

University “Alexandru Ioan Cuza” Iași

Domain: Sociology

Habilitation Thesis

The multidimensional research of social space

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I graduated from the Faculty of Philosophy, majoring in Sociology and Political Science, profile socio-psycho-pedagogy in 1995. The bachelor's thesis was called "Mathematical Models in social research". After completing my studies, I competed for a position as a lecturer at the Department of Sociology and Social Work, which I obtained in 1996. Between 1998 and 2001, I held the position of university preparator, at the same time a doctoral student in Sociology under the supervision of Mr. Professor Vasile Miftode (currently retired). Between 1998 and 2003, I wrote my doctoral thesis with the title "Social dimensions of decision-making processes", a work that was to a great extent a path-breaker in the Romanian sociology of those years and which benefited from the involvement in the specialized commissions of an important sociologist, academician Catalin Zamfir. Between 2000 and 2001, I followed a one-year master's degree, after which I obtained "Diploma of advanced studies in Sociology and human resources". The academic evolution continued with the position of university lecturer (between 2001-2007) and assistant professor (between the years 2007-2016), after which from 2016 until today I held the position of university professor. Throughout my university career, I have taught the following courses and seminars: Theories of Communication and Information (ICT), Social Statistics, Data Computer Analysis, Demography, Contemporary Sociological Theories, Urban Sociology, Sociometry and Social Networks. Throughout my career I have been involved in numerous national or international research projects from which I

remember: "Specific forms of intervention and protection of disadvantaged families" (1998 – 2001), "Specific intervention strategies in disadvantaged areas" (2000-2001), "Latent resources, functions and social dysfunctions in the protection of disadvantaged populations" (2003-2005), Expertise Center for the Sustainable Exploitation of Ecosystems (CEXDUREC)" (2004-2008), „EUDIMENSION (Local dimension of a wider European neighbourhood: Developing Political Community through Practices and Discourses of Cross-Border co-operation” (2006-2009), Technical assistance for an independent evaluation of the decentralized grant scheme to develop community based social services which was implemented under the social sector development project” (2007-2008), "Equality in employment and the workplace - information and awareness campaign in order to change social attitudes and stereotypes in employment and the workplace" (2009-2011), "Graduates and the labour market. National study to monitor the insertion on the labour market of graduates from higher education" (2009-2012), "FEMINTEGRA Professional, social and personal integration of disadvantaged women through insertion on the labour market" (2014-2015), „Socio-graphic mapping of the Roma Communities in Romania for a community-level monitoring of changes concerning Roma integration" (2015), ELITAF (Etudiants et élites africaines formés dans les pays de l'ex-bloc soviétique) [2012-2016], European EC2U (European Campus of City-Universities) [2021-2024].

Between 2012-2013 I was a postdoctoral fellow in the project POSDRU/89/1.5/S/56815 "Knowledge-Based Society - research, debates, perspectives", Romanian Academy Iasi branch, with the theme regarding *Higher education graduates and the labour market*. The two last books published were *Demography and the Sociology of Populations*, Ed. UAIC, Iași, 2016 and *Informatics and data analysis*, Ed. UAIC, 2016. I was the author or co-author of several chapters of the vol. *Recent Trends in Social Systems: Quantitative and Qualitative Theories Models (Studies in Systems and Control Decision)* [A. Mauro, S. Hosková-Mayerová, D.-T. Soitu, J. Kacprzyk., Eds.], Springer, 2016 or the vol. *Étudier à l'Est. Experiences of diplômés africains* [Monique de Saint Martin, Grazia Scarfo Ghellab, Kamal Mellakh eds.], Ed. Karthala, France, 2015.

I entitled my current thesis "The multidimensional research of social space" to highlight on the one hand the various fields in which I have evolved in social research and on the other hand to make a plea for the obligation of the sociologist to be ultimately

prepared to approach social research from several points of view which are definitively complementary. Throughout my career, I have been adept at combining quantitative and qualitative research, adept at combining theory with the practice of social research, and adept at triangulation and opening new directions of sociological research. All this explains the structure of the thesis as well as the component chapters.

The first chapter entitled "Research Methods and Techniques" represents a brief description of my contributions to social research methodology. I explained that young sociologists need basic computer skills (for which I initiated the information technologies-ICT course), they need fundamental knowledge in social statistics (for this I developed a separate course), they need the use of specialized software in data analysis, for example, SPSS (and in this case, I wrote a printed introduction course in computerized data analysis). To these, I have added an introductory 'content analysis' manual as well as many other helpful materials in the didactic activity. In recent years, I was focused on 'sociometry and social networks as part of a master's degree in human resources, a field in which I propose to edit a new course as part of the career development project.

In the second chapter entitled "Analysis of religious behaviour" I detailed a series of field research carried out over the years, starting with the Neamț Monastery case study. The research took place during the period in which I was writing my doctoral thesis and constituted a challenge from the perspective of the sociology of decision: why do certain social actors prefer to withdraw from the society by choosing monasticism? This kind of research marked me deeply because sometimes the sociologist tries to understand the rationality of social actions (in the sense of R. Boudon) beyond social prejudices and false ideological frameworks. In this field, I continued to research the religious pilgrimage, the level of religiosity of the university students, and the manifestations of religious behaviour in the penitentiary and in a more recent article I analysed the issue of religious conversion to the Pentecostal cult in a Roma community. I want to emphasize that all these researches were done with and for the students, they were involved in every stage of the research starting from the research questions, proposed objectives, the hypotheses considered, continuing with the actual field work and ending with the construction of the databases and their statistical analysis to draw up research conclusions.

In the third chapter entitled "African Studies," I explained in detail the research experience spread over several years (2012-2016) after an invitation to be part of the ELITAF project (Etudiants et élites africaines formés dans les pays de l'ex-bloc soviétique) initiated by the Maison des sciences de l'Homme-MSH (Paris) and with many international partners. Following this collaboration, I got involved in the first stage of documenting the young Africans who studied in Romania until 1990 and for this purpose, I did a documentation internship at the Bucharest Security Archives (CNSAS). Then we published numerous articles, and chapters in volumes (from France or Romania), participated in various conferences in the country or abroad, communicated the results of our research within the AISLF World Congresses, etc. I continue my African studies today through new research opportunities and I hope to be able to communicate the current results at the future AISLF congress that will take place in Ottawa in 2024.

In the fourth chapter entitled "Graduates and the labour market" I presented the national and local research in which I was involved in a topic of utmost relevance. All over the world, such research is done as feedback that universities can receive from the market to improve their offer and to facilitate the integration of young people into future jobs. The research efforts ranged from various documentaries to visits to research centres already recognized all over the world (for example in Kassel, Germany). In my opinion, this kind of field research must be included in the development policies of any university.

The fifth chapter refers to the research on cultural consumption, a research theme that I have constantly approached in the last 20 years. Research on cultural consumption is all the more important in a prestigious university city (Iasi, Romania) just as it is part of a national research strategy (see the analyses and research on the cultural data website for example). The research has evolved from the analysis of cultural consumption and reading habits among students to the diagnosis of cultural consumption in the context of the candidacy of the city of Iasi in the competition for the European capital of culture.

Community research was the subject of the sixth chapter. These can strictly constitute the entire palette of social methods and theories. I have exemplified in this chapter a series of topics of interest that I have addressed over the years: urban security and violence, Research on community medical assistance, Research on the multi-ethnic community (the case of the M. Kogălniceanu commune, Constanta County), the research

of urban communities (for example Roma community from Murgeni, Vaslui county), the issue of evaluating community resources, research on the efficiency of local administration.

The last but one chapter refers to demographic research, in which I reviewed the articles published in the country or abroad and briefly presented the volume entitled *Demography and Sociology of populations. Theoretical and practical elements* (Netedu, Ed. UAIC, 2016).

The last chapter represents the career development plan. I explained the new contributions that I intend to materialize in each of the fields contained in the qualification thesis. Here are these contributions in brief according to the field of research: sociological methods and techniques (editing a volume on the technique used in the analysis of social networks), sociological theories (editing a new volume with this same title), African studies (continuing research and presenting results at the future AISLF international congress, Ottawa, 2024), graduates and the labour market (continuation of specific research with an emphasis on the mutations that appeared due to the pandemic), Research on cultural consumption (extension of some research on the FILIT Iasi festival), community research (starting some research on social assistance of refugees), demographic studies (re-editing of the volume on *Demography and sociology of populations* with the appearance of the results of the last census in Romania).

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