

V. Honoured Personality

LAUDATIO

In the Honor of Professor Doctor Vasile Pușcaș, Babeș-Bolyai University, Celebrating a Prestigious Academic and Diplomatic Career

There are only few universities around the world who can be proud to have among their academics an outstanding personality, a visionary diplomat, a creative builder of a dynamic school in the field of international relations and European studies and a real patriot, who took the opportunity to change his country destiny for the benefits of its citizens. The *Alma Mater Napocensis* is proud to have among its prestigious academics a world tale professor and diplomat, Prof. Dr. Vasile Pușcaș, the Transylvanian who arrived to Washington to negotiate for his country the *Most Favored Nation Status*, who arrived from Cluj to Brussels to negotiate with the EU Romania's accession and whomown wis his "to *make history*, not just *speak* about it". Indeed, the Negotiator Vasile Pușcaș managed to enroll Romania on right contemporary trajectory, among other important global actors.



An elite European intellectual and a real believer in the role of the European Union project, Professor Vasile Pușcaș is the most known brand of Babeș-Bolyai University, especially in the field of international relations and European studies. He represents an inspirational model of professional and personal career to his students and colleagues.

His ability to give represents one of his main characteristics, which easily can be seen in his former students careers or in the transparency of the dissemination of the technical details of the negotiation process of Romania's accession to the EU. For the city of Cluj-Napoca, the Professor and Negotiator Vasile Pușcaș, is a sign of pride and a reference point of knowledge, credibility and trust.

The distinguished Professor was born on July 8th, 1952 in Surduc (Sălaj county). He graduated the Faculty of History and Philosophy, "Babes Bolyai University", Cluj-Napoca with a degree on History and Social Sciences. He obtained a Ph. D in History, with a thesis entitled "Organizarea și activitatea științifică a Universității din Cluj în perioada 1919-1940" (*The organization and the scientifically activity of University of Cluj, between 1919-1940*), being recognized in the field of contemporary history as one of the most modern approach of the history of the University of Cluj, largely appreciated nowadays among the students and scholars. The second edition of his Ph. D publication, "Universitatea – Societate-Modernizare" has the preface written by Professor Keith Hitchins (2003), who made the following remarks: "Here, then, is the first history of the University of Cluj to describe systematically its organization and functioning during the first twenty years of existence. Vasile Pușcaș has given us a case study of how a great university comes into being. His history of this complex process will become essential reading not only for Romanians, but also for all those elsewhere who are concerned about the role of the university in society. But he has done more; he has gone beyond the hard

evidence of the sources to capture the spirit of the University of Cluj, that vital force that lay behind its impressive growth and accomplishment in the interwar period. It is the spirit that endured throughout the difficult decades that followed the Second World War, and it is the spirit that guides university today”.

His main research fields are *International and European Negotiations, International Relations, Central and Eastern Europe in the XXth Century International Relations* and *International Business Relations and Conflict Management*.

He followed all the steps of academic career, becoming a full professor in the field of International Relations in 1995. From 2000, he is Ph D coordinator in International Relations and visiting professor of International University Institute of European Studies in Gorizia / Trieste (Italy).

His innovative academic vision is present in the BA, MA and Ph. D programs which he initiated, mainly in collaboration with prestigious universities and educational entities from abroad: **BA program - Faculty of Political Sciences**, Babes-Bolyai University, in collaboration with USAID Central European Academic Program, with BA issued in Political Sciences, Public Administration, Journalism and Communication (1995); **MA - International Peace Operations**, under Academic Consortium International University Institute for European Studies Triste-Gorizia (2000); **MA - Cooperation project Making and European Policies**, under Academic Consortium International University Institute for European Studies Triste-Gorizia (2000); **MA - Communication and Methods for European Policy Making**, under Academic Consortium International University Institute for European Studies Triste-Gorizia (2005); **MA - Cultural Diplomacy and the Global Economy**, in collaboration with Institute for Cultural Diplomacy Berlin (2012); **MA - International Relations and Cultural Diplomacy**, in collaboration with Institute for Cultural Diplomacy Berlin (2012); **PhD program - Transborder Policies for Daily Life** under program Academic Consortium International University Institute for European Studies Triste-Gorizia (2000); **PhD program - Cultural Diplomacy** (2012); a **Research institute - Institute for International Studies**, Babes-Bolyai University, Faculty of History and Philosophy (1999) and the **Center for International and European Negotiations and Mediation** at Babeş-Bolyai University (2012).

From 2011, his excellency in teaching European studies disciplines was recognised by the European Commission, thus he was awarded the title of Professor Jean Monnet *Ad Personam*, within a European project - *European Politics and Negotiation in the European Union* - which he is coordinating. The European Commission recognised his expertise, appointing him as the trainer for the accession negotiation teams of the Western Balkans countries. He is actively involved in the Regional Environmental Network for Accession (RENA), a project which is aiming to enhance regional cooperation in the Western Balkans and Turkey in the field of environment in the prospect of accession to the European Union and to assist these countries in the preparation for accession. Within this project, he wrote a handbook on European Accession Negotiations, printed in the year 2013 which will constitute the basis for the training of the Balkan countries for the European accession negotiations.

His research preoccupations are present in more than 10 research projects that he managed or was involved in, as a member team. Among the most important projects, it could be mentioned: *Accession Negotiations to Communities/European Union (1962-2007). Methods, Procedures, Perspectives (2007)* as director, *Cross-border Co-operation in Balkan-Danube Area - Romania - Bulgaria, Hungary, Moldova, Serbia and Montenegro (2002-2005)* as a member of research team, *Region and regionalization in*

European Union and the countries of Central Europe and NATO (2002-2004) as a member of research team. He is actively involved and a real promoter of the projects financed from the European Social Funds, as director or expert: „*Socio-humanistic sciences in the context of globalized evolution – developing and implementation of the studies and research postdoctoral program*” (2010-2012) - director, „*The Center for the Promovation of the Entrepreneurship in the field of Sustainable Development*” (2010-2013) as expert and „*Managerial competences in developing poles and future entrepreneurship in competitiveness poles*” (2012-2014) as expert.

The international scientific prestige is evidenced by the professional organizations that he is leading or is a member of: Academy of Political Sciences from New York, Association of International Law and International Relations; Governors Council Gorizia/Trieste; Commission of the History of International Relations; Commission of Military History; Steering Committee, European Institute from Romania, Bucharest; Scientific Committee of *ISIG*- Gorizia-Trieste (president); European Institute, Florence; Advisory Committee of the Institute of Cultural Diplomacy from Berlin; Society of Romanian Historians; Romanian Society of European Law and European Academy of Sustainable Development.

Also, it is worth mentioning the editorial team of prestigious journals, where he is a dedicated member or the collections from contemporary history and international relations which he coordinates: “Romanian Journal of Society and Politics”; Coordinator of collection UNIVERSITAS, serie *Contemporary History and International Relations* (Eikon Printing House); “Eastern Journal of European Studies”, Centre for European Studies, Al. Ioan Cuza University, (Iași); Editorial Board, IUIES Journal (Gorizia); Editorial Board, ISIG Journal (Gorizia); Editor, International Politics and Diplomacy Collection, “Sincron” Printing House, Cluj-Napoca; “Central European Issues” (Bucharest); „Central European Political Review” (Budapest); Coordinator of collection “Politics”, Dacia Printing House (Cluj-Napoca); “Foreign Policy - Romania”; “History Folders” (Bucharest); „Review of Political Studies and International Relations” (Bucharest); “Eurolimes” – Journal of the Institute for Euroregional Studies (Oradea) and *Studia Universitas Babes-Bolyai. Studia Europaea* (Cluj-Napoca).

The dedicated Professor is well-known in the academic community as one of the most prolific publishers from the field of international relations and the author of the first handbook of international relations (1998). He received in 2007 the Romanian Academy Prize “Mihail Kogălniceanu”, for the book *România spre Uniunea Europeană. Negocierile de aderare (2000-2004) (Romania to the European Union. Accession Negotiations)*. This book represents the quintessence of the process of the Romania’s Accession to the EU, it was translated into English language for the international public, and it was preceded by more than 2000 pages describing the technical process of accession contained in the six volumes of the book *Negotiating with the European Union* (2003-2005): „Documente inițiale de poziție la capitolele de negociere” (*Initial position paper of negotiating chapters*) (2003), as the first volume; „Initial Position Papers” (2003) as the second volume; „Preparing the External Environment of Negotiations” (2003), the third volume; „Pregătirea mediului intern de negociere” (*Preparing the internal environment for negotiation*) (2003), the fourth volume; „Pregătirea mediului de negociere, 2003 – 2004” (*Preparing the environment for negotiation 2003-2004*) (2005), the fifth volume and the last volume „Comunicarea publică și negocierea pentru aderare, 2003 – 2004” (*Public communication and negotiations for accession 2003-2004*) (2005). From all of the countries from the fifth wave of enlargement, Romania was the only

country which described in detail this process, and for that we have to thank to Professor and Negotiator Vasile Pușcaș.

He published until now, 28 volumes as single author; he coordinated and was the co-author of more than 50 books and more than 150 articles and essays in prestigious international and national journals and reviews.

The powerful character of Professor was obvious from the beginning of his academic and publishing activity, when his first book, *Dr. Petru Groza – pentru o „lume nouă”* (*Dr. Petru Groza – for a “new world”*), published in 1985 at printing house Dacia, was forbidden and full edition was burnt. Instead of abandon his scientific interest and academic activity, Professor Vasile Pușcaș decided to go further on, and the same pattern of behavior conducted him in the difficult public positions that he occupied, when he had to take decisions as for the *Most Favored Nation Status* or the decisions regarding the Romania's accession to the EU.

Being recognised as the **Negotiator** in the public life, the eminent Professor is a brave and responsible diplomat who served his country on each position he was assigned. The most important public positions that he honored were: Director of the Romanian Cultural Center from New York, which was created after his negotiations (1991-1992); Charge d'Affaires / Interim Ambassador, Washington, D.C. (1993-1994); Minister Councillor, DCM, Romanian Embassy, Washington, D.C. (1992-1994); Minister Delegate, Chief Negotiator with European Union (2000-2004); Member of Romanian Parliament (2004-2008); Member of European Parliament (2007) and Minister of European Affairs, Romanian Government (2008-2009). The diplomatic activity represents his emblem in the public life at international and, especially, European level. A lot of European officials and specialists from international relations field of studies said that we, Romanians, owe our accession to the EU to Romanian Negotiator, Professor Vasile Pușcaș and to his negotiation team, composed merely from his former students. His dedication, intense work and efforts, the official connection that he developed and the recognition from the most important European actors.

His experience is constantly in the service of the others, being frequently invited as a keynote speaker in international and national conferences, organized by academic, diplomatic or NGOs entities.

His activity was several times awarded by different communities and organizations, from which we mentioned the following: *Excellency Diploma* from Romanian Academy for researches in the field of contemporary history (2010); *Doctor Honoris Causa* of University of Oradea (2010); *Excellency Trophy “10 for Romania”*, at the category *Diplomacy*, for the *negotiation of the Accession Treaty of Romania to the European Union and for the academic, scientific and diplomatic activity, held throughout his entire career*, offered by the Reality TV station, *Transilvanian Cross*, offered by the Metropolitan of Cluj, Alba, Crișana and Maramureș (2010) and the *Romanian Star Medal*, the rank of knight (2002). He was awarded several times with the prize of *Representativity* or *Excellency* from the University Babeș-Bolyai.

He is an active supporter of the entrepreneurship, being the first Romanian deputy who initiated a law for entrepreneurship. He is involved in the activity of the *Romanian Entrepreneur Club* (*Clubul Întreprinzătorului Român*), participating in its projects (for example, he is expert in the project *„Managerial competences in developing poles and future entrepreneurship in competitiveness poles”*, of which beneficiary is *Romanian Entrepreneur Club*). His expertise is valued by the Transilvania Bank, a national bank which decided in 2009 to ask for consultancy regarding the investment with European funds. As a sign of appreciation and performance of his work, the Advisory Board of the

bank,ask him to join it as a member (from 2012) andthen, as the senior advisor of the President of the Transilvania Bank.

The words are not enough to express the gratitude of the community and academic corpus for what Professor Vasile Pușcașhas given in his prestigious career. He accomplished a lot, and then gave a lot to the others: students and colleagues from university or from other institutions where he worked. Respect and admiration for the Professor and Negotiator Vasile Pușcaș, who changed Romania's history: to many other accomplishments!

Assoc. Prof. PhD. Melania-Gabriela CIOT

IN MEMORIAM

PROFESSOR BARBU ȘTEFĂNESCU

The beginning of this year came with a great loss for the Department of International Relations and European Studies and University of Oradea: the death of one of our most loved and prestigious teachers. Mentor of many generations of undergraduate, master and PhD candidates, Professor Barbu Ștefănescu suddenly disappeared from Oradea academic landscape, leaving behind a complex work, recognized both at national and international level, research projects and future plans which are to be continued by his colleagues in the Departments of History and International Relations and European Studies with whom he had worked for almost twenty years. Hardworking and extremely dedicated Barbu Ștefănescu brought his contribution to the strengthening of the academic management in his positions as Scientific Secretary of the Faculty of Letters and Human Social Sciences (1996-1998), Vice Dean of the same faculty (1998-1999), Dean of the Faculty of Human Social Sciences (1999-2000), Dean of the Faculty of History and Geography (2000-2007), Dean of the Faculty of History and International Relations (2007-2008), Vice Rector for International Relations and Communication (2008-2012), Director (having vice rector duties) of the Council of University Doctoral Studies (2012-2013). In all these positions he came to the fore with the tenacity he supported his ideas with, the balance he proved in conflict management and the skills he had in human resources management.



The death of our distinguished Professor in February 2013 made us write these lines in his memory, and the event is even more sad, as this year he would have reached the age of 60 years, and the staff of our Department was about to celebrate him by bringing an homage to his entire activity. Taking into account everything mentioned above, the following lines will not be a mere series of data from his CV and a list of his publications, but rather an endeavor to underline the quality the researcher and Professor Barbu Ștefănescu brought to the Department of International Relations and European Studies.

Thus, our approach will start by presenting certain biographical data. Barbu Ștefănescu was born at Ohaba de Sub Piatră, Hunedoara County on 5 July 1953. In 1968 – 1972 he attended the High School in Hațeg, in 1972 he entered the Pedagogical Institute in Oradea where he studied at the History Geography specialization graduating as top of the form. He continued his studies at „Babeș-Bolyai” University, Cluj-Napoca at the Faculty of History and Philosophy, which he graduated in 1979. It is here too, that he brought to perfection his professional training when he sustained his doctoral thesis “The Agricultural Technique and Work Rhythm in Crisana Peasant Household (18th Century – the beginning of the 19th Century) in 1995 in the field of history. After having graduated the Institute he was employed by Țării Crișurilor Museum as a restaurator in the History Department (1975-1979), and then as a curator in the Ethnography Department (1979-

1994).from 1980 to 1994 he was Head of Department and in 1990 – 1994 he was director of the Museum. In 1994 he became lecturer at the Faculty of Letters and Human Social Sciences, the Department of History and Geography. Two years later he was appointed Senior Lecturer in the same department, and in 1998 he was appointed full professor, thus starting with 2000 he could supervise doctor's degrees in the field of history. Starting with 2006 he was a member of the National Council for Doctor's Degrees Certification and Doctor's Degrees Supervisor's Quality, History Commission and with 2011 he was a member of the National Council of Attesting University Tiles, Diplomas and Certifications, Human Sciences and Arts Field, History and Cultural Studies Commission.

Regarding his activity as a researcher, it started once he graduated the Pedagogical Institute when he was employed as a curator. The recognition of his activity came with his being awarded the „Gheorghe Bariț” Prize by the Romanian Academy for his work “The Agricultural Technique and Work Rhythm in Crisana Peasant Household (18th Century – the beginning of the 19th Century). The previous year he had been awarded „M. G. Samarineanu” Prize by Familia Magazine for “the laborious historiographical restoration of the rural west country, thus synchronizing it to the major cultural trends of historical research” and in 2004 he was awarded the “Cultural Merit” in the rank of Knight in “National Cultural Patrimony” category. His researches were mostly directed upon the “discreet peasant world” as the professor himself had characterized, in one of his books, the rural society in western Romania, in the era of transition from medieval to modern.

His interest in the rural collectivities' image had expressed itself immediately after Barbu Ștefănescu graduated the university studies and worked as a curator; it is now that he published his first works in the field of ethnography. Using modern methods and innovative ways in sorting the records and illustrations, he intended to offer an integrative image of the “quiet peasant world”, which “besides these material traces and a few oral ones too little mentioned by researchers, leaves few documents about itself”. Thus, embracing Jacques Le Goff's ideas, our ethnographer succeeded in bringing forth, at the end of the 20th century, elements belonging to the rural world civilization which marked humanity up to the beginning of the modern epoch. By studying the furniture beyond its utility, the historian discovered a certain spirituality of this world, a certain mentality in organizing the space in the household which surpasses the material level thus revealing a belief about good and beautiful or about life and death. Furthermore, the feasts that broke the everyday monotony, the masculine and feminine space, the dialogue between generations, the magic-religious dialogue, are also elements that describe the human civilization which Barbu Ștefănescu placed in an inherent relationship with the pieces of furniture he registered.

Such a modern approach implies using new techniques in investigating historical resources and interdisciplinary methodological tools. The interdisciplinary research on all its four levels of cooperation and interrelation determine nothing but a “fertile dialogue between sciences” or some of their branches; and the researcher is invited to take into account contributions brought about by the sociologist, the ethnographer, the economist, the political scientist, the semiotician while studying the same topic. It is exactly what professor Barbu Ștefănescu understood very well when he approached the problem of the rural world with the aim to give “the study of the rural world a primary position in the historiography as promoted by the School of Annals.” Further research through the study of original sources and the analysis of edit documents using new methodological instruments make possible the understanding of the peasant society in the 18th and 19th century by recreating a more complete picture of the society “as it was”. His long experience in the field of history and ethnography convinced him even more of the necessity and efficiency of an interdisciplinary

cooperation when “studying the behavior in time of a concrete person and a real humanity”, in other words getting out of the patterns created by the “scientific and narrow perspective of contemporary historiography”.

Following his convictions, Professor Barbu Ștefănescu recommended his students and PhD candidates to use “the interdisciplinary methodology tributary to more directions” in order to research any topic. First and foremost the Professor laid stress on the historiography promoted by the School of Annals; as the inconsistency of the traditional documentary resources could be compensated by a frontier approach of science and the researched topic. Secondly, he insisted upon using the specific instruments of ethnography, geography, ecology, linguistics, philosophy, sociology, anthropology, or demography in order to compensate the lack of written documents or the often deformed information coming to us from the ancient times of human civilization. During this interdisciplinary intercession history had always been kept as a pillar science, the Professor being convinced that, in its turn, the historical analysis represented a great interest for the other sciences especially because when relating with other sciences, “many branches of history tend to become self-sufficient”.

The complex rural world, studied from the economic, social, political, judicial and artistic perspective represented the starting point towards other sciences consistent with the field of international relations and European studies. As an adapt of Pierre Chaunu’s principles, Barbu Ștefănescu referred to the methods of economic history in order to interpret from a quantitative and serial point of view agricultural productions, grain yield, cattle drive, prices, information that gives substance to such terms as natural economy, subsistence economy, market economy. Studying the peasant society in its preoccupation to secure the daily food, Barbu Ștefănescu made use of the social history for which the development of the peasant society is the same with “long duration rhythms”. At the same time, political history was involved in order to underline the role of politics in the modernization of a society in which reluctance to renewal was great, or the instruments of history of law were also used in order to analyze the discrepancies between the official judicial norms and the custom ones according to which rural communities function. At the same time history of art and the study of the images brought about important clarifications in understanding the rural life.

Regarding history, Professor Ștefănescu mentioned that the most important benefits were coming from its interaction with ethnology and anthropology. The former “gives history a new documentation different from the usual one”; the documentary importance of the folk culture being demonstrated by the study using critical methods upon oral testimonies. From this point of view, Professor Ștefănescu found convergent elements between “the new history” and ethnology by means of the history of mentalities, sensibilities and the history of the imaginary, a field concerned only with the “deep structures and long duration” which “derives its strength mostly from the world of folk culture”. The history of everyday life completed the information obtained using the methods of the history of mentalities in the field of alimentation, clothing, or habitat. Thus, Barbu Ștefănescu urged us to do a history that “accepts suggestions from ethnology”, being convinced that history was to be studied by means of events, repeated and expected facts, common ones which were strongly connected with everyday life, a conversion that inevitably directed the research towards the history of mentalities and social imaginary. From this point of view, both the methodology and the instruments suggested by our professor for the research of the collectivities can successfully be applied in the field of international relations and European studies.

Thus under his supervision, students and PhD candidates in this field of study, could elaborate interesting works in which they applied the new means of investigation in order to answer the new historiographical necessities of our time. In this way they could restore issues that had not been dealt with before by other researchers, could bring about important contributions in studying the relations between countries, their cultures, traditions, the impact of cultural models upon different cultures and could demonstrate the value of the image of the Other and its impact upon the collective mentality. All these researches helped the students understand the importance of studying different sciences so that they may be better prepared to become actors in international relations.

Another central theme in Barbu Ștefănescu's research was anthropology, the science that "aims at a global study of the human being covering the whole spatial and temporal area of humankind". Embracing Fernand Braudel's opinions, Professor Ștefănescu emphasized the idea that history was "the human being and...the rest". Whether it was the cultural anthropology promoted in USA, or the social anthropology promoted in Great Britain, anthropology was used as "a stage in the synthesis, superior to ethnology, and mainly based on the methodologies of ethnography and ethnology". By using each methodology he urged us "to start from techniques to get to the social and political life, or vice versa, to start from the social life to get to techniques". This is but another way to research the problems in the field of International Relations and European Studies which was opened by our distinguished professor. Furthermore, Barbu Ștefănescu underlined that "the great ambition of anthropology was to know all the aspects and general rules of action of the mankind ensemble thus revealing the general characteristics of human life and its universal features." By paraphrasing Wunenburger, he wrote that "society cannot be reduced to a mere aggregate of individuals, it is more than the result of a phylogenetic evolution as it is defined by its existence above people, by a collective consciousness which imposes itself by means of the sense of obligation".

We, therefore, can observe the hallmark left by the researcher Barbu Ștefănescu upon the teacher Barbu Ștefănescu who shared his students, his PhD candidates and younger colleagues innovative ideas and approaches in fields seemingly far from his scientific preoccupations. His courses (Collective Mentalities, Introduction to Anthropology, Cultural Anthropology, Security Anthropology, Interdisciplinary Research Methods), the lectures he delivered, and the works he published lie at the basis of the education of future students. At the same time, the interdisciplinary research based principle he constantly supported, could be regarded as another lesson he taught both his colleagues in University of Oradea and other universities as well.

*Staff of the Department of International Relations and European Studies
University of Oradea*