

**The Provincial Complex in Inter-War Academia.
The Case of the University of Iași**
(Abstract)

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In South-Eastern Europe, province means, in most of the cases, the absence of alternative choices, reduction of development opportunities, with total subordination to the centre. The provincials are generally resigned to this daily universe, being marginalized, excluded from the power games, as all decisions are made centrally. On the other hand, the central authorities always feel they make favours for the province, that they act excessively in order to widen its horizon, to develop new possibilities and opportunities to reintegrate the peripheral members (almost all of them uncomfortable and backward-looking) into the rapid rhythm of the metropolis. In their turn, the local decision-makers keep on accusing the capital, which thus becomes responsible for all of the province problems, while the measures imposed by the central authorities are received with reserves, and suspected of hiding imminent dangers or perfidious interests.

Even if they accepted the 1859 Union, the inhabitants of Iași had always preserved the city's past fame and importance as a fact, and this very mentality of 'former capital' was deemed guilty, partly at least, for the blockage of local initiatives of revival, because of the passiveness and of the static and exaggerated attachment to a glorious past. The priorities of the struggle meant to achieve the union and the national idea diminished, for a while, the local reactions against centralization. After 1918, when one could say that the immediate national desiderata were reached, the complex of the "periphery" grows more visible and the enlightened spirits of the city of Iași radicalize their perspectives and ask, more and more loudly, for the rights of the city and of the University to be met.

Our paper focuses on the way in which the University of Iași, where most of the intellectual preoccupations of the province of Moldova were concentrated, became in the inter-war period the standard-bearer of the discontents related to the discriminatory policies of the capital. But this is not a successful local effort, as most of the academic staff from Iași are not willing to struggle actively, consistently and in the long run, to enhance, on the one hand, the quality of the teaching act, or to stop, on the other hand, the discriminating actions of the capital; all of these represented the threat for the University to be reduced to the level of a simple school. Naturally, for want of a

genuine community spirit, of corporatist structures and, above all, of an integrating project, unanimously assumed, for the salvation of the academic Iași (and implicitly of Moldova), solutions of personal salvation are preferred instead (a transfer to Bucharest, most of the times), while the loud but isolated voices militating against the complex of the provincial, for the improvement of the local activity and for the acknowledgement, by the capital, of a better status (the financial one included), only sound exaggerated, in relation to the real problem, minimized or ignored by the majority.