

EDITORIAL

40 YEARS OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN TOURISM

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In 1977, four decades ago, the Faculty of Commerce (Faculty of Business and Tourism) of the Bucharest University of Economic Studies (BUES) introduced the specialization of Economy of Public Alimentation and Tourism Services (ESAPT). The Rector was Professor Gheorghe Dolgu (1971-1980), and the Dean Professor Alexandru Puiu (1976-1981). Later, Professor Gheorghe Dolgu (1929-2017) will confess that the name of the specialization was established during a "negotiation" process which he himself conducted at the Ministry of Education.

A subject with the name of "economy and organization of tourism" has been part of the curriculum of the Economics of Internal Trade specialization ever since 1967. And also in 1967, the old Academy of High Commercial and Industrial Studies/ Commercial Academy was given the name of the Bucharest University of Economic Studies. The first concerns regarding the study of tourism, at the Commercial Academy and beyond, are even older. In the "National Economy", in 1922, an article appeared, entitled *Spa Resorts*, and in 1924 another article, *Tourism – Its Economic-Cultural Role in the Life of Modern People*. The author of both was Victor Slăvescu – later, in 1944, Rector of the Commercial Academy. Vasile A. Marinescu, a PhD student who had founded the International Tourism University Association, which had its headquarters at the Commercial Academy, will hold the conference *The Role of the Tourism Industry in the Romanian National Economy*, the text being published in the same year (1933). Victor Slăvescu is also the Ph.D. supervisor of D.T. Vișan, the author, in 1945, of the thesis entitled *Tourism as a new economic and social phenomenon*, which seems to be the first with a theme on tourism. Once the discipline of tourism economy and organization was introduced, under the signature of Professor Nicolae Lisandru, in 1968 the first course notes/ chapters were published in BUES, with the themes of *Tourism Organization in RSR* and *Organizing Hotel Activities* respectively. Prof. Rodica Bărănescu (Zadig) will publish in 1973 in BUES the first course of *Economics and Tourism Organization* in two volumes, as well as in 1975 the first solid bibliographic resource at the Didactic and Pedagogical Publishing House under the title *Tourism and Public Alimentation*.

At the beginning of the ESAPT specialization, in 1977, at the time of organizing the admission examination at the Faculty of Commerce, the secretary of the commission was Prof. Iacob Cătoiu – future Vicedean (1981-1989) and Dean of the faculty (1992-2003). After the establishment of the new specialization, in the 1980s, the following specialized disciplines have been consecrated: tourist geography (Prof. Dumitru Alexandru), technology (Prof. Maria Maxim), food commodities (Prof. Neicu Bologa), non-food commodities (Prof. Ileana Răducanu), the economy of services (Prof. Rodica Minciu), management (Prof. Radu Emilian), rational alimentation (Prof. Dorina Stănescu), machinery exploitation technique (Prof. Gheorghe Preda), marketing (Prof. Virgil Balaure), ergonomics (Prof. Victoria Petre). 1984 is the year of the first doctoral thesis on tourism from the "modern age" of the Academy, i.e. *Seasonality of tourism activity and ways to attenuate it*, by Prof. Valerică Olteanu–scientific coordinator Prof. Constantin Florescu.

In 1990, ESAPT specialization was re-launched under the name of Tourism-Services. Also after 1989 the Department of Tourism-Services was created, until 2008 its head being Professor Radu Emilian. Prof. Gabriela Țigu followed. In 2011, the Department of Tourism-Services and the members of Economic Geography of BUES were reorganized as the Department of Tourism and Geography-director, since 2012, being Prof. Delia Popescu.

Between 1995 and 2003, after having obtained the Bachelor's degree, the opportunity to pursue in-depth, one-year studies in International Tourism was provided. In 2001, the first Master's program was introduced, with a duration of three semesters. With the adoption of the "Bologna process" and the restructuring of three cycles, undergraduate, masters and doctoral degrees in 2005, the old specializations of the Faculty of Commerce were replaced by a unique bachelor's degree program entitled Business Administration in Trade, Tourism, Services, Commodities and Quality Management, lasting 3 years. Afterwards, two-year master's degree programs (professional) were also founded: Business Administration in Tourism, Management and Marketing in Tourism, respectively Geopolitics and Business. The field of doctoral studies to which most of the PhD coordinators in the department adhered is Business Administration. The doctoral supervisors were/are: Prof. Radu Emilian, Prof. Rodica Minciu, Prof. Gabriela Stănculescu, Prof. Maria Ionică, Prof. Puiu Nistoreanu, Prof. Gabriela Țigu. Also, Prof. Silviu Neagu and Prof. Claudia Popescu are known as PhD coordinators in the field of geography (in other universities).

Scientific research activity is carried out under the aegis of the Academic Center for Research in Tourism and Services (CACTUS) – whose acronym was adopted as the name of the present journal – the directorate was fulfilled successively by Prof. Gabriela Stănculescu, prof. Andreea Șchiopu and, more recently, Prof. Mădălina Țală.

In this context, the 40th anniversary celebration was represented by the 6th edition of the International Conference of CACTUS (Contemporary Approaches and Challenges of Tourism Sustainability), held October 5-7, 2017, in Predeal, at the training center „Prof. univ. Dr. Ion Gh. Roșca” – director of the event being Prof. Andreea Șchiopu, Ph.D.. It was the first scientific conference hosted by the new BUES complex in Predeal. In the official opening, Prof. Nicolae Istudor, Ph.D. – Rector of the Bucharest University of Economic Studies and Prof. Rodica Pamfilie, Ph.D. – Dean of the Faculty of Business and Tourism, addressed the audience, being introduced by Prof. Delia Popescu, Ph.D. – Head of the Department of Tourism and Geography.

In the plenary, views and communications were presented by: Her Excellency Boutheina Labidi – Ambassador of the Tunisian Republic to Romania, as well as special guests from the field of tourism: Tijani Haddad – FIJET President, prof. Stefan Bratosin, Ph.D. – Paul Valéry University of Montpellier (France), prof. Antonio García-Sánchez, Ph.D. – Technical University of Cartagena (Spain) and Alin Burcea, Ph.D. – President of the National Association of Tourism Agencies in Romania (ANAT). During the sessions, the conference scheduled presentations of specialists, professors and researchers from the main university centres in the country (Bucharest, Cluj-Napoca, Iași, Timișoara, Brașov, Constanța, Sibiu, Craiova, Suceava), as well as from abroad (Czech Republic, Italy, Poland, Spain, United Kingdom, Ukraine) – including poster and online sessions, respectively. The conference concluded with an itinerant workshop, at the Râșnov fortress and in the Cioplea district of Predeal.

Happy Birthday, tourism specialization at BUES!
