

**Klaus Bochmann, *Lexicul social-politic român între 1821 și 1848*. Traducere de Octavian Nicolae, Editura Universității „Alexandru Ioan Cuza”, Iași, 2017, 313 p.**

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As opposed to other terminologies, political lexis displays a greater degree of permeability towards the common vocabulary units that do not require great efforts during the reception process. In the steps taken towards conceptualization, aiming at describing and explaining various phenomena related to the political life, political language makes use of both specific terms (*party, political formation, senate, parliament, government, presidential, electoral, etc.*) and elements of the common vocabulary, enriched with new meanings (*right, left, centre, red, orange*). This circulation phenomenon is bilateral, as a series of terms that are specific to the political field might enter, in turn, the colloquial language. In this respect, any strict delimitation of a lexical inventory specific to the social-political communication proves to be very difficult, since the differences between the social-political lexis and the common vocabulary do not necessarily reside in the words that are used, but rather in the functions they accomplish during the social-political communication act (Denquin, 2007, p. 22).

Issued by the Publishing House of “Alexandru Ioan Cuza” University of Iași in 2017 and translated by Octavian Nicolae, Klaus Bochmann’s book entitled *Lexicul social-politic român între 1821 și 1848* [Romanian Social and Political Lexis between the Years 1821 and 1848] mentions from the very introductory chapter the ambition to provide a history of the Romanian social-political concepts in the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. This work is based on the author’s habilitation thesis, defended in 1976 at the Faculty of Letters of the University of Leipzig, and it is influenced by the linguistic theories and methodological directions of that time. The author engages in a complex project in which the delimitation of the terminological inventory corresponding

to the social and political field is achieved starting from a rich and varied range of sources: political literature, journalistic sources, personal notes, official and private correspondence, memoirs with a political content, as well as official documents.

On the assumption that: “Any historical event of great importance is directly reflected by the political-social lexis of the respective people’s language. Any new social practice produces new notions, new words, it causes terms deeply rooted in tradition to disappear or receive new meanings” (Bochmann, 1970), the author provides an inventory of the Romanian social-political lexis in the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, relating it to the political, economic and social events of the time. Besides the emergence of new terms belonging to the social-political field, the author is interested in the changes these terms are subject to from a diachronic perspective. The semantic analysis is supplemented with a socio-linguistic approach generated by the necessity to relate the terminological inventory to the changes occurring in the Romanian social and political realities. In this respect the author distinguishes between three stages in the formation process of the Romanian social-political lexis: a. 1780/1800–1820: the incubation stage; b. 1821–1848: the rapid maturation stage c. 1848/49–1850: the stage of development and consolidation of the new terminological code.

By organizing his material in six chapters prefaced with a section dedicated to the research objectives and methodology, Bochmann structures his presentation in a diachronic manner: 1. The prehistory of the modern Romanian social-political vocabulary; 2. Social-political vocabulary in the period 1800–1820; 3. Lexical evolutions between the years 1821 and 1829; 3. Lexical evolutions

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between the years 1821 and 1829; 4. The first decade of the Organic Regulations (1830–1839); 5. From “Dacia literară” [Literary Dacia] to the revolution of 1848/49; 6. Final observations. The social-political lexis is divided into synchronic segments, for each decade, starting with the year 1821, as the author analyses key-concepts, historical events and the personalities who influenced the introduction of new fields of meaning.

The author opens his descriptive itinerary with the 14<sup>th</sup> century, regarded as the landmark of the Romanian social-political lexis. The beginnings of social-political terminology is related to the history of domestic social and cultural relationships as well as the relationships with the neighbouring countries, being influenced by factors such as: the Latin inheritance, the Slavonic-Romanian cohabitation, the Orthodox culture, the Hungarian and Polish domination, the hierarchic domination relationships of the feudal system. The social-political lexis of the old Romanian language comprises a relatively limited inventory of words inherited from Latin, enriched with Romanian formations, with a consistent percent of elements belonging to canonical Slavonic and quite few elements of Hungarian, Ukrainian and Russian elements, as a result of the political and cultural influences of the neighbouring countries upon the Romanian feudal society. During the 17<sup>th</sup> and especially the 18<sup>th</sup> centuries, this lexis is completed with neo-Greek and Turkish elements. Dimitrie Cantemir is considered the forerunner of the modern political-social vocabulary. The author of the *Hieroglyphic History* built his discourse around three key concepts: *monarchy*, *democracy* and *(re)public*, which synthesize his political views (p. 31–39).

The period between the years 1800 and 1820, described in the second chapter of the book, is marked by the activity of the Transylvanian School and its attempts to claim the Romanians’ rights and support their ideas by means of historical and philological arguments. *Luminare* [enlightenment], *cultură* [culture] and *polire* [refinement] are, according to Bochmann, the concepts that synthesise the ideas promoted by the representatives of the Enlightenment: the awareness of historical greatness, the desire for national emancipation and the will for national unity. The terms used for the new political concepts are usually borrowings: *nation*,

*culture*, *education*, *tolerance*, *superstition*, *liberty*, yet the lexis of the time equally reveals certain extensions of the meanings of traditional terms (*neam* [descent] with the meaning of *nație* [nation]). The different administration and the distinct social and cultural situation within the Principalities led to differentiations of the social-political lexis in these regions: “While the Transylvanian scholars’ vocabulary corresponding to their ideological sources and their philological ideas is often adorned with Latin-Romance neologisms, the vocabulary of the Moldavian and Wallachian writers displays Greek borrowings as well as a greater number of calques which are also preferred, as they were more easily comprehensible, by some Transylvanians” (p. 62). Only during the next decades shall Latin-Romance neologisms enter Moldavia and Wallachia.

Starting with 1821, the centre of gravity of Romanians’ social and cultural evolution moves from Transylvania to Wallachia. The third Chapter, entitled *Lexical evolutions between the years 1821 and 1829*, emphasizes the most important gain of this decade: the foundation of a Romanian public opinion. The awareness of a public opinion is expressed, among other elements, by the attempt to implant its terminological roots, by using terms such as *people*, *public* or *political practice*. The vocabulary of the state administration is now characterized by the coexistence of traditional Romanian elements with Turkish, Greek and Russian elements. The Latin-Romance influence upon the administrative lexis is still quite reduced. Tudor Vladimirescu’s revolution in 1821 will trigger semantic evolutions of traditional terms. Thus, lexemes such as *norod* [people], *boieri* [boyars] and *patrie* [homeland] gain new semantic values that had not existed in the history of Romanian language so far. The introduction of neologisms, mainly from the fields of social philosophy and theory of the state represents exclusively the contribution of political literature written in the period 1825–1829 to the development of political lexis. The concepts related to the organization of the state are characterized by semantic richness while their number grows considerably. An important part in the development of the Romanian social-political lexis is played, starting with the year 1829, by the newspapers “*Curierul Românesc*” [The Romanian Courier] and “*Albina Românească*” [The Romanian Bee].

The decade 1830–1839 is governed by the Organic Regulations. Written in 1830 and adopted in 1831 in Wallachia and in 1832 in Moldavia, this document stipulated a series of regulations regarding the separation of powers, the existence of a National Assembly and the introduction of elected town councils. The most visible changes of the political-administrative vocabulary in the fourth decade is due to the radical process of modernization of the administration of the Principalities. The relationship between the traditional stock of words and the modern terminology illustrates the transient nature of the Regulations' content and language. One should note the remarkably small number of Turkish and Greek elements contained in the Regulations. The Turkish terms mostly refer to military and police grades as well as various debts and obligations towards the Sublime Porte. The persistence of traditional formulations and expressions in the conditions of the modernized state is proven by the use of surviving terms such as *jalobă* [complaint], *obraz* [faces], *pitac* [decree], *briso* [property act] and so forth. Despite the heterogeneous character of the lexis of that time, the tendency towards Latin-Romance borrowings becomes obvious, preparing the unity that was about to be accomplished in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

A notable phenomenon is the semantic evolution during the fourth decade of the term *nație* [nation]: “*Nație* [nation] is now used to designate the Romanian nation in its entirety while in the previous decade it used to designate just parts of the Romanian people” (p. 123). Among the attributes of the nation, the contemporaries include common linguistic, cultural and historical traits. In parallel with the word *nație* [nation] its synonym *neam* [descent] remains in use. It is also during the fourth decade that the word *România*, used for a long time as a synonym for *Wallachia*, starts to designate the entire Romanian territory. The orthography oscillates between *Rumânia* and *România*.

The fourth decade of the 19<sup>th</sup> century represents, according to the author, the decisive decade for the formation of the modern social-political vocabulary. The fifth Chapter, entitled *From Literary Dacia to the Revolution of 1848/1849* depicts the main characteristics of the time: the ideology of the forty-eighters finds its lexical expression in a relatively uniform vocabulary, while the use of the social-

political lexis no longer represents the exclusive prerogative of intellectuals. With regard to the use of the social-political lexis, one can note a relative levelling of the semantic differences, less present as far as morphological and orthographic differences are concerned. “The relative uniformity of terms in written texts, their democratization due to their being largely used, as well as a certain variation of meaning and form, according to the users' education level are the main traits of the communicative act around the year 1848” (p. 145). The acceptance of borrowings, especially from Romance languages becomes increasingly obvious during this decade. The temptation to use neologisms, justified by some researchers with arguments related to rapidity and easiness (Pană Dindelegan, 1997), becomes constant by the middle of the decade, preceding the qualitative leap in the second half of the century. However, a problematic issue remains the identification of the origins of the borrowings that represent the highest percent of the lexis in the 1840's. While these aspects are quite clear when it comes to the source language—French is the favourite source—the authors and the currents the terms are borrowed from remain uncertain.

The formation process of the modern social-political lexis reaches a new level with the revolution of 1848/1849, proving thus that the Romanian culture and social-political mentality were ready to align with the most advanced European cultures. Among the characteristics of the lexis at the time, Klaus Bochmann mentions: the persistence of a strong Russian influence, the gradual disappearance of the Turkish and neo-Greek elements, an increasing Latin-Romance influence and the preservation of traditional terms, especially for authorities and official titles. The key-concepts of social philosophy at the time are *progress*, *civilization* and *society*. In the revolutionary context, the concept of people is subject to major semantic and formal changes: seldom used with a political-social meaning until then *popor* [people] (with the versions *popol* and *popul*) starts replacing the older term *norod*. An analysis of the semantic evolution of the term reveals a series of sociolinguistic observations: “in our view, the fact that *norod* is still in use is rather symptomatic for a certain linguistic conservatism in Moldavia, being rooted in the actual political situation and the weakness of anti-feudal forces” (p. 189).

The words *justice* and *fraternity* are among the slogans of the revolution of 1848. This slogan is identified in the documents of the provisional government, newspapers, the revolutionaries' private correspondence, its circulation being, however, limited to Wallachia. In Transylvania, on the other hand, the slogan of the French Revolution of 1789 is reformulated by the forty-eighters: *liberty, equality, fraternity*. The author emphasizes the lack of semantic precision of the terms included in these slogans, adding that their polysemous nature was also favoured by their degree of circulation (Bidu-Vrănceanu, 2007). The preference for the older terms *slobozenie* [liberty], respectively *potrivire* [equality] depends on the users' ideological appurtenance, these terms being more frequently used by the conservatives, while *libertate* [liberty] and *egalitate* [equality] enter the vocabulary of progressive forces.

The issue of national unity and independence, the most ardent element in the history of Romania in the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century, finds its expression in the multitude and frequency of key-words included in the semantic area of *națiune* [nation]. The terms *nație* [nation] and *naționalitate* [nationality] stand in the foreground, while the former, a relatively new term, gains ground. When compared to the relatively clearer semantics of the term *nație* [nation], *naționalitate* [nationality] displays a more vague nature, specific to slogan terms. In Transylvania, where the issue of granting Romanians the same rights as other peoples' was ardent, *naționalitate* [nationality] occurs frequently with the meaning of "right to national existence".

Between the years 1840 and 1850 one can notice the explosive flourishing of the Romanian social-political literature and its corresponding lexis, in the context of a consistent production of books and periodicals. As Klaus Bochmann rightfully remarks, modern Romanian language draws the general lines of its political-social lexis by the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century. The vocabulary of politics and its related fields is dominated, starting with the fifth decade, by borrowings taken almost exclusively from French. These terms replace not only elements from Greek, Turkish or Russian, but also traditional forms originated from the old language or coined in the first decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century (*norod* [people], *slobozenie* [liberty], *înaintare* [evolution], *propășire* [prosperity] etc.). The author draws attention upon

the differences characterizing the rhythm and quality of the modernization of the lexis in various compartments of the political-social vocabulary (administration, economy, politics, social relations and others). Thus, in the field of administration traditional and Slavonic elements are preserved, while in the field of commerce the Greek and Turkish terms are still in use.

The fifth decade marks a relative closure of the formation process of the Romanian social-political lexis. The contradiction between the lexis influenced by Greek, Turkish and Russian elements specific to the Danubian Principalities and the lexis influenced by Latin elements specific to Transylvania, manifested in the first decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, is overcome in the 1840's. The Latinization tendencies manifested by the national movement in Transylvania do not impede on the relative homogeneity of the Romanian political-social lexis. According to Bochmann, the differences between the three regions are not significant, due to the intense exchange of ideas between the intellectuals.

The final observations of the book are organized in two sections: 1. *The History of Romanian Literary Language and the Modern Social-Political Lexis* and 2. *The Relationship Between Language and Society*. The book contains three annexes: 1. A list of quoted documents and their acronyms; 2. An index of names and 3. An index of terms that provide a perspective on both the resources and the lexis analyzed by the author.

Klaus Bochmann's work has the merit of providing a thorough scan of a period in the history of the Romanian social-political terminology that has received scarce attention from researchers so far. The author pays special attention to the semantic approach, since the modernization process of the social-political lexis does not reside entirely in the replacement of older lexical units (from Slavic, Turkish, Modern Greek) with new ones (from French, Italian, Latin), but rather in assigning new semantic values to lexical elements already in use. While completing and supporting the semantic analysis, the sociolinguistic approach of the lexical inventory takes into account aspects such as: the regions the speakers come from (Transylvania, Moldavia, Wallachia); their appurtenance to a particular social class and ideological orientation; the speaker's level of education; the speaker's expectations related to

the cultural and social level of the audience; the code and the linguistic means available at the time; the nature of the communication channel: letter, newspaper article, proclamation, etc. Conceived in

1976, this work stands out as a landmark of the literature dedicated to the Romanian social-political terminology.

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