 1990; Frank Fox 2006: 441–457).

At the beginning of the 1980s, numerous studies were published, demonstrating how gender influences participation, position, and recognition in science. Women have participated in the production of knowledge in various sciences, but they have most often been placed in inferior positions, in disciplinary and institutional areas that benefited from low prestige. Hence, their gratification and scientific recognition were not only radically lower than those of men scientists, but their work was often misappropriated and their contributions assumed by men (Sicherman–Green 1980, Alic 1986, Bailey Ogilvie 1986).

Of special interest for my study is a phenomenon uncovered in many studies concerning various scientific and literary domains, which consists in the non-recognition, elimination, and even appropriation of women’s work and contributions by men. Margaret Rossiter investigated this phenomenon in diverse scientific domains and designated it – on the model of the “Matthew Effect” noted by Robert K. Merton (Merton 1968: 56–63) – the “Matilda Effect”, following one of the first historians of women’s movements, Matilda Joslyn Gage.

For everyone who has will be given more, and he will have an abundance.
Whoever does not have, even what *she* has will be taken from *her* (Matthew 25:29; gendered version).

Rossiter argues that the “Matthew effect” refers first and foremost to the first verse of the biblical quote, which postulated the enrichment of those already rich, and fails to notice the second verse – the one which posits the further impoverishment of the already poor. The historian locates the gendered functioning of the mechanisms of scientific recognition, recompense, and valorization precisely in this second part. Rossiter condemns the non-recognition,

indeed the very erasure from the public records and, therefore, the collective memory of women's contributions to scientific knowledge production (Rossiter 1993: 325–341). For Rossiter, it is vital to unmask the fact that within the social structures that influence the distribution of public recognition and scientific authority, gender works as the fundamental determinant of this asymmetry.

The historian illustrates the profoundly unequal distribution of recognition and rewards with various examples drawn both from historical records and scientific fields. The mechanisms and strategies whereby women are excluded from and/or circumscribed to certain occupations within the scientific field are rooted in institutional and disciplinary dynamics, as well as in the distribution of resources and the localization of social, economic, and political interests. From the perspective of my subject, these phenomena and the theories on the involvement of women in sociological and social change activities are not unique to Romania. Rather, they fit into a larger complex of global social, economic, and historical processes, especially associated with industrialization and urbanization, social change and reform activities, as well as nation-building projects.

My exploration of women's work and contributions and of their consequences for social sciences, reforms, and interventions on the one hand and for the professional trajectories of the women involved on the other starts from the premise of a combination of disciplinary and institutional mechanisms, social and political necessities, and personal strategies. I presented the arguments of the previous section that support the hypothesis of women students' co-option in the sociological monographs following the realization both of the existence of some aspects of rural social life that could more effectively be studied by women and the necessity of a larger number of persons who would gather data in the field, but who would not necessarily have professional aspirations of their own. Women students were both deprived of professional models that would encourage them to aspire to scientific recognition and confronted with a lack of support from the research group for their scholarly development. As such, women constituted the group deemed best suited for the role of research "assistants" and information "gatherers."

These tendencies, however, should not be understood as unidirectional. Women who participated in the research should not be understood exclusively as a manipulated, passive, and uniform group upon which the group of male researchers – well-structured and with a clear plan – imposed their will. Such an explanation would be simplistic and reductive. There were women researchers who refused the role of auxiliaries, which was appointed for them, and who attempted to tackle research topics that their male colleagues considered appealing career-wise. Moreover, there were women who endeavoured to build a scientific career of their own. I will thus show the extent to which they succeeded, what personal strategies women used in order to have their work promoted and recognized, and

how the institutional mechanisms, which substantially reduced their chances of professional acknowledgment and the possibility of obtaining prestigious professional positions, value validation, and scientific authority functioned.

The gender dynamics of the monographic group must be integrated in the larger context of conceptualizing women's and men's roles in social life, in the antecedents of women's involvement in science in general and in social research in particular – as shown above –, and in the definition of the social sciences and of women's place in the institutionalization of the discipline. Thus, the displacement of women from sociological research must be connected to the mechanisms of professionalization and institutionalization of the discipline.

Generally, the borders of scientific areas that are still developing and which do not yet benefit from academic recognition and legitimacy, much less from funding and career opportunities, are more permeable. In this ambiguous phase, women can penetrate and work beside men in fairly large numbers, although mostly as volunteers and generally in subordinate positions. Once the area has achieved institutional recognition as an autonomous discipline – a status that draws funds and professional opportunities, as well as a more rigorous but not necessarily objective selection –, women find it more difficult to enter these domains. Those women already in the field remain in subordinate positions, or a new sub-discipline is created, one that is considered “appropriate” for women. Accordingly, women are directed towards this sub-discipline, which is situated marginally both in terms of prestige and available economic resources. This is precisely what happened in the Bucharest Sociological School once the Superior School of Social Work “Princess Ileana” was established.

In order to support these hypotheses and to exemplify the mechanisms and strategies that produced both the participation and the exclusion or the ghettoization of women within the School, I will further develop a few aspects of collective work undertaken by the research group by succinctly presenting women researchers' publications in the School's journals (for a complete list of women's articles in these journals, see Văcărescu 2018) and in separate volumes and by offering an illustration of the professional and personal trajectories of women participants in Gustian sociological research.

Strategies of Exclusion and Misappropriation of Women's Work

In this study, I am interested in women students' participation in the Gustian activities, for they reached the highest number, and their lives and careers were affected most by the involvement in sociological practice. The greatest part of these students was enrolled in the Faculty of Philosophy and Letters and

in the newly established School for Social Work. Most attended the meetings of the Sociology Seminar and participated in ever-increasing numbers in the sociological monographic campaigns between 1927 and 1935.

These young women were in the formative phase of their scientific specialization. Consequently, their involvement in field research – especially for those who worked for several years in the campaigns – represented a critical juncture in their educational and professional trajectories. Even if it is probable that many of them did not have scientific aspirations, the studies, interviews, and documents I used reveal beyond doubt that some women students had both scientific aspirations and the theoretical as well as methodological training that would have enabled them to fulfil them. However, these aspirations were only fulfilled in very few cases and only partially. Thus, Xenia Costa-Foru, Ștefania Cristescu, Elisabeta Constante, Lena Constante, Marcela Focșa, Paula Gusty, Natalia Raisky, Domnica Păun, Dochia Ioanovici, Maria Negreanu, and Maria Dărmănescu are only a few of the women who entered the Bucharest Sociological School as students, worked in several monographic campaigns, and published studies but did not benefit from the same career opportunities and recognition as their male colleagues. Some of these women's professional courses and the mechanisms and strategies of exclusion and/or misappropriation of their work by their male collaborators will be discussed below.

Some women researchers who entered as students in the monographic campaigns were later employed at the Superior School of Social Work “Princess Ileana”. One of them was Xenia Costa-Foru (1902–1983), who achieved the highest professional position and academic prestige available to women in the Gustian School, for she became the director of the School of Social Work in 1935 (see Manuilă 1938: 14). Xenia Costa-Foru is the woman researcher who benefited from the highest degree of visibility and recognition within the School. Her main research area was the family, on which she published two studies in the School's journals, many more in the journal *Asistența socială* [Social Work] and other publications. She also authored a volume on the sociology of the family, the topic that constituted her Ph.D. dissertation under the supervision of Dimitrie Gusti (see the articles published by Costa-Foru–Stahl 1932: 447–462, Costa-Foru 1936: 112–118, and the volume Costa-Foru 1945). Costa-Foru participated in the monographic campaigns started at Nerej in 1927, where she had already begun her work on the family, women's lives and work, child-rearing, etc. Within the research group that shared the same topics, there were other women students too, but Costa-Foru emerged quite fast as the leader of the group, a fact that was admitted and mentioned several times, at least since the campaign in Fundu Moldovei (1929), by Henri H. Stahl, one of Gusti's closest collaborators and the leader of some of the monographic campaigns:

Who were actually these “elders” who assumed the guilt of the decision-making? Ever since Fundu Moldovei, there started a grouping of the campaigns’ “veterans” who worked harder and had more experience and will. According to a thought that became almost an obsession for me, I suggested (jokingly, of course) that not only the communal villages could “run on elders, but that it was appropriate that the monographers did the same. At the end of long discussions, we agreed, playfully, to organize ourselves under the leadership of “four elders”: Vulcănescu, D. C. Georgescu, Xenia Costa-Foru, and the undersigned. [...] Each had in their turn a group of “descendants”, “sons”, and “nephews”, according to their entrance in the monographic work. Thus, everything could have been represented graphically in the form of “hereditary lines”, the four “elders” considering themselves “brothers”. (Stahl 1981: 132)⁹

Similarly, further on, Henri H. Stahl insists on the important role played by Xenia Costa-Foru not only in research work but also in the organization and coordination of an entire subject matter in village life – that of the family and, in general, everything that represented rural social life from women’s perspective: “As powerful ‘personalities’ could be considered some of the other monographers, such as Xenia Costa-Foru, around whom gravitated all those not only interested in the topic of the ‘family’ but also in the entire life of the village conceived from women’s point of view” (Stahl 1981: 143). There are two relevant aspects within this informal organization of the work groups in the context of the broader field research campaigns.

The first aspect is related to the private character of these “hierarchical” acknowledgments within the framework of the monographic campaigns. Stahl does not talk about Xenia Costa-Foru’s importance, whom he considers equal to the other three prominent members of the Gustian School – Mircea Vulcănescu, D. C. Georgescu, and himself –, other than in publications with a private character such as memoirs and oral history interviews. Although he mentions the organization of “hierarchical ties established between all monographers on the model of a free peasantry ‘lead by four elders’” (Stahl 1936: 1164) in the scholarly overview article of the sociological monographic campaigns, published in the journal *Arhiva pentru știința și reforma socială* [Archives for Social Research and Reform], Stahl does not specify which these “hierarchical” relationships are, nor does he mention the names of the four “elders”.

The second aspect is that of the discursive conveyance in a ludic register of Xenia Costa-Foru’s recognition of her importance and her contributions to research and fieldwork organization. Stahl insists on the playful dimension, even if he himself has realized the “reality” of both the usefulness of the research system and

9 Translated by the author.

the important contribution of the four coordinators: “It was, of course, an amusing game but also a system of work organization [which might be characterized as one of ‘school’], [which is] put together by each of the ‘elders’ with their apprentices” (Stahl 1981: 132). If in the cases of the other “elders” the recognition of their importance within the economy of monographic research and, more broadly, of sociological knowledge production happened in various ways within the academic sphere, as well as in the context of rendering visible and even using scientific “propaganda” for the monographic research system, it is obvious that the other three members did not necessarily need Stahl’s supplementary emphasis. However, in Costa-Foru’s case, who did not benefit from the same appreciation of her scholarly and organizational achievements, Stahl’s omission and playful, private mentioning could be read as a means of diminishing her role. This limitation of visibility, recognition, and even appropriation of Xenia Costa-Foru’s results by other members of the research campaigns are supported by other elusions of her work.

As mentioned earlier, Henri H. Stahl asserted in several places that he was the one who guided Costa-Foru towards the family as a research topic for there was nobody to deal with it and especially because “it fits very well a woman sociologist, better than a man sociologist” (interview with Henri H. Stahl in Rostás 2000: 245–246). However, women’s putative suitability for such topics did not hinder Alexandru Claudian, who in 1929 delivered a talk at the Romanian Social Institute, titled *The Issue of the Social and of the Family in the Monographic Research* (see the result with public visibility from the campaign at Fundu Moldovei in Stahl 1936: 1150–1151). This happened despite the fact that it was Xenia Costa-Foru who studied the family and coordinated the research group working on this topic both in the campaigns from Nerej and Fundu Moldovei, while Alexandru Claudian had only participated in Fundu Moldovei, and he was not specialized in the sociology of the family. Moreover, not even Stahl himself was held back by the “more fitting a woman sociologist” character of the topic, so he co-signed an article on the family from Nerej (Costa-Foru–Stahl 1932: 447–462).

All these seeming “details” of the dynamics of scientific work and the distribution of visibility and rewards form, in fact, a gendered image of the Bucharest Sociological School, that is, of the inequalities between men and women in their opportunities, scientific recognition, and professional careers. Therefore, we are, on the one hand, encountering the footprints of the recognition of women’s work and achievements during the research campaigns – thus, contemporary with their activities – and, from “private” sources, Costa-Foru’s certification as a “strong personality” and her placement on the same level of importance and authority with Mircea Vulcănescu, D. C. Georgescu, and Henri H. Stahl. On the other hand, one cannot overlook her erasure from the “canon” or, at most, her placement in a marginal position in histories of sociology, authored by such scholars as Traian Herseni, Ovidiu Bădina, and Marin Diaconu. For them,

the most important contributors to the Gustian School are exclusively male. This elimination of some of the women researchers’ contributions from the history of the discipline, such as Xenia Costa-Foru’s, can be framed in and can also support the existence of the phenomenon identified by the American historian Margaret Rossiter under the designation “the Matilda effect”.

The second case I want to discuss constitutes perhaps the most unjust rejection that a woman researcher was confronted with in her repeated endeavours to work alongside her male colleagues in the final phase of writing up the results of the sociological field research which she collected and in which she was specialized. Ștefania Cristescu (1908–1978) published studies, articles, and reviews in *Arhiva pentru știința și reforma socială* and in *Sociologie românească* (see the articles: Cristescu 1932: 371–380, 1936b: 11–18, 1936c: 36–38, 1936d: 36–39, 1936e: 28–33, 1938: 383–388; Cristescu 1936a: 119–137), as well as a volume on women’s beliefs about the household and magic rituals from Drăguș (Cristescu-Golopenția 1940). From among the women participants in the monographic campaigns, she was the researcher who published most in the School’s journals. Cristescu graduated with two BA degrees in philosophy and modern philology in 1930. She then pursued her doctoral studies at the University of Bucharest from 1930 to 1936. Between 1932 and 1934, she was awarded a scholarship to Paris, where she studied linguistics, ethnography, and sociology (see the letters addressed by Ștefania Cristescu to Anton Golopenția between 27 November 1932 and 21 July 1934 in Golopenția 2010: 76–266).

Cristescu was one of the most active participants in the monographic campaigns, attending all of them, starting with Drăguș (1929). Her primary research interest was magical practices, predominantly those performed by women. Most of her publications describe and analyse these practices from a complex perspective that combines theoretical and methodological elements from sociology, ethnology, and linguistics.

Apparently, at least, Ștefania Cristescu had her merits and qualities as a recognized researcher; this is evident from several comments made by her male colleagues interviewed by Zoltán Rostás. For instance, Henri H. Stahl considered her “very skilled in her profession”, “a very conscientious and hardworking folklorist”. He likewise noticed that “she worked well and published very interesting things”. At the same time, however, these qualities having to do with skill, attention to detail, and hard work were supplemented by another gendered dimension: the quality of being “docile:” “she was a compliant girl” (interview with Henri H. Stahl in Rostás 2000: 303). This specific combination of attributes fits the traditional gender norms and roles, thereby showing the model accepted and valued by society and by the scientific community.

Despite being recognized for her work, Cristescu’s scientific career alternated between periods when she was included in the privileged group and numerous

times when a group of researchers who sought professional advancement attempted to exclude her from the very research topics she worked on, as well as from the process of collating and writing up the research material. The documents available regarding Ștefania Cristescu enable a detailed documentation of the mechanisms and strategies whereby women were excluded and their work misappropriated. As such, they would deserve a separate study. However, here I illustrate by means of a few excerpts from letters between Cristescu and Anton Golopenția (her colleague and, later, husband) one attempt to keep her out of the group that worked on the topic of spirituality, as well as her perception of this phenomenon.

In the letter of 19 August 1939, addressed to Golopenția, sent from the writing campaign unfolding in Făgăraș, Cristescu recounts at length the conflict within the group that wanted to take over the writing of the topic on spirituality, a topic on which she had been working for a long time and for which she had gathered a great deal of material. Now her male colleagues wanted to use Cristescu's material for their own texts.

I elaborated my work last year based on the last plan concerning the "Spiritual" area, which was proposed at Cornova by I. Ionică. Consequently, I worked in such a manner so as not to trespass at all in the field of customs with a primarily religious connotation that Bernea worked on. But [Bernea] wants to work this year only with Ionică and Iosif. Ionică would write the magical-religious representations, while Bernea the magical-religious practices. Therefore, half of the file I assembled would pass to one and the other half to the other. Bernea arrived here this morning and took – most likely – the list of my informants, and he went on the field where he gathered again my material. That's what he says, at least, because he wouldn't show me the material. (Golopenția 2010: 176)¹⁰

Cristescu explains to Golopenția the unfairness of the situation she finds herself in, which she characterizes as "unjust to me", for she had worked on the initial plan, according to which she was supposed to collaborate with the others and to write the part related to "magical representations and practices". Her reactions are contradictory, a fact that she is aware of. Initially, she wanted to leave the writing campaign altogether, but both the unfairness of her exclusion and the use by her colleagues of the material she collected – to say nothing of the importance she ascribed to monographic research – convinced her to stay. She writes that she would have accepted an option that enabled her to collaborate in the writing, but "Bernea flatly refused any collaboration, saying that writing is done much better alone (although there are three or at least two), saying that it was his first serious scientific work".

10 Translated by the author.

In this manner, Ștefania Cristescu makes manifest the professional ambitions of her male colleague and, further on, notes her colleague's opportunism in his attempt to oust her so that he would profit from an attractive topic: “Bernea deems this topic one of the most beautiful to write about and that he must be the one to do it. He screamed at me that I should work on folklore or linguistics.” She takes this second option into account, but she does not believe she can manage to gather new material for a new topic: “To start from the beginning, alone and angry as I am, another fieldwork – I cannot. For me, the process of collecting material is a much more serious endeavour than a write-up” (Golopenția 2010: 176–177).

Cristescu thinks about writing her own text, even if it would duplicate the one of her colleagues, but she fears that this would be useless: “It seems to me that I would write for nothing, and the monograph will publish what Bernea and Ionică already worked on.” She concludes that she is “in a terrible bind” and that, “deprived, as I am, in this monograph, of a problem of my own on which I worked and that interests me, all I have left to do is to write the same topic using the Cornova material so that the Drăguș material should not be at risk of being written twice” (Golopenția 2010: 176–179). This example – one of many found in the rich correspondence between Ștefania Cristescu and Anton Golopenția edited by Sanda Golopenția – supports the thesis of ousting women researchers and using their monographic work by some of their colleagues.

Ștefania Cristescu did not, however, give up on her scientific aspirations – at least not permanently. In 1935, demoralized by the conflict-ridden atmosphere caused by the professional ambitions of some of the monographers, she obtained her teaching certificate in order to take up a position in secondary education. At the same time, she worked on several articles and acted as the librarian for the Seminar of Sociology, Ethics, and Politics at the University of Bucharest. She did this to support herself financially while in Bucharest. Nevertheless, in 1936, she accepted a teaching position at a high school in Caransebeș, where she remained for two years, until she was recalled for collaborating on the publication of a series of studies in preparation for the 14th International Congress of Sociology. The Congress was scheduled to take place in the fall of 1939 in Bucharest, but it was cancelled. Since the autumn of 1938, she worked for the Royal Cultural Foundation “Prince Carol”. In the spring of 1939, she became Chief of Research for Spiritual Manifestations within the Research Directorate at the Romanian Institute for Social Research.

Ștefania Cristescu's professional and scientific trajectory illustrates the mechanisms of removing competing women researchers and the strategies employed in exploiting their work towards the career advancement of their male counterparts. At the same time, it also shows some of the women researchers' active and repeated endeavours and scientific aspirations to conduct their work, to be included in the writing groups, and to have their research achievements recognized and valued.

Conclusions

The societal project, which Dimitrie Gusti adhered to and supported, comprised a flexible constellation of gender ideas and arrangements during its three decades of activity. The various organizations founded and/or coordinated by Gusti included women's participation from the beginning. Women students' and researchers' involvement in the sociological monographic campaigns, the establishment of a Feminine Section within the Romanian Social Institute, women students' participation at the voluntary student teams, and the mandatory character of women's social and cultural work under the Social Service Law show the existence of a set of activities that could be accomplished by women or even should be performed specifically by them. At first sight, we could believe we are facing a complete gender opening, a phenomenon unprecedented in the history of the provinces inhabited by Romanians and maybe even in the European and North American history of sciences.

An investigation of the social, cultural, and economic contexts at the end of the nineteenth century and during the first decades of the last century, especially when looking at an area that is not, however, included in the Romanian mainstream historiographical discourse, reveals information that contributes to the de-exceptionalization of the Gustian efforts from a gender perspective. Furthermore, such an inquiry shows that some aspects of the Gustian research endeavours, social reform, and intervention activities – planned and partially implemented – had been done before, particularly beginning in the first decade of the twentieth century, by women's and feminist organizations. It is possible that Gusti not only knew about the goals, the means to achieve them, and the activities undertaken by these organizations, but he might have considered some of them useful and included them in his project of social reform based on sociological research with multidisciplinary methods.

Thus, women's involvement in sociological monographs from 1927 onward becomes explainable through the existence of previous social research undertaken by women, particularly focusing on aspects such as the family, the household, women's lives and work, child-rearing, domestic industry, etc. Another hypothesis that cannot be discounted is the one of realizing the difficulties and the ineffectiveness of male researchers trying to collect information on some topics of social life, as well as the necessity of a large number of social investigators who would gather data according to the Gustian theoretical and methodological system but who would not necessarily have scientific aspirations in their own name. However, at the same time and just as importantly, the social and economic motivations, as well as women students' and researchers' personal and scholarly aspirations, constitute arguments for a reading of their involvement

in the sociological monographs as active agents in modelling their professional lives, as well as the research they carried out.

Historical and sociological studies on women’s participation in science in general and in social sciences in particular, as well as in reformist activities, in various historical periods and geo-political contexts bring new perspectives on and explanatory models of the apparently paradoxical phenomenon of inclusion and exclusion of women from the production of sociological knowledge and, later, the elimination of their contributions from the history of the discipline. It can, therefore, be identified a combination of institutional and disciplinary mechanisms, economic and political interests, functional and social necessities, and personal strategies that first produced women’s co-option in the production of knowledge and the recognition of their work only partially and mostly in “informal” contexts. At the same time, there is also evidence for the elimination of women or the diminishing of the value of their contributions in institutional and public contexts. At the same time, another phenomenon appeared: the relegation of most of the women in disciplinary and professional areas deemed “feminine” and considered “appropriate for women” such as social work. Of course, these areas benefited from less prestige and thus less funding and visibility.

The study of some topics of social life, such as the family, the household, women’s lives and work, by the women researchers who participated at the interwar sociological monographs did not constitute a novelty. The novelty of the Bucharest Sociological School consists in both the fact that women studying these topics were included in recognized research structures, and the very inclusion of these aspects within a theoretical and methodological system, thus legitimizing them as topics worthy of scientific research attention and interest.

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