

THE HISTORY OF THE ADVENTIST EDUCATION SYSTEM IN ROMANIA

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ABSTRACT: *The History of the Adventist Education System in Romania.*

Education is the most effective solution for the development of a society. The most valuable asset of a company and therefore of a country is human capital. Its effective training produces value both commercially and socio-culturally. It was Protestantism that reappropriated education from religion, promoting the reading of the Bible by every individual. This required a minimum of instruction from an educational point of view, namely learning to read. Adventism did not disagree, so that in Romania, too, it sought to develop an educational system that would educate citizens with moral and responsible values.

Keywords: *education, education system, Adventist, global crises, communism, religious freedom, human rights, freedom.*

In the Romanian territories, Adventism penetrated to Pitesti, Bucharest, Dobrogea, or Transylvania, through missionaries or German settlers from Crimea. Slowly but surely, Adventism spread to the Romanian territories, with education playing an important role. In fact, two events that took place in Pitesti and Bucharest made education play an important role in the spread of Romanian Adventism.

The Pitești group came into being thanks to the work of the Polish American Michael Czechowski. After his departure, the group developed through the magazine *Les Signes du Temps*, published in French in Switzerland. From 1881, Toma Aslan, who became the leader of the group in Pitesti, began a correspondence with the magazine *Signs of Time*.¹ As a

¹ Dumitru Popa, *Biografii ale pionierilor Bisericii adventiste din România*, Vol. I (Bucharest: Grafix Print, 1995), p.296.

result of this correspondence, Thomas Aslan is invited to attend the tenth session of the General Conference of Adventists in Europe, held in Basel, Switzerland, October 19-23, 1883. Here it is decided to publish a magazine in Romanian to spread the Advent message in Romania.² After the Basel Conference and the decision to print a magazine in Romanian, the Pitești group received a visit from the president of the General Conference at that time, George Butler. Although he confessed that the decision to visit Romania was taken with difficulty, due to the great distance and the high cost, the decision to print a Romanian language magazine was the most important. Following the visit, Butler noted that although there was little interest in religion among the population, there was nevertheless an interest among the participants in truth. This was also accentuated by the fact that the Bible was not read as it was in America. That's why Butler didn't expect a large percentage of the population to get the truth. But he believed there were precious people who would accept it. That is why he confessed that this group needed pastoral care and why not a Romanian-speaking pastor.³ Thus, Butler's visit is the first event that indirectly influenced Adventist education in Romania.

The most significant impact on Adventism in Romania was made by the Adventist community in Bucharest. A number of German missionaries arrived here and organized Bible conferences that led to the formation of churches and groups. In 1904, J. F. Hinter arrived in Bucharest and organized the first Adventist group, which numbered 16 members. Among them were Nicolae Jelescu, an instrumentalist of the royal chapel, Petre P. Paulini, a medical student, and the officer Stefan Demetrescu. The meetings were disturbed by the police, but two years later this stopped and Bucharest counted 65 Adventists.⁴ Pastor Hinter's work attracts the attention of the Romanian authorities who are faced with the spread of new Christian religious beliefs. Their solution, the expulsion of Johann Hinter in 1909, did not have the effect the authorities had hoped for. Romanian missionaries were encouraged to join the work, which led to an opening up to the native population. This led to a rapid growth of the church.

2 B. L. Whitney, „Progress of the Cause. Report from Central European Mission,” *Review and Herald* 61.1 (1884), p.5.

3 George Butler, „Visit to Roumania,” *Review and Herald* 61.21 (1884), pp.328-329.

4 L.R. Conradi, „Rumania and Austria-Hungary,” *Review and Herald* 83.40 (1906), p.13.

Adventist Education 1870-1946

The expulsion from the country of Pastor Hinter, the second event that influenced Adventist education in Romania, paved the way for ministry through Romanian pastors. At the beginning of the 20th century, their academic training took place in Adventist schools in Germany, France and even England. The high costs meant that a relatively small number of students were able to attend these schools. In 1924, church leaders decided to open an educational centre in Focsani with a twofold purpose: to train future pastors and to develop existing ones. Reporting on the establishment of this school, L. H. Christian, president of the European Division, emphasizes two points. The first is that, from the very beginning, the school proved to be overcrowded and a better solution was sought. The second is that Romania had become a promising country in the eyes of church leaders, compared to the opposite impression that George Butler, former president of the General Conference, had had when he came here 40 years ago.⁵

The school functioned in Focsani until 1926, when it moved to Diciosanmartin in Transylvania, on a larger property, land and buildings, bought from Count Rakoczi. In 1929, an "institute" for cultic deserters was set up here. This location was not ideal either, as it was far from Bucharest and the areas where Adventists were widespread. Soon, the buildings became overcrowded. In 1930 there were 40 places for 130 students enrolled in classes.

The new location that met all the requirements (to be in the center of the country and close to Bucharest) was found in 1930, at Stupini, near Brasov. Thirty-six hectares of land were bought, on which one of the most beautiful Adventist schools in Europe at that time was built. The building was erected in two years with the help of Adventist members from all over the country.⁶ Classes begin in the 1932-1933 school year, with both boys and girls enrolled. The beginning was not easy, as there was a lack of teachers with specialized academic training. Also, the few people with higher education carried out multiple responsibilities in the Adventist Church. As a result, the training of students was limited, being oriented more

5 George Butler, "Visit to Roumania," *Review and Herald* 61.21 (1884), pp.328-329.

6 Gunter Gehan, *Întreita solie în Austro-Ungaria și România 1869-1938* (Graphe, 2008), p.118.

towards pastoral and human relations than intellectual. In 1933, Dumitru Florea became director of the Bible Institute at Stupini.

The requirements for attending classes were minimal, completion of primary school. As a private school, students had to pay fees and contribute a certain amount of food for the kitchen. Classes were combined with work on the school's own farm, so that the students' livelihoods were assured.

The Biblical Institute operated at Stupini until 1949, with an interruption between 1942 and 1945, when due to the war the building was occupied by a hospital for the wounded, after which it was requisitioned by the Board of Trustees by DGP Order no. 34997/2 October 1942. In the autumn of 1944, classes were resumed, but not at Stupini, but in the church building in Labirint Street, Bucharest. Between 1945 and 1949, the Institute returned to Stupini, and the building was confiscated by the state in 1949.⁷

The Education System between 1947-1989

In church documents, two schools appear worldwide in 1947: the Biblical Institute of Stupini, Brasov and the Victoria School of Nursing and Dispensary in Bucharest, 116 Mitropolit Ghenadie Petrescu Street.⁸ The Stupini Institute, which had been established in 1924, had V. Diaconescu as director and M. Parvan as treasurer. The subjects taught were Bible, Commerce, Cooking, Engineering, History, Geography, Science, Romanian, English, German and Hungarian.⁹ The Victoria School of Nursing and Dispensary was founded in 1945 and had as director Dr. E. I. Prisecaru and as Bible teacher Stefan Demetrescu.¹⁰

The Biblical Institute operated at Stupini until 1949, with a break between 1942 and 1945, when the building was used as a hospital for

7 Available at <https://uadventus.ro/despre-ua/>. Accessed on March 31, 2023.

8 „Institutions in the Southern European Division,” *1947 YearBook of the Seventh-Day Adventist Denomination*, editor Claude Conard (Washington, DC: Review and Herald Publishing Association), pp.209-210.

9 „Educational Institutions,” *1947 YearBook of the Seventh-Day Adventist Denomination*, editor Claude Conard (Washington, DC: Review and Herald Publishing Association), p.259.

10 „Medical Institutions,” *1947 YearBook of the Seventh-Day Adventist Denomination*, editor Claude Conard (Washington, DC: Review and Herald Publishing Association), p.286.

the wounded. In 1948, by decision of the Ministry of Religious Affairs 42898/1948, the name was changed from Biblical Institute to Theological Seminary. For two years, the activity is interrupted, after which the courses are resumed with 12 students, in the building in Bucharest, Labirint Street. In 1953 the number of students reached 42, including four girls, in the two years of study. Among the teachers were Stefan Demetrescu, Petre P. Paulini, Dumitru Florea and Arthur Vacareanu. After the elections of 1955, when Stefan Nailescu took over the leadership of the church thanks to the authorities, the number of pupils increased even more. In 1957 the highest number of students was reached, 64 students in four years of study. Because of the secret account, in 1958 President Nailescu is dismissed and as a result the state does not approve any more first-year students for that year or the next. As a result, from 1961 onwards, the Seminary operated with only one class. The crisis has become so acute that the state only approves first-year enrollment for four students every four years, taught by four teachers. The situation improved in 1974, when after almost 20 years, 15 pupils were approved for first-year enrolment. From 1975 until the 1989 Revolution, the state approved the enrolment of ten students each in the first year.¹¹

Due to communist censorship, the development of the Theological Institute is not accurately recorded in church documents worldwide. The information about the institution was related to its address, being located in Stupini 133, Brasov, and its staff, consisting of: V. Diaconescu (director and English), M. Parvan (treasurer and Commerce), G. Proksch (preceptor, Bible and German), C. Pascariu (agriculture), R. Artenian (Bible), C. Cojea (Commerce), Mrs. I. Garai (Cooking), G. Doaga (Engineering), M. Ionescu (English and History), I. Mihordea (Geography and Sciences) and G. Kovacs (Hungarian). This information is the same for the period 1947-1955. Thus, there are no fluctuations in operation on the Brasov-Bucharest route and no change of name to Theological Seminary.¹² All these

11 The exception was 1977 when no students were approved for enrolment. See <https://uadventus.ro/despre-ua/>. Accesat la 30 martie 2023.

12 „Educational Institutions,” *1947 YearBook of the Seventh-Day Adventist Denomination*, editor Claude Conard (Washington, DC: Review and Herald Publishing Association), p.259; „Educational Institutions,” *1948 YearBook of the Seventh-Day Adventist Denomination*, editor Claude Conard (Washington, DC: Review and Herald Publishing Association), p.264; „Educational Institutions,” *1949 YearBook of the Seventh-Day Adven-*

changes are found much later. Between 1956 and 1967, for 12 years, there is a period of silence, with general information about the Adventist Church in Romania. It was specified that due to communism it was impossible to provide a report on any institution in Romania.¹³

tist Denomination, editor Claude Conard (Washington, DC: Review and Herald Publishing Association), 281; „Educational Institutions,” *1950 YearBook of the Seventh-Day Adventist Denomination*, editor Claude Conard (Washington, DC: Review and Herald Publishing Association), p.286; „Educational Institutions,” *1951 YearBook of the Seventh-Day Adventist Denomination*, editor E. J. Johanson (Washington, DC: Review and Herald Publishing Association), p.274; „Educational Institutions,” *1952 YearBook of the Seventh-Day Adventist Denomination*, editor E. J. Johanson (Washington, DC: Review and Herald Publishing Association), p.264; „Educational Institutions,” *1953 YearBook of the Seventh-Day Adventist Denomination*, editor H. M. Klaser (Washington, DC: Review and Herald Publishing Association), p.270; „Educational Institutions,” *1954 YearBook of the Seventh-Day Adventist Denomination*, editor H. M. Klaser (Washington, DC: Review and Herald Publishing Association), p.281; „Educational Institutions,” *1955 YearBook of the Seventh-Day Adventist Denomination*, editor H. M. Klaser (Washington, DC: Review and Herald Publishing Association), p.231.

13 „Southern European Division,” *1956 YearBook of the Seventh-Day Adventist Denomination*, editor H. M. Klaser (Washington, DC: Review and Herald Publishing Association), 191; „Southern European Division,” *1957 YearBook of the Seventh-Day Adventist Denomination*, editor H. M. Klaser (Washington, DC: Review and Herald Publishing Association), 194; „Southern European Division,” *1958 YearBook of the Seventh-Day Adventist Denomination*, editor H. M. Klaser (Washington, DC: Review and Herald Publishing Association), p.198; „Southern European Division,” *1959 YearBook of the Seventh-Day Adventist Denomination*, editor H. M. Klaser (Washington, DC: Review and Herald Publishing Association), p.205; „Southern European Division,” *1960 YearBook of the Seventh-Day Adventist Denomination*, editor H. M. Klaser (Washington, DC: Review and Herald Publishing Association), p.210; „Southern European Division,” *1961 YearBook of the Seventh-Day Adventist Denomination*, editor H. M. Klaser (Washington, DC: Review and Herald Publishing Association), p.210; „Southern European Division,” *1962 YearBook of the Seventh-Day Adventist Denomination*, editor H. M. Klaser (Washington, DC: Review and Herald Publishing Association), p. 223; „Southern European Division,” *1963 YearBook of the Seventh-Day Adventist Denomination*, editor E. I. Becker (Washington, DC: Review and Herald Publishing Association), p.248; „Southern European Division,” *1964 YearBook of the Seventh-Day Adventist Denomination*, editor E. I. Becker (Washington, DC: Review and Herald Publishing Association), p.236; „Southern European Division,” *1965 YearBook of the Seventh-Day Adventist Denomination*, editor E. I. Becker (Washington, DC: Review and Herald Publishing Association), 248; „Southern European Division,” *1965-1966 YearBook of the Seventh-Day Adventist Denomination* (Washington, DC: Review and Herald Publishing Association), p.241; „Southern European Division,” *1967 YearBook of the Seventh-Day Adventist Denomination*, editor Jesse O. Gibson (Washington, DC: Review and Herald Publishing Association), p.243.

Since 1968, information about the school has been reappearing. It is still called Institute, located in Bucharest, 116 Labirint Street, Tudor Vladimirescu district. The board was provided by Mihail Popa, as secretary, but who also served as director. The teachers were Ion Batrina, Gheorghe Indricau and Mihail Popa.¹⁴ From 1971-72 the board was headed by Hrant Artinian, as President and Director of the institution. The number of professors increases, these being Hrant Artinian, Aristide Doroftei, Horst Gehann, Gheorghe Indricau, Constantin Petcu.¹⁵ Between 1973 and 1976 Gabriel Vasilescu was co-opted to the board as secretary. He replaces Horst Gehann in the list of professors.¹⁶

The name of Theological Seminary appeared only in 1977. The number of members of the board also increased, being composed of Aristide Doroftei, Nelu Dumitrescu, Gheorghe Indricau, George Mateescu, Marin Pârvan, Dumitru Popa, Mihail Popa. Mihail Popa returns as director and the teachers are Titu Cazan, Gheorghe Indricau, Dumitru Popa, Mihail Popa.¹⁷ Since 1978, the Theological Seminary had Dumitru Popa as president, Mihail Popa as director and Titu Cazan, Aristide Doroftei, Gheorghe Indricau, Dumitru Popa and Mihail Popa as teachers. They also formed the management board.¹⁸ In the 1980s, a whole series of changes would

14 „Educational Institutions,” *Seventh-Day Adventist YearBook 1968*, editor Jesse O. Gibson (Washington, DC: Review and Herald Publishing Association), p.339; „Educational Institutions,” *Seventh-Day Adventist YearBook 1969*, editor Jesse O. Gibson (Washington, DC: Review and Herald Publishing Association), p.350; „Educational Institutions,” *Seventh-Day Adventist YearBook 1970*, editor Jesse O. Gibson (Washington, DC: Review and Herald Publishing Association), p.360.

15 „Educational Institutions,” *Seventh-Day Adventist YearBook 1971*, editor Jesse O. Gibson (Washington, DC: Review and Herald Publishing Association), 370; „Educational Institutions,” *Seventh-Day Adventist YearBook 1972*, editor Jesse O. Gibson (Washington, DC: Review and Herald Publishing Association), p.339.

16 „Educational Institutions,” *Seventh-Day Adventist YearBook 1973-1974*, editor Jesse O. Gibson (Washington, DC: Review and Herald Publishing Association), 340; „Educational Institutions,” *Seventh-Day Adventist YearBook 1975*, editor Jesse O. Gibson (Washington, DC: Review and Herald Publishing Association), p.345; „Educational Institutions,” *Seventh-Day Adventist YearBook 1976* (Washington, DC: Review and Herald Publishing Association), p.370.

17 „Educational Institutions,” *Seventh-Day Adventist YearBook 1977* (Washington, DC: Review and Herald Publishing Association), p.381.

18 „Educational Institutions,” *Seventh-Day Adventist YearBook 1978* (Washington, DC: Review and Herald Publishing Association), p.390; „Educational Institutions,” *Se-*

take place, especially at team level, but also at management level. In 1980, Nelu Dumitrescu and Lucian Cristescu replaced Aristide Doroftei.¹⁹ Since 1981, only Dumitru Popa remains on the board, and Gheorghe Indricau no longer appears as a teacher.²⁰ A year later, Titu Cazan is replaced by Stefan Rad,²¹ in 1984, Lucian Cristescu is replaced by Wilhelm Moldovan²² and in 1985 Stefan Radu disappears.²³ In 1987, the team undergoes other changes, Nelu Dumitrescu becomes director and Mihail Popa's place as teacher is taken by Ionica Aurel.²⁴ In 1988, Adrian Bocaneanu and Desideriu Faluvegi joined the team of teachers,²⁵ and a year later Wilhelm Moldovan disappeared, because he dies under suspicious circumstances.²⁶

Unfortunately, we have little information about the Victoria School of Nursing and Dispensary in Bucharest, Mitropolit Ghenadie Petrescu 116 Street. What is known is that the Industrial Girls' Gymnasium, whose director was Ilse Demetrescu, operated at this address. In a letter of thanks addressed to the school on 30 June 1942 from Sinaia, Her Majesty the Queen Mother's Household instructed Nelly Catargi, the lady-in-waiting, to convey the Queen's thanks for "the sentiments you expressed to her on the occasion of the end-of-school-year celebration of the Girls' Industri-

venth-Day Adventist YearBook 1979 (Washington, DC: Review and Herald Publishing Association), p.400.

19 „Educational Institutions,” *Seventh-Day Adventist YearBook 1980* (Washington, DC: Review and Herald Publishing Association), p.394.

20 „Educational Institutions,” *Seventh-Day Adventist YearBook 1981* (Washington, DC: Review and Herald Publishing Association), p.399.

21 „Educational Institutions,” *Seventh-Day Adventist YearBook 1982* (Washington, DC: Review and Herald Publishing Association), p.420; „Educational Institutions,” *Seventh-Day Adventist YearBook 1983* (Washington, DC: Review and Herald Publishing Association), p.438.

22 „Educational Institutions,” *Seventh-Day Adventist YearBook 1984* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald Publishing Association), p.438.

23 „Educational Institutions,” *Seventh-Day Adventist YearBook 1985* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald Publishing Association), p.452; „Educational Institutions,” *Seventh-Day Adventist YearBook 1986* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald Publishing Association), 456.

24 „Educational Institutions,” *Seventh-Day Adventist YearBook 1987* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald Publishing Association), p.449.

25 „Educational Institutions,” *Seventh-Day Adventist YearBook 1988* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald Publishing Association), p.458.

26 „Educational Institutions,” *Seventh-Day Adventist YearBook 1989* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald Publishing Association), p.422.

al Gymnasium, Bucharest."²⁷ Later, the building was requisitioned by the state during the war. After the war, we find information that the Victoria School of Nursing and Dispensary was founded in 1945, information that appears until 1955.²⁸ After this year, there is no further information about this institution. However, it is hardly likely that the data appearing in these documents are up to date. At the time of writing no further information has been found.

Education System after 1989

Part of the Adventist Church's mission, in all the countries where it is present, has been education. At the end of 2021, the church owned 9,589 educational institutions, at all levels, in which 111,476 teachers taught and 2,064,741 students were active.²⁹ Over the years, especially after the fall of communism in December 1989, the Adventist Church in Romania has developed its education system.

After the 1989 Revolution, the only Adventist educational institution operating in Romania was the Theological Institute, which was called Adventist Theological Seminary. Since 1990, it has operated in Bucharest,

27 Romanian Adventist Church Union Archives.

28 „Medical Institutions,” *1947 YearBook of the Seventh-Day Adventist Denomination*, editor Claude Conard (Washington, DC: Review and Herald Publishing Association), p.286; „Medical Institutions,” *1948 YearBook of the Seventh-Day Adventist Denomination*, editor Claude Conard (Washington, DC: Review and Herald Publishing Association), p.292; „Medical Institutions,” *1949 YearBook of the Seventh-Day Adventist Denomination*, editor Claude Conard (Washington, DC: Review and Herald Publishing Association), p.311; „Medical Institutions,” *1950 YearBook of the Seventh-Day Adventist Denomination*, editor Claude Conard (Washington, DC: Review and Herald Publishing Association), p.318; „Medical Institutions,” *1951 YearBook of the Seventh-Day Adventist Denomination*, editor E. J. Johanson (Washington, DC: Review and Herald Publishing Association), p.304; „Medical Institutions,” *1952 YearBook of the Seventh-Day Adventist Denomination*, editor E. J. Johanson (Washington, DC: Review and Herald Publishing Association), p.292; „Medical Institutions,” *1953 YearBook of the Seventh-Day Adventist Denomination*, editor H. W. Klaser (Washington, DC: Review and Herald Publishing Association), p.301; „Medical Institutions,” *1954 YearBook of the Seventh-Day Adventist Denomination*, editor H. W. Klaser (Washington, DC: Review and Herald Publishing Association), p.312; „Medical Institutions,” *1955 YearBook of the Seventh-Day Adventist Denomination*, editor H. W. Klaser (Washington, DC: Review and Herald Publishing Association), p.259.

29 Seventh-day Adventists Education Statistics. Available at <https://www.adventist.education/education-statistics/>. Accessed on July 7, 2023.

at 59 Romulus Street. Two years later, by government decision, the seminary became the Adventist Theological Institute of University Degree. New challenges after 1989, as well as the interest of young people in pastoring, prompted church leaders to seek solutions for moving the institute to a new location. Thus, starting in 1994, construction work began on the Cernica campus. Although it was inaugurated in 2000, courses began in 1997 with the first generation graduating in full at Cernica. The first legally recognized diplomas were obtained in 1998, following collaboration with the Faculty of Reformed Theology and Didactics of the Babes-Bolyai University. At the same time, the institute diversified its offer by setting up the program Adventist Didactic Theology - Romanian Language and Literature. A year later, the Adventist Didactic Theology - Social Work programme was established. In 2000 the institute received church accreditation (AAA - Adventist Accrediting Association). In April 2015, the Romanian state obtained institutional accreditation through ARACIS. Two years later, on 29 November 2017, at the initiative of the Church, the Romanian Government initiated a bill establishing Adventus University, a law approved and subsequently promulgated by the President of Romania.³⁰ Thus, by Law no. 227 and Presidential Decree no. 1035, the old Adventist Theological Institute is transformed into Adventus University and continues to operate on the Cernica campus, with three accredited degree programs: Adventist Pastoral Theology, Social Work and Pedagogy of Primary and Preschool Education taught in Romanian.³¹ The university attracts students from both home and abroad, such as Austria, Germany, Portugal, Spain, Sweden and Zambia, making it an international campus.

In the 1990s the Adventist education system in Romania developed through the establishment of secondary and post-secondary education. In 1991, in Braila, one of the most appreciated educational institutions, the Post-Secondary Sanitary School, was founded, which trained more than 1000 students. Following the success of this institution, in 2015 another school with the same profile is opened in the Adventist university campus of Cernica. Between 1992 and 1993, three Adventist high schools were established in Bucharest, Cluj and Craiova. These will function as state denominational high schools.

30 Available at <https://uadventus.ro/despre-ua/>. Accessed on July 6, 2023.

31 Monitorul Oficial, Part I, 945 / November 29, 2017.

Since the 2000s, the Adventist education system has been growing rapidly. The first kindergartens appear at first, the oldest being that of the Popa Tatu Adventist Church in Bucharest. The kindergarten network is growing throughout the country, with 37 kindergartens operating by 31 October 2007. Also in Bucharest, the first primary school, Mihai Ionescu School, is established, which later develops to high school level, becoming Mihai Ionescu High School. As with kindergartens, the network of primary schools and gymnasiums develops throughout the country. Private Adventist high schools also appear in Campenita and Budiu Mic (Mures county) and most recently in Iasi (2022).

The fall of communism was a good omen for the Adventist education system in Romania, which experienced a marked development. According to data from the Romanian Union of Conferences, at the beginning of September 2021 there were 42 kindergartens operating in Banat (2), Moldova (8), Muntenia (11), Oltenia (6), Northern Transylvania (7) and Southern Transylvania (8), elementary schools, high schools, post-secondary schools, and a university. At the end of 2022, on 20 November to be precise, the Adventist Church had 48 kindergartens, 19 primary schools, 13 secondary schools, 7 high schools, 3 post-secondary schools and a university with three faculties.³²

Statistics recorded in 1990 show that 49 students were enrolled at the Theological Institute, 2 of whom graduated that year, indicating that during communism only a few people were admitted per year. A year later, the number of students increases to 95, of which 5 graduated. In 1992, the number of students reaches 116, of which 13 are graduates. The following year, the number of students almost triples to 337, including 28 graduates. The upward trend in the number of students does not continue in 1994, as the number of students drops by about 7% (314 students). This year, 49 students graduate, the highest number ever.³³ In the mid-1990s, the num-

32 Available at <https://adventist.ro/organizare/departamentul-educatie/>. Accessed on July 6, 2023.

33 Institutional Statistics for 1990. Section I – Educational Institutions, in *128th Annual Statistical Report 1990*, 28; Institutional Statistics for 1991. Section I – Educational Institutions, in *129th Annual Statistical Report 1991*, 28; Institutional Statistics for 1992. Section I – Educational Institutions, in *130th Annual Statistical Report 1992*, 28; Institutional Statistics for 1993. Section I – Educational Institutions, in *131st Annual Statistical Report 1993*, 28; Institutional Statistics for 1994. Section I – Educational Institutions, in *132th Annual Statistical Report 1994*, p.28.

ber of students is steadily decreasing, reaching 261, all of whom graduate. The year 1996 brings an increase of about 28% in the number of students (401), of which 96 are graduates. Also, the first data of the Postgraduate School of Health in Braila are recorded (203 students, of which 78 graduates). A year later, the first generation of students started and completed their courses at the new campus in Cernica, a generation that included the author. The number of students enrolled is 309, of which 70 students graduated that year. The Romanian Union also operates two health schools in Braila, with 254 students, of which 31 graduates. The year 1998 saw the diversification of the Theological Institute's offerings, with a new programme, reflected in an increase in the number of students to 414, of whom 88 graduated. The two post-secondary health schools enroll 331 students, of whom 95 are graduates. The final year of the decade records 419 students at the Theological Institute, of whom 37 are graduates. The post-secondary schools attract 304 students, of whom 150 are Adventists, showing that the quality education offered makes the two schools attractive to non-Adventist students. Also, this year, the first information about the Popa Tatu Church Kindergarten is recorded, where 10 children are enrolled.³⁴

The 2000s began with a significant increase in the number of students at the Theological Institute, 499, of which 482 were Adventist students and 17 non-Adventist students. In 2000, 82 students graduated. The two post-secondary health schools enrolled 207 students, of whom 107 were non-Adventist and 100 Adventist, graduating 124. The kindergarten reported the same data (10 children). The following year, there is a decrease in the number of students by about 28% (total 357 students), of which 18 graduated. A smaller decrease (6.2%) is also recorded in the post-secondary schools, with 194 enrolments, of which 97 are Adventists. This year, one more kindergarten appears, with 59 children, 37 of them

34 Institutional Statistics for 1995. Section I – Educational Institutions, in *133rd Annual Statistical Report 1995*, 32; Institutional Statistics for 1996. Section I – Educational Institutions and Primary Schools, in *134th Annual Statistical Report 1996*, p.32; Institutional Statistics for 1997. Section I – Educational Institutions and Primary Schools, in *135th Annual Statistical Report 1997*, pp. 47-48; Institutional Statistics for 1998. Section I – Educational Institutions and Primary Schools, in *136th Annual Statistical Report 1998*, pp. 47, 51.

from Adventist families. The year 2002 sees an increase in the number of students at the institute (24%), namely 443, of whom 96 are graduates. Among the latter was the first generation of students to start classes on the Cernica campus. There are 160 students enrolled in post-secondary health education, 74 of whom are graduates. The number of kindergartens doubles to 4, with 126 children, 72 of whom come from Adventist families. The following year does not bring such many students to the institute, registering 294, of which 99 will graduate that year. Of the two postgraduate health schools, one had been left since 2002, this year attracting 168 students, 60 of them Adventists. It should be noted that one of the two schools is going into state education, making it no longer appear in church statistics. Also, all three Adventist high schools in Bucharest, Cluj and Craiova do not appear in church statistics, as they were in state education. The number of kindergartens is preserved, with 144 children, 82 of whom came from Adventist families. In 2004, the Theological Institute attracts 297 students, of whom 51 will graduate that year. The Post-Secondary School of Health enrolls 156 students, of whom 67 are Adventists and 121 are graduates. The four kindergartens operate with 200 children, 75 of whom come from Adventist families.³⁵ In the mid-2000s, the institute attracted 263 students, of whom 90 were graduating. The post-secondary school had 148 students, 46 of whom were Adventists. The number of children from non-Adventist families at the four kindergartens is increasing. These operated with 272 children, of whom just over half (137) came from Adventist families. In 2006, there is a slight increase in the number of students compared to the previous year (265), but the number of graduates is lower (37). The post-secondary health courses attract 141 people, of whom about a third are Adventists (50). The four kindergartens are atten-

35 Institutional Statistics for 2000. Section I – Educational Institutions and Primary Schools, in *138th Annual Statistical Report 2000*, pp. 50-51, 55; Institutional Statistics for 2001. Section I – Educational Institutions and Primary Schools, in *139th Annual Statistical Report 2001*, pp. 52-53, 57; Institutional Statistics for 2002. Section I – Educational Institutions and Primary Schools, in *140th Annual Statistical Report 2002*, pp. 52-53, 57; Institutional Statistics for 2003. Section I – Educational Institutions and Primary Schools, in *141st Annual Statistical Report 2003*, pp. 56-57, 61; Institutional Statistics for 2004. Section I – Educational Institutions and Primary Schools, in *142nd Annual Statistical Report 2004*, pp. 56-57, 61.

ded by 342 children, of whom 206 come from Adventist families. In 2007 there are 253 students at the Theological Institute and 114 students at the Post-Secondary School of Health. Although the website of the Education Department of the Romanian Union states that 37 kindergartens were operating throughout the country at the end of October, data are reported only for the four kindergartens so far. These operate with 374 children, 204 of whom are from Adventist families. The following year the number of students drops to 237, while 118 students attend the School of Health. As for kindergartens, the number of kindergartens reaches 5. Of the 421 children enrolled, about half come from non-adolescent families. In 2009, the number of students at the Theological Institute increases to 250, and the number of post-secondary students increases to 160. This year, another kindergarten is added, so that the Romanian Adventist Church had 6 kindergartens with a total of 457 children.³⁶

In the 2010s, the number of students at the Institute drops below 200, with the highest number of students in 2015 (187 students) and the lowest number in 2012 (128 students). At the end of 2019, Adventus University (the new name of the Theological Institute) had 176 students, of which 32 were graduates. Statistics related to the two post-secondary health schools show that the highest number of students was recorded in 2018 (189 students) and the lowest number in 2014 (132 students). At the end of 2019, the two post-secondary schools had 156 students, of which 47 were Adventists. The 2010s led to the establishment of primary and secondary schools, starting in 2011. Statistics show that in 2011 there were 8 schools operating, with 600 children studying, 292 of them from Adventist families. However, the number has fluctuated throughout this period, reaching 2 schools in 2013 and 4 schools at the end of 2019. In terms of kindergartens, the Adventist Church had 7 kindergartens in 2010 with

36 Institutional Statistics for 2005. Section I – Educational Institutions and Primary Schools, in *143th Annual Statistical Report 2005*, pp. 56-57, 61; Institutional Statistics for 2006. Section I – Educational Institutions and Primary Schools, in *144th Annual Statistical Report 2006*, pp. 56-57, 63; Institutional Statistics for 2007. Section I – Educational Institutions and Primary Schools, in *145th Annual Statistical Report 2007*, pp. 56, 63; Institutional Statistics for 2008. Section I – Educational Institutions and Primary Schools, in *146th Annual Statistical Report 2008*, pp. 56, 63; Institutional Statistics for 2009. Section I – Educational Institutions and Primary Schools, in *147th Annual Statistical Report 2009*, pp. 56, 63.

574 children enrolled and 11 kindergartens with 1742 children at the end of 2019.³⁷

The years 2020 and 2021 for which statistics are available indicate that the number of students at Adventus University continued to decline, reaching 160 students in 2021, of which 40 are graduates. In contrast, the two Post-Secondary Health Schools saw increases in student numbers, 166 in 2020 and 172 in 2021, the majority of whom were non-Adventists. The number of primary and secondary schools increased to 6 in 2020, the same number being maintained the following year, with Romania ranking second in the Division, together with the Southern German Union and behind Austria. In 2021, the 6 schools had 824 pupils, putting our country in second place after the Southern German Union. In 2020 the number of kindergartens quadrupled compared to the previous year. Thus, from 11 kindergartens in 2019, there were 44 kindergartens in 2020, the same number in the following year. In 2021, Romania ranked first in Europe, at Adventist Church level, both in the number of kindergartens and in the

37 Institutional Statistics for 2010. Section I – Educational Institutions and Primary Schools, in *148th Annual Statistical Report 2010*, pp. 56, 63; Institutional Statistics for 2011. Section I – Educational Institutions and Primary Schools, in *2013 Annual Statistical Report. 149th Report of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists for Year Ending December 31, 2011*, pp. 61-63; Institutional Statistics for 2012. Section I – Educational Institutions and Primary Schools, in *2014 Annual Statistical Report. 150th Report of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists for 2012 and 2013*, pp. 62-64; Institutional Statistics for 2013. Section I – Educational Institutions and Primary Schools, in *2015 Annual Statistical Report. 151st Report of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists for 2013 and 2014*, pp. 66-68; Institutional Statistics for 2014. Section I – Educational Institutions and Primary Schools, in *2016 Annual Statistical Report. 152nd Report of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists for 2014 and 2015*, pp. 74-76; Institutional Statistics for 2015. Section I – Educational Institutions and Primary Schools, in *2017 Annual Statistical Report. 153th Report of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists for 2015 and 2016*, pp. 74-76; Institutional Statistics for 2016. Section I – Educational Institutions and Primary Schools, in *2018 Annual Statistical Report. 154th Report of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists for 2016 and 2017*, pp. 76-79; Institutional Statistics for 2017. Section I – Educational Institutions and Primary Schools, in *2019 Annual Statistical Report. 155th Report of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists for 2017*, pp. 56-59; Institutional Statistics for 2018. Section I – Educational Institutions and Primary Schools, in *2019 Annual Statistical Report. Report of General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. 2018 Statistics*, vol. 1, pp.77-80; Institutional Statistics for 2019. Section I – Educational Institutions and Primary Schools, in *2020 Annual Statistical Report. Report of General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. 2019 Statistics*, vol. 2, pp. 86-89.

number of registered children (2914 children, of which 803 were from Adventist families).³⁸

Conclusions

George Butler's visit to Romania was the first event to influence Adventist education in Romania. Although he was not too optimistic about the rise of Adventism in Romanian territory, he nevertheless felt that the message could penetrate through Romanian evangelists. The second event that hastened Adventist education was the expulsion of the German-born Pastor Hinter. This event led to the training of workers of Romanian origin. Initially they were educated in European Adventist schools, and later in the missionary school established in various locations in Romania. The fall of communism was a good omen for the Adventist education system, which developed strongly, especially after 2010.

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