

# *A.C. Cuza, German Antisemitism, and the Swastika<sup>1</sup>*

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La mine ideea-i săracă  
A.C. Cuza<sup>2</sup>

**Abstract:** This case study of transnational antisemitism in the 1910s and 1920s argues that the Romanian antisemite A.C. Cuza (1857-1947) copied the swastika from the German antisemite Heinrich Kraeger (1870-1945). It examines the evolution of Cuza's political antisemitism from the 1890s until 1923 and discusses the possible origins of Cuza's use of the swastika and his interpretations of the symbol. It highlights that Cuza used various foreign sources to produce vague and contradictory interpretations of the swastika, that he made no effort to give it a coherent racial meaning, and that he opportunistically but inconsistently tried to Christianise it. The study concludes that the swastika in his view became both a German and a Romanian ethnic symbol, performing the same antisemitic function in each context.

**Keywords:** Political antisemitism; student antisemitism; Romanian nationalism; transnationalism; League for National Christian Defence; Iron Guard

**Rezumat:** Acest studiu de caz de antisemitism transnațional în anii 1910-1920 susține teoria că A.C. Cuza (1857-1947) a copiat svastica de la antisemitul german Heinrich Kraeger (1870-1945). Articolul examinează evoluția antisemitismului politic dezvoltat de Cuza

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<sup>2</sup> A.C. Cuza, "La mine...", *Convorbiri literare*, 1890, 619. The quotation translates approximately as: "In my [work], the idea is mediocre."

între anii 1890 și 1923 și discută posibilele origini ale utilizării svasticii de către Cuza și ale interpretărilor pe care le-a dat acestui simbol. Articolul subliniază că A.C. Cuza a folosit diverse surse străine pentru a produce interpretări vagi și contradictorii ale svasticii; că nu a făcut niciun efort pentru a-i da un conținut semantic rasial coerent și că, în mod oportunist și inconsistent, a încercat să o creștineze. Articolul concludă că, în viziunea lui Cuza, svastica a devenit un simbol etnic în același timp german și român, având aceeași funcție antisemită în fiecare dintre aceste contexte.

**Cuvinte cheie:** Antisemitism politic; antisemitism studențesc; naționalism român; transnaționalism; Liga Apărării Naționale Creștine; Garda de Fier

This case study of transnational antisemitism in the 1910s and 1920s argues that A.C. Cuza, probably Romania's most influential and baleful antisemite in the 1920s,<sup>3</sup> copied the swastika from the German antisemites, and, more precisely, from a little-known member of that milieu, Heinrich Kraeger.

The transnational turn has transformed the study of antisemitism and fascism in recent years.<sup>4</sup> Partly because the transnational nature of antisemitism was common knowledge even before that turn, new research on transnationalism has had a greater impact on fascism studies than on antisemitism studies. The main recent transnational study on antisemitism is Paul Hanebrink's *A Specter Haunting Europe*, which has the merit of taking Romanian antisemitism into account. However, Hanebrink focused on Corneliu Zelea-Codreanu and, despite the disciple-

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<sup>3</sup> A.C. Cuza appears in fascism and antisemitism studies, in particular in a series of excellent monographs focusing on the Romanian fascist leader Corneliu Zelea-Codreanu and his Legion of the Archangel Michael or Iron Guard: Stelian Neagoe, *Triumful rațiunii împotriva violenței (Viața universitară ieșană interbelică)* (Iași: Junimea, 1977); Armin Heinen, *Die Legion „Erzengel Michael” in Rumänien: Soziale Bewegung und politische Organisation: Ein Beitrag zum Problem des internationalen Faschismus* (München: R. Oldenbourg, 1986); Traian Sandu, *Un fascisme roumain: Histoire de la Garde de fer* (Paris: Perrin, 2014); Roland Clark, *Holy Legionary Youth: Fascist Activism in Interwar Romania* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2015); Oliver Jens Schmitt, *Corneliu Zelea Codreanu: Ascensiunea și căderea „Căpitanului”* (București: Humanitas, 2017).

<sup>4</sup> See, for instance: Robert Gerwarth, “The Central European Counter-Revolution: Paramilitary Violence in Germany, Austria and Hungary after the Great War,” *Past & Present*, no. 200 (August 2008): 175-209; Federico Finchelstein, *Transatlantic Fascism: Ideology, Violence, and the Sacred in Argentina and Italy, 1919-1945* (Durham/London: Duke University Press, 2010); *Fascism without Borders: Transnational Connections and Cooperation between Movements and Regimes in Europe from 1918 to 1945*, ed. Arnd Bauerkämper and Grzegorz Rossoliński-Liebe (New York: Berghahn Books, 2017); Paul Hanebrink, *A Specter Haunting Europe: The Myth of Judeo-Bolshevism* (Cambridge, MA, and London: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2018).

master relationship between the latter and Cuza, he merely mentioned that “A.C. Cuza, one of the country’s most prominent far-right political theorists, taught law at Iași”.<sup>5</sup> The only study that tackles Cuza’s direct ties to non-Romanian and international antisemitism is Roland Clark’s article “Both Form and Substance”.<sup>6</sup> Clark provided a solid basis for the present study, which supplements Clark’s findings with Cuza’s correspondence preserved at the Library of the Romanian Academy in Bucharest. Some earlier studies already analysed the non-Romanian references in Cuza’s pamphlets. They pointed out the influence of Ernest Renan, Édouard Drumont, or Houston Stewart Chamberlain – whom Cuza asked in October 1902 “d’intervenir dans les débats”<sup>7</sup> – but without discussing Cuza’s relations with his contemporaries.<sup>8</sup> Historian Raul Cârstocea mentioned that Cuza established a Universal Antisemitic Alliance in 1895 – a claim for which I found no evidence<sup>9</sup> – and that he

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<sup>5</sup> Hanebrink, *A Specter Haunting Europe*, 65.

<sup>6</sup> Roland Clark, “Both Form and Substance: Romanians and Political Antisemitism in a European Context,” *Holocaust: Studii și cercetări*, no. 1 (2021): 41-68.

<sup>7</sup> Biblioteca Academiei Române, Fondul A.C. Cuza, S 23/DXLVIII: Alexandru C. Cuza to Houston Stewart Chamberlain, 29 October 1902. In the letter, Cuza called the Romanians “les seuls qui n’ayons pas encore capitulé, en droit”. Chamberlain’s wife Anna responded in November 1902 that her husband was occupied with the fourth edition of *The Foundations of the Nineteenth Century* and that he would answer some days later. There is no letter by Chamberlain himself in Cuza’s preserved correspondence: Biblioteca Academiei Române, Fondul A.C. Cuza, S 6 (1)/DXLVI: Anna Chamberlain to Alexandru C. Cuza, 2 November 1902.

<sup>8</sup> Leon Volovici, *Nationalist Ideology and Antisemitism: The Case of Romanian Intellectuals in the 1930s* (Oxford, etc.: Pergamon Press, 1991), 24; see also: Lucian Butaru, “L’antisémitisme appliqué: Le cas A.C. Cuza,” *Studia Universitatis Babeș-Bolyai: Studia Europæa*, no. 2-3 (2005): 195-212; Lucian Butaru, “A.C. Cuza, était-il un raciste?” *Studia Universitatis Babeș-Bolyai: Studia Europæa*, no. 1 (2008): 41-54.

<sup>9</sup> The idea that Nicolae Iorga and A.C. Cuza founded the Universal Antisemitic Alliance in 1895 stems from an undocumented paragraph in an introduction published in 2011. The source is probably a book by historian Carol Iancu, cited a bit earlier. Iancu did mention an “Antisemitic Alliance” established in 1895, whose founder was however a certain Nae Dumitrescu. Cârstocea did not refer to the 2011 introduction, but to a 2014 article which, based on archival evidence, stated merely that “priests played a prominent role [...] in the Universal Antisemitic Alliance (*Alliance Anti-sémitique Universelle*), an organization founded in 1895”: “Antisemitismul universitar în România (1919-1939): Studiu introductiv,” in *Antisemitismul universitar în România (1919-1939): Mărturii documentare*, ed. Lucian Nastasă (Cluj-Napoca: ISPMN, 2011), 24-25; Carol Iancu, *Les Juifs en Roumanie 1866-1919. De l’exclusion à l’émancipation* (Aix-en-Provence: Éditions de l’Université de Provence, 1978), 222-225; Iulia Onac, “The Brusturoasa Uprising in Romania,” in *Sites of European Antisemitism in the Age of Mass Politics, 1880-1918*, ed. Robert Nemes and Daniel Unowsky (Waltham, MA: Brandeis University Press, 2014), 88. For more details on the Antisemitic Alliance, see: Maria Mădălina Irimia, “Violența antisemită în a doua jumătate a secolului al XIX-lea: Pogromul de la Iași din 1899,” *Revista de istorie a ereilor din România*, no. 4-5 (2019-2020): 55-56.

participated in the international antisemitic congress in Budapest in 1925. However, Cârstocea did not provide any details on or make an in-depth analysis of Cuza's entanglements with non-Romanian and international antisemitism.<sup>10</sup>

Symbols have been a key element of both transnational antisemitism and fascism.<sup>11</sup> As stated by historian Hillel J. Kieval: "[...] antisemitism's power, it turns out, does not rest in the coherence of its ideas – which is not very strong – but in its own sense of urgency and in the emotions that it is able to produce in others. It is a language of symbols and allusions, which lends itself more fruitfully to symbolic, discourse analysis than to intellectual history. The ideas in themselves are not that interesting, but their social and cultural reverberations are."<sup>12</sup>

Cuza's adoption of the swastika shows how a vaguely defined antisemitic symbol could easily transcend national borders and nationalist discourses. Removed from its German nationalist context, the swastika became the symbol under which Cuza's Romanian nationalist supporters (often called "Cuzists") rallied to assault the Jews. However, Cuza himself did not develop a coherent definition of this symbol either. On the contrary, he concocted various racist interpretations of the swastika, combining ideas from a variety of non-Romanian and Romanian sources and adding his own thoughts. Having possibly forgotten the German origin of the antisemitic symbol, Cuza's – and Corneliu Zelea-Codreanu's – supporters would later even claim primacy over Hitler's use of the swastika. Thus, in the process of transnational borrowing, the vague German nationalist signified of the swastika was replaced with a no less

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<sup>10</sup> Raul Cârstocea, „Native Fascists, Transnational Anti-Semites: The International Activity of Legionary Leader Ion I. Moța,” in *Fascism without Borders: Transnational Connections and Cooperation between Movements and Regimes in Europe from 1918 to 1945*, ed. Arnd Bauerkämper and Grzegorz Rossoliński-Liebe (New York: Berghahn Books, 2017) 221-222.

<sup>11</sup> See, for instance: Judith Keene, *Fighting for Franco: International Volunteers in Nationalist Spain during the Spanish Civil War, 1936-39* (New York: Hambledon Continuum, 2001), 2; 34; 146; 215; Claudia Baldoli, *Exporting Fascism: Italian Fascists and Britain's Italians in the 1930* (Oxford/New York: Berg, 2003), 51; Adrian Lyttelton, “Concluding Remarks,” *Rethinking the Nature of Fascism: Comparative Perspectives*, ed. António Costa Pinto (Houndmills/New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 272; Arnd Bauerkämper and Grzegorz Rossoliński-Liebe, “Fascism without Borders: Transnational Connections and Cooperation between Movements and Regimes in Europe, 1918-1945,” in *Fascism without Borders*, 3; 15.

<sup>12</sup> Hillel J. Kieval, “Afterword: European Antisemitism – the Search for a Pattern,” in *Sites of European Antisemitism in the Age of Mass Politics, 1880-1918*, ed. Robert Nemes and Daniel Unowsky (Waltham, MA: Brandeis University Press, 2014), 260. Kieval possibly relied on a similar idea by Sven Reichardt and Armin Nolzen regarding fascism: Sven Reichardt and Armin Nolzen, “Editorial,” *Faschismus in Italien und Deutschland: Studien zu Transfer und Vergleich*, ed. Sven Reichardt and Armin Nolzen (Göttingen: Wallstein Verlag, 2005), 12.

fuzzy Romanian nationalist meaning. At the same time, the symbol kept its antisemitic function and had “social and cultural reverberations” similar to those generated within its original German context.

The article consists of two parts. The first one examines Cuza’s career as an antisemitic politician from 1892 until 1923. The second part discusses the possible origins of Cuza’s use of the swastika and his interpretations of the symbol. The first part is based on published materials, including Cuza’s journal *Apărarea Națională* [National Defence], and on archival sources, mainly from the Iași county archives. The second part largely relies on two document collections from the Library of the Romanian Academy in Bucharest. The first collection, “Arhiva A.C. Cuza,” includes draft articles, private papers, and a part of the incoming political correspondence. It is a well-known collection, which has been often used in studies relating to Cuza or his movement. The second collection, “Fondul A.C. Cuza,” consists of various letters sent or received by Cuza. While it is not unknown to researchers, it has been made little use of and most letters in German have been skipped. Most information in the second part is therefore completely new.

### **Cuza’s political career**

Antisemitic violence marked the history of Romania from its beginning in 1859,<sup>13</sup> antisemitism was used for political mobilisation already in the 1860s,<sup>14</sup> and Jews were refused citizens’ rights in the first Romanian constitution of 1866.<sup>15</sup> However, Romanian antisemitic political organisations emerged only in the 1880s and 1890s.<sup>16</sup> Among them was the Romanian League against Alcoholism, established in 1897 in Iași. In May 1897, A.D. Xenopol, a professor of Romanian history at the local university,<sup>17</sup> and Alexandru Constantin (A.C.) Cuza, a former MP, called

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<sup>13</sup> Constantin Ardeleanu, “‘Masacrul din Galați’ (aprilie 1859) – Un episod din istoria comunității evreiești de la Galați,” *Analele Universității „Dunărea de Jos” Galați: Seria 19: Istorie*, no. 7 (2008): 129-146; Onac, “The Brusturoasa Uprising,” 79-93; Irimia, “Violența antisemită,” 45-93.

<sup>14</sup> Andreas Pfützner, “Die rumänisch-jüdische Frage: Europäische Perspektiven auf die Entstehung einer Anomalie (ca.1772-1870)” (PhD diss., University of Vienna, 2021), introduction.

<sup>15</sup> *Monitorul Oficial*, no. 142 (1 Iulie 1866): art. 7; see Pfützner, “Die rumänisch-jüdische Frage,” chapters 4 and 5.

<sup>16</sup> Carol Iancu, *Les Juifs en Roumanie 1866-1919: De l’exclusion à l’émancipation* (Aix-en-Provence: Éditions de l’Université de Provence, 1978), 220-225; Roland Clark, “From Elite Pamphleteers to Social Movement Protagonists: Antisemitic Activism in 1920s Romania,” *Studies on National Movements*, no. 4 (2019): 6.

<sup>17</sup> *Anuarul Universității din Iași: Anul Scolar 1901-902* (Iași: Tipografia „Dacia” P. Ilescu & D. Grossu, 1903), 53.

upon the parties to support the League,<sup>18</sup> and, on October 1, its programme was launched. The programme warned that Romanians would become extinct due to alcoholism and that “foreigners” would take their place.<sup>19</sup> A brochure published by Cuza, the League’s secretary general, shows that “foreigners” meant “Jews”.<sup>20</sup>

Who was A.C. Cuza? There are only three recent biographies on him. In 2007, Gabriel Asandului published *A.C. Cuza. Politică și cultură* [A.C. Cuza. Politics and Culture]. It was an attempt to rehabilitate Cuza as a person of his time, with his “good and bad sides”.<sup>21</sup> Another biography by Corneliu Ciucanu, “A.C. Cuza și mișcările studentești din anii 1922-1923” [A.C. Cuza and the Student Movements in 1922-1923], which appeared in 2010, also trivialised Cuza’s antisemitism, partly echoing Cuza’s propaganda.<sup>22</sup> In his *Antisemitismul lui A.C. Cuza în politica românească* [A.C. Cuza’s Antisemitism in Romanian Politics] (2012), historian Horia Bozdoghină attempted to be impartial. However, he fell to some extent for Cuza’s propaganda, as he proceeded from the premise that Cuza and his movement had a coherent and original ideology, and as he largely failed to note how contradictory and derivative their ideas were.<sup>23</sup> Although factually not completely accurate, these biographies are nevertheless helpful for reconstructing the main aspects of Cuza’s life.

A.C. Cuza was born on November 8, 1857 O.S., in a boyar (noble) family in Iași.<sup>24</sup> He came into contact with German culture during his adolescence.<sup>25</sup> In Dresden, he attended – like several other Romanians – the Vitzthumsches Gymnasium (secondary school) in 1872/1873 and the

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<sup>18</sup> “Ligă contra alcoolismului,” *Tribuna* (Sibiu), 18/30 May 1897, 439.

<sup>19</sup> *Programul Ligei Române în contra Alcoolismului* (Jassy: Tipografia Națională, 1897), 5.

<sup>20</sup> A.C. Cuza, *Ce-i Alcoolismul?* (Jassy: Tipografia Națională, 1897), 32-33.

<sup>21</sup> Gabriel Asandului, *A.C. Cuza. Politică și cultură* (Iași: Fides, 2007), 7-8.

<sup>22</sup> Corneliu Ciucanu, “A.C. Cuza și mișcările studentești din anii 1922-1923: Constituirea și activitatea Ligii Apărării Național-Creștine (1923-1930),” *Zargidava*, no. 9 (2010): 81-100.

<sup>23</sup> Horia Bozdoghină, *Antisemitismul lui A.C. Cuza în politica românească* (București, Curtea Veche, 2012). A short biography of Cuza, which is based on Bozdoghină, is included in Iulia Onac, “In der rumänischen Antisemiten-Citadelle”: *Zur Entstehung des politischen Antisemitismus in Rumänien 1878-1914* (Berlin: Metropol, 2017), 104-105.

<sup>24</sup> Serviciul județean Iași al Arhivelor naționale, Colecția „Stare Civilă oraș Iași” (no. 2252), mitrice orașul Iași, registre mitricale ale Parohiei Buna-Vestire, register no. 1/1846-1865, no. 240/1857. Cuza died on November 3, 1947, in Sibiu: Biblioteca Academiei Române, Arhiva A.C. Cuza, XII, acte 449: death certificate, 5 November 1947.

<sup>25</sup> According to a pamphlet from 1939, Cuza had attended the French boarding school of Anton Frey (1808?-1898) from 1867. In an article from 1942, which was published in Cuza’s son’s newspaper, this became the boarding school of the German Anton Frey. In the context of the alliance between Romania and Germany, Cuza’s education in French was thus concealed: Grigore V. Coban, *Fenomenul A.C. Cuza: Extras din revista „Cuget Moldovenesc”* (Iași: Alexandru Țerek, 1939), 9; G. Bezviconi, “Legăturile familiale ale lui A.C. Cuza cu Basarabia. În loc de dedicație,” *Cetatea Moldovei*, no. 5 (1942): 144.

Gymnasium of the Krause'sches Institut in 1875/1876, 1876/1877, and 1877/1878, leaving during the winter term.<sup>26</sup> He made friends at the Institute, who were the opposite of professing German antisemites.<sup>27</sup> Cuza finished his studies obtaining two doctorates in Brussels, one in political and administrative sciences in 1882 and the other one in law, in 1884 or 1886.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> *Programm des Vitzthumschen Gymnasiums* (Dresden: E. Blochmann & Sohn, 1873), 97; *Jahres-Bericht des Krause'schen Instituts* (Dresden: Julius Reichel, 1876), 29; *Jahres-Bericht des Krause'schen Instituts* (Dresden: Julius Reichel, 1877), 28; *Jahres-Bericht des Krause'schen Instituts* (Dresden: Julius Reichel, 1878), 29; Coban, *Fenomenul A.C. Cuza*, 9. "Julius Zachler," who was mentioned by Grigore V. Coban, was most probably Julius Zähler, who taught at the Vitzthumsches Gymnasium.

<sup>27</sup> Cuza had become friends with Flodoard von Biedermann (1858-1934), with whose family he had also stayed some time at Hohe Straße 23, and with Oscar Jolles, who was of Jewish descent. In November 1927, Biedermann, now an editor, disapproved of Cuza's antisemitism, as Cuza no longer regarded Jolles as a friend. Biedermann wrote: "As regards the personal aspect, I have to say that the great evil I have suffered in my life always came from my Christian Germanic fellows; I have experienced a lot of good and friendliness from Jews. Even if I acknowledge certain things that are proper to the Jewish being and detrimental to our nation, I therefore could never adhere to antisemitism out of respect for the many Jews whom I know and to whom I am even befriended. In my opinion, we can also fight off the harm without [antisemitism], harm of whose propagation in many cases our ethnic fellows are themselves responsible." For instance, Biedermann co-organised in November 1931 a bibliophilic evening in Berlin with the Jewish Soncino Society. In August 1934, Biedermann reiterated his position, adding: "However, I am of the opinion that every nation should keep its national matters pure of Jewish influence and therefore it was right that our government broke the overly exceeding influence of the Jewry on our public life." Despite this overall approval of the National Socialist government's action, Biedermann was critical of the means used and warned Cuza against imitating the German example: *Adreß- und Geschäfts-Handbuch der Königlichen Haupt- und Residenzstadt Dresden für das Jahr 1871* (Dresden: E. Blochmann u. Sohn, 1871), 25; Biblioteca Academiei Române, Fondul A.C. Cuza, S 37 (4)/DXLIV: Flodoard von Biedermann to Alexandru C. Cuza, 21 November 1927 (1<sup>st</sup> quotation); S 37 (5)/DXLIV: Flodoard von Biedermann to Alexandru C. Cuza, 4 January 1928; S 37 (22)/DXLIV: Flodoard von Biedermann to Alexandru C. Cuza, 3 August 1934 (2<sup>nd</sup> quotation); Regina Thiele, "...ich zog nun werbend durch Berlin': Der Nachlass Herrmann Meyer im Archiv des Jüdischen Museums Berlin," in *Soncino-Gesellschaft der Freunde des jüdischen Buches: Ein Beitrag zur Kulturgeschichte*, ed. Karin Bürger, etc. (Berlin/Boston: De Gruyter Oldenbourg, 2014), 144. The detective work to discover Cuza's and his friend Biedermann's whereabouts in Dresden was kindly done by Uwe Steinhoff.

<sup>28</sup> Bozdoghină, *Antisemitismul lui A.C. Cuza*, 22; Laurențiu Vlad, "Les Roumains titulaires d'un doctorat à l'université libre de Bruxelles (1863/1884-1914)," in *Identitate, cultură și politică în sud-estul Europei: Două colocvii româno-bulgare* (Brăila: Istros, 2014), 150; 152. According to an undocumented claim by Iulia Onac, Cuza also studied in Berlin. However, Cuza appears nowhere in the student registers from 1877/1878 to 1886/1887: Onac, "In der rumänischen Antisemiten-Citadelle," 104; *Amtliches Verzeichniß des Personals und der Studirenden der königlichen Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität zu Berlin* (Berlin: Gustav Schade (Otto Francke), 1877-1886).

From 1881, Cuza contributed to *Contemporanul* [The Contemporary], a journal established that year in Iași, publishing various poems, mostly variations on the theme of “memento mori,” as well as jokes.<sup>29</sup> In one poem, he referred to a “Jewish pub”<sup>30</sup> and, in another, he mentioned Judas’ betrayal and the crucifixion.<sup>31</sup> However, these poems were not antisemitic.

There have been many discussions regarding Cuza’s poem “Mormîntul Mieu” [“My Tomb”], in which he professed his atheism.<sup>32</sup> In 1939, a pamphlet claimed that *Contemporanul* was a socialist journal and that A.C. Cuza had published “humanist verses of social nature” in it.<sup>33</sup> The pamphlet quoted the relevant lines, calling them “verses that reveal a ferocious atheist, an aggressive critic, chloroformed with the Marxist doctrine.”<sup>34</sup> In 1956, right-wing author Pamfil Șeicaru quoted the same lines, with several variations and cutting Cuza’s final apostasy (“[...] for me, heaven was without God”). According to Șeicaru, Cuza had published them in the socialist journal *Dacia viitoare* [Future Dacia] (established in Paris in February 1883 and moved to Brussels during April 1883).<sup>35</sup> As many authors in *Dacia viitoare* used pseudonyms, it cannot be excluded that Cuza wrote in the paper. This would be interesting, as *Dacia viitoare* was against the discrimination of the Jews as a whole, making the difference between Jewish oppressors and oppressed (counting the Jewish pub owners among the former).<sup>36</sup> However, Cuza never published “My Tomb”

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<sup>29</sup> A.C. Cuza, “O rugăminte: Epigramă,” *Contemporanul*, 1881/1882, 179-180; “A doua înviere,” *ibidem*, 244-246; “Lor...,” *ibidem*, 246-247; “Monologul unui calic,” *ibidem*, 282-285; “Respuns la întrebare,” *ibidem*, 316; “Nemîngierea,” *ibidem*, 513; “Monologul unui Cobzariu,” *ibidem*, 555-560; “Părintelui Damaschin,” *ibidem*, 610; “Părintelui Damaschin,” *ibidem*, 725-726; “Isus Nazarineanul,” *ibidem*, 841-842; “Părintelui Damaschin,” *Contemporanul*, 1882/1883, 115; “De ce?...,” *ibidem*, 302; “Luî Damaschin,” *ibidem*, 303; “La Marea,” *Contemporanul*, *ibidem*, 303; “Vis,” *ibidem*, 412; “Domnișoarei S... N...” *ibidem*, 463; “Monologul lui Barbu lăutariul,” *ibidem*, 543-547; “Mormîntul Mieu,” *ibidem*, 688-689; “Monologul unui vagabond,” *Contemporanul*, 1883/1884, 251-254; “Și moartea sosi-va,” *Contemporanul*, 1884/1885, 36-37; “Dragעי mele,” *ibidem*, 305-306; “Luî Ștefan-Voda,” *ibidem*, 396; “Luî Damaschin,” *ibidem*, 868-869; “Luî Damaschin,” *ibidem*, 933; “De cum naște...,” *Contemporanul*, 1886/1887, 5; “De sus,” *ibidem*, 206; “Mărioara,” *ibidem*, 309-310.

<sup>30</sup> “Monologul unui Cobzariu,” *Contemporanul*, 1881/1882, 559.

<sup>31</sup> “Isus Nazarineanul,” *Contemporanul*, 1881/1882, 841-842.

<sup>32</sup> A.C. Cuza, “Mormîntul Mieu,” *Contemporanul*, 1882/1883, 688-689.

<sup>33</sup> Coban, *Fenomenul A.C. Cuza*, 10.

<sup>34</sup> Coban, *Fenomenul A.C. Cuza*, 10.

<sup>35</sup> Pamfil Șeicaru, *Un junimist antisemit A.C. Cuza* (Madrid: “Carpații,” 1956), 7.

<sup>36</sup> Dinu, “Patriotism și socialism,” *Dacia viitoare*, 1 March 1883, 34; Dinu, “Dacia viitoare și evreii,” *Dacia viitoare*, 1 May 1883, 105-106.

in *Dacia viitoare*. The confusion probably stemmed from the fact that Cuza wrote his poem in March 1883 in Brussels.<sup>37</sup>

Contrary to the interpretations of the 1939 pamphlet and Șeicaru's text, Cuza's atheist poem is not sufficient evidence that he was a socialist in the early 1880s. Bozdoghină suggested that the revolt expressed in his poems in *Contemporanul* hints at a socialist orientation.<sup>38</sup> Some of Cuza's poems, in particular four self-portraits of paupers (a beggar, a "țigane" kobza player, an elderly singer, and a vagrant<sup>39</sup>) might give the impression that he felt for the needy. However, there is no definite clue as to his political ideas in these poems. The self-portrait of the kobza player even has conservative overtones as Cuza made him say: "This is the țigane fate [...] because we poverty-stricken people have many sins."<sup>40</sup> In general, Cuza's poems reflect his belief that the world was profoundly corrupt, of which he would later publicly accuse the Jews. Cuza's statements from the late 1880s show that he had some socialist sympathies, which his Romanian nationalism and xenophobia however overshadowed. I found no evidence that he thought otherwise in the early 1880s.

It is possible that Cuza's collaboration with *Contemporanul* impacted on his (later?) antisemitism. Indeed, he published alongside Vasile Conta, a "scientific" antisemite,<sup>41</sup> and A.D. Xenopol, his future partner within the Romanian League against Alcoholism.

On 15/27 July 1884, Cuza launched an "independent" paper - or rather a political pamphlet - in Iași, *Ciomagul* [The Hammer].<sup>42</sup> The anti-

<sup>37</sup> A.C. Cuza, "Mormîntul Mieu," *Contemporanul*, 1882/1883, 689. Bozdoghină did not verify any of these aspects. He based his claim that, "in 1882, A.C. Cuza had joined the socialist group led by V. Gh. Morțun and Constantin Mille, the redactors of the publication *Dacia viitoare*" on an undocumented statement with a slightly different meaning in Cristian Sandache, *Doctrina național-creștină în România* (Bucharest: Paideia, 1997), 7. He quoted the relevant lines of "My Tomb" from G. Călinescu, *Istoria literaturii române dela origini până în prezent* (Bucharest: Fundația regală pentru literatură și artă, 1941), 482 (Bozdoghină used the reedition from 1982, p. 546). He did not take into account that the quotation was part of the chapter on *Contemporanul*, not *Dacia viitoare*: Bozdoghină, *Antisemitismul lui A.C. Cuza*, 22.

<sup>38</sup> Bozdoghină, *Antisemitismul lui A.C. Cuza*, 23.

<sup>39</sup> A.C. Cuza, "Monologul unui calic," *Contemporanul*, 1881/1882, 282-285; "Monologul unui Cobzariu," *Contemporanul*, 1881/1882, 555-560; "Monologul lui Barbu lăutariul," *Contemporanul*, 1882/1883, 543-547; "Monologul unui vagabond," *Contemporanul*, 1883/1884, 251-254.

<sup>40</sup> "Monologul unui Cobzariu," *Contemporanul*, 1881/1882, 558.

<sup>41</sup> Volovici, *Nationalist Ideology and Antisemitism*, 14-15.

<sup>42</sup> *Gazeta Transilvaniei*, 13/25 July 1884, 1. Only one issue is known: *Publicațiile periodice românești: Tom. II* (Bucharest: Editura Academiei Republicii Socialiste România, 1969), 131. The paper was apparently programmed to reappear in 1892: "Reviste, foi și ziare," *Familia* (Oradea), 29 December/10 January 1891, 625.

monarchist and pro-peasant foreword mentioned that “Judas sells [the nation] to the foreigners,”<sup>43</sup> denounced and threatened “the German immigrants” who allegedly aimed at exploiting the locals,<sup>44</sup> and predicted a rebellion of the Romanians against “the civilised immigrants from every corner of the world”.<sup>45</sup> In one of the articles, Cuza specifically targeted the Greeks and the Bulgarians.<sup>46</sup> While there were no antisemitic statements, Cuza revealed his general xenophobia.

From May 1885, Cuza’s poems appeared in *Convorbiri literare* [Literary Conversations],<sup>47</sup> the journal of the literary and political Junimea group. Cuza also participated in the activities of the group.<sup>48</sup> The 1939 pamphlet claimed that Cuza joined the group “after having left the socialist movement”.<sup>49</sup> According to Şeicaru, “under the influence of Junimea, A.C. Cuza underwent a radical change, his socialism being replaced with a nationalist conservatism”.<sup>50</sup> Cuza had already declared in 1884 that he had “nothing in common with the socialists”<sup>51</sup> and described socialism as a mere beautiful theory in 1887.<sup>52</sup> However, his statement in or shortly before 1889 that he was “a socialist as concerns the ideas, but a member of Junimea as regards the government”<sup>53</sup> suggests that he had not yet abandoned his left-wing ideas when joining the group. In any case, as we will see, he would start his national political career as a member of Junimea.

After 1886, no more poems by Cuza appeared in *Contemporanul*. In 1887, Cuza published a poetry collection, *Versuri* [Verses], reprinting

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<sup>43</sup> “Publicului Cetitoriu,” *Ciomagul*, 15/27 July 1884, 4.

<sup>44</sup> “Publicului Cetitoriu,” *Ciomagul*, 15/27 July 1884, 20.

<sup>45</sup> “Publicului Cetitoriu,” *Ciomagul*, 15/27 July 1884, 23.

<sup>46</sup> “Mezat şi Ciomăgeală,” *Ciomagul*, 15/27 July 1884, 31.

<sup>47</sup> A.C. Cuza, “Ideal,” *Convorbiri literare*, 1885, 189.

<sup>48</sup> Iacob Negruzzi, *Amintiri din Junimea* (Bucharest: Humanitas, 2011), 241-242; 245-246.

<sup>49</sup> Coban, *Fenomenul A.C. Cuza*, 10.

<sup>50</sup> Şeicaru, *Un junimist antisemit*, 7.

<sup>51</sup> “Publicului Cetitoriu,” *Ciomagul*, 15/27 July 1884, 14.

<sup>52</sup> Biblioteca Academiei Române, Arhiva A.C. Cuza, I, Mss. 9: political thoughts, 23 February 1887 – 11 April 1893. Bozdoghină’s commented on this source that “paradoxically, the future doyen of Romanian antisemitism criticised at that time the ideas of political extremism and proved to be an adept of cosmopolitanism”. This interpretation is due to a negligent reading of the source. Indeed, Cuza wrote: “The fraternisation of all the nations, cosmopolitanism is an idea born of noble human feelings, as is socialism. However, today, to renounce nationality by putting cosmopolitanism in practice would be as wise for a nation than for [unreadable] to put into practice socialism by abandoning of its own volition its means of subsistence.” As we will see, Cuza’s text was nationalist and protofascist: Bozdoghină, *Antisemitismul lui A.C. Cuza*, 23.

<sup>53</sup> Cuza, *Generația de la 48*, 67.

some of the poems from *Contemporanul*.<sup>54</sup> He donated his royalties to the poet Mihai Eminescu,<sup>55</sup> a virulent xenophobe<sup>56</sup> and antisemite,<sup>57</sup> whose antisemitic texts have had a huge influence since his death in 1889.<sup>58</sup>

In *Versuri*, Cuza publicly renounced his atheism by cutting the atheist stanzas from the poem "My Tomb".<sup>59</sup> Although Cuza still remained critical of the Christian religion,<sup>60</sup> this was a first step towards his later apology of Christianity. He also made known his antisemitic worldview. In an act of revenge, he abused a lawyer who was a Jewish convert, insulting him and telling him that a Jew remained a Jew.<sup>61</sup> In an epigram, he insinuated, without mentioning the Jews, that Iași would soon be completely Jewish.<sup>62</sup> In another epigram, he referred to the "prose with sidelocks" of a "journalist and good Romanian".<sup>63</sup> In a third epigram, he accused liberal politicians of having Jewish feelings.<sup>64</sup>

In a list of notes from 1887-1893, Cuza developed nationalist and protofascist ideas, including antisemitic statements and the project of an antisemitic "National Party" (the latter probably in or shortly before 1892).<sup>65</sup> In a pamphlet published in 1889, Cuza emphasised the necessity to eliminate the "foreigners" from the Romanian nation, without however mentioning the Jews explicitly.<sup>66</sup> It is possible that, as in 1884, Cuza targeted all non-Romanians, not only the Jews.

In November 1890, Cuza was elected a member of the local council of Iași.<sup>67</sup> In November 1891, he applied for the chair of political economy at the faculty of law in Iași, but the position was apparently filled with a

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<sup>54</sup> A.C. Cuza, *Versuri* (Iași: Tipografia Națională, 1887).

<sup>55</sup> *Lupta*, 5 June 1887, 3; "Știri literare și artistice," *Familia* (Oradea), 13/25 December 1887, 598.

<sup>56</sup> See, for instance: M. Eminescu, "Doină," *Convorbiri literare*, 1 July 1883, 159-160.

<sup>57</sup> As Eminescu is viewed as the national poet of Romania, there has been an endless debate regarding his antisemitism, which is amply documented by the texts quoted in Teodor Al. Munteanu, "Eminescu și Evreii," *Convorbiri literare*, no. 6-9 (June-September 1939): 891-903.

<sup>58</sup> Volovici, *Nationalist Ideology and Antisemitism*, 10-11.

<sup>59</sup> Cuza, *Versuri*, 43.

<sup>60</sup> Biblioteca Academiei Române, Arhiva A.C. Cuza, I, Mss. 9: political thoughts, 23 February 1887 - 11 April 1893.

<sup>61</sup> Cuza, *Versuri*, 98-99; 102.

<sup>62</sup> Cuza, *Versuri*, 161.

<sup>63</sup> Cuza, *Versuri*, 165.

<sup>64</sup> Cuza, *Versuri*, 166.

<sup>65</sup> Biblioteca Academiei Române, Arhiva A.C. Cuza, I, Mss. 9: political thoughts, 23 February 1887 - 11 April 1893.

<sup>66</sup> A.C. Cuza, *Generația de la 48 și era nouă* (Iași: Tipografia Națională, 1889), 46-49.

<sup>67</sup> *Raport asupra administrației comunei Iași de la 1 Ianuarie 1890 până la 31 Decembrie 1891* (Iași: H. Goldner, 1891), 11.

supply.<sup>68</sup> In January 1892, Cuza stood in the elections as a candidate of the conservative government party, Junimea group. Simultaneously, he was appointed by the government as a member of the acting administration of Iași. In February 1892, he was elected to the lower house,<sup>69</sup> apparently on a conservative, but not (explicitly) antisemitic platform.<sup>70</sup> This nonetheless marked the beginning of Cuza's career as an antisemitic politician on the national level. Thus, during the session of February 8/20, 1893, he claimed that everybody was against the Jews, that "the Romanians had been gradually expropriated by the Jews," that the "invasion of the Jews had started a long time ago," that the demographic evolution was in favour of the Jews, and that they controlled Bucharest economically. He called for the elimination of the Jews from the Romanian people and joked about drowning or hanging them.<sup>71</sup> During the session of March 5/17, 1893, he referred to Ernest Renan's idea that the "Semitic race" was an "inferior race," called again for the removal of the Jews from the Romanian people, and discoursed on the incompatibility between the "higher" "Aryan race" and the "lower" "Semitic race" or the "Christians and Jews".<sup>72</sup>

During the session of March 7/19, 1894, Cuza developed his replacement theory in a long and tedious speech, making alcoholism responsible for the decline of the "Christian" population. He argued that the Jews abstained from alcohol and, repeating a centuries-old Jewish stereotype,<sup>73</sup> insinuated that the Jewish pub owners intoxicated the Romanians with counterfeit alcohol. Among other things, he proposed a state alcohol monopoly, the restriction of free movement, and the strict enforcement of "the law that bans Jews from living in the countryside and selling alcoholic drinks in the rural communes".<sup>74</sup> The latter was probably a reference to the law promulgated on 28 March/9 April 1873, which was not an outright ban, but which restricted licences for alcohol sellers on the countryside to local electors (art. 8).<sup>75</sup>

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<sup>68</sup> *Lupta*, 2 November 1891, 3; *Lupta*, 10 November 1891, 3; *Lupta*, 10 December 1891, 3.

<sup>69</sup> *Lupta*, 10 January 1892, 3; "Mișcarea electorală," *Lupta*, 14 January 1892, 2; Constantin C. Bacalbașa, "Ce deosebire!" *Lupta*, 23 January 1892, 1.

<sup>70</sup> See the summary of Cuza's electoral speech, in which Jews are not mentioned: "Întruniri electorale," *Era Nouă*, 2 February 1892, 3.

<sup>71</sup> *Desbaterile Adunării Deputaților*, 13 February 1893, 448-452.

<sup>72</sup> *Desbaterile Adunării Deputaților*, 16 March 1893, 739-741; Bozdoghină, *Antisemitismul lui A.C. Cuza*, 26-27.

<sup>73</sup> Andrei Oișteanu, *Inventing the Jew. Antisemitic Stereotypes in Romanian and Other Central-East European Cultures* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2009), 173-191.

<sup>74</sup> *Desbaterile Adunării Deputaților*, 19 March 1894, 1105-1121.

<sup>75</sup> *Monitorul Oficial al României*, no. 74 (1/13 April 1873), 1; see: Iancu, *Les Juifs en Roumanie*, 198-199.

In December 1895, Cuza failed to be reelected.<sup>76</sup> Instead, he developed his antisemitic political image. As mentioned above, in 1897, he participated in the antisemitic Romanian League against Alcoholism. He also began to capitalise on student antisemitism in order to foster his political career. While some authors have assumed that student antisemitism was inexistent in Romania before the First World War,<sup>77</sup> antisemitic student violence was common in Iași much earlier. Already in 1877, the local consul of Austria-Hungary reported about a visit by the czar that “the academic youth, which distinguishes itself on every occasion by assaulting the Jews, also expressed its feeling this time by smashing the windows in several streets inhabited by Jews and by creating non negligible damage”.<sup>78</sup> Now, two decades later, in May 1899 and March 1900, Cuza defended the students who had participated in a pogrom in Iași.<sup>79</sup>

In June 1900, Cuza stood in the elections as “the candidate of the antisemitic group” linked to the newspaper *Ecoul Moldovei* [Echo of Moldavia], whose slogan was “Romania to the Romanians”. His political programme was mainly antisemitic. Jews were to be barred from public offices, public companies, public land lease contracts, the army, the press, and professional schools; the law banning Jews from settling in the countryside was to be strictly applied; recently immigrated Jews were to be expelled; individual naturalisations of Jews – provided for by a constitutional modification of 1879 – were to be stopped; the shechita – the slaughtering of animals according to Jewish religious laws – was to be prohibited.<sup>80</sup> In March 1901, *Ecoul Moldovei* and Cuza – appointed a

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<sup>76</sup> “Rezultatul alegerilor,” *Lupta*, 28 November 1895, 1; Biblioteca Academiei Române, Arhiva A.C. Cuza, XII, acte 447: the president of the lower house, certificate, 1937.

<sup>77</sup> Raul Cârstocea, “Students Don the Green Shirt: The Roots of Romanian Fascism in the Antisemitic Student Movements of the 1920s,” in *Alma Mater Antisemitica: Akademisches Milieu, Juden und Antisemitismus an den Universitäten Europas zwischen 1918 und 1939*, ed. Regina Fritz, Grzegorz Rossoliński-Liebe, and Jana Starek (Vienna: New Academic Press, 2016), 42.

<sup>78</sup> Arhivele Naționale Istorice Centrale, Casa Regala – Oficiale Vol I. (no. 725), folder 23/1877, 55-57: report by the consul of Austria-Hungary in Iași, 6 June 1877.

<sup>79</sup> Irimia, “Violența antisemită,” 70; 83. About the pogrom, see also: *Rapoarte diplomatice ruse din România (1899-1905): Дипломатические документы российских представителей в Румынии (1899-1905)*, ed. Flavius Solomon (București/Brăila: Editura Academiei Române/Editura Istros a Muzeului Brăilei „Carol I,” 2020), 146-150 (doc. 12): the Russian consul in Iași to the Russian minister plenipotentiary in Bucharest, 22 May/6 June 1899; Andrei Cușco, “Chestiunea evreiască în sursele diplomatice rusești și austro-ungare, 1899-1905,” *Volumul conferinței anuale a Institutului de Istorie „A.D. Xenopol”* (forthcoming).

<sup>80</sup> “Candidatul grupului antisemit din jurul ‘Ecoului Moldovei’ este Cuza C. Alex.,” *Ecoul Moldovei*, 27 May 1899, 1.

month earlier professor at the University of Iași<sup>81</sup> thanks to a plagiarism<sup>82</sup> – split up as the newspaper disagreed with Cuza’s new electoral programme and allies.<sup>83</sup>

Six years later, during the peasant revolt of February-April 1907, the Romanian statesmen, most of whom were great landowners, blamed the uprising on the “foreigners,” in particular the Jews.<sup>84</sup> Among the xenophobe and antisemitic agitators were Cuza and Nicolae Iorga, a professor of history at the University of Bucharest.<sup>85</sup> In June 1907, they stood together in the elections as “Nationalist Democratic candidates”.<sup>86</sup> From 1910, Iorga’s newspaper *Neamul Românesc* [The Romanian nation] bore the subtitle “Paper of the Nationalist Democrats”. In May 1910, a Nationalist Democratic programme was set up under Cuza and Iorga, which included explicitly antisemitic aims: “foreigners” were to be excluded from supply and public works contracts and removed from the countryside; Jews were to be ousted from the army.<sup>87</sup> From 1912, Cuza and Iorga repeatedly clashed. After Cuza’s group decided to support the government of Alexandru Averescu, Cuza expelled Iorga from the Nationalist Democratic Party in April 1920. Each of the two founders now claimed to be the party leader.<sup>88</sup> During the same period, Cuza served as an MP in

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<sup>81</sup> *Anuarul Universității din Iași*, 51.

<sup>82</sup> Emanuel Socor, *O rușine universitară: Plagiatul D-lui A.C. Cuza* (București: Editura Revistei „Facla,” 1911). Cuza blamed the accusation of plagiarism on the Kabbalah. He sued Emanuel Socor, who had uncovered the plagiarism, for libel, but lost. In 1922, he was unable to deny the plagiarism: “Procesul Cuza-Socor: Ziua III-a,” *Universul*, 20 January 1912, 3; “Procesul Cuza-Socor: Ziua IV-a,” *Universul*, 21 January 1912, 4; “Verdictul în procesul Cuza-Socor,” *Universul*, 22 January 1912, 3; Neagoe, *Triumful rațiunii*, 193-194.

<sup>83</sup> “Atitudinea noastră,” *Ecoul Moldovei*, 15 March 1901, 1. Presumably, Cuza’s programme was the one published in the newspapers, which resembled his programme of 1899, but referred to “the foreigners” instead of the Jews: “Programul naționaliștilor din Iași,” *Răsăritul*, 17/30 March 1901, 3; “Alegerile în România,” *Gazeta Transilvaniei*, 11/24 March 1901, 3.

<sup>84</sup> Irina Marin, *Peasant Violence and Antisemitism in Early Twentieth-Century Eastern Europe* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018), 73-74; Irina Marin, “*Raubwirtschaft* and Colonisation: The Jewish Question and Land Tenure in Romania in 1907,” in *Modern Antisemitisms in the Peripheries: Europe and its Colonies 1880-1945*, ed. Raul Cârstocea and Éva Kovács (Vienna and Hamburg: New Academic Press, 2019), 435-436.

<sup>85</sup> *Anuarul Universității din București pe anul școlar 1896-1897* (București: Stabilimentul Grafic I. V. Socecă, 1897), 16. Regarding the agitation, see the issues of *Neamul Românesc* of 1907.

<sup>86</sup> Biblioteca Academiei Române, Arhiva A.C. Cuza, V, Mss. 116: Alexandru C. Cuza, draft article, 1918 (probably).

<sup>87</sup> “Consfătuirea noastră,” *Neamul Românesc*, 27 April 1910, 802-816; *Calendarul „Neamului Românesc” pe anul 1910* (Vălenii-de-Munte: Tipografia Societății „Neamul Românesc,” 1909), 138-139; see also Iancu, *Les Juifs en Roumanie*, 227-228; Clark, “From Elite Pamphleteers,” 8-10.

<sup>88</sup> Nicolae Iorga, “Naționalismul-democrat și falsificațiile d-lui A.C. Cuza,” *Neamul Românesc*, 8 April 1920, 1; “Semnificația căderii d-lui A.C. Cuza,” *Patria*, 2 June 1920, 1; “Partidul Naționalist-Democrat din România este numai acela de sub șefia D-lui Profesor

February-April 1914, June 1914-April 1918, June-November 1918, November 1919-March 1920, and June 1920-January 1922.<sup>89</sup>

Already planning the foundation of a National Christian Party<sup>90</sup> – despite his (former?) atheism – Cuza added the subtitle “National and Christian newspaper” to his paper *Unirea* [The Union] in May 1920. One of his articles shows that “Christian” meant in fact “antisemitic”. Cuza stated that “the Nationalist Democratic Party is a party that fights for the defence of [the] Romanian interests, in particular against those who are not Christians”. He quoted two verses from the Gospel (Matthew 6:19 and 6:24: “Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust” and “You cannot serve God and wealth.”), but only to lash out at the Jews.<sup>91</sup> Cuza’s definition of “Christian” in opposition to “Jew” reflected that of the Austrian Christian Socials,<sup>92</sup> with whom he had been in contact.<sup>93</sup> However, in Cuza’s case, there was no “positive” Christian content at all.

After the war, Cuza continued to build on student antisemitism. He profited from the antisemitic climate in foreign academia. Thus, when students in Karlsruhe, Germany, threatened to boycott the classes of a Jewish engineer if he was appointed at the local Technische Hochschule,<sup>94</sup> *Unirea* used the event to promote student strikes against the appointment of Jewish professors in Romania.<sup>95</sup>

Cuza also exploited war-due changes in Romania’s universities. At the end of the war, Romania had been able to expand its territory and population. From 139,083 km<sup>2</sup> and about 7.8 million inhabitants in 1914, it

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Universitar de Economia-Politică A.C. Cuza,” *Naționalistul*, 1 Octombrie 1922; Horia Florin Bozdoghină, “Relațiile politice dintre N. Iorga și A.C. Cuza (1900-1920),” *Transilvania*, no. 10 (2003): 69-74; Bozdoghină, *Antisemitismul lui A.C. Cuza*, 45-73.

<sup>89</sup> Biblioteca Academiei Române, Arhiva A.C. Cuza, XII, acte 447: the president of the lower house, certificate, 1937.

<sup>90</sup> “Cel mai nou și – mai dorit partid!” *Unirea*, 17 March 1920, 1.

<sup>91</sup> Biblioteca Academiei Române, Arhiva A.C. Cuza, V, Mss. 103: Alexandru C. Cuza, draft article, 1920 or later.

<sup>92</sup> Kurt Augustinus Huber, *Katholische Kirche und Kultur in Böhmen: Ausgewählte Abhandlungen* (Münster: LIT Verlag, 2005), 230.

<sup>93</sup> In 1894, Cuza had sent his pamphlets to Karl Lueger and received answers from the future mayor of Vienna. In June 1909, Bukovinian Christian Social Konstantin von Zoppa had solicited Cuza for articles for his Viennese paper *Die Judenfrage* [The Jewish Question]: Biblioteca Academiei Române, Fondul A.C. Cuza, S 27 (2)/DLVII: Karl Lueger to Alexandru C. Cuza, 26 May 1894; S 11/DLXVIII: Konstantin von Zoppa to Alexandru C. Cuza, 23 June 1909.

<sup>94</sup> “Studentischer Antisemitismus,” *Jüdische Rundschau*, 6 February 1920, 67.

<sup>95</sup> Probus, “Antisemitismul în Germania,” *Unirea*, 15 February 1920, 1.

had grown to 296,142 km<sup>2</sup> and about 16 million inhabitants in 1919,<sup>96</sup> among whom many non-Romanians.<sup>97</sup> In particular, important towns like Kolozsvár/Cluj, Transylvania, and Czernowitz/Cernăuți, Bukovina, had an overwhelmingly non-Romanian population,<sup>98</sup> Cernăuți being essentially a German-speaking Jewish cultural hub.<sup>99</sup>

In Cluj and Cernăuți, Romania gained a Hungarian and a German university respectively. In May 1919, the University of Cluj was closed as the Hungarian professors refused to take the oath to the Romanian state, and preparations for its Romanianisation were made.<sup>100</sup> In June, the German-speaking professors of the University of Cernăuți were notified that they would be dismissed on September 1.<sup>101</sup> On September 12, both universities were Romanianised by decree.<sup>102</sup> As a consequence, not only

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<sup>96</sup> *Anuarul statistic al României 1915-1916* (București: F. Göbl Fii, 1919), 16; *Anuarul statistic al României 1922* (București: F. Göbl Fii, 1923), 21-24.

<sup>97</sup> No detailed census was organised in Romania until 1930. For estimates, see *Minoritățile naționale din România 1918-1925* (București: Arhivele Statului din România, 1995), 8.

<sup>98</sup> According to the Hungarian and Austrian censuses of 1910, which the Romanian nationalists disputed, Kolozsvár had numbered 60,808 inhabitants, of whom only 7,562 had Romanian as their mother tongue, while Czernowitz had counted 85,446 Austrian citizens, of whom 13,425 used Romanian as “everyday language”: *A Magyar Szent Korona országainak 1910. évi népszámlálása: Ötödik rész* (Budapest: Pesti könyvnyomda részvénytársaság, 1916), 116-117; *Die Ergebnisse der Volkszählung vom 31. Dezember 1910 in den im Reichsrat vertretenen Königreichen und Ländern: 2. Heft des ersten Bandes* (Wien: kaiserlich-königliche Hof- und Staatsdruckerei, 1914), 50.

<sup>99</sup> In 1919, Cernăuți had almost 92,000 inhabitants. In 1925, an estimated 50,000-60,000 Jews lived here and there were 57 temples and synagogues: *Dicționarul Statistic al Bucovinei întocmit pe baza rezultatelor recensământului populației din 28 Februarie 1919* (București: Gutenberg, 1922), V; Державний Архів Чернівецької Облaсті, фонд 325, опис 1, справ 1902, 1-2: list of the temples and synagogues of Cernăuți and number of worshippers, 1925; see also the studies by prof. Andrei Corbea-Hoișie and prof. Petro Rychlo, as well as Cristina Florea’s excellent PhD thesis: “City of Dreams, Land of Longing: Czernowitz and Bukovina at the Crossroads of Empires” (PhD diss., Princeton University, 2016).

<sup>100</sup> “Universitatea din Cluj închisă: Profesorii unguri refuză jurământul,” *Gazeta Transilvaniei*, 18 May 1919, 2; “Universitatea din Cluj,” *Gazeta Transilvaniei*, 27 May 1919, 1; Sextil Pușcariu, “Raport,” in *Anuarul Universității din Cluj 1919-1920* (Cluj: Ardealul, 1921), 2.

<sup>101</sup> “Entlassung der deutschen Universitätsprofessoren,” *Allgemeine Zeitung/Tagblatt*, 15 June 1919, 2. Professors concerned contacted the University of Vienna, which suggested that the Austrian department of Foreign Affairs take action on their behalf, which it apparently did. According to the University of Vienna, the Romanian Government demanded that the professors commit to give classes in Romanian, on pain of having their salaries suspended: Österreichisches Staatsarchiv, AdR AAng BKA-AA NPA 293, 460: the rector of the University of Vienna to the Austrian department of Foreign Affairs, 1 July 1919; 459: the Austrian department of Foreign Affairs to the Austrian delegation in Saint-Germain, 2 July 1919.

<sup>102</sup> *Monitorul Oficial*, no. 126 (23 September 1919): 7202 (no. 4091).

professors, but also students left.<sup>103</sup> While the share of Jewish students at the University of Cernăuți decreased in the early 1920s, it remained substantial<sup>104</sup> and Jews were still present at the University of Cluj.<sup>105</sup>

Romanianising the Universities of Cluj and Cernăuți in order to do justice to the Romanian nation and to cancel the Hungarian and the Austrian past<sup>106</sup> implied that Romanian professors and students could

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<sup>103</sup> See: Zoltán Pálffy, *National Controversy in the Transylvanian Academe: The Cluj/Kolozsvár University in the First Half of the Twentieth Century* (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 2005); Nora Chelaru, "Românizarea Universității din Cernăuți și îmbogățirea bibliotecii universitare cu cărți de literatură germană (1919-1940)," in *Rumänisch-Deutsche Kulturbegegnungen 1918-1933*, ed. Daniela Vladu, Laura Laza and Ursula Wittstock (Cluj-Napoca: Casa Cărții de Știință, 2021). Personal connections and party loyalty governed new appointments. Thus, the University of Cernăuți was soon monopolised by the group connected to the Romanian nationalist newspaper  *Glasul Bucovinei* [The Voice of Bukovina], founded in October 1918, and the resulting Democratic Party of the Union, established in September 1919. Contributors to the newspaper and/or members of the party who were appointed at the University were: Ion Nistor, Romulus Câdea, Vasile Grecu, Dimitrie Marmeliuc, and Alexie Procopovici. Despite his mediocrity, Câdea had a splendid career in Nistor's shadow: "Marea adunare constitutivă a partidului democrat al unirii,"  *Glasul Bucovinei*, 17 September 1919, 4;  *Universitatea Ferdinand I din Cernăuți: Inaugurarea festivă a rectorului pentru anul de studii 1921/1922* (Cernăuți: Editura Universității, 1922), 7;  *Universitatea Regele Ferdinand I din Cernăuți: Inaugurarea solemnă a anului de studii 1922-1923* (Cernăuți: Editura Universității, 1922), 10; "Das Prestige unserer Universität,"  *Vorwärts*, 10 March 1921, 2-3; "Ein würdiger Universitätslehrer,"  *Vorwärts*, 4 January 1923, 3; "Antisemitismul universitar," 44. In  *Glasul Bucovinei*, Dimitrie Marmeliuc published eulogies to Ion Zelea-Codreanu and Nicolae Iorga. In an article about the latter, Marmeliuc also mentioned the "beautiful" Nationalist Democratic movement, which he however thought had become extinct ten years earlier: D. Marmeliuc, "Ion Zelea-Codreanu,"  *Glasul Bucovinei*, 29 November 1918, 1; D. Marmeliuc, "Dl. N. Iorga și politica viitorului,"  *Glasul Bucovinei*, 7 December 1918, 1-2.

<sup>104</sup> During the summer semester 1921, out of 1,271 students (arithmetic total), 532 were Jewish and 548 Orthodox (probably Romanians and Ukrainians); at the end of 1921/1922, out of 1,256, 465 Jewish and 622 Orthodox; during the winter semester 1922, out of 1,448, 483 Jewish and 753 Orthodox; during the summer semester 1923, out of 1,241, 387 Jewish and 685 Orthodox:  *Inaugurarea festivă a rectorului pentru anul de studii 1921/1922 la 24 Octomvrie 1921* (Cernăuți: Editura Universității, 1922), 8-9;  *Inaugurarea solemnă a anului de studii 1922-1923 la 24 Octomvrie 1922* (Cernăuți: Editura Universității, 1922), 11;  *Inaugurarea solemnă a anului de studii 1923-1924 la 24 Octomvrie 1923* (Cernăuți, Editura Universității, 1923), 10. The totals in the yearbooks do not equal the arithmetic totals.

<sup>105</sup> At the University of Cluj, only the Faculty of Philosophy and Literature published relevant statistics in 1921/1922: during the winter semester 1921, out of 221 students, 22 were Jewish and 161 Romanian; during the summer semester 1922, out of 238, 20 Jewish and 166 Romanian:  *Anuarul Universității din Cluj pe anul școlar 1921-22* (Cluj: Ardealul, 1923), 15.

<sup>106</sup> See, for instance, Ion Nistor's and P.P. Negulescu's speeches during the opening of the Romanian University of Cernăuți in October 1920, as well as Dimitrie Marmeliuc's commentary in  *Glasul Bucovinei: Inaugurarea Universității Românești din Cernăuți 23-25 Octomvrie 1920* (Cernăuți:  *Glasul Bucovinei*, 1922), 15-25; 28-34; "Inaugurarea universității,"  *Glasul Bucovinei*, 24 October 1920, 2.

“claim ethnic privilege”<sup>107</sup> to the detriment of the professors and students belonging to non-Romanian groups associated with that past, mainly Hungarians and Hungarian-speaking Jews in Cluj and German-speaking Jews in Cernăuți. Thus, one of Cuza’s disciples, Ion Moța, who created an antisemitic student movement in Cluj,<sup>108</sup> argued in December 1922 that the proportion of Jewish students at the Romanian universities (purportedly, 160 Jews and 40 Romanians in the first year of the Faculty of Medicine in Cluj),<sup>109</sup> as well as among the beneficiaries of Romanian fellowships was the reason for the movement.<sup>110</sup>

Another reason behind Romanian student antisemitism was aversion to communism. Romania had annexed Bessarabia, a territory which had experienced the Russian Revolution and had been heavily exposed to Bolshevik ideas. Romanian nationalists therefore suspected Bessarabian students who studied at Romanian universities of communism.<sup>111</sup> Among these students were numerous Jews. Historian Irina Livezeanu calculated that, “of the 4,062 Bessarabian students enrolled at Iași University from 1918 until 1930, only 1,306, or one-third, were ethnic Romanians” while “the 1,794 Jews represented 44.2 percent of the Bessarabian students”.<sup>112</sup> Corneliu Zelea-Codreanu, the son of Cuza’s friend Io(a)n Zelea-Codreanu, and Cuza’s godchild,<sup>113</sup> considered that one of the two student groups at the University of Iași in 1919 “was overwhelmed by the enormous mass of kike students who had come from Bessarabia and who were all agents and propagators of communism”.<sup>114</sup> His reaction was to assault the Jewish students from Bessarabia.<sup>115</sup>

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<sup>107</sup> The expression was coined by Roland Clark: Roland Clark, “Claiming Ethnic Privilege: Aromanian Immigrants and Romanian Fascist Politics,” *Contemporary European History*, no. 1 (2015): 37-58.

<sup>108</sup> About Moța’s early activity, see: Biblioteca Academiei Române, Fondul A.C. Cuza, S 47 (2)/DLVIII: Ioan Moța to Alexandru C. Cuza, 12 October 1924.

<sup>109</sup> According to the rector, it were actually 108 Jews and 112 Romanians: Ana-Maria Stan, “The 1922-1923 Student Revolts at the University of Cluj, Romania: From Local Anti-Semitic Academic Protests to National Events,” in *Student Revolt, City, and Society in Europe: From the Middle Ages to the Present*, ed. Pieter Dhondt and Elizabethanne Boran (New York/London: Routledge, 2018), 288.

<sup>110</sup> Ion I. Moța, “De vorbă cu conștiința: Cauza noastră e justă în ordinea morală și servește progresul social,” *Dacia Nouă*, 23 December 1922 quoted from Ion I. Moța, *Cranii de lemn: Articole 1922-1936* (Sibiu: “Totul pentru țară,” 1936), 14-15.

<sup>111</sup> “Focarul anarhiei dintre studenți,” *Unirea*, 3 March 1920, 1.

<sup>112</sup> Irina Livezeanu, *Cultural Politics in Greater Romania: Regionalism, Nation Building, & Ethnic Struggle, 1918-1930* (Ithaca/London: Cornell University Press, 1995), 259.

<sup>113</sup> Heinen: *Die Legion „Erzengel Michael,”* 132.

<sup>114</sup> Corneliu Zelea-Codreanu, *Pentru legionari: Vol. I* (București: Editura „Totul pentru țară,” 1936), 15.

<sup>115</sup> Raul Cârstocea, “Anti-Semitism in Romania: Historical Legacies, Contemporary Challenges,” European Centre for Minority Issues Working Paper #81 (October 2014): 10.

As in 1899, Cuza protected the antisemitic bullies. Moreover, he used them to undermine the authority of the senate of the University of Iași. In autumn 1919, Corneliu Zelea-Codreanu enrolled in the Faculty of Law, where Cuza was dean. In less than two years, he committed several offences. For instance, after having attended an anti-Bolshevik and antisemitic speech by Cuza, he and other students vandalised the editorial offices and the printing shop of the newspaper *Lumea*, whose editor was Jewish. He and other students also blocked the entrances to the University after the senate decided that no religious service would be held at the beginning of the new academic year 1920/1921.

On June 2, 1921, the senate decided to expel Corneliu Zelea-Codreanu as a consequence of his assaulting a journalist, who had found fault with his father. Immediately, Cuza, who was staying in Bucharest, sent a letter to protest the expulsion. He accused the senate of “cultivating cowardice, by deciding that the students do not have the right to reject insults and to defend themselves when attacked”. He also blamed the senate for “defending an anarchic press, written by foreigners or people who have become foreigners” – meaning Jews and Romanian leftists. Four days later, Cuza convened the faculty council and declared the senate’s decision void.

Disregarding the senate’s decision, Corneliu Zelea-Codreanu stood in the elections for the committee of the Society of Law Students and was elected in November 1921, obtaining the most votes. Without the rector’s approbation, but with Cuza’s permission, Corneliu Zelea-Codreanu organised the founding meeting of the Association of Christian (Romanian) Students in May 1922. In July, Cuza even submitted a list of law graduates which included Corneliu Zelea-Codreanu, but the prorector decided that his diploma would be issued “after the final settlement of the question”.<sup>116</sup> As we will see, Cuza gained in the short

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<sup>116</sup> Neagoe, *Triumful națiunii*, 90-120; see: Serviciul județean Iași al Arhivelor naționale, Universitatea „Alexandru Ioan Cuza” Iași – Rectorat (no. 2224), folder 948, 5: the Student Centre Iași to the rector of the University of Iași, complaint against Corneliu Zelea-Codreanu, 31 May 1921 (see also 29-30); folder 976, 10 (= Biblioteca Academiei Române, Fondul A.C. Cuza, S 106/DXLIX): Alexandru C. Cuza to the rector of the University of Iași, protest against Corneliu Zelea-Codreanu’s expulsion, Bucharest, 2 June 1921; folder 953, 79: Alexandru C. Cuza to the rector of the University of Iași, request for the transcript of Corneliu Zelea-Codreanu’s expulsion, 5 June 1921; 86-87: transcript of the law faculty council meeting, 6 June 1921; folder 978, 65-70: transcript of the senate meeting regarding the decision of the law faculty council, 8 June 1921; folder 948, 104: a student to the rector of the University of Iași, complaint against his cautioning for having protested against Corneliu Zelea-Codreanu’s expulsion, 28 June 1921; folder 963, 60: Corneliu Zelea-Codreanu’s candidature to the committee of the Society of Law Students, November (?) 1921; 80-81: results of the elections of the committee of the Society of Law Students, 23 November 1921; 29: Corneliu Zelea-

term. In the long term, the boost to Corneliu Zelea-Codreanu's ego turned the latter into a dangerous competitor.

In January 1922, Cuza had founded the National Christian Union together with several friends, among whom doctor Nicolae Paulescu and Ion Zelea-Codreanu.<sup>117</sup> Meanwhile, his and Iorga's Nationalist Democratic Parties continued to coexist.<sup>118</sup>

According to the Union's programme, published a year later in 1923, Jews were to be expelled from Romania in the long term. In the short term, the constitutional article which provided only for individual naturalisations of Jews was to be upheld; the Jews were to be removed from the countryside and barred from the army, academic positions, public companies and offices, supply and public works contracts, etc.; Jewish pupils were to be sent to separate schools for Jews, and the proportion of Jewish students was to be limited (*numerus clausus*); Christians were to be favoured in commerce and industry.<sup>119</sup>

In April 1922, Cuza launched *Apărarea Națională* [National Defence], a journal aimed "to enlighten the Jewish question scientifically and to lead to its solution".<sup>120</sup> In other words, it bolstered crude antisemitic stereotypes<sup>121</sup> and spread hatred against the Jews. Already in its first issue, it promoted student antisemitism. It reproduced a leaflet which had surfaced a month earlier in Cluj.<sup>122</sup> Claiming that Jews led the University of Cluj, the leaflet called upon the "true students" to protest against "the Jewish terror" and to demand the *numerus clausus*.<sup>123</sup>

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Codreanu, complaint against his expulsion, December 1921; folder 1000 I, 15: transcript of the declarations of different students, including Corneliu Zelea-Codreanu, regarding the founding meeting of the Association of Christian Romanian Students, 30 May 1922; folder 958, 51: the minister of Education to the rector of the University of Iași, opinion regarding Corneliu Zelea-Codreanu's expulsion, 24 June 1922; folder 1000 I, 170: Alexandru C. Cuza to the prorector of the University of Iași, list of law graduates, 3 July 1922; the prorector of the University of Iași, decision, 5 July 1922; Codreanu, *Pentru legionari*, 15-16; 40-50; 60-63.

<sup>117</sup> A.C. Cuza, "Uniunea națională Creștină," *Apărarea Națională*, 1 April 1922, 1; "Dezordinele antisemite la Cameră," *Adevărul*, 9 December 1922, 1.

<sup>118</sup> For instance: "Guvernul Take Ionescu a căzut," *Gazeta Transilvaniei*, 19 January 1922, 3.

<sup>119</sup> "Programul Uniunii Naționale Creștine," *Apărarea Națională*, 1 January 1923, 30-31.

<sup>120</sup> A.C. Cuza, "Uniunea națională Creștină," *Apărarea Națională*, 1 April 1922, 3.

<sup>121</sup> For instance, in 1923, Paulescu suggested in an item that a ritual murder had taken place in Bârlad: Dr. Paulescu, "Martirul Neamului," *Apărarea Națională*, 1 February 1923, 1.

<sup>122</sup> "Izgató röpiratok a kolozsvári egyetemen," *Uj Kelet*, 16 March 1922, 1-2. The pamphlet is mentioned in: Attila Gidó, *Două decenii: Ereii din Cluj în perioada interbelică* (Cluj-Napoca: ISPMN, 2014), 139.

<sup>123</sup> "Tinerime universitară Română!" *Apărarea Națională*, 1 April 1922, 20.

At the end of 1922, antisemitic student protests, which the French chargé d'affaires attributed to Cuza's articles and speeches,<sup>124</sup> took place in each of the four universities of Romania. They were marked by physical violence against the Jews and the state authorities.<sup>125</sup> The idea of the *numerus clausus* was central to the protests. It was purportedly included in a draft petition by the students in Iași, which they discussed on December 9, 1922, with the students in Cluj, who were to debate it with the students in Bucharest.<sup>126</sup> On December 9, students from Iași also took part in a meeting in Cernăuți. They asked the Christian students in Cernăuți to advocate the *numerus clausus* too.<sup>127</sup> The final petition was apparently adopted on December 10 in Bucharest.<sup>128</sup>

This was not an isolated event at this time in Europe. *Numerus clausus* debates were going on in many countries in 1919-1922,<sup>129</sup> for instance in neighbouring Hungary<sup>130</sup> and Poland.<sup>131</sup> While Clark acknowledged that "by 1922 the phenomenon of violent student antisemitism had taken on clear transnational proportions,"<sup>132</sup> he also

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<sup>124</sup> Carol Iancu, *Les Juifs de Roumanie et la solidarité internationale: Documents diplomatiques inédits (1919-1939)* (Montpellier: Université Paul Valéry, 2006), 80 (doc. 5): the French chargé d'affaires in Bucharest, report, 18 December 1922.

<sup>125</sup> No full account of the events seems to exist. See: Livezeanu, *Cultural Politics*, 268-270; Gidó, *Două decenii*, 139-141; Clark, *Holy Legionary Youth*, 28-31.

<sup>126</sup> "Manifestațiile studentești din Cluj," *Patria*, 12 December 1922, 2; see: Dragoș Sdrobiș, *Limitele meritocrației într-o societate agrară: Șomajul intelectual și radicalizarea politică a tineretului în România interbelică* (Iași: Polirom, 2015), 241.

<sup>127</sup> "Die Studentenmanifestationen in Czernowitz," *Czernowitzer Allgemeine Zeitung*, 12 December 1922, 1.

<sup>128</sup> Clark, *Holy Legionary Youth*, 28.

<sup>129</sup> Cârstocea, "Students Don the Green Shirt," 48-49; Clark, "Both Form and Substance," 48-49; see also: "The Jewish Question" and Higher Education in Central Europe and Beyond (1880-1945), ed. Michael L. Miller and Judith Szapor (forthcoming).

<sup>130</sup> Mária M. Kovács, "The Hungarian *numerus clausus*: ideology, apology and history, 1919-1945," in: "The *numerus clausus* in Hungary: Studies on the First Anti-Jewish Law and Academic Anti-Semitism in Modern Central Europe," ed. Victor Karady and Peter Tibor Nagy (Budapest: Pasts Inc. Centre for Historical Research, History Department of the Central European University, 2012), 28-30; see also the other articles in this volume, as well as those in *Hungarian Studies Review*, no. 1 (June 2021).

<sup>131</sup> Izabela Mrzygłód, "Paragrafy dla narodu. Antysemitcka radykalizacja Koła Prawników Studentów Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego w okresie II Rzeczypospolitej," in *Polityka. Między współpracą a odrzuceniem. Żydzi i Polacy w XIX i XX wieku*, ed. Zofia Trębacz (Warsaw: Żydowski Instytut Historyczny, 2021), 79-80; see also: Grzegorz Krzywiec, "The Crusade for a Numerus Clausus 1922/1923: Preliminaries of Polish Fascism in the Central and Eastern European Context," in *Alma Mater Antisemitica: Akademisches Milieu, Juden und Antisemitismus an den Universitäten Europas zwischen 1918 und 1939*, ed. Regina Fritz, Grzegorz Rossoliński-Liebe, and Jana Starek (Vienna: New Academic Press, 2016), 67-84.

<sup>132</sup> Clark, "Both Form and Substance," 49.

concluded that “students talked about the student movement as a Europe-wide phenomenon, but outside of German-speaking Central Europe, it seems to have been poorly coordinated across borders”.<sup>133</sup> While the last statement calls for further research, it would thus seem that the student movement was transnational in the discourse, but less so from the perspective of personal connections.

In Iași, as early as October 24, 1922, antisemitic students had disrupted a play at the National Theatre because the cast included a Jewish actress.<sup>134</sup> Corneliu Zelea-Codreanu left two weeks later for Berlin.<sup>135</sup> He would only return after the temporary closure of the University of Cernăuți on December 27.<sup>136</sup> However, antisemitic incidents continued and the rector of the University of Iași, Traian Bratu,<sup>137</sup> finally resigned on December 6 upon acknowledging that the students sided with Cuza.<sup>138</sup> Thus, the dean had defeated the rector.

Despite being the doyen, Cuza refused to head the rectorate, leaving this charge to the prorector. As the acting rector, he would have had to take pragmatic decisions. As an opponent of the rectorate, he could continue demanding the impossible and remain the idol of the antisemitic students. During the first senate meeting without Bratu, Cuza thus embraced the students’ demands that Christians get Christian corpses and Jews Jewish cadavers for dissection and that the Jews be expelled from the university halls.<sup>139</sup> During another senate meeting on

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<sup>133</sup> Roland Clark, “Terror and Antisemitic Student Violence in East-Central Europe, 1919-1923,” in *A Transnational History of Right-Wing Terrorism: Political Violence and the Far Right in Eastern and Western Europe since 1900*, ed. Johannes Dalfinger and Moritz Florin (London: Routledge, 2022), 74.

<sup>134</sup> *Antisemitismul universitar în România, 193-194* (doc. 38): the General Association of Jewish Students to the rector of the University of Iași, 1 November 1922; 195-196 (doc. 39): the police headquarters of Iași to the rector of the University of Iași, 9 November 1922; Neagoe, *Triumful rațiunii*, 172.

<sup>135</sup> *Consiliul Național pentru Studierea Arhivelor Securității, fond Penal, folder P 011784, vol. 2, 1: the special service of Siguranța to the director of the police and Siguranța, 7 November 1922.*

<sup>136</sup> “Der Studentenstreik auf der Czernowitzer Universität,” *Czernowitzer Allgemeine Zeitung*, 29 December 1922, 1; Codreanu, *Pentru legionari*, 108.

<sup>137</sup> For a biography, see: Cristina Spinei, *Ipostaze ale vieții: Traian Bratu în scrisori și documente* (Iași: Editura Universității „Alexandru Ioan Cuza” din Iași, 2019).

<sup>138</sup> Neagoe, *Triumful rațiunii*, 179-199; see: Serviciul județean Iași al Arhivelor naționale, Universitatea „Alexandru Ioan Cuza” Iași – Rectorat (no. 2224), folder 958, 71: the rector of the University of Iași, letter of resignation, 6 December 1922; folder 1001: the Ministry of Education to the rector of the University of Iași, acceptance of the resignation, 14 December 1922.

<sup>139</sup> Serviciul județean Iași al Arhivelor naționale, Universitatea „Alexandru Ioan Cuza” Iași – Rectorat (no. 2224), folder 1006, 75-76: transcript of the senate meeting, 16 December 1922.

March 16, 1923, he even proposed that only Christian students be admitted to the final exams.<sup>140</sup>

On March 4, 1923, Cuza founded the League for National Christian Defence (Liga Apărării Naționale Creștine, L.A.N.C.). According to Corneliu Zelea-Codreanu, it aimed at organising and directing the supporters of the antisemitic student movement and at politicising the rural population. Corneliu Zelea-Codreanu later suggested that the League had been his idea, claiming that “Professor Cuza was not sufficiently convinced of the need of the organisation”.<sup>141</sup> However, as a veteran politician and founder of political groups, Cuza hardly needed Codreanu to see the advantage of giving a formal structure to the nation-wide student movement that he had inspired and to take “the struggle into the political arena”.<sup>142</sup>

### Cuza’s use of the swastika

The third issue of *Apărarea Națională*, published in May 1922, already bore the swastika. On March 4, 1923, just before Cuza was proclaimed president of the League for National Christian Defence in the foyer of the University of Iași (thus putting on show his victory over Bratu), a ceremony took place at the local Metropolitan church, during which the banner of the organisation was consecrated.<sup>143</sup> Allegedly, these flags, as approved by Cuza, were black, with a Romanian tricolour border. In the centre, they had a white circle with a swastika.<sup>144</sup> The by-law of the League established the swastika as its official sign (quoted below). The League’s banner (in 1925) consisted of the Romanian tricolour with a black swastika on the yellow stripe.<sup>145</sup> The swastika was thus visually Romanianised. The League’s regulation compelled its members to wear the swastika “in full view, so as to recognise each other as brothers”<sup>146</sup> and its newspapers sold lapel swastikas to this effect.<sup>147</sup> Already in 1922, Ion Zelea-Codreanu had ordered his daughter Iridenta to wear the “Aryan cross” at school in Huși, thereby creating a scandal which allowed the antisemites to portray themselves as the victims.<sup>148</sup>

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<sup>140</sup> Serviciul județean Iași al Arhivelor naționale, Universitatea „Alexandru Ioan Cuza” Iași – Rectorat (no. 2224), folder 1006, 90: transcript of the senate meeting, 16 March 1923.

<sup>141</sup> Codreanu, *Pentru legionari*, 114-116.

<sup>142</sup> Livezeanu, *Cultural Politics*, 271.

<sup>143</sup> “Întrunirea partidului naționalist creștin din Iași,” *Universul*, 7 March 1923, 2.

<sup>144</sup> Codreanu, *Pentru legionari*, 117.

<sup>145</sup> *Călăuza bunilor Români* (Cluj: Tipografia Națională, 1925), 29.

<sup>146</sup> *Călăuza bunilor Români*, 49.

<sup>147</sup> Clark, “From Elite Pamphleteers,” 25.

<sup>148</sup> Biblioteca Academiei Române, Arhiva A.C. Cuza, VII, Mss. 47: “a Christian priest,” “Crucea arică persecutată la Huși,” [1922]. Several pupils in Huși were involved in

When Cuza and Ion Zelea-Codreanu split up in 1927, Corneliu Zelea-Codreanu founded a second antisemitic movement, the Legion of the Archangel Michael,<sup>149</sup> later also known as the Iron Guard. From August 1, 1927 (no. 1), to December 1, 1927 (no. 9), the paper of the new organisation, *Pământul Strămoșesc* [Ancestral Land], used the swastika on its front page, on top of the icon of the Archangel Michael. From December 15, 1927 (no. 10), the swastika was replaced temporarily with two crosses crosslet with the swastika in their centre. This was also the symbol of Georg de Pottere's contemporary Arisch-christlicher Kulturbund [Aryan Christian Cultural Association].<sup>150</sup> As de Pottere

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antisemitic incidents, posting antisemitic signs and assaulting Jews. In December 1922, a 13-year old pupil, who put up a sign "Down with the kikes" and was consequently beaten by Jews, told the police that he "did not know that what was written on the paper would vex somebody". In fact, the word "kike" ("jidán"), which Ion Zelea-Codreanu, a local professor, had actively promoted, had been banned a month earlier by a school inspector as the local Jewish population considered it very offensive: Arhivele Naționale Istorice Centrale, Ministerul Instrucțiunii (no. 711), folder 431/1923, 28: statement of a pupil, December 1922; *Antisemitismul universitar în România*, 198-203 (doc. 42): a school inspector, report, 16 November 1922.

<sup>149</sup> Clark, *Holy Legionary Youth*, 63-65.

<sup>150</sup> Born on July 1, 1875 in Ermeny, Banat, Hungary, and purportedly of Northern German origin, Georg de Pottere joined the Austro-Hungarian consular service in 1899. He served in Vienna, Sofia, Tangier, Mexico, and Moscow, where, in November 1918, he was detained three hours by the Soviets. The Soviet experience visibly impacted on his worldview. After the war, de Pottere was retired by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in March 1919. In April 1919, he opted for the Austrian citizenship. He founded a monarchist Selbstschutz, Ostara, which was involved in February 1923 in a street fight during which a Social Democratic worker was killed. In 1925, he participated in the international antisemitic congress in Budapest and, in 1926, in an antisemitic congress in Switzerland. On February 28, 1926, five people – but de Pottere not among them – submitted the by-laws of the Arisch-christlicher Kulturbund to the Ministry of Interior, which approved them on March 10. According to these by-laws, the association sought to spread "the conscience and the knowledge of the Aryan and the Christian cultural heritage, to preserve the surviving cultural heritage, and to safeguard it from foreign and harmful influences". On May 10, 1926, de Pottere was elected as a board member. Three and a half years later, on November 9, 1929, the general assembly of the Arisch-christlicher Kulturbund unanimously decided to dissolve the association. Nonetheless, Pottere's efforts to create an antisemitic organisation continued. On November 8, 1936, de Pottere and his friend Edwin Cooper travelled to Switzerland. In Bern, they apparently attempted to open an account for a "board for the establishment of a Pan-Aryan Union". To that effect, they recruited a local antisemite, Boris Tödli, and used their pseudonyms Otto Farmer and Edward Planter. They seem to have intended to gain members for the Pan-Aryan Union in Switzerland, who would have paid their membership fee into the account. The Swiss authorities expelled de Pottere and Cooper on November 14. From his file in the Swiss Federal Archives, it results that, in 1938, de Pottere also arouse suspicions during a stay in Belgium and that, in 1939, he was in contact with the Institut für arisches Studium [Institute for Aryan Studies] in Chicago. According to historian Magnus Brechtken, de Pottere had attempted to gain access to the NSDAP already in 1927. In 1937, in

apparently supported Cuza,<sup>151</sup> it is possible that the Legion's provisional symbol had a discrete origin. Corneliu Zelea-Codreanu might have been inspired by the crosses crosslet and swastikas on the ceiling of Saint-Laurent in Grenoble, which he had described to Cuza in December 1925.<sup>152</sup> Later, under the National Legionary State, a German-language Legionary propaganda album claimed that Corneliu Zelea-Codreanu had used the swastika the first time as a political symbol in Europe,<sup>153</sup> thus suggesting that the symbol had an autochthonous origin and that Corneliu Zelea-Codreanu had adopted it before Hitler. Cuza's role was passed over in silence.

For the June 1931 elections, the Iron Guard adopted a grating-like fence as an "electoral sign," a geometric figure used in lieu of a party

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the context of the tensions between German National Socialism and Austrofascism, de Pottere declared that he had known Hitler and Alfred Rosenberg years earlier, but that he opposed the National Socialist ideas. He depicted himself as an antisemite who wanted to instil antisemitism into the Austrian legitimist movement. A 1934 article in de Pottere's Swiss file shows that the National Socialists also dissociated themselves from de Pottere: "Gerichtssaal: Der Tod Birneckers," *Illustrierte Kronen-Zeitung*, 18 May 1923, 6-8; Österreichisches Staatsarchiv, AdR AAng BKA-AA NAR Fach 4 Serie N Pottere, Georg, de; AdR BKA BKA-Inneres, Signatur 15/16, 100.826/1926 (Arisch-christlicher Kulturbund); HHStA MdÄ AR F4-269-2 (Georg de Pottere); Swiss Federal Archives, E4320B#1970/25#13\*; Magnus Brechtken, *„Madagaskar für die Juden“: Antisemitische Idee und politische Praxis 1885-1945* (München: R. Oldenbourg, 1998), 43-44 (partly inaccurate). The Arisch-christlicher Kulturbund file listed in the records inventory of the Wiener Stadt- und Landesarchiv (1.3.2.119.A32.2703/1926) does not exist any more.

<sup>151</sup> The preserved correspondence between de Pottere and Cuza suggests that the former supported the latter against the Legion of the Archangel Michael - despite also corresponding later with Cuza's renegade disciple Ion Moța. Cuza, Moța, and de Pottere probably met during the international antisemitic congress in Budapest in 1925. In 1926, Cuza and de Pottere (as Egon van Winghene) were both published in the antisemitic anthology *Die Weltfront. Eine Sammlung von Aufsätzen antisemitischer Führer aller Völker* [The World Front. An Anthology of Contributions by Antisemitic Leaders from All Nations] edited by Hans Krebs and Otto Prager. Interestingly, in 1932, Cuza gave de Pottere "des éclaircissements [...] au sujet de la Svastica," but no details are known: Biblioteca Academiei Române, Fondul A.C. Cuza, S 45/DLXVIII: Georg de Pottere ("Farmer") to Alexandru C. Cuza, Vienna, 10 November 1927; Arhivele Naționale Istorice Centrale, Cuza A.C. (no. 1139), folder 25, 45: Georg de Pottere to Alexandru C. Cuza, 27 August 1932; Ion I. Moța, *Correspondența cu „Serviciul Mondial” (1934-1936)* (Rome: Armatolii, 1954), 13-14: Ion Moța to Georg de Pottere, [August 1934?]; Andrei C. Ionescu, "Viața și moartea vitejească a lui Ion I. Moța," *Almanahul Cuvântul al Mișcării Legionare*, 1941, 141; Heinen, *Die Legion „Erzengel Michael,”* 327; see also: Serviciul județean Sibiu al Arhivelor naționale, Comunitatea germanilor din România (no. 348), A I, 4, 19: Alexandru C. Cuza to Fritz Fabritius, 10 October 1931.

<sup>152</sup> Consiliul Național pentru Studierea Arhivelor Securității, fond Penal, folder P 011784, vol. 18, 196-197: Corneliu Zelea-Codreanu to Alexandru C. Cuza, Grenoble, 20 December 1925.

<sup>153</sup> Arhivele Naționale Istorice Centrale, CC al PCR Albume foto (no. unknown), folder AF 2815 (old reference), 8: Legionary album *Kampf und Sieg*.

emblem on the ballot paper.<sup>154</sup> It was clearly chosen as a mnemonic. Being advertised as “iron fence” (“Gardul de fer”),<sup>155</sup> it helped the voters remember that it stood for the “Iron Guard” (“Garda de f(i)er”).<sup>156</sup> It was possibly an abstraction of a certain type of Romanian wayside cross (“troiță”) or of the crosses crosslet used earlier. Several Iron Guard newspapers used the fence alongside the swastika.<sup>157</sup> While the swastika remained a symbol of the Iron Guard at least until September 1940,<sup>158</sup> the fence became the official symbol of the National Legionary State. For instance, the postage stamps of that period displayed exclusively the fence, sometimes in front of a Greek cross.

According to historian Bernard Mees, “when [Heinrich] Schliemann discovered symbols identical to Hindu swastikas among his much-publicized discoveries at Troy, swastikas became the symbols of an occidental Aryan identity,” in particular the symbol of the connection between “Indo-Germans” and Germans.<sup>159</sup> In the 1910s, the swastika had already made its appearance in the titles of German nationalist and antisemitic newspapers edited by the Saxon Heinrich Pudor: *Der eiserne Ring* (1915-1918), *Treu Deutsch* (1918), etc. However, in 1919, it was still little known to the general public in Germany and Austria.<sup>160</sup>

That year, it began spreading as a symbol of German nationalism and antisemitism in both countries.<sup>161</sup> In Hellerau near Dresden, a publishing house was rebaptised Hakenkreuz-Verlag [Swastika publisher] and started publishing a nationalist German calendar.<sup>162</sup> In early 1920, Adolf Hitler mentioned the swastika among several “sacred

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<sup>154</sup> See: *Garda de Fier. Ziar pentru alegeri al organizației care candidează cu numirea Gruparea Corneliu Z. Codreanu*, 20 mai 1931.

<sup>155</sup> Consiliul Național pentru Studierea Arhivelor Securității, fond Penal, folder P 011784, vol. 14, 365-366: electoral leaflets, 1931.

<sup>156</sup> I became aware of the play on words due to historian Grant T. Harward.

<sup>157</sup> See the titles of the newspapers *Garda Moldovei*, *Garda: Organul „Gârzei de Fier” Muscel*, *Garda Prahovei*, and *Garda de Fer: Organ oficial al Organizației Centrale din Basarabia*.

<sup>158</sup> See: “Un omagiu eroilor Moța și Marin,” *Porunca Vremii*, 12 March 1937; Corneliu Zelea Codreanu, *Circulări și manifeste* (München: self-published, 1981), 143; Corneliu Zelea Codreanu, circular order No. 78/June 15, 1937; Arhivele Naționale Istorice Centrale, CC al PCR Albume foto (no. unknown), folder AF 2815 (old reference), 96: Legionary album *Kampf und Sieg*.

<sup>159</sup> Bernard Mees, *The Science of the Swastika* (Budapest/New York: CEU Press, 2008), 59.

<sup>160</sup> E.g. “Allerlei Wissenswertes,” *Neues Wiener Tagblatt*, 28 July 1919, 15.

<sup>161</sup> E.g. “Unterm Hakenkreuz,” *Wiener Morgenzeitung*, 4 April 1920, 1; Karlheinz Weißmann, *Das Hakenkreuz: Symbol eines Jahrhunderts* (Steigra: Edition Antaios 2006), 90-91.

<sup>162</sup> Justus H. Ulbricht, “Hellerau und Hakenkreuz: Völkische Kultur in einer deutschen Gartenstadt,” *Neues Archiv für sächsische Geschichte*, no. 89 (2018), 119.

signs of the Germanic people," of which one was to be rehabilitated.<sup>163</sup> The NSDAP chose the swastika, which was registered as the party emblem on September 9.<sup>164</sup>

The left-wing and the Jewish press perceived Cuza's adoption of the swastika as a sign of his adherence to antisemitic pan-Germanism. In December 1922, the big left-leaning newspaper *Adevărul* wrote: "On the front pages of Mr A.C. Cuza's antisemitic publications, we find the famous 'Hackenkreuz' [sic], the cross with which the pan-Germans decorate themselves."<sup>165</sup> The same month, *Ostjüdische Zeitung*, the organ of the Jewish National Party in Bukovina and the Bukovinian Zionist organisation, both chaired by lawyer Mayer Ebner,<sup>166</sup> commented on a pamphlet of the National Christian Union:

According to §2 of this National Christian Union's by-law, its scope is 'to protect the Romanian people from being submerged everywhere by the Jews'. This does not impede Mr Cuza &co to use the swastika as a symbol of their fight, slavishly imitating the German spirit. The whole pamphlet breathes German spirit. Prof. A.C. Cuza's antisemitism is also a plagiarism of the antisemitic German literature. We repeat what we have said so often: The Romanian people is not antisemitic. Antisemitism is an import product, which is unfortunately not liable to customs. From France, one imports aromatic perfumes, from Germany – the opposite.<sup>167</sup>

*Ostjüdische Zeitung* was rather benevolent, as Bukovinian Jews had experienced antisemitism from local Romanians and other ethnicities already before Bukovina's annexation to Romania in November 1918.<sup>168</sup>

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<sup>163</sup> Rüdiger Sünner, *Schwarze Sonne. Entfesselung und Mißbrauch der Mythen in Nationalsozialismus und rechter Esoterik* (Freiburg, etc.: Herder/Spektrum, 1999), 118; 177.

<sup>164</sup> Hans-Günter Richardi, *Hitler und seine Hintermänner: Neue Fakten zur Frühgeschichte der NSDAP* (München: Süddeutscher Verlag, 1991), 284.

<sup>165</sup> "Antisemitismul internațional," *Adevărul*, 25 December 1922, 1.

<sup>166</sup> Elias Weinstein, "Juden im Pressewesen der Bukowina," in *Geschichte der Juden in der Bukowina I*, ed. Hugo Gold (Tel-Aviv: Olamenu, 1958), 128.

<sup>167</sup> "'Uniunea națională creștină' (National-christliche Vereinigung): Antisemitische Hochflut," *Ostjüdische Zeitung*, 29 December 1922, 1; similar: Mayer Ebner: "Zur Verständigung zwischen Rumänen und Juden," *Ostjüdische Zeitung*, 28 May 1923, 2.

<sup>168</sup> Already before the war, antisemitism had existed in Bukovina, despite a working cohabitation between the Jews and the other ethnicities. It was used in the 1900s and the early 1910s by Ukrainians, Germans, and Romanians to gain political capital. During the war, Bukovinian Jews were exposed to ransom demands, pogroms, expulsions, and deportations by the Russian armed forces that occupied Czernowitz three times. The degree of involvement of the local population in these actions is unknown. A number of residents

However, *Adevărul* and *Ostjüdische Zeitung* were most probably right: in all likelihood, Cuza's use of the swastika did originate from his ties to German nationalists and antisemites.

Most probably, Cuza got into touch with German nationalists and antisemites via *Der Hammer* [The Hammer], an antisemitic paper founded in 1902 by Theodor Fritsch in Leipzig. In connection with the paper and its founder, different antisemitic organisations had emerged: local Hammer-Gemeinden [Hammer Communities] in 1905; the Deutsche Erneuerungs-Gemeinde [German Renewal Community] in 1908; the Deutscher Hammerbund [German Hammer Union], a Wotan lodge, and a Grand Lodge in 1911, which lodges became the secret Germanen Orden [Germanic Order] in 1912. Both the Hammerbund and the Germanen Orden proved little successful, numbering only a few hundred members in 1912-1913.<sup>169</sup>

In September 1911, Cuza "had the luck to discover the 'Hammer'" and, on October 18, 1911, he sent a letter to Fritsch, which was printed in the paper. Cuza mentioned that, as a professor, he saw it as his "professional duty" to draw the students' attention to the Jewish "threat". He was convinced "that we have to stand united against the Jewish threat and that a union has to be established between the antisemites of all countries".<sup>170</sup>

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helped the Jews. For instance, the firefighters in Czernowitz hid the cult objects of the Jewish community. At the time when Austria definitively lost control of Bukovina and the imperial-royal governor of the Crownland handed over the power to the representatives of the Romanian and the Ukrainian nations on November 6, 1918, Jews were the victims of armed gangs attacks: "Unter eigener Flagge," *Czernowitzer Allgemeine Zeitung*, 18 June 1905, 1-2; "Der Forschmäusekrieg," *ibidem*, 14 January 1906, 1; "Antisemitische Lizitation," *ibidem*, 17 May 1908, 1; "Taktik," *ibidem*, 4 June 1908, 1; "Das Finale," *ibidem*, 5 May 1911, 1; Andrei Corbea-Hoişie, "'Wie die Juden Gewalt schreien': Aurel Onciul und die antisemitische Wende in der Bukowiner Öffentlichkeit nach 1907," *East Central Europe*, no. 39 (2012): 13-60; Державний Архів Чернівецької області, фонд 325, опис 1, справ 1294, 2: the first cantor of the Jewish community to the board of the latter, 1918; Володимир Заполовський, *Буковина в останній війні австро-угорщини 1914-1918* (Чернівці: Золоті литаври, 2003), 47-48; 156-157; Peter Holquist, "The Role of Personality in the First (1914-1915) Russian Occupation of Galicia and Bukovina," in *Anti-Jewish Violence: Rethinking the Pogrom in East European History*, ed. Jonathan Dekel-Chen, etc. (Bloomington/Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2010), 52-73; Державний Архів Чернівецької області, фонд 325, опис 1, справ 1266, 1: the board of the Jewish community, circular order, June 19, 1918; "Ein offenes Wort," *Gemeinsame Kriegs-Ausgabe*, 14 November 1918.

<sup>169</sup> Reginald H. Phelps, "'Before Hitler came': Thule Society and Germanen Orden," *The Journal of Modern History*, no. 3 (September 1963): 247-250; Nicholas Goodrick-Clarke, *The Occult Roots of Nazism: Secret Aryan Cults and their Influence on Nazi Ideology* (London: Tauris Parke Paperbacks, 2004), 125-129.

<sup>170</sup> A.C. Cuza, "Die Judennot in Rumänien," *Hammer*, 15 December 1911, 663.

On December 9, 1911, Cuza was contacted by Heinrich Kraeger (1870-1945), a professor at the Kunstakademie Düsseldorf,<sup>171</sup> who had possibly been involved in the creation of the antisemitic lodges<sup>172</sup> and who participated in the meeting of May 1912 during which the Hammerbund and the Germanen Orden were officialised.<sup>173</sup> Writing on *Hammer* letter paper, Kraeger told Cuza that he had read his contribution “with the greatest interest”. He sent Cuza a pamphlet, asking for his opinion, and hoped that they could start a correspondence. He asked: “Are there already in your country *secret organisations of men of pure race?*”<sup>174</sup>

Cuza responded immediately. On December 21, 1911, Kraeger already thanked him for his answer. Apparently, Cuza had largely approved of the pamphlet Kraeger had sent him. The latter wrote:

We thus are completely of one opinion, I believe, and I gladly seize the hand which you extend me for a holy war. A white International is needed, a white death which cleans up this rabble.<sup>175</sup>

Kraeger also sent Cuza the by-law and programme of the antisemitic Deutsch-Völkischer Schriftstellerverband [Völkisch-German Authors' Association] (established in October 1910<sup>176</sup>), “in which only authors and sponsors of non-Jewish blood gather for national understanding and work”. He mentioned that he acted on behalf of somebody else (“im Auftrage”), possibly the founder of the Association, Philipp Stauff. He suggested that Cuza join as a corresponding member and inquired about other candidates. He specified that the member list was not public and asked that Cuza treat the by-law and the programme confidentially and return them if he did not want to join. Thus, Kraeger made clear that the Association was a secret organisation. He proposed

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<sup>171</sup> Christoph auf der Horst, “Kraeger, Alexander August Heinrich,” in *Internationales Germanistenlexikon 1800-1950: Band 2*, ed. Christoph König (Berlin and New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2003), 997-999.

<sup>172</sup> According to historian Nicholas Goodrick-Clarke, “in spring 1910, Philipp Stauff, a prominent völkisch journalist, mentioned in his correspondence [with Kraeger] the idea of an anti-Semitic lodge with the names of members kept secret to prevent enemy penetration”: Goodrick-Clarke, *The Occult Roots*, 127.

<sup>173</sup> Phelps, “Before Hitler came,” 248 footnote 14.

<sup>174</sup> Biblioteca Academiei Române, Fondul A.C. Cuza, S 20(1)/DLVI: Heinrich Kraeger to Alexandru C. Cuza, 9 December 1911 (emphasis in original).

<sup>175</sup> Biblioteca Academiei Române, Fondul A.C. Cuza, S 20(3)/DLVI: Heinrich Kraeger to Alexandru C. Cuza, 21 December 1911.

<sup>176</sup> See: Gregor Hufenreuter, *Philipp Stauff: Ideologe, Agitator und Organisator im völkischen Netzwerk des Wilhelminischen Kaiserreichs: Zur Geschichte des Deutschvölkischen Schriftstellerverbandes, des Germanen-Ordens und der Guido-von-List-Gesellschaft* (Frankfurt/Main, etc.: Peter Lang, 2011).

that Cuza create a similar group in Romania, as a precursor of a “non-Jewish union,” adding that this group would need to remain secret.<sup>177</sup> Visibly, Kraeger (or Stauff) included Cuza in his grand design of an antisemitic International after Cuza had showed interest in such an idea. At the same time, Kraeger followed a more immediate aim, as he expected Cuza to inform them whether Romanian authors whose texts were played in Germany were Romanian or Jewish.<sup>178</sup> Perhaps Kraeger was already thinking of a publication stigmatising Jewish authors, as his *Semi-Kürschner* (1913) would be.<sup>179</sup>

The correspondence between Kraeger and Cuza most probably continued into the year 1913,<sup>180</sup> but ceased during the war. The next preserved letter of Kraeger on Cuza’s end dated from October 15, 1920. It was a response to a letter which Cuza had sent on September 16 and which included a message to racial hygienist Ludwig Plate.<sup>181</sup>

During the war, Kraeger had served as a volunteer and had been wounded. In 1917-1918, he had had “problems with the French occupation troops at the Kunstakademie Düsseldorf”.<sup>182</sup> During the winter 1918/1919, he had co-founded the Munich organisation of the German Socialist Party (Deutsch-Sozialistische Partei, DSP). Officially established in April 1919, this party would exist in parallel to the German Workers’ Party (Deutsche Arbeiter-Partei, DAP, later NSDAP).<sup>183</sup> Kraeger would join the NSDAP in 1922.<sup>184</sup>

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<sup>177</sup> Biblioteca Academiei Române, Fondul A.C. Cuza, S 20(3)/DLVI: Heinrich Kraeger to Alexandru C. Cuza, 21 December 1911.

<sup>178</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>179</sup> *Semi-Kürschner oder Literarisches Lexikon der Schriftsteller, Dichter, Bankiers, Geldleute, Ärzte, Schauspieler, Künstler, Musiker, Offiziere, Rechtsanwälte, Revolutionäre, Frauenrechtlerinnen, Sozialdemokraten usw. jüdischer Rasse und Versippung, die von 1813-1913 in Deutschland tätig oder bekannt waren*, ed. Philipp Stauff (Berlin: self-published, 1913). The earliest evidence of the idea to publish such an encyclopedia is a letter of Kraeger to Stauff, dated July 26, 1912: Gregor Hufenreuter, “... ein großes Verzeichnis mit eingestreuten Verbrechern’: Zur Entstehung und Geschichte der antisemitischen Lexika *Semi-Kürschner* (1913) und *Sigilla Veri* (1929-1931),” *Jahrbuch für Antisemitismusforschung*, no. 15 (2006): 48 footnote 27.

<sup>180</sup> In a short note of July 1932, Kraeger reminded Cuza of their correspondence in 1913: Biblioteca Academiei Române, Fondul A.C. Cuza, S 20(unnumbered)/DLVI: Heinrich Kraeger to Alexandru C. Cuza, 12 July 1932.

<sup>181</sup> Biblioteca Academiei Române, Fondul A.C. Cuza, S 20(4)/DLVI: Heinrich Kraeger to Alexandru C. Cuza, 15 October 1920.

<sup>182</sup> Auf der Horst, “Kraeger,” 997.

<sup>183</sup> Detlev Rose, *Die Thule-Gesellschaft: Legende – Mythos – Wirklichkeit* (Tübingen: Grabert, 1994), 99.

<sup>184</sup> Wolfgang Höppner, “Kontinuität und Diskontinuität in der Berliner Germanistik,” in *Die Berliner Universität in der NS-Zeit: Band II: Fachbereiche und Fakultäten*, ed. Rüdiger von Bruch (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 2005), 262.

Kraeger's letter to Cuza shows that the war had confirmed his antisemitic beliefs. After suggesting that Cuza participate in an "international Aryan meeting" in Hungary, Kraeger wrote that the Jews had pushed Germany into the war and the revolution, "but we must and we will rebel". He mentioned the "huge" production of antisemitic literature and promised to send some books. In return, he asked Cuza to write a pamphlet about the Jews in Romania for a new series, probably "Die Judenfrage im Ausland" [The Jewish Question Abroad], whose first volume *Die Judenfrage in England* [The Jewish Question in England] had been published that same year by the Deutschvölkische Verlagsanstalt [Völkisch-German Publishing Institute] in Hamburg. Kraeger also inquired about Romanian sponsors for a new edition of *Semi-Kürschner*. He finished his letter "with an Aryan salute" and affixed a golden swastika sticker.<sup>185</sup>

The first edition of *Semi-Kürschner* bore the swastika. The newsletter of the Germanen Orden, *Allgemeine Ordens-Nachrichten* [General News of the Order], published from 1916, used a swastika combined with a thin four-pointed star, forming a design resembling a four-blade fan.<sup>186</sup> The Orden's paper, *Runen*, printed from 1918, did the same while displaying a simple square swastika in a circle in its opening article.<sup>187</sup> For Kraeger, the use of the swastika was therefore nothing new. Cuza might also have seen it on these or similar publications. However, this particular sticker might have drawn his attention. Indeed, Cuza was observant of such details. When his friend Flodoard von Biedermann sent him an envelope with a paper seal, he started asking where Biedermann had got it from.<sup>188</sup> Cuza's newspaper *Unirea* had not used the swastika until its shutdown in July 1920. It is therefore quite possible that Kraeger's golden swastika sticker gave Cuza the idea to adopt the swastika for his new paper *Apărarea Națională* and his new political movement.

In regards to the NSDAP as source of Cuza's use of the swastika, his followers would later claim that "Hitler had not even been born when Mr A.C. Cuza wore this sign and used it for propaganda".<sup>189</sup> This claim was absurd, as Hitler's birth in 1889 predated even the establishment of

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<sup>185</sup> Biblioteca Academiei Române, Fondul A.C. Cuza, S 20(4)/DLVI: Heinrich Kraeger to Alexandru C. Cuza, 15 October 1920. One other letter of Kraeger is preserved. Sent from Dordrecht, Netherlands, in June 1921, it was an invitation to an antisemitic meeting in München in August: S 64/DLXIV: Heinrich Kraeger to Alexandru C. Cuza, 11 June 1921.

<sup>186</sup> Goodrick-Clarke, *The Occult Roots*, 129.

<sup>187</sup> "Zur Einführung," *Runen*, 21 January 1918, 1.

<sup>188</sup> Biblioteca Academiei Române, Fondul A.C. Cuza, S 37 (21)/DXLIV: envelop with paper seal; S 37 (22)/DXLIV: Flodoard von Biedermann to Alexandru C. Cuza, 3 August 1934.

<sup>189</sup> Sebastian Bornemisa, *Catechism național-creștin* (Cluj: Astra, 1936), 14.

the League against Alcoholism. It was obviously an attempt to present Cuza as the primordial antisemite. However, there is a hint that the swastika did not stem directly from the NSDAP. In a kind of early memoirs, Corneliu Zelea-Codreanu claimed that he learned about Hitler in October 1922, when he went to a “worker who produced ‘swastikas’” in Berlin.<sup>190</sup> This would imply that Corneliu Zelea-Codreanu was aware of the swastika as an antisemitic symbol before he knew of the NSDAP and that his milieu had not made the connection between the swastika and the NSDAP until then.

In 1920, Hitler had interpreted the swastika as a symbol of the sun.<sup>191</sup> In the second part of *Mein Kampf* (1926), he declared that it embodied “the mission of the battle for the victory of the Aryans and, at the same time, the victory of the idea of constructive work, which has been and will be forever antisemitic”.<sup>192</sup> By that time, the idea that the swastika was the sign of the Aryans had already spread in Germany, as shown for instance by Pudor’s *Der Sinn des Hakenkreuzes* [The Meaning of the Swastika], published in 1922 by the above-mentioned Hakenkreuz-Verlag.<sup>193</sup>

In June 1922, Cuza explained the swastika to the readers of *Apărarea Națională*, some of whom were apparently not familiar with it. He called it “sign of salvation” (“semnul mântuirii”), mentioned its Sanskrit name, and referred to its unfathomable past. Passing quickly from the “Brahmanic Indians” to the “young Buddhists,” he linked it to the “solar cult,” and called it the “distinctive sign of the Aryan race”.<sup>194</sup>

Kraeger’s letter of October 15, 1920, had made the connection between the swastika and the idea of an Aryan race. It is therefore likely that Cuza adopted it via Kraeger and/or his group. However, he probably also relied on Alfred Cort Haddon’s pages on the “fylfot” – the swastika – published in 1895,<sup>195</sup> of which a summary (in his wife’s

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<sup>190</sup> Codreanu, *Pentru legionari*, 70; see: Clark, “Both Form and Substance,” 50. In February 1923, a swastika producer from Berlin sent Cuza a sample of swastikas, as well as a price list. However, he must have been a different person from the one whom Corneliu Zelea-Codreanu had met, as he mentioned that he had “already read” about the latter: Biblioteca Academiei Române, Fondul A.C. Cuza, S 69/DLXIV: A. Strumpf, Berlin, Salzwedeler Strasse 3, to Alexandru C. Cuza, 7 February 1923.

<sup>191</sup> Sünner, *Schwarze Sonne*, 118.

<sup>192</sup> Adolf Hitler, *Mein Kampf* (München: Zentralverlag der NSDAP, Frz. Eher Nachf., 1940), 557.

<sup>193</sup> Heinrich Pudor, *Der Sinn des Hakenkreuzes* (Hellerau: Hakenkreuz-Verlag, [1922]).

<sup>194</sup> A.C. Cuza, “卐,” *Apărarea Națională*, 15 June 1922, 1.

<sup>195</sup> See: Alfred C. Haddon, *Evolution in Art: As Illustrated by the Life-Histories of Designs* (London: Walter Scott, 1895), 213-214; 275-299.

handwriting) subsists among his personal documents.<sup>196</sup> In his 1922 article, Cuza also quoted a 50-year old study by Émile Burnouf, *Science des religions* [Science of religions] (1872),<sup>197</sup> which he had had in his library since 1902:<sup>198</sup> “Quand Jésus eût été mis à mort par les Juifs, ce vieux symbole aryen lui fut aisément appliqué, et le swastika [...] devint la croix hastée des modernes chrétiens.”<sup>199</sup>

In the same article, Cuza claimed – in accordance with Haddon – that everywhere where Aryans had lived, the swastika could be found. He further quoted Nicolae Densușianu,<sup>200</sup> a dilettantish historian who had invented a “Pelasgian” people and empire and who had asserted that the swastika existed throughout Europe, Asia and Northern Africa where the “Pelasgian race” had settled. In particular, Densușianu talked about a “cult of the swastika” in Roman Dacia and its continued use by the Romanian people.<sup>201</sup> Cuza spun the yarn further. He declared that the swastika was the symbol of the Romanians’ Aryan race, of their “spiritualist religion,” and of their connection to their soil. As such, the swastika stood for their resolve to keep their race pure, their religion unaltered, and their land undivided. It stood against the Jews.<sup>202</sup>

Reacting to attacks by cabinet minister Gheorghe G. Mârzescu, Cuza produced a second interpretation in November 1923. During the consecration of the church of Ungheni on October 21, Mârzescu had contrasted the Orthodox cross with the swastika. Cuza summarised his first article on the subject and quoted the by-law of the League for National Christian Defence: “The sign of the L.A.N.C. is the Aryan cross ‘swastika’, 卐, the ancient sign of our existence, the sign of the autochthonousness of the Romanian race on its soil, whose ruler it wants to remain.” Cuza claimed that the swastika and the Christian cross were closely related and that the latter had evolved from the former<sup>203</sup> – an idea

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<sup>196</sup> Biblioteca Academiei Române, Arhiva A.C. Cuza, VIII, Mss. 11: Maria Cuza, “Despre Crucea gammadă,” n.d.

<sup>197</sup> Cuza, “卐,” 1.

<sup>198</sup> Biblioteca Academiei Române, Arhiva A.C. Cuza, X, Mss. 74: catalogue of Alexandru C. Cuza’s library, 1902 (with later additions).

<sup>199</sup> Émile Burnouf, *Science des religions* (Paris: Maisonneuve et Cie, 1872), 257. Cuza quoted the 4<sup>th</sup> edition of 1885 (p. 188). He did not translate the expression “croix hastée,” but only the word “croix”.

<sup>200</sup> Cuza, “卐,” 1.

<sup>201</sup> Nicolae Densușianu, *Dacia preistorica* (București: Carol Göbl, 1913), 659-660.

<sup>202</sup> Cuza, “卐,” 2.

<sup>203</sup> A.C. Cuza, “Ce este ‘Svastica’: Răspuns unei calomnii,” *Apărarea Națională*, 15 November 1923, 1-6; for the context, see: “Sfințirea unei biserici la Ungheni,” *Universul*, 24 October 1923, 3.

which he had already expressed on August 30, 1922, in a letter to Fritz Fabritius, the Transylvanian Saxon völkisch leader.<sup>204</sup> The weakness of the argument suggests that Christianity meant little to Cuza, despite the name of his organisation.

A pseudo-theological treaty from 1925, in which Cuza claimed that the “true meaning of [Jesus’] teaching [was] the fight against Judaism”<sup>205</sup> in line with emerging German ideas<sup>206</sup>, featured a photograph of a swastika with a crucifix in its centre. The words “One country, one religion, one people, one king” were printed in the spaces between the branches. As stated in the legend, it had been created “in order to commemorate the heroic battles of the students for Romanian culture in the years 1922-1925”. The lower left branch showed a group of students led by Corneliu Zelea-Codreanu, who bore a flag asking: “Whose is this Romania?” On the upper left branch, the Unknown Hero pierced the “devil of the gold” with a cross (a possible reference to the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*,<sup>207</sup> which *Apărarea Națională* promoted<sup>208</sup>). He clutched a roll stating: “Romania to the Romanians”. On the upper right branch, an angel held “the great book of life, the Gospel,” opened at Matthew 15:26 (“It is not fair to take the children’s food and throw it to the dogs.”). Finally, the lower right branch showed the royal couple of Romania as “witnesses of this faith”.<sup>209</sup>

A short commentary by Cuza contained some new elements: the swastika was “the distinguishing sign of the Aryan race, in particular the Thracian branch, from which we descend, via the Dacians”. Cuza now mentioned a German book, Ludwig Wilser, *Das Hakenkreuz nach Ursprung, Vorkommen und Bedeutung* [The Origin, Presence, and Meaning

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<sup>204</sup> In the letter, Cuza called the swastika the “Aryan sign of salvation and altogether the first, ancient form of our Christian cross”: *Serviciul județean Sibiu al Arhivelor naționale, Comunitatea germanilor din România* (no. 348), A I, 4, 27; Alexandru C. Cuza to Fritz Fabritius, 30 August 1922.

<sup>205</sup> A.C. Cuza, *Învățătura lui Isus: Iudaismul și teologia creștină* (Iași: Editura „Ligii Apărării Naționale Creștine,” 1925), 17.

<sup>206</sup> Pudor, *Der Sinn des Hakenkreuzes*, 23-25; Dirk Schuster, *Die Lehre vom „arischen” Christentum: Das wissenschaftliche Selbstverständnis im Eisenacher „Entjudungsinstitut”* (Göttingen: V&R unipress, 2017), 49-51.

<sup>207</sup> Gold is a recurring theme in the *Protocols*, as is the serpent. See: Cesare G. De Michelis, *Il manoscritto inesistente: I „Protocolli dei savi di Sion”* (Venezia: Marsilio, 1998), 91-98.

<sup>208</sup> “Marea descoperire,” *Apărarea Națională*, 15 October 1923, 15-16; Verax, “Chestia protocoalelor,” *Apărarea Națională*, 15 December 1923, 8-11; “A apărut: Protocoalele Înțelepților Sionului,” *ibidem*, 19.

<sup>209</sup> Cuza, *Învățătura lui Isus*, 34.

of the Swastika] (1922)<sup>210</sup> – which however claimed the swastika for the German world.<sup>211</sup> Visibly obsessed with the sign, Cuza had discovered it “on monuments, national embroideries, Easter eggs, Church ornaments,” the pall of Maria of Mangup in Putna, and the church of the Three Hierarchs in Iași.<sup>212</sup> He emphasised that the swastika was the sign of the Romanian ethnicity (“neam”) and the cross of its and the other Christians’ faith. He concluded: “Only together, the ‘swastika’ and the cross show our complete being – body and soul – [of] Aryans and Christians.”<sup>213</sup>

Also published in 1925, a League pamphlet repeated these arguments. It associated a Romanian religious holiday, Foca, with the swastika, interpreting the festivity as the Aryan Vedic fire ritual preserved by the Romanian people “as a prodigious proof of its conservative spirit”. In fact, “Foca” derived from the Greek name Phocas and was unrelated to the Romanian word “foc” for “fire”. It did not matter to the author, probably Cuza himself, that the swastika played no role in the festivity.<sup>214</sup>

The pamphlet also launched a superstition. It warned: “Beware the inverted sign 卍, which is the sign of defeat and doom.”<sup>215</sup>

While it would seem that Cuza copied the swastika from the German nationalists in 1922, his first interpretation in 1922 relied on non-German literature. Maybe he did it by choice, to avoid to be connected to the country that had occupied Romania during the war – in which case he failed, as shown by the newspapers quoted above. Maybe he lacked German literature on the topic. Cuza had Burnouf’s study in his library since 1902, but he might have got hold of German interpretations of the swastika like Wilser’s book only after 1922. Cuza’s transnational syncretism shows that he did not care about his sources’ national(ist) contexts. Any reference was good enough to cobble together a meaning for his movement’s symbol. As he did it openly, it seems that his Romanian nationalist readers accepted any foreign content – as long as it

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<sup>210</sup> Cuza, *Învățătura lui Isus*, 33.

<sup>211</sup> Ludwig Wilser, *Das Hakenkreuz nach Ursprung, Vorkommen und Bedeutung* (Leipzig: Hammer-Verlag, Theod. Fritsch, 1922), 13.

<sup>212</sup> Cuza’s disciple Corneliu Zelea-Codreanu also became obsessed with the swastika, writing to Cuza in December 1925 about the swastikas he had discovered in Grenoble: *Consiliul Național pentru Studiarea Arhivelor Securității, fond Penal, folder P 011784, vol. 18, 196-197: Corneliu Zelea-Codreanu to Alexandru C. Cuza, Grenoble, 20 December 1925; Biblioteca Academiei Române, Fondul A.C. Cuza, S 24/DXLVIII: Alexandru C. Cuza to Corneliu Zelea-Codreanu, 11 January 1926; see: Schmitt: *Corneliu Zelea Codreanu*, 96.*

<sup>213</sup> Cuza, *Învățătura lui Isus*, 34.

<sup>214</sup> *Călăuza bunilor Români*, 3-5.

<sup>215</sup> *Călăuza bunilor Români*, 5.

was antisemitic. However, in a country with a high illiteracy rate, many of his followers were probably unaware of his interpretations.

In the end, the antisemitic function of the swastika was all that mattered to Cuza. He made no effort to give the symbol a coherent racial meaning, mixing Aryans, "Pelasgians," Dacians, and Thracians. This mishmash reflected "the fortuitous nature of Cuza's racist arguments"<sup>216</sup> in general.

Cuza did not bother either to establish a consistent connection between the swastika and Christianity, first mentioning a historical link between the swastika and the cross and later declaring that these were two different signs. The visual combination of the swastika and the crucifix - later also adopted by the German Christians - allowed for the reinterpretation of the latter as a purely antisemitic symbol in the sense of Cuza's exegesis of the Gospel. However, it did not make the swastika more Christian. On the contrary, Cuza's attempts to Christianise the swastika resulted in the desacralisation of the cross. Similarly, religious formulas like "the blessing of the 'Swastika' be with you, so that we can achieve its ideals"<sup>217</sup> profaned the Christian faith.

Cuza's attempts to invest the swastika with a Christian meaning were doubtless opportunistic. While his performative Christianity owned him criticisms from German fellow antisemites,<sup>218</sup> it resonated with a population whose deep religiosity focused first and foremost on the form, and less on the content.<sup>219</sup> Regardless of his sacrileges, Cuza was popular even among priests, both Orthodox and Catholic,<sup>220</sup> and it was purportedly a "Christian priest" who denounced the "persecution of the

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<sup>216</sup> Butaru, "A.C. Cuza, était-il un raciste?," 45.

<sup>217</sup> Biblioteca Academiei Române, Fondul A.C. Cuza, S 98 (14)/DXLIX: Alexandru C. Cuza to "Zeze," 17 August 1925.

<sup>218</sup> Taking Cuza's profession of faith at face value, Pudor, from whom Cuza was ordering antisemitic publications, reprimanded him in October 1923: "However, I cannot approve that you want to be simultaneously völkisch and Christian. These are mutually exclusive and incompatible. [...] Christianity is not völkisch-Romanian, but international, and Paul and most of the others were Jews.": Biblioteca Academiei Române, Fondul A.C. Cuza, S 18 (1)/DLXII: Heinrich Pudor to Alexandru C. Cuza, 18 October 1923.

<sup>219</sup> Österreichisches Staatsarchiv, HHStA PA XVIII 13, 100-103: the Austro-Hungarian minister plenipotentiary, report n°45/pol, 20 February 1879; Roland Clark, *Sectarianism and Renewal in 1920s Romania: The Limits of Orthodoxy and Nation-Building* (New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2021), 22.

<sup>220</sup> Clark, *Holy Legionary Youth*, 188; Biblioteca Academiei Române, Arhiva A.C. Cuza, VII, acte 45: "A Bukovinian priest," "Antisemitismul poporului Sârbo-croat"; acte 46, 1-2: "A Bukovinian priest," "Într'o unică zi fața României cu desăvârșire schimbată"; Fondul A.C. Cuza, S 16 (5)/DLVII: Iosif Lipski SJ to Alexandru C. Cuza, 28 December 1924; etc.

Aryan cross in Huși” after the incident involving Ion Zelea-Codreanu’s daughter Iridenta.<sup>221</sup>

Despite – or maybe because of – its vague meaning, the swastika soon became an identity marker of the Romanian antisemites. *Ostjüdische Zeitung* used the word “Hakenkreuz” [swastika] as a metonymy for the League for National Christian Defence and antisemitism in general. It even coined the term “Hakenkreuzler” [swastikards] to refer to the League’s members and other antisemites. The newspaper thus acknowledged the swastika’s transnational nature.

Cuza’s followers used the swastika as a trigger for antisemitic violence. Already in May 1923, *Ostjüdische Zeitung* had emphasised that certain flags bore the letters “M.J.” for “Moartea Jidanilor” [death to the kikes] beside the swastika.<sup>222</sup> In July 1925, the newspaper drew attention to a pamphlet by the League for National Christian Defence – published in 1924 by student leader Ion Sava – whose cover showed a Jew hanging from a swastika and an ocean of blood with a severed Jewish head.<sup>223</sup> Jewish politician Wilhelm Filderman also sent a copy of the booklet to the Joint Foreign Committee of the Jewish Board of Deputies and the Anglo-Jewish Association, which forwarded it in September 1925 to the director of the Administrative Commissions and Minorities Questions of the League of Nations.<sup>224</sup>

In the end, antisemitic murder under the sign of the swastika materialised. In October 1923, Corneliu Zelea-Codreanu, Ion Moța, and other young men already planned to assassinate ministers and Jewish bankers. However, a sympathetic jury found them innocent – even after Moța had shot a student during the proceedings for having betrayed them.<sup>225</sup> In October 1924, Corneliu Zelea-Codreanu killed the head of police of Iași in an act of revenge – and was again acquitted by a jury.<sup>226</sup> For the verdict, the jurors wore the swastika on their lapels.<sup>227</sup>

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<sup>221</sup> Biblioteca Academiei Române, Arhiva A.C. Cuza, VII, Mss. 47: “a Christian priest,” “Crucea arică persecutată la Huși,” [1922].

<sup>222</sup> “Kultusgemeinde und Hakenkreuz,” *Ostjüdische Zeitung*, 20 May 1923, 6.

<sup>223</sup> Ion Sava, *Pericolul Satanei* ([București: 1924]).

<sup>224</sup> United Nations Archives at Geneva, League of Nations Archives, R1699/41/46539/45705: Lucien Wolf to Erik Colban, 17 September 1925; Wilhelm Filderman, *Le mouvement antisémite en Roumanie*, September 1925.

<sup>225</sup> Clark, *Holy Legionary Youth*, 42-48.

<sup>226</sup> Clark, *Holy Legionary Youth*, 49-54.

<sup>227</sup> Leontin Iliescu and N. Ciocârdia, “Procesul Corneliu Zelea Codreanu: Achitarea,” *Universul*, 28 May 1925, 5.

Eventually, in November 1926, Nicolae Totu, a Romanian pupil from Iași who was connected to the League for National Christian Defence, murdered David Falik, a Jewish pupil in Cernăuți, who was accused of having assaulted a Romanian teacher.<sup>228</sup> Totu's subsequent trial and acquittal in Câmpulung Moldovenesc was attended not only by Cuza (who defended Totu), Ion Zelea-Codreanu, and other League members, but also by over 100 students from Iași who wore tricolour rosettes and swastikas. In the same town, the newspaper of Corneliu Zelea-Codreanu's Association of Christian Students *Svastica Iașilor* [The Swastika of Iași] (established in December 1926) was handed out on the streets.<sup>229</sup> Five years after its adoption, the foreign swastika had become fully functional as an antisemitic symbol in the Romanian context.

The case of Cuza's adoption of the swastika not only confirms that ideological consistency is of minor importance to antisemitism and that antisemitism is primarily symbol-based, as Kieval pointed out. It also shows that the nationalist discourse which usually underpinned antisemitism did not stop antisemites from transnational borrowing for local purposes. Their professed autochthonism did not preclude transnational plagiarisms. The idea of an antisemitic International did not prevent antisemites from appropriating foreign symbols exclusively for their ethnic community. Cuza's repeated references to the Aryan race implied supranational connections. However, it was his association of the swastika with the Romanian ethnicity, visually represented in the League's banner, that finally became entrenched among his followers. Thus the swastika existed simultaneously as a German and as a Romanian ethnic symbol, performing the same antisemitic function.

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<sup>228</sup> See: Lya Benjamin, "Paradigma Falik-Totu sau cum s-a transformat un fapt cotidian într-un caz de asasinat politic," *Studia et Acta Historiae Iudaeorum Romaniae*, vol. II, (1997): 187-200; Livezeanu, *Cultural Politics*, 79-87; Clark, *Holy Legionary Youth*, 58-59.

<sup>229</sup> "Nicolae Totu în fața Curții cu Jurați din Câmpulung (Bucovina)," *Adevărul*, 22 February 1927, 3.