HISTORY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

120 YEARS WITH THE MEMOIRS OF THE SCIENTIFIC SECTION(S) OF THE ROMANIAN ACADEMY

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We attempt a brief review of the history of the journal Memoirs of the Scientific Section(s) of the Romanian Academy, during the first 120 years of publication, in the context of the development of science in Romania during that period and on the background of the changes the Romanian Academy has undergone. We also discuss the role of the Memoirs on the national scientific and educational stage and its content along Series II and III, until 1925.

Key words: context of advent; development, journal characteristics, style, content.

1. CONTEXT OF THE ADVENT OF THE MEMOIRS OF THE SCIENTIFIC SECTION OF THE ROMANIAN ACADEMY

When the Romanian Academic Society has been inaugurated1 in 1867, eight years after the de facto establishment of the union of Walachia (Muntenia) and Moldavia in the United Principalities, the founders of the Society did not provide inspiration and political will to include and emphasize the development of science and technology – the most lacking intellectual components of the national culture in Romania at the end of the 19th century. That deficiency of vision is attributable and partly due to the stage of development of the country at that time, yet it proved to represent a major limit in the years to come.

In 1877, the United Principalities fought the war of independence from the suzerainty of the Ottoman Empire and in 1878 became the independent Romania. As a political act, by special law, on March 29/April 10, 1879, the Romanian Academic Society changed its name to become the Romanian Academy (Academia Română 2007, p. 33–24), thus making a bold step forth. In the new era of independence so opened, developing the national industry, science and technology was a necessity.

1 The Romanian Academic Society is the new name, given in 1967 to the Romanian Literary Society, which has been established in April 1866, at the moment of its actual inauguration. The Romanian Literary Society has been formally established in 1866, by the Ministry Council, at the formal proposal of C.A. Rosetti (Rosetti, 1866).
Under the new name, the Academy became a significant national scientific body, with broader aims and scope; therefore, the State and the Academy itself had to provide new means to fulfill the wider scope. A new Statute was voted, the Academy was reorganized to include more members, and a new Section – the Scientific Section – was created. Envisaging the increased scientific contribution it will bring, the Academy gave itself tools for wider dissemination of the science, history and literature – the new statute foresaw separate journals for its three Sections. While the Statute has not provided all details, leaving them for future procedures to determine, the Statute nevertheless clearly established the desideratum of a separate journal for the Scientific Section.

According to the Statute of the Romanian Academy from 1879 (see Statutes of the Romanian Academy, 1879, in (Academia Română 2007), pages 34–39),

“Article 14. The Academy periodically publishes the Annals that will include both its proceedings and administration works and the literary and scientific works approved by the Academy for this purpose. The general form and the division of this publication will be determined by a special procedure.” [Our translation].


The papers published in the Annals are drawn from those that the members of the Academy were expected (or even had the duty) to produce, according to the article 28 of the Statute:

“Article 28. Beyond the literary and scientific papers that the members of the Academy, by their own initiative, will present to the Academy, every member is obliged to fulfill the personal or collective tasks the academic body or the corresponding Section of the Academy will assign.”

“Art. 28. Afără de lucrările literare și științifice ce membrii Academiei, din propria lor inițiativă, vor prezenta Academiei, fiecare dintr-înșii este obligat a îndeplini sarcinile personale sau colective ce i se vor da de către corpul academic sau de secțiunea sa respectivă.”

The increase in number of papers is due to a stricter work discipline imposed to the members of the Academy:

All translations herein are our translations.
“Since 1879, the Romanian Academy was organized according to today Statutes and its activity became permanent. The sessions are taking place every Friday, excepting the vacation periods at Christmas, Easter, and July and August months. The general sessions, lasting 25 days, take place before Easter; their primary role is to review the papers, to determine the winning papers for the prizes of the Academy, to establish the themes for future research and papers and to make general decisions regarding the activities and interests of the Academy” (Sturdza, 1891, p. 58).

“De la 1879 încoace, s-a organizat Academia Română cu statutele de astăzi, activitatea ei are un caracter permanent. Şedinţele se țin în fiecare vineri, afară de cele trei vacanţe, la Crăciun, la Paşti și în lunile iulie și august. Sesiunile generale, care durează 25 de zile, se țin înainte de Paști și au mai cu seamă menirea de a constata și aprecia lucrările făcute, de a acorda premiile puse la concurs, de a da direcțiunea lucrărilor viitoare și de a lua deciziuni de natură generală privind activitatea și la interesele Academiei.”

The situation of the first re-organization is described by Dimitrie Sturdza, at the celebration of 25 years since the creation of the Romanian Academy (Sturdza, 1891) as:

“The natural and mathematical sciences have been the last to enter in the circle of activities of our Academy. The Statutes of 1867 created the “Section of natural Sciences”. In the entire epoch of the Academic Society (1867–1879) we can find in our Annals a single report with scientific content, the discourse presented in 1872 by the late Dr. A. Fătu, On the attempts of developing the Natural sciences in Romania.”

The members of the Scientific Section, only a few in the first years, have seen their number increased during the subsequent years, but only in 1879, when the Academy was reorganized as a national institute, a truly equal weight has been given to this section compared to the two other ones.”


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For preserving a linear development of the topic, we avoid presenting any biographical information, beyond that strictly needed in this study. Such information can be found in the volumes on the members of the Romanian Academy the institution periodically publishes.
Membrii Secțiunii științifice, puțini la număr la început, s-au înmulțit în cursul anilor; însă numai la 1879, când s-a reorganizat Academia Română ca institut național, s-a dat acestei secțiuni o poziție deplin egală cu celelalte două surori ale ei.

“Since then, the activity of the scientific Section prospered. Since 1879 the Annals include a significant number of memoirs and scientific communications from various scientific theoretical and applied domains, like mathematics, geology, anthropology, chemistry, botanic, agricultural sciences etc.”

“De atunci activitatea Secțiunei științifice și-a luat avântul. De pe la anul 1879 Analele noastre cuprind un însemnat număr de memorii și comunicări științifice din diferitele ramuri ale științelor naturale și matematice atât teoretice, cât și aplicate: geologie, antropologie, chimie, zoologie, botanică, agricultură etc.”

The first issue corresponds to the second series of the Annals of the Romanian Academy, when the Annals split into three sections, the third one corresponding to the Memoirs of the Scientific Section (Analele Academiei Române, Memoriile Secțiilor Științifice).

Along its history, the journal was known under various names, the variations being due either to translations, or to changes in the orthographic rules in Romania. A slight change occurred much later, in 1978, when the singular “Section” was changed into plural, because meanwhile several scientific sections were created since 1947. Names used by the journal and encountered in catalogues of major libraries are: “Analele Academiei Romane. Memoriile secțiunii științifice”, “Analele Academiei Române. Memoriile secției științifice”, “Memoriile secțiunii științifice – Academia Română”, “Analele Academiei Române. Memoriile secțiilor științifice”, and “Memoirs of the scientific sections – Academia Republicii Socialiste România”. The abridged title most cited is “An. Acad. Rom., Mem. sec. științ.”, see for example Bibliothèque interuniversitaire scientifique Jussieu, Service Commun de la Documentation Médicale de l’UPMC, Catalogue de la BIOUSJ et du SCDM, (BIUSJ, 2009).

The journal had two ISSN numbers, ISSN 0258-9133 and ISSN 0254-8607; the current ISSN is 1224–1407.

2. THE THREE SERIES OF THE JOURNAL

The first series of the Memoirs of the Scientific Sections have been published as an independent journal – yet showing the fact that the journal was a part of the Annals of the Romanian Academy – under the name “Analele Academiei Române. Memoriile Secției Științifice” (Annals of the Romanian Academy. Memoirs of the Scientific Section).
### Table 1

Historical evolution of the publications of the Romanian Academy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Structure</th>
<th>Titles</th>
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<tr>
<td>1867–1878</td>
<td>no structure</td>
<td>Desbaterile Academiei Române</td>
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| 1879 to the issue for 1885–1886 | 2 sections (titles) | 1. Desbaterile Academiei Române (Annals, Proceedings), Series II  
2. Discursuri, memori și notițe (Discourses, Memoirs and Notices)  
   (Latter, the second title appeared as “Memorii și notițe” – Memoirs and Notices, only) |
| 1886–1887 | 3 titles | 1. Annals (Proceedings), Series II  
2. Analele Academiei Române. Memoriile Secțiunii (secției) istorice (Memoirs of the Section of History)  
3. Analele Academiei Române. Memoriile secțiunii științifice (Memoirs of the Scientific Section) |
| Starting 1888–1889 | 4 titles | 1. Annals (Proceedings), Series II  
2. Analele Academiei Române. Memoriile Secțiunii literare (Memoirs of the Section of Literature)  
3. Memoirs of the Section of History  
4. Memoirs of the Scientific Section |
| Starting 1893 | 4 titles plus reports | The same as above, plus an indeterminate number of reports, in fact representing reports published in the Annals and independently reprinted and sold. |
| 1923–1948 | The Memoirs do not mention “Annals” on the cover. New periodical published | Series III of the Annals (Proceedings), but the three titles of Memoirs no longer bore on the cover the title of the Annals (Analele Academiei Române. Memoriile Secției istorice / științifice). Several new periodicals were published by the Romanian Academy, for example La vie scientifique en Roumanie. Sciences pures (since 1933; in 1937, tome IV was published by Academia Română). |
| Since 1948 to 1990 | Academy restructured. Numerous new journals (titles) | Annals are published in an irregular manner, the Memoirs disappear – except for the Annals of History, but a large number of specialty journals appeared, like Studii și Cercetări Lingvistice founded in 1950, Revista de istorie și teorie literară since 1952, Revue roumaine de linguistique, 1956, Revue roumaine de mathématiques pures et appliqués, 1956, Revue Roumaine de Chimie, 1956 (first appeared as Revue de Chimie. Acad. RPR; since 1964, title modified as Revue Roumaine de Chimie; since 1997, appears as Romanian Journal of Chemistry), Fonetica și Dialectologie (Phonetics and Dialectology) founded in 1958, Noesis, 1973 etc. The proliferation of journals corresponds to an increased number of Sections and to the diversification of scientific topics. |
| Since 1977–1978 | Memoirs reappear | Memorii Secțiilor Științifice (Memoirs of the Scientific Sections). The singular “section” becomes plural because the several sections devoted to scientific research were established. |
The name reflected the fact that the Memoirs were seen as a section of the Annals, which were published in triples of issues, two for the Literature and History sections, and one for the scientific section of the Academy. Because in 1888 the Memoirs were part of the Annals, the first series of the Memoirs correspond to the second series of the Annals, thus bearing on the cover “Series II.” The volumes 13 (1891), 15 (1893), 17 (1895), 19 (1897), and 21 (1899) have never been published.

The third series of the Annals started in 1923 (volume 1, series III). It should be emphasized that the series numbers are somewhat misleading, because initially the series referred to the Annals, not to the Memoirs. As long as the Memoirs have been a strict part of the Annals, the series number was correct. In 1923, when the Memoirs first appeared without the name of the Annals on the cover, and latter in 1978, when the Memoirs became totally independent, the series number has been preserved for traditional reasons. The current fourth series corresponds to the fourth series counted for the Annals (today, the annals of the Romanian Academy are published in English under the name of “Proceedings”), but is actually the third series of the Memoirs. The evolution of the Memoirs is summarized in Table 1.

While virtually all members of the Scientific Section of the Academy of the time have published in the Annals – Memoirs section during the second series, not all contributed equally. Depending on the period, some authors like Ştefan C. Hepites, Petru Poni, and Victor Babeş have been extremely prolific, while others rarely had a report published. Any way, all the names of important scientists of the epoch can be found among the contributors, like Victor Babeş, Petru Poni, Iacob Felix, Gheorghe Marinescu, Şt.C. Hepites, N. Leon, P. Riegler, Grigorie (also appearing as Grigoriu) Ştefănescu, Florian Porcius, C.I. Brătianu, etc.

The tendency was preserved during the third series, yet the increased number of journals devoted to single domains, many of them initiated by the members of the Academy, dispersed forces and scattered publications on a wider publication basis. The Memoirs lost part of their representative power as main publication of the members of the Academy, yet retaining the prestige.

Beyond the Annals and the three series of Memoirs – all these included under the generic name of Annals – since 1879 the Academy also published independent reports as brochures and books, like “Materials for the Climatology of Romania, by Şt. C. Hepites”, or reports on plants, like that authored by C. Istrati (see Figure 1).

We also found (at http://openlibrary.org/b/OL6591033M/Serviciul%CC%86-meteorologic%CC%86-in-Europa, accessed May 3, 2009) a mention on the volume “Serviciul meteorologic în Europa, by Ştefan C. Hepites. Published in 1884, Tip. Academiă română (Laboratori români) (Bucuresci)”. Yet, it does not result that the volume was published under the aegis of the Romanian Academy.
Fig. 1. Issues of the Annals and other publications of the Romanian Academy still available at the publisher, in 1894.

The number of reports has varied from year to year. The reports, authored by members of the Romanian Academy, were extensive and the reason for publishing
them apart the Memoirs was, probably, twofold: the reports constituted papers not presented in the sessions of the Academy; moreover they were intended to address a larger audience than that interested in the whole Annals of the Academy.

During Series II, the name of the journal was “Memoirs of the Scientific Section” (Memoriile Secțiunii Sciințifice) and appeared in smaller fonts, after the main title “Annals of the Romanian Academy” – see arrow on the left panel of Figure 2.

3. CONTENT OF THE MEMOIRS DURING SERIES II

The first issues included few but extended studies. For example, the content of the tome XVIII of the series II (1895–1896) included only two reports, by Gregoriu Ștefănescu and by Florian Porcius (shown in Figure 3).

Later, especially after 1900, the content of the Memoirs became more complex, with increasingly larger number of papers, as seen for example in 1902 (see Figure 4). Subsequently, we present the content and discuss the style of a few articles appearing in this series, to offer a glimpse on the journal at that epoch.
The style of the papers and reports significantly vary from author to author. The analysis of the style exposes in the published papers the characteristics of evolution of the science and scientific writing at that epoch. Papers as (Felix, 1904) show that Dr. Iacob Felix was, beyond the scientist and organizer of medical services history mainly retains on him, a moralist and educator:

“The education – the art of growing up children – has the purpose to form a well rounded-up man, to simultaneously develop his physical, moral and intellectual faculties, a condition to which is subordinated the individual and state prosperity. A small nation must, for its strengthening, form in every citizen a physical, moral and intellectual force … It is the school that remains – and in some degree the army service – almost the only civilizing means able to fill the gap left by the family education …”
Educaţia, arta de a creşte copii, are scopul de a forma omul întreg, a dezvolta simultan facultăţile lui fizice, morale şi intelectuale, condiţie căreia [îi] este subordonată prosperitatea individuală şi a statului. O naţiune mică trebuie, pentru întărirea ei, să formeze în fiecare cetatean o forţă fizică, morală şi intelectuală. … Rămâne școala, până la un grad oarecare şi cazarma, aproape singurele medii de civilizare, care umplu golul lăsat de educaţia în familie…” [Orthographic updated to today norms].

Ştefan C. Hepites, a prolific writer and a very energetic organizer and scientist, is a narrator favoring ample sentences without stylistic devices, yet offering a pleasant reading, with ample and complex sentences:

"An accident happened at the beginning of the summer of 1912 to the Magnetic Observatory from Filaret, accident due to heavy rains that produced the falling down of the platform covering the Observatory, moreover the felt necessity of building two new rooms were the causes that prompted the decision of building a second floor on top of the Observatory.” (From: The Earthquakes in Romania during the year 1912 and from the decade [sic!] 1893–1902”, by St.C. Hepites, Session of March 20 1903).

"Un accident întîmplat, la începutul verii din 1912, Observatorului magnetic de la Filaret din causa ploilor cari au făcut să se prăbuşescă platforma care acoperia acest’Observatoriu, şi necesitatea care se simţia de a se clădi două camere au fost causele cari au decis construcţia unui etaju mansardat de-asupra zidurilor acestui Observatoriu.” (Cutremurele de pămînt din România în anul 1902 şi din deceniul 1893–1902, de St.C. Hepites, ședința de la 20 Martie 1903). [With orthography as close as possible to that used in the original publication].

One of the main roles of the third series and of the Scientific Section of the Romanian Academy of the time was to educate and to synchronize the scientific knowledge in Romania to that in the Western Europe. Scientific debates of the epoch often appear in the papers published in the Memoirs. An example is the debate between the vitalism doctrine and “positive” scientists reflected in the paper (Riegler, 1905):
“Gentlemen, you know the present tendency of science to explain all life processes with the laws of physics and chemistry, to which the whole universe obey. But many scientists are opposed to this trend; the vitalists can not accommodate to the idea that in the manifestations of the living organisms do not exist other factors that the forces of inanimate and disorganized world.”

Social issues are often mirrored in the second series of the Memoirs. The social relations of medicine have been brought fourth by Dr. Iacob Felix, and after him, by Dr. Victor Babeș, especially in relation to the organization of the medical service in the rural areas. One of the studies by Babeș is significantly titled “Critical Studies on the Present Sanitary Organization. 1. Vasile Lascar and the Sanitary Activities in the Rural Villages” (Session of 13 April, 1907). Those familiar to the modern history of Romania know that 1907 was the year of large peasant revolts, a context that makes the study by Babeș extremely timely and sensitive. In his study, Babeș first recollects the professional credo of his forerunner, Dr. Lascar, emphasizing that the sanitary reforms should go hand in hand with the economic ones, a clear social-oriented approach: “… Lascar not only appreciated the necessity of economic and sanitary reforms in the countryside, but also had as starting point of his program the syntagme “Sanitary policy.” (Babeș, 1908). More insights on Victor Babeș works will be presented in the next section, because this highest rank bacteriologist, who was several times proposed for the Nobel Price, published much in the third series of the Memoirs too.

4. THE THIRD SERIES

The first issue of the third series has been published in 1923. For the first time, it was a full fledged independent journal – the name of the Annals was no more included on the cover (see Figure 5).

Already, the content was rich, yet less important that what one could expect for that time and for the number of members in the scientific sections. For example, the content of the first issue (see Figure 5) included 13 papers, four on medical subjects, authored by V. Babeș (twice), G. Marinescu and Ar. Grădinescu, two on biological topics – both by N. Leon, three on geology, one on physics (Bădăreu, 1922), and one on military engineering (General Sc. Panaitescu).

It should be noted that the journal has probably been among the last ones in Europe to accept papers in Latin. As late in 1925, Constantin Hurmuzaki, with the first name Latinized as Constantinus, published a paper “Conspectus Specierum et Varietatum Generis RUBUS L.” (Account on the species and varieties of Rubus L.) entirely in Latin (Hurmuzaki, 1925).
While some authors wrote reports in almost the contemporary style, with very technical content and lack of any literary tendency, some others wrote pieces that could stand as literary compositions as well as scientific papers. Ion Simionescu, a member of the Romanian Academy and professor of geography and paleontology at the University of Iaşi, later on at the University of Bucharest, who wrote a large number of books and brochures for science popularization, was a marvelous writer, whose geographic papers were very nice descriptions of the landscapes. His style can be fully appreciated by a Romanian reader, while the translation of his work into other languages has to be done by a literature writer to preserve all its beauty. The native reader (we do not provide a translation for this prose fragment) will find parallels with the poetic pastels of Vasile Alecsandri and with the prose of Hogaş or of Vlahuţă, yet Simionescu’s prose is intermixed with knowledge of geology:

Ion Simionescu (1873–1944), doctoral student at Vienna, post-doctoral research in paleontology at Grenoble, France, professor at the University of Iaşi, until 1929, and at the University of Bucharest (1929–1940), where he creates the first chair of paleontology in Romania. Correspondent member (1911), then full member (1911) of the Romanian Academy, president of the Romanian Academy (1941–1944). He authored a remarkable number of brochures and volumes for science popularization.

Calistrat Hogaş (1847–1917), Romanian narrator, best-known for the two volumes under the title “Pe drumuri de munte” (Wandering in the mountains). These narratives are a mixture of traveling notes, descriptive sketches, and essays.

The literary style of that fragment can be best appreciated in the original language and hence is not translated.
“Când treci podul peste Siret, dintre Brăila și Galați, ți se prezintă înainte, spre Dobrogea, unul din cele mai instructive profiluri geografice, cari se pot găsi pe teritoriul țării noastre, arătând legătura strânsă dintre formele de teren și natura geologică a substratului.

Spre Vest se ridică, chiar din albia Dunării, Dealul Carol I de lângă Turcăia. Constituit din granit cu o aureolă de fălăte și porfiri, are forma tipică a lacolitelor granitice, erodate și dezaggregate: profil larg, rotund. Spre Est, dimpotrivă, se înalță culmea Priopii, zid de cvarțit rezistent, ca o muchie ascuțită. Între ele sunt dâmburi joase, valuri large, cari au înlesnit drumul dintre Măcin și Cerna. E zona alcătuită din șisturi și grauwacke devonice, ușor de erodat. Pe urmă spre Est se alipesc Priopii, șisturi cristaline, gneisuri injectate cu roci granitice, cu aspectul munților îmbătrânii, dar variați, după osatura scheletului lor geologic.”

The prose written by Ion Simionescu is typical for the Moldavian narrators like Calistrat Hogaș and Mihail Sadoveanu; while varied and full of stylistic devices, it is recounted in a slow, monotonic but not mono-tone way, like the sound of a spring in the collinary Moldavia. The frequent personifications (the hills perform actions by themselves, like joining together, “se alipesc”, instead of being joined [sunt alipite, Romanina l.]; they have bony skeletons “osatura scheletului” etc.) remember the animist tendency of the Romanian folklore and of the cult literature of the time, especially of writers from Moldova, at the end of the XIXth century and the beginning of the XXth century, from Eminescu to Sadoveanu. While the reading of such a paper is very pleasant, the content is not less scientifically significant, as I. Simionescu presents both a descriptive and an implied comparative study of the geological formations in a marvelous prose.

The neurology professor G. Marinescu proves to be a master of rhythm in prose by the use of variable length sentences and syncopes of the verb, thus increasing the tumultuous tension of the narrative in a theatric representation of the subject:

“The doctor in occult sciences appears, preceded by the appropriate advertising. A jury is named to control his experiments, jury always composed of people with no education and competence in normal and pathological psychology. The experiment begins, the curiosity is high since the beginning, we reach the paroxysm when the “doctor in occult sciences” fascinates or hypnotizes persons from the genuine audience or persons specifically brought by him. The neurotics are unsteady, fictive crimes are discovered, the telepathy is demonstrated, enthusiastic applaudes reward the magnetizer, who leaves with full pockets jubilating the obtained successes, successes due to the public naïvety, to the lack of
education of the jury, to the passivity of the official authorities and often to the indifference the sanitary officers have regarding such performances.”

“Doctorul de științe oculte apare, precedat de reclama făcută. Un juriu se numește pentru a-i controla experiențele, juriu compus totdeauna din oameni nepregățiți pentru cercetări de psihologie normală și patologică. Experiența începe, curiozitatea mare încă de la încept, ajunge la paroxism când “doctorul în științe oculte” fascinează sau hipnotizează persoane din public sau aduse într’adins de dănsul. Nevrozații sunt neliniștiți, crimele fictive sunt descoperite, telepatia e demonstrată, aplaune entuziaste răsplătesc pe magnetizator, care pleacă cu buzunarele pline, jubilând de succesele obținute, succese datorite naivității publicului, nepregătirii comisiei de control, pasivității autorităților administrative și deseori indiferenței cu care autoritățile sanitarice privește aceste reprezentații.”

(“Hipnozismul din punct de vedere terapeutic și medico-legal, de Dr. G. Marinescu, Ședința dela 12 Maiu 1922”).

Victor Babeș is a complex writer, able to adapt his style to the topic. When he writes about Pasteur, at the anniversary of 100 years of Pasteur’s birth, he proves to be fine rhetorician in the tradition of the French culture. When reviewing the work of a colleague, he preserves much of the rhetoric style, yet leaning toward the more abstract scientific style, boldly bringing forth his own views on the subject, like in “Epidemiile din Transilvania și comparația lor cu epidemiile celorlalte provincii românești în 1921, studiate de Dr. Sabin Maniulă”. In contrast, when he exposes his scientific research, for example in his paper “Despre pătrunderea unor microbi prin suprafața corpului” (Babeș, 1905), Babeș’s style becomes limpid, with clear-cut shorter sentences, almost formal, still not arid and totally cut-and-dry.

Especially in the third series, several members of the Romanian Academy who have spent extended periods of time in foreign universities in the immediately previous years preferred a purely scientific, almost sketchy and abrupt style. An example is the physicist Eugen Bădăreu, well known internationally for his studies on plasma. His paper “Despre valoarea absolută a dublei refracții electrice. Notă de E. Bădăreu. Ședința dela 16 Maiu 1922” starts hastily with no introduction at all:

“The isotropic bodies immersed in an external electric field become birefringent, gaining the properties of a uniaxial crystal, of either positive or negative type, whose axis becomes parallel to the direction of the electrical field (Kerr effect).”

“Corpurile isotope puse în câmpul electric devin birefrigente, căpătând proprietățile unui cristal uniaxial, pozitiv sau negativ, a cărui axă ar fi paralelă cu direcția câmpului electric (fenomenul lui Kerr).”
The purely scientific style will become the dominant style of the papers in the 1930s and in the fourth series of the Memoirs.

5. THE FOURTH SERIES

In 1948, the Romanian Academy was abolished and transformed into the Academy of Popular Republic of Romania, to become later the Academy of the Socialist Republic of Romania. The transformation consisted in the exclusion of some of the former members – most of them famous scientists – the creation of several new sections out of the four extant at the time, and the inclusion of a large number of new members, many of them reputed scientists, but some with lower or obscure scientific profile. Importantly, the Academy lost its traditional independence from the State, moreover lost all its properties donated during almost a century by some generous donors. For two years, no journal has been published. In 1950, new titles have been established.

Fig. 6. Cover and table of contents of the first issue of the fourth series, 1977.
The Memoirs have completely disappeared for 30 years, from 1948 to 1978. It is only in 1977 that academician Cristofor Simionescu, a great chemist, an excellent organizer, and a politician of great ability succeeded to re-establish the Memoirs of the Scientific Sections and managed to publish the first issue of Series IV. The editorial office was located in the Iaşi Branch of the Romanian Academy, yet the publication was carried on by the Publishing House of the Romanian Academy in Bucharest. The cover and subcover of the first issue of the new series are shown in Figure 6. Since 1978, the Memoirs appeared on a yearly basis with no interruption, under the leadership of the late academician Cristofor Simionescu.

6. THE MEMOIRS OF THE SCIENTIFIC SECTIONS IN THE PUBLIC COLLECTIONS AND MAJOR LIBRARIES

Major collections of the journal, including substantial parts of the collection starting from the 19th century, are currently deposited in some European libraries, in France, Italy, and possibly in other countries. In Figure 7 is exemplified the recording of the journal in the Catalogo Italiano dei Periodici at the Bologna University (CIP, 2009), while Figure 8 shows an indexing in the French Catalog of Periodicals, since 1894. The journal is currently indexed by Mathematical Reviews, Zentralblatt für Mathematik, and INSPEC, among others.

Fig. 7. The Annals in the Italian Catalog of Periodicals, 1892–1893; 1895–1919.

viii The unfortunate death of Professor Cristofer Simionescu in 2007 saw the Editorial Board without operative command. At the incentive of the leadership of the Iaşi Branch of the Romanian Academy and of the editorial secretary Mrs. Elena Rusu, I took in charge the current operations, without a specific official position except the one I already had, as member of the Editorial Board in position of co-scientific secretary. My first duty is to follow the spirit imposed to the journal by the late academician Cristofer Simionescu whose attention I had the privilege to enjoy for almost 30 years. I am convinced he would approve the small changes to the journal we propose today, hopefully for the benefit of the journal audience.
Today, the journal is sent by the Romanian Academy to about 120 libraries, universities and academic publishers, either for inclusion in major public libraries, or for the double purpose of academic exchanges of academic journals and for mutual information.

We are unaware of all the major libraries where collections of the Annals of the Romanian Academy – series I to IV – are still preserved. Possibly, with the increase in the number of electronic catalogues, we will learn about several places we do not know about and expect that such libraries exist in Austria, Germany, Russia, and England.

7. CONCLUSIONS

The fate of the Memoirs of the Romanian Academy has been a vacillating one, from excellent issues containing a large number of fine papers, to periods of disappearance. The Memoirs, in their evolution on the three series, parallels both the development of the Romanian science and of the science in general. Evolving
from a small section of the Annals to an independent publication, the journal faced an increasing pressure from other national journals and from centrifugal tendencies in the Academy itself, especially during and after the third series was launched. However, while other traditional publications of major European academies – including the Annals of the Romanian Academy – fade away, the Memoirs still stand to represent the time-honored editorial and publication practice of the Academy, yet using modern norms and the high standards required by major scientific publications today.

While we may have succeeded to clarify some of the main historical facts regarding the Memoirs of the Scientific Section(s) of the Romanian Academy and some facts related to the Annals of the Romanian Academy, these publications still remain poorly known today even in Romania. The study and analysis of the reports and papers published during the period 1879–1948 might – or should – become one of the tasks the Romanian Academy considers to undertake in the proximal years. A partial at least republication of the issues from the first two series of the Annals would be a significant contribution to the history of science in modern Romania and would help a better understanding of the developing of science in East Europe.

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