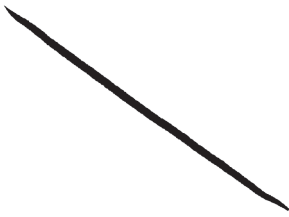


AN X FILE/1955.

THE BOURGEOIS IDEA OF "SIMPLE
TALENTS" MUST BE COMBATED

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Abstract: The starting point of the research we undertook as part of the project *TabThePAST – Taboo History. Fill the Past to Sense the Present* is an unusual, fragmentary, and poetically inflected file from 1955, produced by the Propaganda and Agitation Section of the Central Committee of the Romanian Communist Party. The file concerns the expulsion of 14 or 15 students from I.L. Caragiale IATC (Institute of Theatre and Film in Bucharest) — the initial document cites 14, while the final decision records 15. The analysis seeks to reflect on the broader context of the events, on how they were shaped by the prevailing social and political circumstances, and on the relationships among the individuals involved. A separate file containing materials related solely to one of the young “enemies of the fatherland” — specifically the individual who served as the primary subject of the main (princeps) case file — was in the archives of the I.L. Caragiale UNATC (National University of Theatre and Film, former IATC). The research highlighted how analysing the archives can stir difficult questions and unsettle our sense of the present. This study, drawing on the archives of both ANIC (the Romanian National Central of Historical Archives) and I.L. Caragiale UNATC, examines the repercussions of the decisions issued by the Propaganda and Agitation Section. One of the central questions addressed in this study concerns the extent to which the directives issued by the Propaganda and Agitation Section were actually implemented within the artistic academic community.

Keywords: TabThePAST Project, IATC, UNATC, students, archives, communism, Communist Party, dictatorship, Propaganda and Agitation Section, performative.

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Introduction

TabThePAST–Taboo History. Fill the Past to Sense the Present is a project initiated by UNATC Bucharest in collaboration with the Replika Centre for Educational Theatre (Romania) and Citizen.Kane.Collective (Germany). The initiative undertakes an interdisciplinary investigation into the mechanisms and repercussions of communist censorship on cultural and artistic production between 1950 and 1989. Drawing on archival materials, interviews, official documents, personal diaries, and specialized studies, the project reactivates—through performative means—both well-known and marginal historical moments. In doing so, it transforms historical research into a pedagogical instrument and a generative framework for developing innovative artistic and educational practices.

Given the reverberations of the past in understanding the present, I found my involvement into the *TabThePast* project particularly relevant. I.L. Caragiale UNATC’s archive represents “a gold mine”, still not sufficiently explored and exploited. The value of the documents in the university’s archive is enormous, both historically and artistically, constituting an important source of unpublished

information that can provide material for future research, films, performances and art installations.

“The archive is the first law of what can be said, the system that governs the portrayal of statements as single events. At the same time, the archive also determines the fact that all things said [...] do not disappear according to the inevitable accidents in the external environment, which causes them to shine like stars, some of which shine close to us and whose brilliance shines from afar, while others, which are close to us, flicker pale.” (Foucault, 2002)

Research methodology

Two complementary research trajectories were pursued: one conducted within the UNATC institutional archive and the other within the holdings of ANIC – The National Central Historical Archives in Bucharest. The data retrieved from these distinct sources were subsequently correlated, enabling a consolidated investigation that informed the project’s research process and its performative outcomes.

The history of the I.L. Caragiale National University of Theatre and Film in Bucharest traces its origins to 1834, with the establishment of Romania’s first theatre faculty within the Philharmonic School. A major development occurred in 1948 with the creation of the Directing Faculty under the Institute of Art, which temporarily unified all artistic education in Bucharest. A decisive moment followed in 1950, when the Institute of Cinematic Art and the separate I.L. Caragiale Theatre Institute were founded. These institutions merged in 1954 to form the I.L. Caragiale Institute of Theatre and Film (IATC). Over subsequent decades, the institution underwent several reorganizations and name changes: in 1990 it became the Academy of Theatre and Film (ATF), the sole university-level institution in Romania dedicated to theatre and film at that time; in 1998 it was renamed the University of Theatre and Film (UATC), and, since 2001, it has carried its current title, the I.L. Caragiale National University of Theatre and Cinematography (or Film)—UNATC.

Of course, like any archive, UNATC’s archive requires substantial investment—financially, but above all regarding human resources. The worlds concealed in its light-protected boxes are too often visited only by dust mites and mold. Safeguarding these worlds for future generations demands a dedicated team, as well as sustained efforts in digitization and digitalization.

For the period 1950-1989, the UNATC archive contains hundreds of boxes with thousands of files summing up hundreds of thousands of pages. Most of them are administrative and financial documents, but with great patience and

determination, among the kilos of dust and bureaucracy, the “stars” Foucault refers to begin to appear.

Before starting my research in the archives, *File 55/1955* from the Propaganda and Agitation Section (a central Communist Party apparatus responsible for controlling ideological education, shaping public discourse, and enforcing cultural and political conformity across society) was found at the National Central Historical Archives (ANIC) by Andra Petrescu (PhD candidate at that time). The file was scanned by PhD candidate Ana Szel and made available to Associate Professor Radu Apostol by Professor Doru Nițescu. Radu Apostol directed my research towards *File 55/1995* and this is how I had the idea to corroborate it with what I have discovered in the IATC archives.



An X File / 1955, Directed by Vlad Galer.

Cast: Victoria Ecaterina Moraru, Alexia Mocănescu, Șerban Lazarovici, Mihai Bercaru.

The CINETic Multifunctional Hall, I.L. Caragiale UNATC, Bucharest, 2024

Photo by Vlad Galer © *TabThePast* Project archive

Romanian socio-political context of the investigated period

As I mentioned, the focus of the project was on the communist censorship on cultural and artistic activities between 1950 and 1989. A brief historical overview is therefore indispensable.

Romania's post-war political transformation unfolded within the wider realignment of Eastern Europe under Soviet influence. After the entry of the Red Army into Bucharest on 31 August 1944 and the formation of the pro-communist government led by Petru Groza on 6 March 1945, the monarchy was formally abolished on 30 December 1947, when King Michael I was compelled to abdicate. This event marked the establishment of the Romanian People's Republic and set the stage for the rapid consolidation of communist power (Tismăneanu, 2003).

A series of legislative and institutional reforms followed. The Nationalisation Law of 11 June 1948 (Law No. 119/1948) transferred 8,894 enterprises into state ownership, fundamentally reshaping economic structures. In 1949, Decree No. 163 created the Securitate, the political police charged with monitoring and suppressing opposition. During these years, the regime launched major infrastructural and ideological projects—including the Danube–Black Sea Canal—and simultaneously endorsed severe political repression, exemplified by the “re-education” campaign at Pitești Prison (Deletant, 1999).

Gheorghiu-Dej takes over as President of the Council of Ministers in 1952. Another critical moment was I.V. Stalin’s death (1953), an event that had a direct impact on the entire Socialist Bloc. Gheorghiu-Dej was elected First Secretary of the Partidul Muncitoresc Român (PMR)/Romanian Worker’s Party at the 1955 Central Committee (CC) meeting. Between the 23rd October and 4th of November 1956, the Hungarian Revolution takes place, violently suppressed by the Red Army, with a death toll of around 2500. Against the backdrop of the crisis situation in Hungary, protest demonstrations take place in Romania, initiated and coordinated by students from the major university centres: Cluj-Napoca, Bucharest, Timișoara, Târgu-Mureș, Iași (*The Institute for the Investigation of Communist Crimes and the Memory of the Romanian Exile*, 2024)

The 1950s were characterised by far-reaching transformations aimed at reshaping Romanian society along Stalinist lines. After the proclamation of the republic, Romania entered a period of strong Soviet political and administrative influence, and Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej consolidated a system of authoritarian governance defined by centralised control and ideological uniformity. Repression—through arrests, show trials, labour camps, and institutionalised surveillance—became a standard mechanism for managing dissent and enforcing political loyalty (Verdery, 1991; Deletant, 1999).

Collectivisation dramatically altered rural social structures, while accelerated industrialisation drove significant demographic change as rural populations migrated to urban centres. Everyday life was permeated by the logic of political supervision: personal freedoms were limited, access to information was controlled, and ideological conformity was reinforced through education, propaganda, and cultural policies. The state’s monopolisation of cultural life ensured that Western influences were restricted and that artistic production remained aligned with socialist values.

Culture was strongly influenced by the communist regime and used as a propaganda tool. Art, literature and the media were strictly censored and controlled by Communist Party structures. Socialist realism became dominant in art and literature, promoting party values and ideals.

Only one kind of art is allowed: the one that serves the communist cause. From the Party's point of view, the people have no need for bourgeois artistic products. Prose, poetry, theatre, criticism, literary history, the sciences are allowed to exist only on condition that dialectical and historical materialism is adopted (as the only doctrine), and art in general is not allowed to exist outside the "general cause of the proletariat". The only art and the only artist relevant to communist ideology was only propaganda art and the citizen-artist. The analysis and value judgement of a work can only be made from the perspective of its contribution to building socialism in the Romanian Communist Party (RCP). Education had the same status. Education was restructured to reflect communist ideology and access to Western culture was severely limited.

The 1950s in Romania were a period of radical and often traumatic transformations, reflecting the tensions and challenges brought about by the new communist order. These changes had a lasting impact on Romanian society and culture.

The 1952 *Constitution* states that "The Romanian People's Republic came into being as a result of the historic victory of the Soviet Union over German imperialism and the liberation of Romania by the glorious Soviet army" (*Official Bulletin* of the Romanian Parliament, 1952). A direct consequence of the passage in the Constitution is the State Anthem of the Romanian People's Republic, which between 1953 and 1977, was "We praise you, Romania" (lyrics by Eugen Frunză and Dan Deşliu, music by Matei Socor). The essence of this anthem can be understood from the following lyrics:

Our people will be forever united
With the liberating Soviet people
Leninism is our lighthouse and our strength and drive
We faithfully follow the undefeated party. (Frunză, Deşliu, 1953)

After Stalin's death, the leadership of the PMR/Romanian Worker's Party, led by Gheorghiu-Dej, skilfully adopted the politics of de-Stalinization, continuing, with minor adjustments, a Stalinist policy without Stalin. The thaw that followed in Khrushchev's style of leadership (with his new, populist style of leadership) will, however, be practised here too. The decision to alleviate food shortages, the abolition of the *carte blanche*, the 1955 decree pardoning, on humanitarian grounds, some of those convicted of minor political offences, the infinitesimal changes in the official view of artistic creation and the circulation of values have the gift of suggesting a beginning of relaxation.

Romania seems to have been the closest to the original Soviet model, transposed down to the last detail. This is because Romanian society was in many

ways similar to Russian society before the Bolshevik revolution: the overwhelmingly peasant mass, illiteracy, the weak democratic tradition, the predominance of Orthodoxy. Communism was built on production, not consumption. When even food was no longer on people's plates, steel and cement invariably showed an increase in production. Romania became massively Sovietised but proved impervious to Russification. As one might say, Soviet communism, of the purest orthodoxy, was translated from Russian into Romanian (Boia, 2016).

Censorship served as one of the primary instruments through which the Communist Party exercised ideological control and shaped public discourse. Its operation involved a network of regulatory bodies that supervised cultural production across all media. The principal mechanisms included:

- Comprehensive regulation of expression: All cultural and informational materials—books, periodicals, radio broadcasts, theatre, cinema, and visual arts—were subject to scrutiny to ensure alignment with Party ideology and to prevent the circulation of content considered subversive or “counter-revolutionary”.
- Pre-publication and pre-performance vetting: Manuscripts, scripts, and artistic works required prior approval by state censors. Authors and editors were required to comply to doctrinal guidelines before dissemination.
- Enforcement of Socialist Realism: Artistic practices had to promote socialist values, class consciousness, and loyalty to the regime. Aesthetic currents associated with Western modernism or “bourgeois decadence” were systematically discouraged or prohibited.
- Suppression of dissent: Intellectuals and artists who deviated from Party norms were subject to surveillance, professional sanctions, arrest, or imprisonment. Dissenting perspectives were removed from public visibility through institutional pressures and punitive measures.
- Ideological control of education: Curricula and pedagogical materials were designed to promote Marxist-Leninist principles. Exposure to alternative worldviews was restricted as part of a broader strategy of political socialisation.
- Restriction of cultural imports: Access to Western literature, music, cinema, and art was tightly controlled. Imports were monitored, translations limited, and many cultural products were banned outright (Chiorean, 2019; Tismăneanu, 2003).

Censorship was administered by various state bodies, such as the General Directorate of Press and Printing or the Propaganda and Agitation Section.

Established on 28th of August 1944, the Propaganda and Agitation Section of the Romania Communist Party (PCR-Partidul Comunist Român), which in 1965 became the Directorate of Propaganda and Culture, a section of the Central Committee of the PCR, had the task of disseminating “mass culture” (since 1965 it has been headed by Ion Iliescu, who later became the president of Romania between 1990-1996 and 2000-2004 - which was sidelined and marginalized by Ceaușescu in the early 1970s due to political disagreements). The repertoire of the theatres was also approved by the Propaganda and Agitation Section of the Central Committee. The aim was to “actively continue the struggle on the ideological front against imperialist influences, against reformist and revisionist influences in theory and politics” (Gheorghiu-Dej, 1955, p. 162).

These institutions had the power to control everything that was published or broadcast. Thus, censorship is imposed and has a growing impact on cultural and intellectual life in Romania, shaping perceptions, limiting freedom of expression and strengthening state control over society.

Since its foundation in 1954, the Institute of Theatre and Film Arts in Bucharest functioned as a centre for education and training in the field of performing arts and cinema, under the direct influence of communist ideology and policies. The educational and cultural context of that period was deeply marked by state control and the demands of socialist realism.

The Institute was intended to educate and train theatre and film professionals according to the principles of the dictatorial regime. This meant an emphasis on themes that promoted communist values and glorified life under the communist regime. Courses and teaching materials were subject to strict ideological control. There was a strong emphasis on political content and fidelity to the party line in all art forms.

I. File No. 55/1955—Propaganda and Agitation Section, Central Committee of the Romanian Communist Party

On the 15th of April 1955, the Propaganda and Agitation Section received a report from the Bucharest City Committee regarding some problems at the I.L. Caragiale. The investigation was coordinated by comrade Leonte Răutu (head of the Propaganda Department, also known as *Malvolio*.) and comrade Florian Dănălache (former lathe operator, first secretary of the committee). It was found that at the IATC there is a group of 14 students (headed by Sterescu Victoria and Caramitru Elena, both part of UTM, Young Workers Union, students in second year, theatre directing section) who carry out an activity hostile to the communist regime. Links are maintained with the French Legation in Bucharest through Robert Dallet (ANIC dossier, p.2).

Some information about a certain Robert Dallet, probably the Robert Dallet from file 55/1955, was found on the internet. Originally from Normandy (northern France), Robert Dallet was born in 1923 and from an early age was passionate about nature and drawing. Being particularly interested in drawing animals, he decided in 1952 to pursue a career in this field and left for Paris. His debut in the artistic world was slow and difficult. In his spare time, he frequented zoos and museums in Europe to perfect his style. It is known that in 1955 he was on a trip to Europe (see Robert Dallet's site: <https://www.robert-dallet.com/en/biography/>). Although there is not enough solid evidence to support this hypothesis, it is possible that he was in Bucharest at the time of the events described in the file of the Agitation and Propaganda Section.

Robert Dallet invited in multiple times the student group to listen to western decadent music by throwing home parties, while "discrediting Romanian music" (ANIC dossier, p.2). Through gifts, such as "nylon stockings, perfumes, medicines" (ANIC dossier, p.2), he managed to maintain a close relationship with this group in order to influence them in the spirit of bourgeois ideology and rotten morals. Moreover, the morally decadent student Victoria Sterescu became Dallet's concubine. Various means of bribery were used, from lavish meals and clothing to the organisation of parties especially on the occasion of Christmas, New Year's Eve or Easter, on which occasions they danced on decadent music and sang in a chorus of carols (ANIC dossier, p.2)

It is mentioned that Sterescu Victoria and Caramitru Elena, two of the IATC students involved in this case, sold part of the gifts (ANIC dossier, p.3). At the same time, it is noted that this group also sought to carry out a coordinated activity in the institute to disrupt the educational process. These facts of crucial importance are recorded in the file.

One example of these kinds of activities would be that one day, student Caramitru Elena phoned the secretariat and asking to inform a group of students that Professor Silvestru was not coming to class that day and that the students were free, although the professor was in the institute and was ready to come to class. At the work review meeting of the third year of the Theatrology class, led by Comr. Silvestru Valentin (theatre critic, prose writer, translator, founder of the IATC's Theatre Department and leading member of the communist nomenclatura), the student Pop Ana Maria (the best student of the year) wanted to give a report on the work done during the first term, but this report was stolen from her coat pocket on the evening of the meeting; the student Caramitru, who was sitting at the desk nearby, was suspected of stealing it (ANIC dossier, p.3).

Therefore, students and teachers are investigated. Following objective and detailed analyses, some telling characterizations are made, such as the

one attributed to Professor Porumbescu Vladimir, who is recorded as a “good professional element, unreliable, comes in drunk”. About comrade Beligan Radu it is noted that, along with Birlic Vasiliu, Cotescu Octavian, Fory Eterle and other actors from the Municipal Theatre, attends the French Embassy. Instead, Professor Raicu Mihail “had a conflict with a student over a student in the institute whom he later married and is currently in the process of divorce”(ANIC dossier, p. 8). About the student Sterescu Victoria it is recorded that she has already made a request to withdraw from the faculty, Caramitru Elena (finally) seems to be “well prepared professionally, she was responsible for the year”, Simedru Elena has “a father with tobacco addiction, 80% disabled”, Radovici Sebastian [was a member of Crin Teodorescu’s band in Galați (1955-1957), and in the 1980s he emigrated to Belgium] “is a pederast”, and Paraschivescu Constantin (part of the first generation of IATC-theatreologists; in 2000 he received the UNITER prize for lifetime achievement.) is “member of UTM, responsible for the group, he exposed Sterescu to the UTM organization, *he resolutely rejected the attempts of those who wanted to corrupt him, bringing the facts to the attention of the organization* (ANIC dossier, p.11). Of the 14 initially mentioned, after the investigation, Paraschivescu (the one who exposed the facts), Bulcă and Cazaban (theatre critic, historian, professor at UNATC and senior scientific researcher at the Romanian Academy; his father was a party member), disappear from the list. Instead, 5 new names appear who seem to be part of Dallet’s terrorist structure.

Student Paraschivescu Constantin, “element with a sense of class and who noticed this situation” (ANIC dossier, p. 22), was also present in Dallet’s house. Paraschivescu, being ill and in need of medicine, was welcomed with humanity and offered medicine and shoes. “He refused to receive and informed the UTM committee—it seems that the French diplomat’s plans included the need to recruit elements with responsible jobs in the UTM” (ANIC dossier, p. 22).

First and foremost, students must be citizen-artists, aware of the highly educational role of their profession and prepared to put their talents to work for the flourishing of their country. UTM and IATC have the responsibility of shaping the conscience of the young citizen-artist, a true patriot.

Beyond the absurdity and drama of the situation, the text written by Răutu, *For the Continuous Improvement of Patriotic Education of Youth*, contains an intrinsic lyricism, animated by a real and ardent passion for the cause of the regime. For example:

[...] showing political short-sightedness, the committee of the UTM organization did not understand that all this creates conditions conducive to the penetration of the harmful influence of bourgeois ideology in

the institute; Sterescu, Caramitru, Herberescu, having fallen to the last rung of bourgeois debauchery and rottenness, ended up combining prostitution with the repulsive attitude of cosmopolitanism, of plunging into the bourgeois model of life, of bourgeois contempt and denigration of the conquests of our life". (ANIC dossier, p. 15)

This style of writing and of relating to life should not be treated with superiority or irony, but should be understood, deeply, so that it can be combated or prevented. Contradictions appear from page to page, in reporting facts or people. It is not rational logic that should be sought in these files, but emotional logic. It is a dialectic that wants to be right at all costs, because socialism is only now being built, the ground is sandy and the roots need to be dug deep.

Răutu states that the enemy "pushes the youth on the road of apoliticism, then cosmopolitanism, to turn them into docile tools of their evil plans" (ANIC dossier, 16). What makes an intelligent man have this kind of discourse? The ideal. What causes an intelligent man with a lofty ideal to act in this way? Fear. Fear of failure, fear of being different, fear of the unknown, fear of being seen exactly as you are, with flaws and qualities. Communism, through its communists, had only qualities. No one, neither the system, nor the ideal, nor its people, had any flaws. There were no shortages, cement was produced, steel was produced, food was produced and there was no hunger or cold. No one had to see or believe otherwise. So, for efficient silence, the fist of the system will be shoved in everyone's mouth.

The bourgeois idea of "talent in itself", the vicious idea that for a "talented" person everything is allowed, the poisonous opinions of some elements who are interested in discovering "talent" whenever a student takes a path that is alien to the interests of the people, must be combated (ANIC dossier, p. 18). Civic duties must be the main task of student-citizens.

The survey, in which the committee spoke to around 50 students and teachers, revealed the following: [...] in the institute the number of students is much higher than the need for theatres and cinemas, the social-political composition of the students is very poor, a considerable number of students show moral decay (immoral relationships with several people, they marry and divorce from one day to the next), a number of 14 students have had direct or indirect relationships with members of the French Legation (ANIC dossier, p. 21). Although this document, which aims to conclude the investigation, contains not 14, but 15 names of students who are proposed for expulsion, the list contains different names from the original accusations.

Whether they interacted with Dallet or did not report these meetings, 15 students are expelled from UTM, expelled from the institute, and some of them

will also benefit from the “right” not to be allowed to enroll ever again in any educational institution in the country. Although some of the students are accused of the same thing, the penalties vary according to an unknown criterion. Vlădescu Tiberiu, for example, a second-year student in the Theatre Department, “did not go to the diplomat’s house, is an immoral, dishonest element, instigator of indiscipline, wanted to break into an antique shop to steal books, is not a UTM -ist. We propose his expulsion from the institute” (ANIC dossier, p. 25). Sterescu Victoria, the ringleader, was no longer a student in the institute at the time, but she is also asked to be expelled. It is requested to communicate the decision to sanction the students indicated on 17 May 1955.

II. An X File

In the UNATC archives, there is no document referring to the event of the expulsion of the 15 students. There are no records or minutes of teachers’ meetings on this case, neither in 1955 nor in 1956. In an informal discussion, Mrs Mihaela Nițu, from the UNATC archive, told me that one night at the end of December 1989, in the courtyard of the IATC, the person in charge of the archive at the time set fire to many boxes containing important information about the dynamics and lives of those in the institute. At the same time, the premises of the UNATC archive were changed several times, some of the documents were stored in inappropriate conditions and deteriorated, and some were lost. There is no record of any expelled student in this case. Except for one file, of student Simedru Ileana. This file was found in a section where it had no place to be - most probably a mistake was made and so this file has remained intact until today. The file opens with the student being informed that her right to enrol in the third year of the Theatre was withdrawn, and she was obliged to leave the institute immediately and hand in her booklet and ID card to the secretary’s office, dated 30 November 1956, and on 12 May 1955 her right to enrol in the institute was withdrawn only after 1 year and 7 months. In the file of the Propaganda Section, following the investigation, it is concluded about student Simedru that is a professionally and politically weak element, did not inform the UTM grassroots organization of what was going on in the institute, was in the diplomat’s house several times. We propose his expulsion from the UTM and his expulsion from the institute and from all higher education institutions in country (ANIC dossier, p. 23).

FOND C. C. al PCR 1)

SECȚIA PROPAGANDĂ ȘI AGITAȚIE

DOSAR Nr. 53/1955

referitor la

Victoria Ecaterina Moraru

Alexia Mocănescu

Șerban Lazarovici

Mihai Berbaru

Data începerii: 28.02.18:00

Data încheierii: Cinetic

File: 33

Vol. _____

Termen de păstrare _____ ani

Regia: Diana Tănase

Coregrafia: Iulia Lupășcu

Coordonatori: Vlad Galer și Mihai Berbaru

TabThePast project
 Poster of the reading performance (28 February 2024) – *An X File/1995*
 The CINETic Multifunctional Hall, I.L. Caragiale UNATC, Bucharest

The student's file in the UNATC archive contains many documents, personal files, references, reports, characterizations and self-characterizations. I will refer to only two of these documents. In the first report, drawn up on 7 February 1956, the following is recorded: she was a mediocre student, she was expelled from the UTM in 1955, she is a friend with Sterescu Victoria, with a rotten and morally and politically decomposed element, because of which she is always late for classes, misses classes without justification, presents herself less well at school, has a careless attitude; she has often been in the house of the representative of an imperialist country: "having completely abandoned her class and patriotic sense, she received a series of gifts from Sterescu (stockings, shoes, etc.)", gifts of foreign origin, given obviously for political, propagandistic purposes, but with which he avoided coming to the institute, so as not to give rise to suspicions" (UNATC Archive). Reference is again made

to the student (Constantin Paraschivescu) in file 55/1955, seriously ill and in material difficulties. Comrade Simedru offered him “free medicines procured from the respective legation with the aim of attracting him to their hostile circle” (UNATC archive).

The only document found in the archive, in which a student’s voice is heard, and a different perspective is offered is the *Autobiography*. Simedru Elena states in a document dated 25 January 1956, the following: [...] outside of class I had to give tutorials to ensure my livelihood in a way, if you can say that. But this did not prevent me from responding to all calls and always being present at all mobilisations. At the Institute, my work was appreciated. The fact that I was always a leading student and a model man was enough to be rated as a basic man who could be counted on. At the end of 1954-1955, it was found that some of the students of the institute had relations with one of the officials of the French representation and measures were taken against them. We were sanctioned. The whole institute, down to the directorate and the Cadre service knew about the relationship between Dallet and Y. When the case was discussed in general it was agreed that such misconduct and such acts of apoliticism concerning me should be sanctioned, as they were not compatible with membership of the revolutionary organisation. I saw the official from the French legation only once, when I went to see her to discuss it, while I was leaving, he was coming, so we met. These were all meetings with this gentleman (UNATC Archive). Students were not expelled, they were only sanctioned. Elena Simedru was at that time excluded from the UTM.

Conclusions

Therefore, student Simedru was not expelled following the proposals of the Bucharest City Committee of the Romanian Workers’ Party on May 12, 1955. Maybe this is the reason why no documents were found, not because boxes were burned during the revolution of 1989. Other students probably found themselves in this situation. Student X’s file contains a lot of information that can provide a kaleidoscopic view of the 1955 case. How much were orders from management enforced in the Institute? How conclusive were these pursuits and facts? How far could the orders from the Centre be overridden? If only file no. 55/1955 is analysed, things seem much more serious, but this is the only information available now. The rest can be fictionalised.

“In the process of *decoding* archival material, the document becomes a kind of *fiction*” (Wees, 1993, p. 73). Therefore, the corroboration of the data from the two files generated the idea of a workshop that took place in February 2024, together with the students of the first year of the Acting Master from UNATC.

During the workshop, the text that was the basis of a performative reading that took place at the end of the work period was also created. Like this initiative, the gaps of the past can be filled by research and fiction.

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