

PRE-UNIVERSITY EDUCATIONAL POLICIES IN INTERWAR ROMANIA

[**Politici educaționale preuniversitare în România interbelică**],

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BOOK REVIEW

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In this volume, the author **Alexandru Mitru**, history teacher at the Constantin Cantacuzino National Pedagogical College from Targoviste, General Assistant Inspector at the Dâmbovița County School Inspectorate and graduate of doctoral and postdoctoral studies at the Doctoral School of Economic and Human Sciences at Valahia University of Târgoviște, approaches from a dual perspective, descriptive and analytical, the educational policies that governed the Romanian pre-university education system, between the two world wars.

Thus, the author states in the introduction that the research was structured around "two important aspects: the ability and willingness of politicians to create an effective education system, that responds to the new needs of Romanian society, in the context of the union of December 1, 1918, and the consequences of government policy in the field of pre-university education, on the development and evolution of Romanian society, in the following two decades" (Mitru, 2024, p.17).

The work is organized into three chapters, each with several subchapters, plus a preface written by two renowned historians, recognized nationally and internationally (University Professors with Habilitatio Sergiu Musteață and Silviu Marian Miloiu), an introduction, conclusions, bibliographical references, and numerous appendices.

The first chapter of the work, entitled *The Romanian School after the War (1918-1922)*, approaches a number of issues such as: the merging of the education system in the geopolitical context created by the Union of December 1, 1918, attempts to reorganize pre-university education, and an analysis of the functions of the school from the perspective of representatives of various ideological currents of the time (europeanists, traditionalists, and peasants).

In the next chapter of the book, *Educational Policies and Legislation in the Interwar Period*, the author provides a valuable, detailed, and in-depth analysis of pre-

university educational policies, as reflected in the ideological and doctrinal positions of representatives of the main political parties and currents in interwar Romania (conservatives, liberals, peasants, etc.). In this context, various approaches and views of the main political, cultural, and educational figures on pre-university education policies are also presented. Among these, we mention: Ion Găvănescul, Onisifor Ghibu, Simion Mehedinți, George G. Antonescu, Iosif Gabrea, Ștefan Bârsănescu, Constantin Narly, Dimitrie Gusti, Petre Andrei, Constantin Rădulescu Motru, Ion C. Petrescu, Stanciu Stoian, Vladimir Ghidionescu, Florian Ștefănescu-Goangă, and others. The legislation on pre-university education, in the interwar period, is also analyzed, highlighting the divergent views of the representatives of the various political parties that succeeded each other in government, during that period.

The last chapter of the volume, entitled *Government Policies in the Field of Pre-university Education in the Interwar Period*, contains a chronological analysis of government activity, in the field of pre-university education, during the Brătianu government (1918-1928), the National Peasant Party (1928-1933), and the Liberal Party (1933-1938), as well as during the monarchist regime (1938-1940). In this context, the numerous initiatives to reform pre-university education, supported by those who headed the relevant ministry, are analyzed: Constantin Angelescu, Petre P. Negulescu, Nicolae Costăchescu, Nicolae Iorga, Dimitrie Gusti, Petre Andrei, and others.

The concluding part of the work highlights its praxiological value, confirmed by the author's statement: "by studying the pedagogical concerns of the interwar period, we aimed to pay tribute to those who worked hard in the field of education, but mainly to analyze the experience of pedagogical thinking and practice, which can be usefully exploited in current and future educational reform programs" (Mitru, 2024, p.368).

Considering all of the above, we emphasize once again the evident theoretical and practical value of this work, which we will certainly refer to as a fundamental resource in our teaching and research activities. We can say that the volume under review, based on valuable expertise and extensive documentation (over 230 bibliographic sources selected from Romanian scientific literature, to which are added numerous primary sources such as documents and written sources), is written in a clear and coherent manner, representing, in unequivocal terms, an important work for the field of educational sciences in general and the history of pedagogy, in particular.

In our opinion, the work entitled *Pre-university Educational Policies in Interwar Romania* is a useful and necessary tool, both in the context of initial training for a teaching career and in that of the continuous professional development of teachers.