

The Interlinkage between Sociology and Politics in the Approach of Anton Golopenția

IN A letter sent on 26 August 1936 to Ștefania Cristescu, Anton Golopenția voiced for the first time his fundamental concern about shedding more light on the relationship between sociology and politics²⁰. Monographic research was supposed to be a thorough scientific tool used to provide information about the Romanian social and economic reality to the political leaders of the state. And again for the first time, he stated the possibility—which became reality with the campaign *Identificarea Românilor de la Est de Bug* [Identification of Romanians East of the River Bug] (deployed between

1941 and 1944)—that sociological research would reveal the political representations of the population in terms of social government or the administrative functioning of the state.

Such a theory was further developed by Anton Golopenția in his PhD thesis entitled *Die Information der Staatsführung und die überlieferte Soziologie* [Information of State Leadership and Traditional Sociology], defended in Germany on 27 November 1936 at the School of Philosophy of Leipzig University²¹. On that occasion, Anton Golopenția produced theoretical arguments in support of his belief, previously voiced by Professor Gusti as well, that the ultimate role of the social sciences, which are in a relation of quasi-interdependence with the political leadership of the state, is to strengthen one's own nation²². Also known as *the informational science of political reality*, sociology may decisively help render the governmental and administrative performance of the public institutions more efficient and better performing, by providing professional, reliable and permanent information about the evolution of their nations and that of other peoples to the state leadership, so that the measures the latter would eventually adopt be consonant with the social reality²³. As such, sociology should be prospective in nature and able to produce forecasts²⁴. In order to carry through these duties of providing information to the state, Anton Golopenția believed that the many stand-alone institutions that were operating in isolation, such as technical committees, study teams, statistical offices, research departments or reporting services, required better and more efficient coordination under the umbrella of a single administrative structure²⁵.

Particular attention is paid to the manner in which social science research could help substantiate the foreign policy decisions. In a survey on the *Contribution of Social Sciences to the Conduct of Foreign Policy*, published in the *Sociologie Românească* magazine in May-June 1936, Anton Golopenția took the view that the results of sociological research could complete the information contained in diplomatic reports or press articles on the situation of our fellow nationals living outside the country's borders, as well as the of neighboring countries or the great powers²⁶. This theoretical conception developed by Golopenția about the relationship between social sciences and the domestic or foreign policy is also summarized in an article—“*Reflecțiile și îndoielile cu privire la știința națiunii românești*” [“Reflections and Doubts” about the Science of the Romanian Nation]—, published in May-June 1937 in the *Sociologie Românească* magazine, as a reaction to the criticism concerning the Gustian monographic method included in *Insemnări sociologice* [Sociological Notes] (April 1937), under the title “*Știința Națiunii. Reflecții și îndoieli asupra noilor inițiative ale Profesorului D. Gusti*” [“The Science of Nation”. Reflections and Doubts about the New Initiatives of Professor D. Gusti] by Dumitru Cristian Amzăr²⁷. In arguing the case of Academician Dimitrie Gusti and in support of his abovementioned theoretical conception, Anton Golopenția points out that

the purpose of social sciences, of the sciences that concern the communities where man lives, is to help the leaders of these communities. Thus, to my mind, the purpose of social sciences is [...], first and foremost, to facilitate the running of one's own state and people through the information provided by specialists to the political leaders. Social sciences perform their function by shedding light, in special researches, on the then current situation and on the evolutionary trends of the nation, both at domestic level and in relation with either hostile or friendly nations 28 .