

INTERNATIONAL SECURITY

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THE NEW ROMANIAN GEOPOLITICAL SCHOOL. RESEARCH TOPICS AND INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT

Abstract:	<p><i>In interwar Romania, a geopolitical school of exceptional quality operated, which explained the reasons for the Romanian state as it was unified in 1918, and proposed solutions for its consolidation in the Romanian geopolitical space.</i></p> <p><i>After a period of quasi-ignorance and hostility to geopolitics, after 1989 it forcefully returned to the attention of scholars and the public. The new research directions aim at the recovery of the interwar school, the systematization and interpretation of classical theories, and the approach of Romanian interests in the new geopolitical context. Universities, private research organizations, publishing houses, and journals mobilized for this purpose. A body of specialized experts has produced an impressive number of volumes, studies, and articles.</i></p> <p><i>We aim to list, as close as possible to reality, these publications, to classify them, to measure their usefulness, and to identify the beneficiaries. We will thus demonstrate that a new geopolitical school operates in Romania, in direct descent from the classical one.</i></p>
Keywords:	Geopolitics; geopolitical school; political geography; Romanian borders; Black Sea geopolitics; Danube geopolitics
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Preliminary considerations

Our objective regarding the description and explanation of the current state of Romanian geopolitical research involves two introductory conceptual approaches: the explanation of the term “school of thought” and the description, however brief, of the comparison term of the new Romanian geopolitical school - the traditional Romanian geopolitical school. On this basis, we will then explain what the new Romanian geopolitical school of thought is and what it looks like.

Therefore, the concept of “school of thought” is very little entered in the big dictionaries, out of proportion to the frequency with which it is used in specialized works in the social and humanistic fields (philosophy, sociology, history, psychology, cultural studies, political sciences, relations international affairs, security studies), in economic and medical sciences, and even in natural sciences. *Cambridge Dictionary* states, lapidary, that the school of thought represents “a set of ideas and opinions that a group of people shares about a matter”¹. In this sense, the concept is not specific only to scientific research but applies to the social sphere as a whole. For *Merriam-Webster*, the explanation is even more superficial: „a way of thinking”² – which does not help at all in understanding the specifics of the field of scientific research. In *Oxford Dictionary* the concept is missing.

Under these conditions, it has become a necessary and complicated task for epistemologists to define and describe the mode of aggregation and operation of a school of thought. We summarize here to extract the

¹ <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/school-of-thought> (31.01.2024)

² <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/school%20of%20thought> (31.01.2024)

gist of the contribution of the collective work of S. Phineas Upham, Lori Rosenkopf, and Lyle H. Ungar, for which “An epistemic community or mini-paradigm, often called a school of thought, is a socially constructed and informal community of researchers who build on each other’s ideas and share similar interests and who consequentially share patterns of citation in their work”¹. In this sense, we will understand the school of thought as the sum of the research works of some authors who produce knowledge in the same field, approaching related themes with the help of a similar research tool, without necessarily reaching similar or compatible conclusions (although, in the vast majority of cases, the results are compatible).

Thus we can understand the meaning in which numerous historical, sociological, and geopolitical researchers in the Romanian scientific space use the paradigm “Romanian interwar geopolitical school” or “classical Romanian geopolitical school” when they refer to the volumes, brochures and articles written in the 3rd-4th decades of the century passed by Ion Conea, Simion Mehedinți, Gheorghe I. Brătianu, M. Popa-Vereș, Vintilă Mihăilescu, Mihai David, Romulus Seișanu etc., who, in collective or individual research, offered the journal „Geopolitică și Geoistorie” [Geopolitics and Geohistory], as well as two monumental geopolitical atlases.

The years of the communist regime meant a withdrawal of national interest in the geopolitical interpretation of the Romanian space and state, geopolitics being fought as an instrument of imperialist policies. For the public, this propaganda found its place in the central newspapers of the Romanian Communist Party², and for professors and researchers – in translations of foreign authors³ or through their research⁴. More ideologically nuanced is the collaboration of Corneliu Bogdan with Eugen Preda, titled *Sfere de influență*⁵ [Spheres of influence], which was then translated and published at Columbia University Press⁶.

The regaining of freedom of thought and creation in December 1989, combined with the need for understanding, orientation, and creation of foreign policy solutions in a volatile regional and global context, led to the resumption of Romanian geopolitical research. They gained a prominent place in military and civilian higher education, produced university courses, doctoral research, and volumes generously hosted in the most valuable Romanian publishing houses and led to the appearance of specialized scientific journals indexed in international databases.

This is the context in which specialized research topics are produced with remarkable speed - to which different authors contribute, individually or collectively. These themes will be stated, described, and explained below.

Recovering the interwar Romanian school

First of all, the concern to recover classical texts published in the interwar period is remarkable. Some public libraries have digitized fundamental works such as the journal “Geopolitică și Geoistorie” or the 48-page booklet by Ion Conea, *Geopolitica – o știință nouă* [Geopolitics – a new science], printed in Bucharest in 1938, under the auspices of the Romanian Social Institute - Sociological Section⁷. The geopolitical atlas of Romulus Seișanu was re-edited, under the original title (principal edition at Editura Universul from Bucharest, in 1936) *România. Atlas istoric, geopolitic, etnografic și economic*⁸ [Romania. Historical, geopolitical, ethnographic, and economic atlas]. Also, Editura Militară printed a new edition of the atlas *Spațiul istoric și*

¹ S. Phineas Upham, Lori Rosenkopf, Lyle H. Ungar, *Positioning Knowledge: Schools of Thought and New Knowledge Creation*, “Scientometrics”, Vol. 83, No. 2, 2010, p. 557

² V. Iliescu, *Geopolitica – teoria falimentară a jefuitorilor și războinicilor imperialiști*, “Scânteia”, Year XXII, No, 2585, February 17, 1953

³ Günter Heyden, *Critica geopoliticii germane. Esența și funcția social a unei școli sociologice reacționare*, Editura Politică, București, 1960

⁴ Ion Nicolae Anghel, *Geopolitica de la ideologie la strategie politico-militară*, Editura Politică, București, 1985

⁵ Corneliu Bogdan, Eugen Preda, *Sfere de influență*, Editura Științifică și Enciclopedică, București, 1986

⁶ Idem, *Spheres of influence*, Columbia University Press, 1988

⁷ By accessing the online catalog of the “Lucian Blaga” Central University Library in Cluj-Napoca, http://aleph.bcuccluj.ro:8991/F/?func=option-update-lng&file_name=find-b&F2=pc-latin&P_CON_LNG=RUM (31.01.2024)

⁸ Romulus Seișanu, *România. Atlas istoric, geopolitic, etnografic și economic*, Editura Asociației Române pentru Educație Democratică, București, 2000

*etnic românesc*¹ [The Romanian historical and ethnic space], which appeared in 1942, which was put on the table of the Paris peace conference in 1946, justifying Romanian rights.

The classic texts as they appeared in the journal “Geopolitica și Geoistoria” or at the Publishing House “Ramuri” from Craiova, were systematically reprinted under the title *Geopolitica* [Geopolitics], edited by Emil I. Emandi, Gh. Buzatu, Vasile S. Cucu, in the year 1994. We find there, among others, Ion Conea, *Geopolitica – o știință nouă*, Sabin Manuilă, *Studiu etnografic asupra populației României (I)* [Ethnographic study on the population of Romania], Vintilă Mihăilescu, *Unitatea pământului și poporului românesc* [The unity of the land and the Romanian people], din nou I. Conea cu *Destinul istoric al Carpaților* [The historical destiny of the Carpathians], M. Popa-Vereș, *Schemă privind cercetările geopolitice sub aspectul intereselor naționale* [Scheme regarding geopolitical research under the aspect of national interests], Anton Golopenția, *Însemnare cu privire la definirea preocupării ce poartă numele de geopolitică* [Note on the definition of the concern called geopolitics], Mihai David, *Probleme de ordin geopolitic ale locului și spațiului ocupate de statul roman* [Geopolitical problems of the place and space occupied by the Romanian state], Nicolae M. Popp, *Românii din Basarabia și Transnistria* [Romanians from Bessarabia and Transnistria]. Se adaugă cercetări recente ale unor autori străini, precum Christian Daudel, *Geografie, geopolitică și geostrategie: termeni în schimbare* [Geography, geopolitics and geostrategy: changing terms], dar și români - Grigore Posea, *Geopolitică și geopolitică românească*² [Geopolitics and Romanian geopolitics].

The reinterpretation and verification of the actuality of the interwar work is a continuous effort of geopoliticians who have worked in recent decades. Substantial volumes resulted under the signature of Călin Cotoi (*Primordialism cultural și geopolitica românească interbelică*³ [Cultural primordialism and interwar Romanian geopolitics]) and Marius-Cristian Neacșu (*Simion Mehedinți și geopolitica românească*⁴ [Simion Mehedinți and Romanian geopolitics]) or volume chapters in thematic compendiums of which we exemplify Marius-Cristian Neacșu (*Simion Mehedinți, precursorul școlii românești de geopolitică* [Simion Mehedinți, the forerunner of the Romanian school of geopolitics], then *Simion Mehedinți, marele absent de la Conferința de Pace de la Paris 1919-1920* [Simion Mehedinți, the great absentee from the Paris Peace Conference 1919-1920]), Silviu Neguț and Marius-Cristian Neacșu (*România în studiile românești de geopolitică din prima jumătate a secolului XX* [Romania in Romanian geopolitical studies from the first half of the 20th century]) Marius-Cristian Neacșu and Gheorghe Vlăsceanu (*Contribuția geografilor români la construcția României. Conferința de Pace de la Paris 1919-1920* [The contribution of Romanian geographers to the construction of Romania. The Paris Peace Conference 1919-1920])⁵, Eugen Străuțiu (*Ion Conea și geopolitica românească* [Ion Conea and Romanian geopolitics])⁶.

Geopolitical studies recalling and explaining the work of the Romanian classics appeared in journals specialized in geography (in “Terra” - Petre Deică, *Contribuții geopolitice ale geografilor români*⁷ [Geopolitical contributions of Romanian geographers] și Marius-Cristian Neacșu, *Ideile lui Simion Mehedinți asupra geopoliticii*⁸ [Simion Mehedinți's ideas on geopolitics]; in “Geographica Timisensis” - Radu Săgeată, *Personalități marcante în geopolitica românească interbelică*⁹ [Outstanding personalities in Romanian interwar geopolitics]), ethnography (in “Etnosfera” - Daniela Didă, *Chestiuni punctuale în geopolitica românească interbelică*¹⁰ [Specific issues in interwar Romanian geopolitics]) or regional studies (in

¹ *Spațiul istoric și etnic românesc - Vol. I. Spațiul istoric românesc*, 1992; *Vol. II. Ungaria “milenară”*, 1992; *Vol. III. Spațiul etnic românesc*, Editura Militară, București, 1993

² Emil I. Emandi, Gh. Buzatu, Vasile S. Cucu (Eds.), *Geopolitica*, vol. I, Casa Editorială Glasul Bucovinei, Iași, 1994, passim

³ Călin Cotoi, *Primordialism cultural și geopolitica românească interbelică*, Mica Valahie, București, 2007

⁴ Marius-Cristian Neacșu, *Simion Mehedinți și geopolitica românească*, CD Press, București, 2018

⁵ Toate în volumul omagia dedicat unui centenar de la Marea Unire, sub titlul *România 1918-2018. Un secol de frământări geopolitice*, Editura Academiei de Studii Economice, București, 2018

⁶ Eugen Străuțiu, *Ion Conea și geopolitica românească*, in *Științe politice, relații internaționale și studii de securitate. Sesiune internațională de comunicări științifice*, Vol. I, Editura Universității „Lucian Blaga”, Sibiu, 2011

⁷ Petre Deică, *Contribuții geopolitice ale geografilor români*, “Terra”, Vol. XXX(L), No. 2, 2000

⁸ Marius-Cristian Neacșu, *Ideile lui Simion Mehedinți asupra geopoliticii*, “Terra”, Vol. XLVIII (LXVIII), No. 1-2, 2017

⁹ Radu Săgeată, *Personalități marcante în geopolitica românească interbelică*, “Geographica Timisensis”, Vol. VIII-IX, 1999-2000

¹⁰ Daniela Didă, *Chestiuni punctuale în geopolitica românească interbelică*, “Etnosfera”, No. 3, 2010

“Milcovia” - Lucian Badea, *Ion Conea, mentor al geografiei românești*¹ [Ion Conea, mentor of Romanian geography], and Cătălina Cârstea, *Ion Conea, reprezentant al intelectualității românești din secolul al XX-lea*² [Ion Conea, representative of Romanian intellectuals from the 20th century]). Simion Mehedinți was evoked by Eugen Străuțiu in “Buletin Științific. Publicație științifică de informare a Academiei Forțelor Terestre”³, and Anton Golopenția – in the political science journal from Chisinau entitled “Moldoscopie. Probleme de analiză politică”⁴.

Attempting some explanations on the impressive quantitative dimension of the working tools and research products intended for the Romanian interwar school of geopolitics, we point out the following:

1. At the end of the Cold War, Romania was leaving a status of stability and predictability on the international level. The old themes of the geopolitical meaning of the Romanian nation have forcibly returned in the present, even if our neighbors appear reorganized into new state units (Republic of Moldova, Ukraine, Serbia). The usefulness of the old analyses and solutions regarding the geographical landmarks in the Romanian political construction was automatically rediscovered, along with the strong and weak points in the present and the future of the Romanian state.
2. Within the effort to recover the Romanian tradition, in the sociological, cultural, political, or military paradigms, the identification of the geopolitical tradition to update and reinterpret it was a necessary and inevitable objective. Even more so since neither in the interwar period nor in the contemporary one, clear lines of demarcation can be drawn. When we evoke Ion Conea or Simion Mehedinți as geographers, Anton Golopenția and M. Popa-Vereș as sociologists, Gheorghe I. Brătianu as a historian, we are already one step into geopolitics; things simply cannot be separated.
3. The demarcation of our society from communism was supposed to provide an intellectual and conscience component, which would fight back against censorship and research topics ordered and necessarily framed in the Marxist-Leninist paradigm. The names cited above represent cases of violent persecution by the communist regime, from the professional and social ones to the prison sentence (where Gheorghe I. Brătianu ended his life). In their memory, as an intellectual and civic attitude, we return to authentic, uncensored research, primarily oriented towards national interests.

Romanian contributions to international geopolitical theories

In the most general way, Romanian geopoliticians (we include here those from the Republic of Moldova, who published their research in Romanian and sometimes in Romanian publishing houses) offered the public working tools, which systematized in an informative manner (non -analytical) conceptual bases of the field. Thus we benefit from dictionaries (Oleg Serebrian, *Dicționar de geopolitică*⁵ [Dictionary of geopolitics]) or lexicons (Vasile Simileanu, *Lexicon geopolitic*⁶ [Lexicon of geopolitics]).

At a higher degree of analytical refinement lies the category of introductions and treatises, offers Silviu Neguț (*Introducere în geopolitică*⁷ [Introduction to geopolitics]), Alexandru Ilieș (*Elemente de geografie politică*⁸ [Elements of political geography]) or Ilie Bădescu (*Tratat de geopolitică*⁹ [Treatise on geopolitics]).

General geopolitical topics, which inventory and classify the most general concepts, the most circulated theories, the reference authors with short forays into their representative volumes, we find at Adrian

¹ Lucian Badea, *Ion Conea, mentor al geografiei românești*, “Milcovia”, Vol. IX, No. 17, 2013

² Cătălina Cârstea, *Ion Conea, reprezentant al intelectualității românești din secolul al XX-lea*, “Milcovia”, Vol. IX, No. 17, 2013

³ Eugen Străuțiu, *Fragments of Romanian Geopolitical School. Simion Mehedinți*, “Buletin Științific. Publicație științifică de informare a Academiei Forțelor Terestre”, Vol. XVII, No. 1(33), 2012

⁴ Idem, *Gândirea geopolitică a lui Anton Golopenția*, “Moldoscopie. Probleme de analiză politică”, Universitatea de Stat a Moldovei, Chișinău, Vol. LII, No. 1, 2011

⁵ Oleg Serebrian, *Dicționar de geopolitică*, Polirom, Iași, 2006

⁶ Vasile Simileanu, *Lexicon geopolitic*, Top Form, București, 2023

⁷ Silviu Neguț, *Introducere în geopolitică*, Meteor Press, București, 2015

⁸ Alexandru Ilieș, *Elemente de geografie politică*, Editura Universității din Oradea, 1999

⁹ Ilie Bădescu, *Tratat de geopolitică*, Mica Valahie, București, 2004

Pop (*Geopolitica*¹ [Geopolitics]), Silviu Neguț (*Geopolitica. Universul puterii*² [Geopolitics. The universe of power]), Ion Coșcodaru and Vasile Paul (*Centrele de putere ale lumii*³ [Power centers of the world]), Liviu-Petru Zăpârțan (*Geopolitica în actualitate*⁴ [Geopolitics today]), Sergiu Tămaș (*Geopolitica*⁵ [Geopolitics]), Alexandru Burian from Chisinau (*Geopolitica lumii contemporane*⁶ [Geopolitics of the contemporary world]).

Geopolitics as a subsystem of other ideational systems is in the attention of Oleg Serebrian (*Politică și geopolitică*⁷ [Politics and geopolitics]), Ilie Bădescu and Ioan Mihăilescu as volume editors (*Geopolitică, globalizare, integrare*⁸ [Geopolitics, globalization, integration]), Vasile Simileanu (*Geopolitică și centre de putere*⁹ [Geopolitics and centers of power]). In relation with other scientific paradigms, geopolitics is addressed by Antonia Colibășanu (*Geopolitică și geoeconomie contemporană*¹⁰ [Contemporary geopolitics and geoeconomics]), but also from Ilie Bădescu and Dan Dungaciu (*Sociologia și geopolitica frontierei*¹¹ [Sociology and geopolitics of the border]). Various categories of geopolitics are analyzed by Ionel Nicu Sava (*Școala geopolitică germană*¹² [The German geopolitical school], then *Geopolitica. Teorii și paradigme clasice. Școala geopolitică germană*¹³ [Geopolitics. Classical theories and paradigms. The German geopolitical school]), Constantin Anechitoaie (*Geopolitica sistemelor maritime*¹⁴ [Geopolitics of maritime systems]), Oleg Serebrian (*Va exploda estul? Geopolitica spațiului pontic*¹⁵ [Will the East explode? Geopolitics of the Pontic space], then *Geopolitica spațiului pontic*¹⁶ [Geopolitics of the Pontic space]) or Cozmin Gușe (*Imperialism în postcomunism. Geopolitica dezordinii în fostul lagăr socialist*¹⁷ [Imperialism in postcommunism. The geopolitics of disorder in the former socialist camp]). We make a special mention for the contributions signed by Alba Iulia Catrinel Popescu, who offers us a treatise on geopolitics in two volumes, investigating the geopolitics of maritime power and the geopolitics of continental power respectively¹⁸, to then return with a theme regarding the Russian empire's spaces of domination¹⁹.

Bold ideas, which question modern-day correlations in an up-to-date conceptual suitcase, are found dissipating in journals – mostly without geopolitical specialization. Thus, without any pretense of exhaustiveness or even representativeness, we can mention the contributions of Ilie Bădescu (*Semnele vremurilor și geopolitica „turbulențelor”*²⁰ [Signs of the times and the geopolitics of “turbulence”]), Nicolae Sfetcu (*Biopolitica și geopolitica*²¹ [Biopolitics and geopolitics]), Petre Deică (*Sistemicitatea economiei mondiale. Considerații geopolitice*²² [The systematicity of the world economy. Geopolitical considerations]) or

¹ Adrian Pop, *Geopolitica*, Sylvi, București, 2003

² Silviu Neguț, *Geopolitica. Universul puterii*, Meteor Press București, 2008

³ Ion Coșcodaru, Vasile Paul, *Centrele de putere ale lumii*, Editura Științelor Social Politice, București, 2003

⁴ Liviu-Petru Zăpârțan, *Geopolitica în actualitate*, Eikon, Cluj-Napoca, 2009

⁵ Sergiu Tămaș, *Geopolitica*, Noua Alternativă, București, 1995

⁶ Alexandru Burian, *Geopolitica lumii contemporane*, Tipografia Centrală, Chișinău, 2002

⁷ Oleg Serebrian, *Politică și geopolitică*, Cartier, Chișinău, 2004

⁸ Ilie Bădescu, Ioan Mihăilescu (Eds.), *Geopolitică, globalizare, integrare*, Mica Valahie, București, 2003

⁹ Vasile Simileanu, *Geopolitică și centre de putere*, Top Form, București, 2010

¹⁰ Antonia Colibășanu, *Geopolitică și geoeconomie contemporană. Cu o prefață de George Friedman*, Tritonic, București, 2020

¹¹ Ilie Bădescu, Dan Dungaciu, *Sociologia și geopolitica frontierei*, Vol. I-II, Floarea Albastră, București, 1995

¹² Ionel Nicu Sava, *Școala geopolitică germană*, Info-Team, București, 1997

¹³ Idem, *Geopolitica. Teorii și paradigme clasice. Școala geopolitică germană*, Info-Team, București, 1997

¹⁴ Constantin Anechitoaie, *Geopolitica sistemelor maritime*, Top Form, București, 2008

¹⁵ Oleg Serebrian, *Va exploda estul? Geopolitica spațiului pontic*, Dacia, Cluj-Napoca, 1998

¹⁶ Idem, *Geopolitica spațiului pontic*, Cartier, Chișinău, 2006

¹⁷ Cozmin Gușe, *Imperialism în postcomunism. Geopolitica dezordinii în fostul lagăr socialist*, Adevărul Holding, București, 2011

¹⁸ Alba Iulia Catrinel Popescu, *Tratat de geopolitică (I–II): Geopolitica puterii maritime. Geopolitica puterii continentale*, Top Form, București, 2020

¹⁹ Idem, *Spațiile de dominație ale Imperiului. Marea strategie de transformare a Rusiei în hegemon al Eurasiei*, Top Form, București, 2022

²⁰ Ilie Bădescu, *Semnele vremurilor și geopolitica „turbulențelor”*, “Infosfera, Revistă de studii de securitate și informații pentru apărare”, Year V, No. 3, 2013

²¹ Nicolae Sfetcu, *Biopolitica și geopolitica*, “Geopolitica”, Vol. 1, No. 2, 2022

²² Petre Deică, *Sistemicitatea economiei mondiale. Considerații geopolitice*, “Analele Universității București”, Vol. XLIII, 1994

the collaboration of Marius-Cristian Neacșu, Silviu Neguț and Gheorghe Vlăsceanu (*The Impact of Geopolitical Risks on Tourism*¹). We must also mention here the contribution of Svetlana Cebotari from Chisinau regarding the methodology of geopolitics research².

Finally, we propose an extremely brief inventory of publications in the interest of higher education that host geopolitics disciplines, their holders writing didactic materials in the form of “course”, “course notes” or “university textbooks”. They systematize the most general data of the discipline and put it in the canonical form corresponding to the didactic process. We can already intuit that the biggest contributors are the professors (military or civilian) who teach at the military academies - especially at the “Carol I” National Defense University (formerly the Academy of Advanced Military Studies), but also at the military academies of the various specializations. So, we appreciate Constantin Hlihor's contributions (*Geopolitica și geostrategia în analiza istoriei imediate a relațiilor internaționale și în istoria artei militare contemporane*³ [Geopolitics and geostrategy in the analysis of the immediate history of international relations and in the history of contemporary military art], then *Geopolitica și geostrategia în analiza relațiilor internaționale*⁴ [Geopolitics and geostrategy in the analysis of international relations]), Marius Hanganu (*Puterea maritimă și strategia navală*⁵ [Maritime power and naval strategy], then *Interesele României la Dunăre și Marea Neagră*⁶ [Romania's interests in the Danube and the Black Sea]), or Mircea Cosma (*De la geopolitică la geostrategie*⁷ [From geopolitics to geostrategy]). To these are added numerous contributions by professors from civil universities, including Vasile Marin, (*Geopolitica și noile provocări ale secolului XXI*⁸ [Geopolitics and the new challenges of the 21st century]), Ion Pâlșoiu, (*Geopolitica – știință interdisciplinară*⁹ [Geopolitics - interdisciplinary science]), Silviu Costachie (*Geografie politică: o nouă abordare*¹⁰ [Political Geography: A New Approach]), Voicu Bodocan, (*Geografie politică*¹¹ [Political geography]), Teodor Simion, (*Geopolitica Mării Negre și a spațiului pontic*¹² [Geopolitics of the Black Sea and the Pontic space]), Adrian-Vasile Popa (*Geopolitică și globalizare. Note de curs*¹³ [Geopolitics and globalization. Course notes]) or Gabriel Micu (*Bessarabia, Romania and the Great Powers' geopolitics 1914 - 1947*¹⁴). In 2003, the Geopolitics and Visual Anthropology Center of the University of Bucharest published the collective volume *Geopolitica integrării europene*¹⁵ [Geopolitics of European integration] – up to now it seems to be the only collection of geopolitical studies written in the universities.

A few concluding comments on the table above (which, again, we acknowledge as incomplete and perfectible):

1. By their nature, the contributions of Romanian authors to the knowledge of geopolitical theories of global resonance are limited to presentation, systematization, comments, and short references regarding their actuality or applicability in the Romanian case. It thus accommodates the target

¹ Marius-Cristian Neacșu, Silviu Neguț, Gheorghe Vlăsceanu, *The Impact of Geopolitical Risks on Tourism*, “Amfiteatru Economic”, Special Issue no. 12, Vol. XX, 2018

² Svetlana Cebotari, *Istoriografia și metodologia cercetării geopoliticii*, “Enciclopedica. Revistă de Istorie a Științei și Studii Enciclopedice”, No. 1-2 (6-7), 2014

³ Constantin Hlihor *Geopolitica și geostrategia în analiza istoriei imediate a relațiilor internaționale și în istoria artei militare contemporane*, Editura Academiei de Înalte Studii Militare, București, 2002

⁴ Idem, *Geopolitica și geostrategia în analiza relațiilor internaționale*, Editura Universității Naționale de Apărare “Carol I”, București, 2005

⁵ Marius Hanganu, *Puterea maritimă și strategia navală*, Editura Academiei de Înalte Studii Militare, București, 2001

⁶ Idem, *Interesele României la Dunăre și Marea Neagră*, Editura Universității Naționale de Apărare “Carol I”, București, 2007

⁷ Mircea Cosma, *De la geopolitică la geostrategie*, Editura Academiei Trupelor de Uscat, Sibiu, 1999

⁸ Vasile Marin, *Geopolitica și noile provocări ale secolului XXI*, Editura Universității “Transilvania”, Brașov, 2004

⁹ Ion Pâlșoiu, *Geopolitica – știință interdisciplinară*, Universitaria, Craiova, 2006

¹⁰ Silviu Costachie, *Geografie politică: o nouă abordare*, Editura Universității din București, București, 2004

¹¹ Voicu Bodocan, *Geografie politică*, Presa Universitară Clujeană, Cluj Napoca, 1997

¹² Teodor Simion, *Geopolitica Mării Negre și a spațiului pontic*, Pro Universitaria, București, 2022

¹³ Adrian-Vasile Popa, *Geopolitică și globalizare. Note de curs*, Top Form, București, 2023

¹⁴ Gabriel Micu, *Bessarabia, Romania and the Great Powers' geopolitics (1914 - 1947)*, Pro Universitaria, București, 2013

¹⁵ Centrul de Geopolitică și Antropologie Vizuală, *Geopolitica integrării europene*, Editura Universității din București, 2003

- audience, represented especially by students in geopolitical or related profiles, professors specialized in the profile, and the public passionate about knowledge beyond the superficial texts available online.
2. Quantitatively, this chapter is impressive. And I didn't even refer to the hundreds of articles published in Romanian geopolitics and political geography journals. I didn't even mention the fruit of the publishing house's collaboration with the Romanian translators, which resulted in the Romanian language editions of some prestigious titles from abroad. As examples, we can refer here to the work with universal circulation signed by Jacques Ancel¹, Thayer Mahan², Paul Claval³, Aymeric Chauprade și François Thual⁴, Robert Kaplan⁵, Aleksandr Dughin (la Bucharest⁶ and Chisinau⁷).
 3. The institutional support of the research direction of international geopolitics consists of universities (which financed, printed, and distributed the volumes in support of the educational process), and publishing houses (which collaborated with authors and reviewers specialized in geopolitics and disseminated their product to the public broad, on commercial criteria). Unfortunately, there are few research centers associated with universities, which are dedicated to geopolitics. The Center for Geopolitics and Visual Anthropology of the Faculty of Sociology and Social Work of the University of Bucharest aims to investigate two rather weakly connected fields and does not have a specialized journal or a presentation website.

The geopolitical approach to Romanian interests

The geopolitical analysis of the Romanian space, which directly continues the interwar tradition (to which it massively appeals through bibliographic lists and initial concepts), can be placed in two categories, according to the criterion of the generality of the geographical of the investigated space.

We can identify a category of integral approaches, that target the entire Romanian space, whether it is understood as political space (the Romanian state) or as geopolitical space (the space of interests of the Romanian nation). Here we mention the collaboration of Silviu Neguț, Vasile Cucu and Liviu Bogdan Vlad - *Geopolitica României*⁸ [Geopolitics of Romania], that of Vasile Simileanu and Radu Săgeata with the same title⁹, that of Silviu Costachie and Alexandru Eugen Oprescu, placed under the auspices of the Research Center for Regional Development and European Integration - *Geopolitica spațiului românesc*¹⁰ [Geopolitics of the Romanian space] or that of Cristian Barna and Adrian Popa, *România între prieteni și dușmani: decupaje geopolitice și hărți imagologice*¹¹ [Romania between friends and enemies: geopolitical cutouts and imagological maps]. Individual efforts have materialized in the case of Vasile Cucu, *Fragmente din geopolitica României*¹² [Fragments from Romania's geopolitics], Vasile Simileanu - *România. Tensiuni Geopolitice*¹³ [Romania. Geopolitical tensions] and Alba Iulia Catrinel Popescu - *România între „gura de rai”*

¹ Jacques Ancel, *Frontierele românești*, Domino, Pitești, 1999

² Thayer Mahan, *Influența puterii maritime asupra istoriei 1660-1783*, Editura Academiei de Înalte Studii Militare, București, 1999

³ Paul Claval, *Geopolitică și geostrategie. Gândirea politică, spațiul și teritoriul în secolul al XX-lea*, Corint, București, 2001

⁴ Aymeric Chauprade, François Thual, *Dicționar de geopolitică*, Corint, București, 2003

⁵ Robert Kaplan, *Răzburarea geografiei. Ce ne spune harta despre conflictele viitoare și lupta împotriva destinului*, Litera, București, 2014

⁶ Aleksandr Dughin, *Bazele geopoliticii vol.1 Viitorul geopolitic al Rusiei. Cu o postfață de prof. Ilie Bădescu*, Eurasiatica.ro, București, 2011; Idem, *Destin Eurasianist*, Mica Valahie, București, 2017

⁷ Idem, *A patra teorie politică, Rusia și ideile politice ale secolului XXI*, Universitatea Populară, Chișinău, 2014

⁸ Silviu Neguț, Vasile Cucu, Liviu Bogdan Vlad, *Geopolitica României*, Transversal, Târgoviște, 2004

⁹ Vasile Simileanu, Radu Săgeată, *Geopolitica României*, Top Form, București, 2009

¹⁰ Silviu Costachie, Alexandru Eugen Oprescu, *Geopolitica spațiului românesc*, Transversal, Târgoviște, 2010

¹¹ Cristian Barna, Adrian Popa, *România între prieteni și dușmani: decupaje geopolitice și hărți imagologice*, Editura Militară, București, 2020

¹² Vasile Cucu, *Fragmente din geopolitica României*, Transversal, Târgoviște, 2007

¹³ Vasile Simileanu, *România. Tensiuni Geopolitice*, Top Form București, 2003

geografică și răspântia geopolitică¹ [Romania between the geographical “mouth of heaven” and the geopolitical crossroad]. Several articles published in scientific journals complete the general views on Romanian geopolitics; being too many to be listed, we limit ourselves to pointing out the one of Vasile Simileanu, *România 1918-2018: un secol de geopolitică* [Romania 1918-2018: a century of geopolitics], published in the journal “Geopolitica”.

The tribute crowning a century of Romanian geopolitical research, together with the centenary of the creation of Greater Romania, is the volume *România 1918-2018. Un secol de frământări geopolitice* [Romania 1918-2018. A century of geopolitical turmoil], offered by the Publishing House of the Academy of Economic Studies in 2018².

The second category sums up research focused on the complicated spaces within the Romanian space. Snake Island is targeted (Dominuț Pădurean, *Insula Șerpilor și implicațiile statutului său juridic asupra intereselor geostrategice ale României în Marea Neagră*³ [Snake Island and the implications of its legal status on Romania's geostrategic interests in the Black Sea]; Vasile Cucu, Gheorghe Vlăsceanu, *Insula Șerpilor*⁴ [Snake Island]), Danube (Iulian Cârțână, Eduardt Samoilă, *Geopolitica Dunării. Dunărea în relațiile internaționale*⁵) [Geopolitics of the Danube. The Danube in international relations], Black Sea (the collective volume edited by the “Geopolitica” editorial office and printed at Top Form, *Marea Neagră. Confluente geopolitice*⁶ [Black Sea. Geopolitical confluences]) or Romania's position in the context of the Ukrainian crisis (Daniel Hrenciuc, *Geopolitica frontierelor României în contextul crizei ucrainene*⁷ [The geopolitics of Romania's borders in the context of the Ukrainian crisis]). In the journals, assuming again an inevitably partial and subjective selection, we find questions and answers about *Binomul geopolitic România – Marea Neagră* [The geopolitical binomial Romania - Black Sea] (Petre Deică)⁸, *Transnistria în jocul geopolitic al Rusiei* [Transnistria in Russia's geopolitical game] (again Petre Deică)⁹ or *Reunificarea României. Elemente de infrastructură geopolitică* [Reunification of Romania. Elements of geopolitical infrastructure] (Radu Baltașiu)¹⁰.

A very brief attempt to evaluate the concerns of contemporary Romanian geopolitical research can refer to the following:

1. We are witnessing a consistent and continuous effort to problematize the Romanian geopolitical space and the geopolitical interests of the Romanian state, which is materialized in a significant number of authored volumes, collaborative volumes, and collections of studies. An impossible to specify number is added through the efforts of a single author, of articles in local magazines.
2. Unfortunately, almost all the literature that we could identify is available in Romanian. An additional presence of Romanian authors in front of the foreign public seems necessary and urgent because the affirmation of Romanian positions can and must dialogue with those of geopoliticians from neighboring states and beyond.
3. As a research direction, contemporary Romanian geopolitics benefits from very solid theoretical support in the previous two research directions: our classical school and the Romanian reception of international theoretical paradigms.

¹ Alba Iulia Catrinel Popescu, *România între “gura de rai” geografică și răspântia geopolitică*, Editura Militară, București, 2023

² *România 1918-2018. Un secol de frământări geopolitice*, Editura Academiei de Studii Economice, București, 2018

³ Dominuț Pădurean, *Insula Șerpilor și implicațiile statutului său juridic asupra intereselor geostrategice ale României în Marea Neagră*, Muntenia, Constanța, 2004

⁴ Vasile Cucu, Gheorghe Vlăsceanu, *Insula Șerpilor*, Casa de Editură și Presă Viața Românească, București, 1991

⁵ Iulian Cârțână, Eduardt Samoilă, *Geopolitica Dunării. Dunărea în relațiile internaționale*, Transversal, Târgoviște, 2010

⁶ *Marea Neagră. Confluente geopolitice*, “Geopolitica. Revistă de Geografie Politică, Geopolitică și Geostrategie”, Vol. III, No. 14-15, Top Form, București, 2005

⁷ Daniel Hrenciuc, *Geopolitica frontierelor României în contextul crizei ucrainene*, Mega, Cluj-Napoca, 2016

⁸ Petre Deică, *Binomul geopolitic România – Marea Neagră*, “Geopolitica. Revistă de Geografie Politică, Geopolitică și Geostrategie”, Vol. II, No. 6, Top Form, București, 2004

⁹ Petre Deică, *Transnistria în jocul geopolitic al Rusiei*, “Revista Română de Geografie Politică”, Vol. II, No. 1, 2000

¹⁰ Radu Baltașiu, *Reunificarea României. Elemente de infrastructură geopolitică*, “Sociologie Românească”, Vol. XVI, No. 3-4, 2018

4. Most of the authors indicated in the previous chapters return with analytical contributions of the Romanian space, practically specializing and updating their contributions of a more general nature. However, unlike the previous ones, in the approach to Romanian current affairs, collaborative works predominate over those by a single author - a fact that can be explained by the interdisciplinary nature and the greater need for documentation of current events. Unfortunately, universities seem to have retreated after solving their need to offer fundamental paradigms to students.

Contribution of the journals

A recapitative look at the bibliographic sources indicated above shows us that the scientific articles in the geopolitical field were hosted in magazines profiled in the fields of geography, sociology, military sciences, international law, security studies, and intelligence. In addition to these, Romanian research also benefits from journal titles specialized in geopolitics; some have ended their existence, while others continue a consolidated course on the path of excellence.

A less noted evolution had “Revista Română de Geopolitică și Relații Internaționale” [“Romanian Journal of Geopolitics and International Relations”], as a publication of the Center for International Relations, Studies and Research within the Romanian University of Sciences and Arts “Gheorghe Cristea”. In 2009 (the first year of publication), the editors proclaimed that “the area of interest of the Romanian Journal of Geopolitics and International Relations varies from the analysis of global problems (risks and threats in the context of the globalization of international relations) to the identification of the effects of the European integration process on new member states and investigating the relations between the European Union and other global actors”¹. The university ceased activity in 2020, but disparate issues of the magazine's collection can be found online only from 2009-2012.

Since the year 2009, it has started working “Revista Română de Geografie Politică” [“Romanian Journal of Political Geography”], under the auspices of the University of Oradea. The editorial office played an important role in organizing international congresses of political geography, under the auspices of the International Union of Geography². Currently, the magazine is presented as “a scientific international publication. The Journal is issued under the aegis and with the financial support of the University of Oradea, Department of Geography, Tourism and Territorial Planning, Territorial Studies, and Analyses Centre (Romania), and IGU – Commission on Political Geography. It is published since 1999, entirely in English, with 2-3 issues per year”³.

The flagship of the geopolitical field remains the magazine “Geopolitica. Revistă de Geografie Politică, Geopolitică și Geostrategie” [“Geopolitics. Journal of Political Geography, Geopolitics and Geostrategy”], edited as a private project by the “Ion Conea” Geopolitics Association. This presents itself as “the quarterly publication of analyses and syntheses of political geography, geopolitics and geostrategy, dedicated to international events and their impact both politically and in the dynamics of the business environment. *Geopolitica* is elitist, with the target audience being the state administration, civil society, international organizations accredited in Romania, the educational environment in the country and abroad, military bodies, and the business environment”⁴. The latest themed issues look particularly consistent, with an internal economy of over 250 pages.

Indexing in prestigious international databases of “Revista Română de Geografie Politică” and “Geopolitica” represents a recognition of the quality of published research and, on the other hand, an invitation for researchers to contribute with topics that will be promoted internationally.

¹ *Centrul de Cercetare CRISC lansează primul număr al REVISTEI ROMANE DE GEOPOLITICA SI RELATII INTERNATIONALE*, <https://www.comunicatedepresa.ro/universitatea-romana-de-stiinte-si-arte/centrul-de-cercetare-crisc-lanseaza-primul-numar-al-revistei-romane-de-geopolitica-si-relatii-internationale> (31.01.2024)

² Radu Săgeată, *Geopolitică, geografie politică, “Geopolitica”, No. 8, 2017*, <https://www.geopolitic.ro/2017/08/geopolitica-geografie-politica/> (31.01.2024)

³ https://www.rrgp.uoradea.ro/Aims_and_Indexing.html (31.01.2024)

⁴ <https://www.geopolitic.ro/in/revista-geopolitica/> (31.01.2024)

Conclusions

Based on the repertoire of essential research on Romanian geopolitics, as shown above, without the pretense of achieving a complete list (but with the conviction that the essential has been recorded), it is already obvious that we are in front of the necessary and sufficient arguments to declare the existence and high scientific standards of a new Romanian geopolitical school. If we list its arguments/components, we insist on at least the following:

1. A historical tradition that provides works, concepts, and theories of enduring value and ready for updating in the post-Cold War context. This is the interwar school, which also extended its activities in the early years of the Second World War.
2. Several directions of research can be classified differently. Opting for the use of the content criterion, we notice a) the recovery of the interwar school; b) contributions to classical theories; c) the geopolitical approach to Romanian interests after 1989. The number of volumes, studies, and articles related to the analyzed period is impressive.
3. A body of specialized experts, which includes researchers, university professors, and members of private research organizations, who hold at least doctorates in fields that intersect geopolitics (history, sociology, economics, etc.). It is interesting the phenomenon of professors from military institutions of higher education, military or civilian, who after retirement continue to work in civilian institutions of higher education, in research organizations, or as journal editors. Percentagewise, this category predominates in the professional structure of the body of experts.
4. A solid institutional foundation, consisting of universities and their publishing houses (which have published courses and books of introductory value), private research centers (Geopolitics Association “Ion Conea”), and scientific journals placed under the auspices of universities or private organizations. We add private publishers, who have capitalized on expert work and public interest, managing to make a profit while satisfying and stimulating public interest in geopolitics.

Who is this impressive output of geopolitical research for? Beneficiaries include students and professors from military sciences, intelligence, geography, sociology, history, law, and more. As for the students, they have sources to prepare papers, undergraduate, master, and doctoral theses. It adds segments of the public, with intellectual concerns, for whom the geopolitical theme represents general culture.

But perhaps the most important function of the new school of geopolitical thought is not resolved. Its products should be a policy resource for foreign, military, and security policymakers. In advanced democracies, decision-makers (personally or rather through their advisors) draw inspiration from geopolitical reading and organize consultations and advice with researchers. Moreover, professionals with geopolitical work are selected for decision-making positions in relevant ministries or in the presidential apparatus (relevant is the example of the Republic of Moldova, where Oleg Serebrian is deputy prime minister in the current government, where he is responsible for the issue of Transnistrian secessionism). In Romania, these best practices are far from being implemented, leaving the impression that decision-makers prefer not to discuss and explain the reasons for the policies they initiate. Somehow, the dialogue between politicians and geopoliticians will have to start here.

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