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In search of racial types: soldiers and the anthropological mapping of the Romanian nation, 1914–44

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Abstract

Turda's article explores the diverse ways in which racial research conducted on prisoners-of-war (POWs) and soldiers contributed to the emergence of anthropological narratives of national identity in Romania between 1914 and 1944. It first discusses racial typologies produced by Austrian, German, Italian and Polish anthropologists investigating POWs during the First World War, and then examines how Romanian physicians and anthropologists engaged with these typologies while refining their own scientific and nationalist agendas. An essential corollary to this development was a strong commitment to the cultivation of distinct Romanian racial types. The interwar and Second World War periods witnessed the full flowering of a Romanian race science that accommodated a racial hierarchy as the basis for national difference. Moreover, by identifying the racial types purportedly constituting the Romanian nation, anthropologists not only hoped to develop a systematic racial inventory of Romania's ethnic communities, but also to reinforce the myth of ethnogenesis, which described the Romanians as worthy of their noble European origins and legitimized their territorial claims.

Keywords

anthropology; Eastern Europe; ethnogenesis; nationalism; race; race science; Romania; soldiers

In this article I discuss theories of racial difference, with a particular focus on anthropological studies carried out on Romanian soldiers between 1914 and 1944. Although the most influential narratives of national belonging during this period were often expressed in terms of culture and history, race gradually became a salient category. As an emerging discipline, physical anthropology gave new impetus to the search for a distinctive national character, and physical anthropologists—in Romania and elsewhere—endorsed cultural theories of ethnogenesis with facts and scientific arguments derived from their research on living populations.¹ This process, which began during the First World War, intensified after 1918 due to the growing significance of nationalism among Romanian scientists. Most of them pursued new interpretations of the idea of a national character,² while retaining their belief in the value of scientific research.³ This was expressed in a wide range of evolution-inspired accounts of Romanian history and identity, particularly during the 1930s and 1940s.

To be sure, the use of the military body for scientific research was not restricted to physical anthropology. The army—as Silviu Hariton argued—was 'one of the main social and institutional agencies where scientific instruments of quantification and standardization were applied as a part of the process of state-building, mainly with the aim of collecting, rationalising and social disciplining the necessary human resources'.⁴ The relationship between anthropology and the military is of particular interest due to the intensity with which categories of race and racial types crossed between them and fused with ideas of nationality and belonging in the post-First World War period. Aiming to record individual and collective identities, physical anthropology gradually became an integral part of a scientific tradition of interpreting the nation in biological terms.

In the first section, I briefly discuss the work of Austrian, German, Italian and Polish anthropologists in prisoner-of-war (POW) camps during the First World War. These camps made it possible for anthropologists to observe and interact with a wide range of ethnic groups on an unprecedented scale. The racial classifications produced not only reinforced cultural stereotypes about different ethnic groups in Europe at the time, but also validated specific anthropological practices, such as cataloguing racial types, that remained central to the discipline until 1945.

Anthropological research in POW camps in Central Europe may have only marginally dealt with Romanian soldiers, but the findings and commentaries were to endure, becoming embedded in the nascent Romanian anthropology after 1918. In trying to solidify a body of indigenous scholarship on race, Romanian anthropologists engaged with models of racial classification formulated by foreign scholars. In the second section, therefore, I turn to research conducted on soldiers by Romanian anthropologists during the interwar and war periods. My aim here is to show that, although indebted to techniques and taxonomies developed elsewhere, Romanian anthropological research did attempt to articulate its own narrative of racial belonging, one that was applied to both Romania's dominant ethnic group and its ethnic minorities.

After 1918 and throughout the interwar period, Romanian ruling elites were uneasy about the territorial integrity of their state. As a result, there was a strong political and nationalist dimension to Romanian anthropological projects, especially during the 1940s, when territorial and demographic changes were perceived as threats to Romania's future. To illustrate this point, I concentrate, in the final section, on Romanian anthropological research during the Second World War, particularly the research carried out in occupied territories in the East (Transnistria). Aside from military actions and the concentration camps, this was a region in which Romanian national identity was highly contested. In carrying out research on the local populations, physical anthropologists assisted the military, the government and official agencies by supplying statistical data, quantitative techniques, population surveys and other forms of scientific information. As the Romanian authorities were contemplating population transfers with neighbouring countries and the creation of an ethnically homogeneous state, anthropology was invested with an important mission: to identify and authenticate racially those individuals envisioned as fully-fledged members of the nation.

The anthropological gaze

POW camps during the First World War contained an impressive number of people, European and non-European alike: 2.5 million in Germany and 1.3 million in Austria-Hungary alone.⁵ This encounter between diverse ethnic groups had an immediate effect on anthropological research. As the Polish immunologist Ludwik Hirsztfeld acknowledged:

Through the accident of war, we happened to come to a part of the globe where more than elsewhere various races and peoples are brought together, so that the problems we are discussing, which otherwise would have necessitated long years of travel, could be brought in a relatively short time near to solution.⁶

It was this circumstance—that a vast number of people were displaced from their traditional cultures and places of origin—that physical anthropology used in order to strengthen its scientific authority over other disciplines in search of racial types and ethnic differences, particularly ethnography.

In reports submitted to national anthropological societies and articles published during this period, physical anthropologists emphasized the unique research possibilities provided by war. Anthropologists everywhere were affected by war, professionally and personally, but

few engaged so directly with it as the German-speaking anthropologists. 'After 1914', according to Andrew Evans,

German anthropologists fully mobilized their discipline for war, fashioning it into a political instrument. The impetus for this shift originated not with the state but with the scientists themselves, who in the context of war became increasingly eager to define their professional roles and the aims of their scientific work in political and nationalist terms.⁷

The racialization of the soldier was one direct consequence of this scientific engagement. As Monique Sheer pointed out:

the prisoners were viewed less in terms of what they had in common with the researchers or their fellow combatants on both sides of the front, and more decidedly from the point of view of what made them interesting for research: as carriers of ethnic and racial traits, waiting to be recorded by German and Austrian scientists.⁸

In other words, the purpose of anthropological research was cataloguing race and racial types. To make proper racial estimates required individual observation and teamwork, as illustrated by the anthropometric studies conducted in POW camps by the Austrian anthropologist Rudolf Pöch and his assistant Josef Weninger between 1915 and 1918.⁹ Other Austrian and German anthropologists soon joined in, most notably Viktor Lebzelter, Egon von Eickstedt and Otto Reche.¹⁰

Most of the ethnic groups investigated by Pöch and his teams were ethnic Russians, Ukrainians and Serbs, but occasionally he included Romanians from the Russian empire. Between July and September 1916, for instance, he measured and photographed twelve Romanians from Bessarabia;¹¹ and then eleven more in the winter of 1916 and the spring of 1917.¹² Five Romanians from the Old Kingdom were later added to these 'marginalized peoples of Eastern Europe',¹³ as Pöch called them. The Romanians from Moldavia and Bessarabia were grouped under the category 'Balkan people' (*Balkanvölker*), an ethnic group seen as an anthropological 'type' rather than a race.

Interestingly, Pöch's methodological preference was not for contemporary racial cartographies, such as those proposed by William Z. Ripley, who insisted that there were only three European races (Teutonic, Alpine (Celtic) and Mediterranean),¹⁴ or Joseph Deniker, who identified six primary races (Northern, Eastern, Ibero-Insular, Western or Cenevole, Littoral or Atlanto-Mediterranean, and Adriatic or Dinaric) and four sub-races (sub-Northern, Vistulian, North-Western and sub-Adriatic).¹⁵ The language of 'type', which Pöch employed in his research on the POWs (see Figure 1), mixed physical descriptions (obtained through anthropometric and photographic measurements) with the assumption that, following Mendelian laws, these soldiers inherited some 'elements' of their original race (*Stammrasse*).¹⁶ The role of the anthropologist was therefore to discover the 'original races' that made up a certain ethnic group.¹⁷ Pöch cast doubt over the conflation of races with ethnic groups, arguing in 1919: 'we anthropologists know that these "Völker" are indeed not identical with races, but that every ethnic group [*Völkerschaft*] contains a specific percentage of racial mixture and in this way is very specifically characterized anthropologically.'¹⁸

Not all physical anthropologists doubted the scientific use of racial taxonomies. In his research on POWs, the German anthropologist Otto Reche, for instance, described some Romanians as belonging to Mongolian and Mediterranean races; others, particularly those from 'the Carpathian mountains, however, demonstrated a strong strain of Nordic blood and often possessed blond hair and blue eyes'.¹⁹ The Italian Renato Biasutti was another

anthropologist who employed racial types in his research on POWs.²⁰ The Romanian soldiers analysed by Biasutti were from the regions of Transylvania, Maramure and the Banat. Biasutti found corroboration for his research in work by other anthropologists, particularly Eugène Pittard,²¹ Augustin Weisbach,²² and Vincenzo Giuffrida-Ruggeri.²³ Operating with a broad conceptual framework, Biasutti nevertheless identified only three main racial types: Dinaric (dominant among the Croats and to some extent the Hungarians and the Slovenes, but very rare among the Romanians); Alpine (characterizing mostly the Slovenes and some of the Croats, but hardly ever the Hungarians and the Romanians); and Carpathian (prevalent among the Romanians, especially in Transylvania). There were also other racial influences, Biasutti concluded, particularly of the Nordic type (as in the case of the Slovenes or the Romanians from Bukovina) and the Mongoloid type (as in the case of the Hungarians).²⁴

The ambition to develop a truly systematic science of race meant that anthropology needed to rely on solid scientific arguments rather than on a vocabulary that was fluid and undermined by divergent interpretations. Physical descriptions of race, especially, were severely criticized for their lack of conceptual rigour. In this context, pioneering work by physiologists, immunologists and pathologists, like Karl Landsteiner—who discovered human blood groups (A, B, O) around 1900—and Ludwik Hirsfeld—who confirmed that the percentage of blood groups in a population varied according to racial origin—provided anthropology with much-needed scientific tools.

Ludwik Hirsfeld's serological research in the POW camps in Salonika was a pioneering anthropological study.²⁵ Joining the Serbian army in 1915, Hirsfeld spent the rest of the war in Salonika, serving as adviser on serology and bacteriology, and running a bacteriology laboratory with his wife Hanka. Hirsfeld was the first to study the blood groups in large numbers of soldiers (8,000) congregated in military camps on the Macedonian front. He found significant differences in the geographical distribution of the AB blood groups:

the nearer to Western and Central Europe the more A and the less B, the nearer to Africa and Asia, especially to India, the less A and the more B. The peoples lying between Central and Eastern Europe on one side, and Africa and Asia on the other—that is to say, the peoples of the Mediterranean basin—show the intermediate type.²⁶

Romanian soldiers were not mentioned, but it is safe to assume that Hirsfeld would have placed them in the 'European type', together with the Serbs, Bulgarians and Greeks. Crucially, by demonstrating that blood groups were inherited according to Mendelian laws of heredity,²⁷ Hirsfeld provided anthropology with a new method for classifying human 'races' by biochemical means rather than by using highly contested anthropometric features. As Pauline Mazumdar has aptly noted, blood-group serology 'promised to be a new and scientific way to define populations, to distinguish races from each other, and to trace their origins, migration routes, and boundaries'.²⁸

The long-term significance of the anthropometric and blood-group research carried out on POWs by anthropologists like Pösch, Biasutti, Reche and Hirsfeld was that it brought the concept of racial difference firmly into the precincts of anthropology. Scholars, like Andrew Evans, have argued that it was during this period that anthropology, in Germany in particular, 'began to transform itself into *Rassenkunde*, [an] overtly racist brand of racial science', and that anthropologists abandoned 'liberal definitions of race, nation, and *Volk*, the same categories that had been eroded and blurred in the practice of wartime anthropology'.²⁹ In other countries, like Romania, the tendency was to turn to the idea of 'nation' in order to explore the social and national role of anthropology. Importantly, as we shall see in the next section, anthropology provided the Romanian myth of ethnogenesis

with ideas of racial and historical continuity. To craft the ideal Romanian nation into its authentic form was first and foremost to authenticate and describe it anthropologically.

Soldiers as models of racial types

After the First World War, Romania's territory greatly expanded as it took in Transylvania, the Banat, northern Bukovina and Bessarabia. Such a substantial territorial transformation also resulted in a significant increase in the number of ethnic minorities, almost 28 per cent of the total population.³⁰ Not surprisingly, then, addressing Romania's ethnic diversity became central to all anthropological research devised in the interwar period. Similar to history and literature, anthropology too generated multiple meanings of racial belonging. What, then, were the distinctive racial features responsible for differentiating Romanians from other ethnic groups?

The previous section explored the role played by foreign anthropologists in shaping racial typologies that Romanian anthropologists could, in turn, adapt to their narratives about the nation. If, during the First World War, anthropologists like Rudolf Pösch and Felix von Luschan had been concerned with the authentication of racial variation, by the 1930s anthropologists like Otto Reche and Hans F. K. Günther had shifted their interest towards the creation of a European racial hierarchy, within which each race would be carefully assigned a place. When Romanian anthropologists invoked this emerging racial cartography, it was significantly not to consecrate the superiority of the 'Nordic race', but to legitimize their efforts at reading racial history in nationalist terms.

Yet a territorial and political unit like Greater Romania did not immediately eliminate cultural and historical differences among Romanians from its diverse regions, previously belonging to the Austro-Hungarian and Russian empires. Common language alone did not suffice for the realization of Romania's nationalist myth of ethnic homogeneity. Anthropology, it was believed, could identify with precision the common racial characteristics of the Romanians. It was now possible to make the racial study of the Romanians into a national science. By conducting technical experiments such as cataloguing and classifying racial types and the blood groups of the population, anthropologists hoped to create what they considered to be scientific knowledge about the nation. In other words, anthropology aimed at creating a new national ontology, according to which the physical attributes of the nation were deemed to be as important as its cultural and spiritual unity.³¹

The director of the institute of anatomy at the University of Cluj, Victor Papilian, was one of the first Romanian physicians who, immediately after the war, grasped the importance of anthropology for charting Romania's new ethnic map.³² In 1921 he published the research carried out on 100 Romanian soldiers recovering in the military hospital in Cluj, demonstrating the existence of racial differences not only between Romanians and Hungarians but also between Romanians from the Old Kingdom and those from Transylvania.³³ Papilian strengthened this view in 1923 by comparing cranial measurements of 230 Romanian soldiers from the garrison at Cluj.³⁴ Given the almost imperceptible physical distinctions between Romanians from various regions, and the very high degree of ethnic mixture, this anthropometric enterprise was arduous and often unconvincing. Yet scientists did not give up. Another professor at the University of Cluj, the paediatrician Gheorghe Popovici, endorsed Papilian's anthropological commentaries on the Romanian racial structure. In an oft-quoted 1924 article, Popovici addressed the possible racial similarities and differences in Romania.³⁵ Following the serological methods proposed by Emil von Dungern and Ludwik Hirsfeld, Popovici also engaged with two contentious topics: the use of race in explaining national differences, and the racial origins of the ethnic groups in Romania, especially in Transylvania.³⁶

With respect to race, Popovici denied its nationalist value. 'In the Balkans', he noted, 'race cannot explain national differences'.³⁷ With the advent of serology, anthropology was endowed with a new method—'more objective, more precise, and more subtle'—that could account for 'differences in blood structure that are more profound and less alterable than differences detected by previous researches'.³⁸ Serology served several functions. On the one hand, it proved that within the same 'race' there were different 'serological races' (or 'bio-chemical races', according to Hirszfeld). Romania's racial homogeneity was thus undeniably questioned. On the other hand, serology demonstrated that blood characteristics were transmitted according to Mendel's laws of heredity, unconditioned by the natural or social environment. Corroborating the results obtained by Hirszfeld in Salonica with those of Oskar Weszeczky and Frigyes Verzár in Hungary,³⁹ and Sabin Manuil in Romania,⁴⁰ Popovici added his own contribution to the discussion on the biological index of the Romanians. He thus analysed 12,000 individuals, including soldiers from different ethnic groups.

The Romanians from the mountainous regions of Transylvania, Popovici claimed, differed in their blood properties from Romanians in the Old Kingdom: as a general rule, the more exposed a region was to the migrations of the Middle Ages, the lower it was in the European group A (and higher in group B respectively). This geographical variance within one specific ethnic group was further tested by concentrating on ethnically mixed sub-regions in Transylvania, where Romanian, Hungarian and German villages were situated next to each other. According to Popovici, the serological characteristics of each group reflected their ethnic affiliation, regardless of the geographical vicinity and historical proximity of other ethnic groups. Serology could ultimately indicate—Popovici reaffirmed—whether common racial elements found in different ethnic groups could be explained by a similar origin or not. Based on this assumption, Popovici concluded that the plausible explanation as to why Romanians and Hungarians living in the same region in Transylvania had approximately similar racial indexes was that they might have had the same racial origin, namely, an autochthonous race whose existence pre-dated the arrival of the Hungarians in the Carpathian basin.⁴¹

Popovici's alternative reading of the established anthropological canon nevertheless dwelt upon certain racial elements common to all Romanians. The Austrian anthropologist and director of the anthropological department of the Naturhistorisches Museum in Vienna, Viktor Lebzelter, adopted a similar strategy. In 1932, with the support of the Romanian government, Lebzelter measured 4,339 Romanian soldiers from around the country, as follows: 1,641 from Transylvania, Crișana, Maramureș and the Banat; 2,057 from Oltenia, Muntenia and Dobruđa; and 641 from Moldavia and Bukovina. According to Lebzelter, the Romanians of the Old Kingdom (Oltenia, Muntenia and Dobruđa) and Bessarabia were dolichocephalic (long-headed with a cephalic index below 76), while those from Transylvania, the Banat and Bukovina were mostly brachycephalic (broad, round heads with a cephalic index between 81 and 85.4).⁴² Lebzelter's anthropological research thus reinforced the line of demarcation between Romania's ethnic communities and re-emphasized Romanian racial authenticity and historical continuity.

There was, however, something more than the qualitative evidence of Romanian's racial diversity. Lebzelter also endorsed autochthonous claims of ethnogenesis: 'the Romanians from the Danubian plains, Moldavia and the central and south regions of the Carpathians are the descendants of Roman colonists not only in their language but also in their blood.'⁴³ This narrative of racial origins may have chimed with Romanian nationalism but Lebzelter did not include Transylvania or other regions obtained by Romania in 1918. Not surprisingly, such views drew little criticism from Romanian anthropologists.⁴⁴ What Lebzelter did not take into account was that, by the 1930s, the Romanian nation itself

became an anthropological trope based on successive interpretations that were as much biological as cultural and historical.

If Popovici focused mostly on Transylvania, Ioan G. Botez, professor of palaeontology and anthropology at the University of Iași, turned his attention to the eastern regions of Romania. In 1937 he conducted research on 1,124 soldiers stationed at the garrison at Iași, with the aim of studying their height and cephalic index.⁴⁵ The group included 936 individuals from Moldavia and 188 from Bukovina. While the subjects from Moldavia were all categorized as ethnic Romanians, those from Bukovina were mixed, consisting of 76 Romanians, 57 Germans and 55 Ruthenians. Unsurprisingly, Botez uncovered racial differences between the soldiers analysed, with the Romanians considered to be brachycephalic, the Germans hyperbrachycephalic (cephalic index over 85.5), and the Ruthenians mezocephalic (heads of medium breadth, with a cephalic index between 76 and 80).

Botez also remarked that, in terms of their racial characteristics (height and cephalic index), the Romanians from Bukovina more closely resembled their kin from western Romanian rather than those from the eastern and southeastern regions.⁴⁶ Yet the representation of racial types was not a straightforward process. Botez admitted that anthropological measurements of soldiers were methodologically prejudiced. When drafted, young men were selected according to their health, physical ability and other medical criteria; to build an all-encompassing racial taxonomy of their original ethnic group was therefore problematic, as only healthy individuals were accepted into the army. Ultimately, these soldiers were products of social selection, which often told anthropologists more about their family history than about their alleged racial belonging. These cautionary observations aside, Botez—like other anthropologists before and after him—emphasized the unique research possibilities offered by the ethnic variation among soldiers. To write anthropologically about soldiers' racial composition was to write about otherness and ethnic heterogeneity. But there was no consensus about Romania's racial history. Theoretical fragmentation and compartmentalization persisted.⁴⁷ This prompted a professor at the Institute of Hygiene and Public Health in Bucharest, Gheorghe Banu, to deplore in 1940 'the deficiency of our racial researches'. What was needed, Banu argued, was the study of race in broader and more integrated terms.

Problems of heredity, race and biotypology are still unsolved. The standardization of methods must be organized, competent teams of research workers must be prepared, research made in every region, etc., so that we may be able to set up *a map of the real Romanian racial types*.⁴⁸

With the territorial changes of the 1940s,⁴⁹ anthropology continued to see itself as the leading science of the nation, now called to strengthen racial unity and national belonging. As the Second World War engulfed Romania, with the rest of Europe, the nationalist appropriation of anthropology became a pressing concern: how could one identify the borders of the Romanian nation when Greater Romania no longer existed?

Romanian *Ostforschung*: the war in the East

During the Second World War, a number of Romanian scientists articulated a more nationalistic anthropological approach. They invested familiar racial taxonomies developed during the interwar period with an intensity that was suggestive of the broader national and territorial crisis Romania had experienced after 1940. This aggressive form of Romanian nationalism was based on ideas of race, alongside Romania's 'civilizational mission' in the East. Of particular importance in this context was the anthropological research carried out in the East, particularly in Transnistria, a territory administered by Romania between August

1941 and January 1944.⁵⁰ This research gave new scientific authority to the Romanian state's attempts to control its diverse ethnic groups and legitimize its power over them.

The Romanian *Ostforschung* was organized and supervised by the Central Institute of Statistics, together with the Romanian Social Institute and the civil government of Transnistria.⁵¹ The intense politicization and total subordination of these institutions to the Romanian government is illustrative of the dynamic and symbiotic relationship between science and politics during the war.⁵² To legitimate Romania's policy in the occupied East, scientists were required to produce social, economic, cultural and racial evaluations of the local Romanian population.⁵³ For the first time, they faced the challenge of applying their methodologies outside their country and research institutes, and in a war environment. Yet they actively complied; at long last, their expertise was required in the service of the nation.⁵⁴ The ultimate goal was, according to Vladimir Solonari, 'to restore Greater Romania, to extend its borders, and thus to guarantee the country an important place in a new Europe and a new world dominated by Nazi Germany'.⁵⁵

The anthropologist assigned to conduct research in Transnistria was the director of the bio-anthropological section of the Central Institute of Statistics, Iordache F c oaru, with his wife Tilly as assistant.⁵⁶ After completing his doctorate in anthropology at the Ludwig-Maximilian University in Munich in 1931 under Theodor Mollison,⁵⁷ F c oaru assiduously researched and assembled an outstanding list of publications devoted to Romania's biological problems.⁵⁸ By the 1940s F c oaru had become a recognized authority on anthropology and eugenics, concerned as much with mapping the racial structure of the Romanian national body as with protecting it through applied eugenics.⁵⁹ His scientific views gravitated around the dominant myths of Romanian nationalism, and this commitment was equally in evidence in his research in Transnistria (see Figure 2).

In his 1943 report, F c oaru outlined the importance of these racial-biological investigations in the East for defining Romania's territorial expansion and its policies of ethnic cleansing: 'Racial research about our co-nationals living outside the borders of the country has both a scientific and biopolitical importance.'⁶⁰ It was essential to establish the racial composition of the local Romanian population, F c oaru maintained, so that it could be scientifically determined who could be resettled in Romania and who could not.⁶¹ Having lived for centuries next to the Russians, it was to be assumed that many Romanians were of 'mixed origins'. Considered to be predominantly of Asiatic origin, the Russians were deemed Romania's 'greatest racial danger', with Hungarians coming second.⁶² Through this racial screening, F c oaru hoped to identify those Romanians 'contaminated with Asian blood', thus preventing their eventual resettlement and ultimately further racial mixing. The methods employed were anthropometric (height, cephalic, facial and nasal indexes, eye and hair colour), with emphasis on both 'the ethnic community in general' and 'each race in particular'.⁶³ The aim was to prove the high proportion of 'European racial elements' within the population's biological structure and, more broadly, to understand how this population fitted into Romania's racial history.

F c oaru's anthropological research in Transnistria served as the basis for two further studies, published in 1943 and 1944, respectively.⁶⁴ The first study concentrated on the 'bio-racial value' of each of the territories that before 1940 belonged to Greater Romania, while the second put forward an interpretation of the autochthonous Romanian race. First, F c oaru surveyed the 'biological value' of all known European races, insisting on their biological and spiritual value. He divided them into 'over-endowed races' (+), 'medium-endowed races' (±), and 'under-medium races' (-). According to this racial diagram, Swedes were placed at the top of the chart with (+) 80 per cent, (±) 0 per cent and (-) 20 per

cent; Romanians were sixth, based on the following data (+) 26 per cent, ($\pm$) 33 per cent and ($-$) 41.⁶⁵

F c oaru then focused on the 'biological value' of the population from Romania's 'western provinces' (Bukovina, the Banat, Transylvania and Cri ana-Maramure), the 'eastern provinces' (Moldavia, Bessarabia and Transnistria), and the 'southern provinces' (Oltenia, Muntenia and Dobrudja).⁶⁶ Examining both rural and urban populations (male and female), F c oaru employed four criteria upon which the 'bio-racial level' of these samples of the population was established: economic efficiency, social mobility, military propensity and spiritual development.⁶⁷ The result was, according to F c oaru, highly indicative of which geographical areas preserved Romania's most authentic European racial types. Thus, the 'western provinces (Bukovina, Transylvania and the Banat) are at the highest biological level; the eastern provinces (Moldavia, Bessarabia and Transnistria) occupy an intermediary place, while the southern provinces (Oltenia, Muntenia and Dobrudja) are last'.⁶⁸

Such an interpretation was somehow consistent with previous anthropological commentaries about Romania's racial diversity put forward by Papilian, Popovici, Lebzelter and Botez; none of these authors, however, went as far as to use this racial diversity in order to suggest an internal racial hierarchy within Romania. In short, F c oaru's theory was that the various waves of migrations and racial incursions, whatever their source, that had penetrated Romanian territories since ancient times had been absorbed by the dominant autochthonous racial type. Believing in the existence of superior (Nordic-European) and inferior (Asian) races prompted F c oaru also to envision a superior racial type within the Romanian nation, which he then located in Romania's 'western provinces'. Undoubtedly, F c oaru was ideologically predisposed to racial theories proposed by Nazi scientists, but his Nordicism did not restrain him from pronouncing the superiority of the Romanian nation. He did this by subsuming the racial types found in Romania within the 'Nordic-European races'.

In his 1944 article, F c oaru named this autochthonous racial type 'Carpathian'. No reference was made to Biasutti's article and terminology, although it is clear that F c oaru was familiar with the Italian anthropologist's work. Similar to Biasutti, F c oaru described the 'Carpathian race' as 'a race of tall, brachycephalic people',⁶⁹ predominant in Romania's mountainous regions. This group of people was, F c oaru argued, the archetypal model of the autochthonous Romanian race: 'the most beautiful and biologically endowed' of all races.⁷⁰ Finally, F c oaru's argument for the 'Carpathian race' also connects several broader themes already encountered in this article, most notably the relationship between racial type and national identity. He did not hesitate to build a historical genealogy for the 'Carpathian race' going back to the visual representation of the Dacian prisoners immortalized on Emperor Trajan's column in Rome, commissioned after he conquered Dacia in 106 ACE.

At a time when ethnic distinctions between the Romanian majority and various ethnic minorities were being reinforced within the borders of the Romanian state, anthropology entered the final struggle to articulate a meaningful Romanian national identity. During the early 1940s a more racist interpretation became entrenched among Romanian anthropologists and eugenicists. As F c oaru confessed, naming the autochthonous Romanian race 'Carpathian' also had 'a nationalist-sentimental reason: the name shows reverence for our mountains, which are joined to the body of the nation. For millennia, these mountains were the cradle of Romanianism'.⁷¹ As the end of the war neared, such statements became more numerous, in association with the Romanian state's determination to regain northern Transylvania from Hungary.

The soldier and his racial belonging

For most of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, races were believed to be biological entities, an assumption based on a wide range of physical and mental characteristics. Between 1914 and 1944 anthropologists attempted to uncover and catalogue these characteristics, building up a narrative of racial difference that sustained and transformed anthropology's evolution as a scientific discipline. The range of racial types we have encountered within and outside the Romanian anthropological tradition powerfully illustrates how conceptually versatile the debate on race was at the time.

More sustained research is needed to determine the extent to which the military and war redefined nationalistic projects. Racializing the soldier was—as this article suggests—only the pretext for a broader anthropological project: mapping the ethnic structure of the Romanian nation. In general terms, war and the military provided anthropologists with a unique opportunity to study distinct ethnic groups; in particular, it sought to define the soldiers according to racial types. Research on POWs by anthropologists like Pösch, Hirsfeld and Biasutti helped to forge an anthropological narrative of racial belonging with which Romanian physicians like Papilian and Popovici engaged critically during the 1920s. Reading the works produced by these authors provides critical insights into the emergence of anthropological thinking in interwar Romania. In their emphasis on racial differences, these anthropological narratives sought to reconstitute the authentic racial commonalities among Romania's multi-ethnic population and not to ascribe racist values. It was in the same spirit that anthropologists like Lebzelter and Botez narrated their research on Romanian soldiers during the 1930s.

Yet the continuing allegiance of many Romanian anthropologists to nationalist ideas, particularly during the 1940s, cast doubt on their scientific objectivity. Behind the general anthropological argument about racial types there was a wide range of nationalist views and attitudes. Some of this nationalist appropriation of race emerges in a very clear light in F c oaru's research in Transnistria. Quite often science endorsed official politics. Similar to other European countries, most notably Germany, the progressive *Gleichschaltung* of science in Romania during the Second World War not only shaped but also defined anthropology.

The racialization of the soldier played a crucial role in the anthropological imagination. Between 1914 and 1944 anthropologists passionately debated the meaning and interpretation of race. But in Romania, this was not simply a debate about race. The state created in 1918, with its contested territories and significant numbers of ethnic minorities, was more constraining than liberating. Unable to avoid the pressures of a nationalist political culture, each anthropologist redefined the canons of the discipline for his and her own purpose. Anthropologists responded to the territorial difficulties faced by the Romanian state during the 1940s by promoting a new mythology of national belonging thoroughly suffused with ideas of historical continuity and racial distinctiveness.

For the Romanian anthropologists discussed in this article, a nationalist anthropology explained their attachment to the significance of both race and nation. Ultimately, what emerges from this discussion of anthropological studies carried out on Romanian soldiers is the constant interaction between national traditions and international discourses and practices. To further explore this interaction, more comprehensive and synthetic works should be undertaken: studies that move away from narrow definitions of scientific traditions and include the juxtaposition of Romanian anthropology with its European context.

Biography

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9. See: Pösch, Rudolf. I. Bericht über die von der Wiener Anthropologischen Gesellschaft in den k.u.k. Kriegsgefangenenlagern veranlaßten Studien. *Mitteilungen der Anthropologischen Gesellschaft in Wien*. 1915; vol. 45:219–35. ; Pösch, Rudolf. II. Bericht über die von der Wiener Anthropologischen Gesellschaft in den k.u.k. Kriegsgefangenenlagern veranlaßten Studien. *Mitteilungen der Anthropologischen Gesellschaft in Wien*. 1916; vol. 46:107–31. ; Pösch, Rudolf. III. Bericht über die von der Wiener Anthropologischen Gesellschaft in den k.u.k. Kriegsgefangenenlagern veranlaßten Studien. *Mitteilungen der Anthropologischen Gesellschaft in Wien*. 1917; vol. 47:77–100. and, finally: Pösch, Rudolf. IV. Bericht über die von der Wiener Anthropologischen Gesellschaft in den k.u.k. Kriegsgefangenenlagern veranlaßten Studien. *Mitteilungen der Anthropologischen*

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 12. Two Moldavians were from POW camp no. 8; the other eleven were from POW camp no. 9. See: Pösch. IV. Bericht über die von der Wiener Anthropologischen Gesellschaft; p. 146–7.
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 17. Ibid. p. 79
 18. Pösch; Evans. *Anthropology at War*; p. 202
 19. Ibid. p. 149 For a recent discussion of Reche’s racial research, see: Boaz, Rachel E. *Search of ‘Aryan Blood’: Serology in Interwar and National Socialist Germany*. Central European University Press; Budapest and New York: 2012.
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 21. For example: Pittard, Eugène. *Anthropologie de la Roumanie: contribution à l’étude des Tsiganes dits Roumains*. *L’Anthropologie*. 1902; vol. 13:321–8.
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 24. Biasutti. Osservazioni antropologiche su prigionieri di Guerra; p. 182–3. Worth noting for our discussion here is Biasutti’s use of the term ‘Carpathian’, no doubt based on the fact that the Romanian and Hungarian POWs were originally from areas around the Carpathian mountains. One would have expected this term to have an immediate impact on Romanian anthropological narratives. However, as we shall see in the next section, it was not until the 1940s—at the height of nationalist debates about the ‘lost territories’ of Bessarabia, northern Bukovina and northern Transylvania—that Romanian physical anthropologists began using the term to refer to an ‘autochthonous Romanian race’.
 25. See: Hirszfild, Ludwik; Hirszfild, Hanka. Essai d’application des methods sérologiques au problème des races. *L’Anthropologie*. 1918; vol. 29:505–37. and Hirszfild and Hirszfild, ‘Serological differences between the blood of different races’.
 26. Hirszfild. Serological differences between the blood of different races; p. 678
 27. Already in the 1910s the German internist Emil von Dungern and then his assistant at the Heidelberg Institut für Experimentelle Krebsforschung (Institute for Experimental Cancer Research), Ludwik Hirszfild, proved that blood groups were inherited according to Mendelian laws. See: Mazumdar, Pauline M. H. *Species and Specificity: An Interpretation of the History of Immunology*. Cambridge University Press; Cambridge and New York: 1995. ; Spörri, Myriam. “Reines Blut”, “gemischtes Blut”: Blutgruppen und Rassen zwischen 1900 und 1933. In: Lauper, Anja, editor. *Transfusionen: Blutbilder und Biopolitik in der Neuzeit*. Diaphanes; Berlin: 2005. p. 211–25. and Schneider, William H. Chance and social setting in the application of the discovery of

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52. The importance of the Central Institute of Statistics within the new biopolitical context of the early 1940s is illustrated by the national census it organized in 1941. The census was extended to northern Bukovina and Bessarabia after their re-integration into Romania in the summer of 1941. An impressive number of 150 specialists were involved in this activity. The research in Transnistria was part of this vast statistical mapping, the ultimate goal of which was to establish this region's ethnic composition in an orderly and regulated manner. See also: Nistor, Ion I. Aspecte geopolitice și culturale din Transnistria. Monitorul oficial și imprimăriile statului; Bucharest: 1942.
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59. As illustrated by the review of Fălcăoaru's ideas in the fascist newspaper *Il Tevere*: Landra, Guido. Alla ricerca di una formula razziale. Il Tevere. Jul 3.1941 :3.

60. F c oaru, Iordache. Cercet ri antropologice în patru sate române ti din Transnistria; 1943. p. 1 : United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, Washington D.C., Fond 2242, opis no. 1, RG-31.004. It is an impressive report, of over 120 pages, accompanied by numerous photographs of various racial types. Some preliminary results were published as F c oaru, Iordache. Rezultatul unor cercet ri antropologice în Transnistria. Buletin eugenic i biopolitic. 1942; vol. 13:141–2.
61. Ibid. p. 2 It was estimated that there were between 200,000 and 300,000 Romanians in Transnistria. After 1940 a number of population transfer plans were discussed in Romania, most notably by Sabin Manuil , the director of the Central Institute of Statistics. See: Bolovan, Sorina; Bolovan, Ioan. Problemele demografice ale Transilvaniei între tiin i politic (1920–1945): studiu de caz. In: Mure anu, Camil, editor. Transilvania între medieval i modern. Centrul de Studii Transilvane; Cluj: 1996. p. 119-131. ; Achim, Viorel. Proiectul guvernului de la Bucure ti vizând schimbul de popula ie româno-ruso-ucrainean. Revista istoric . 2000; vol. 11(no. 5–6): 395–421. ; Achim, Viorel. The Romanian population exchange project elaborated by Sabin Manuil in October 1941. Annali dell’Istituto storico italo-germanico in Trento/Jahrbuch des italienisch-deutschen Instituts in Trient. 2001; vol. 27:593–617. and Solonari. Purifying the Nation. p. 303-30.
62. F c oaru. Cercet ri antropologice în patru sate române ti din Transnistria; p. 3
63. Ibid. p. 5
64. F c oaru, Iordache. Valoarea biorasial a na iunilor europene i a provinciilor române ti. Buletin eugenic i biopolitic. 1943; vol. 14(no. 9–10):278–310. ; F c oaru, Iordache. Contribu ie la studiul compozi iei morfologice a românilor din Republica Moldoveneasc . Imprimeriile Institutului Statistic; Bucharest: 1944.
65. F c oaru. Valoarea biorasial a na iunilor europene i a provinciilor române ti; p. 283
66. Ibid. p. 291
67. Ibid. p. 292
68. Ibid. p. 306
69. F c oaru. Contribu ie la studiul compozi iei morfologice a românilor din Republica Moldoveneasc . p. 6
70. Ibid. p. 7
71. Ibid.

Anthropologische Nr.:	Ort:	Geschlecht:	Photographie: Gesicht Körper Stereoskop.			Aufgenommen:	
	Tag:		Gipsform:			Gemessen:	
			Phonogramm:			Somatoskopiert:	
Volksstamm:			Volksstamm der Mutter:			Sprachen des Vaters:	
						Sprachen der Mutter:	
Vorname:			Beruf:			Sprachen:	
						lesen	
						schreiben	
Familienname:			Alter:	Geschwister:	männl. weibl.	ledig verheir. verwit.	Kind der Mutter
Geburtsort:			Geburtsort des Vaters:			Geburtsort der Mutter:	
			 km von entfernt.			 km von entfernt.	
Bezirk:							
Kreis:							
Land:							
Staat:							
Wohnort:	Land:	Staat:		Ohrmuschel: anliegend, abstehend; Henkelohren. Ohrspitze: Helixrand: stark eingerollt; oben, hinten gesäumt; ungesäumt. Ohrläppchen: groß, klein; frei, angewachsen; fehlend; gefurcht.			
Hautfarbe:	Behaarung:	sehr stark	stark	mittel	schwach	sehr schwach	fehlend
Kopfhautfarbe:	Oberlippe						
Kopfhautform:	Kinn						
Gesichtsform:	Backen						
	Rumpf						
	Achselhöhle						
	Schamberg						
	Arme						
Irisfarbe:	Beine						
Merkmale der Lidspalte:				Kiefer: Prognathie: Orthognathie, Opisthognathie.			
Stirne: gerade, mäßig-, stark fliehend.				Gebiß: vollst.; Orthodontie, Prodentie, Opisthodontie; Färbung. es fehlen: Schneide- und Backen- und Eckzähne, Mahlzähne.			
Hinterhaupt: flach, gewölbt, ausladend.				kariös sind: Schneide- und Backen- und Eckzähne, Mahlzähne.			
Nase: Wurzel: schmal, mittel, breit; ganz flach, flach, mäßig hoch, hoch, sehr hoch.				Progenie, Labiodontie, Psalidodontie, Stegodontie, Opisthodontie, Hiatodontie.			
Rücken: schmal, mittel, breit; stark-, leicht konkav, gerade, stark-, leicht konvex; wellig, winkelig gebogen.				Asymmetrie: des Kopfes: des Gesichtes: der Nase: der Wirbelsäule: Kyphose. Skoliose:			
Spitze: Flügel: Septum: Löcher:				Weibliche Brust: Hyperthelie r. l.			
Integumentallippen: Procheilie: sehr stark, stark, mäßig, leicht. Orthocheilie; Opistocheilie.				Hände: Affenfalte; rechts-, linkshändig.			
Schleimhautlippen: dünn, mittel, dick, wulstig, Lippenleiste. Oberrand: einfacher, zusammengesetzter Bogen.				Beine: O-Beine: X-Beine: Hallux valgus: Fußgewölbe: hoch, mittel, niedrig; Plattfuß. Längste Zehe: r. 1. 2; l. 1. 2; große Zehe abstehend, anliegend.			
Mundspalte: klein, mittel, groß. Rüssel				Ernährungszustand: sehr mager, mager, mittel, fett, sehr fett.			
				Krankheiten: Konstitutionsanomalien: Verletzungen: Beschneidung und andere Deformationen:			
				Rasse und Typus:			
				Bemerkungen:			

Figure 1.
Rudolf Pösch's questionnaire (reproduced from 'IV. Bericht über die von der Wiener Anthropologischen Gesellschaft in den k.u.k. Kriegsgefangenenlagern veranlaßten Studien')

Figure 2.

F c oaru's racial research in Transnistria (reproduced from Iordache F c oaru, *Contribu ie la studiul compozi iei morfologice a românilor din Republica Moldova* (Bucharest: Imprimeriile Institutului Statistic 1944))