

# A SHORT HISTORY OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN ROMANIA AND JAPAN

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**Abstract:** *This paper facilitates the comparative analysis between two histories of higher education. Those interested in the 160 years-old ideas of university in Romania and Japan will find in this study details on the historical, social and political conditions from which they grew, the first locations, purposes and organizational structures, legal frameworks, commonalities and peculiarities. The nature of higher education is grasped through many contrasts: public and private, free and not, masses and elites etc. By revisiting the beginnings and major developments of higher education in these two very distinct countries, this study promises to identify points that are central to a mature understanding of its origins. It mainly addresses the question: What are the main grassroots differences and similarities between Romanian and Japanese higher education? The answer unfolds in the light of events and characteristics, intertwined with explanation and reasoning.*

*A tangential intention is to counterbalance scholarly efforts invested in comparative higher education research, excessively fashioned on present and recent times, or on biases built on the developed/developing notion of a country. This work is marginally international in scope, as it defends in-depth study and rigorous research against algorithms used by university rankings in attempts to compare institutions of higher education around the world, taking no account of the distant but relevant past, and promoting the idea that such a comparison can be made possible with several clicks.*

**Key words:** higher education; Romania; Japan; history of education; comparative sociology.

## 1. Introduction

Few are interested today in knowing why universities emerged in societies and how they spread globally, either because it is a question with an obvious or convergent response, or because it seemingly lacks meaningfulness for our day-to-day realities of teachers or students. Yet, knowing and reflecting on the history of higher education is essential in both the effort to assess its contribution in time to the development of a nation's social capital and methods used to summon it, and that of influencing its destiny and future success.

It is not worth only knowing when, where and by whom was the first university founded in a certain country, but its purpose too: whether it was created with the aim of moving religious, political and other debates from the public space to an appropriate setting, or to establish a social hierarchy, or to enlighten or satisfy the people's thirst for knowledge etc. This study on the history of higher education focuses on Romania and Japan and will be divided into periods.

## 2. 16th Century

In Romania, the first form of higher education was established almost half a century before Harvard University<sup>1</sup>, a period that coincides with that in which the first form of higher education was founded in Japan. That is, if one accepts that the oldest university in Romania is the Babeş-Bolyai University, whose precursor, the Iezuit Major College of Cluj, built in 1581 (Babeş-Bolyai University [UBB], 2014), and that the Japanese counterpart was the Hankōji Temple, the oldest Buddhist college in Japan, built in 1580. It can be inferred that the fundamental purpose of these two university establishments in Romania and Japan was plausibly a religious one. In Romania, this first higher education institution educated future members of an order of Catholic monks, and in Japan, Hankōji trained the learned-monks of the Nichiren Buddhist sect (Bunkachō-hen, 1984). Upon closer scrutiny, however, in both Romania and Japan, one may find that the purpose of setting up these higher education institutions was only partly or not at all a religious one.

Historical sources show that at the beginning of the Habsburg domination in Transylvania, Jesuit monks were used to achieve political goals through the Catholicization of the Romanians (Roller, 1952). It is also known that Hankōji was a great temple in an era when in Japan religious institutions were equally economic, political and even military powers. The Nichiren sect's mandate to spread faith in the Lotus Sūtra was widely interpreted as Japan's national destiny by the army expansion of the empire (Jeffrey, 1989). Despite the existence of sources on the establishment and role of the Jesuit College in Romania and the Hankōji Temple in Japan, it is difficult to appreciate how effective they have accomplished their mission, as most sources are contradictory memories written by those who lived in those times. What is obvious is the controversy that may arise over time over the purpose for which a higher education institution came into being.

For those remaining loyal to the general opinion that the oldest university in Romania is the Alexandru Ioan Cuza University, founded in 1860, and in Japan, Keiō University, founded in 1858, the aforementioned assertion about the coinciding periods of their establishment remains valid.

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<sup>1</sup> Founded under the name of New College in 1636.

### 3. The beginnings: Year 1848

It is unjust for a history of higher education in Romania not to give credit to the enlighteners of the 1848 revolutionary year for the pedagogical movement that spread the first ideas of higher and academic education from Romania, which was then called the "Romanian Principalities". Previous attempts, although spectacular<sup>2</sup>, were short-lived, such as the Mihail Academy in Iași, founded by Gheorghe Asachi in 1835 and in function for 12 years.

The intellectual movement of the Romanian enlighteners, inspired by the French and the Austrians, intended to free Romanians from ignorance and drive progress. The influence of the church on education and instruction has diminished as a result of interventions by personalities of the Transylvanian generation, such as Simion Bărnuțiu, George Barițiu, Aron Pumnul, Alexandru Papiu Ilarian, Andrei Mureșanu, Timotei Cipariu and others. Their activity and ideas triggered the need for several schools in Romanian language on every levels of study, along with several publications, libraries, development of didactic methods etc. The motto of Mihail Kogălniceanu and other 1848 movement leaders was "Salvation is only at school" and thus marked the beginning of the transition period from ignorance and superstition to enlightenment and patriotism (Gorun, 2015).

Though the stream of enlightened and exploratory ideas traversed the Atlantic, Indian and Pacific Oceans too, it has not penetrated Japan. From 1633 until 1853, Japan was a *sakoku* (closed country), due to the isolationist foreign policy imposed by the last feudal military regime in Japan, the Tokugawa shōgunate. This measure was taken to put an end to piracy<sup>3</sup> and reduce foreign colonial and religious threats. Under the Tokugawa leimitsu shōgun<sup>4</sup> relations with other countries were extremely strict. All sorts of ingenious attempts by which numerous foreigners sought to enter in contact with Japan have failed.

Nevertheless, the year 1848 is equally important to the history of Japan as well as to that of Romania, for it marked the decline of Tokugawa's isolationist policy through the entrance in Japan of Ranald MacDonald<sup>5</sup>. MacDonald experienced the oppression of racism at an early age, being a hybrid child. He became fascinated by Japan after he heard as a child that three Japanese shipwrecked near his hometown. In the summer of 1848, he came to the shores of the Rishiri Island in the Sea of Japan, pretending to be

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<sup>2</sup> Comprising in the beginning of three faculties: philosophical, juridical and theological; the courses being completed in 1847 with analytical and descriptive geometry for engineering, agronomy, mineralogy and geology.

<sup>3</sup> A period when foreign merchants were active in Japan's waters.

<sup>4</sup> The shogun was the military dictator of Japan and the head of the government.

<sup>5</sup> Canadian adventurer.

shipwrecked. The area was under the control of the Ainu minorities, which is why MacDonald was not immediately imprisoned or executed. They dispatched fourteen samurai<sup>6</sup> to learn the English language from this native speaker, and so MacDonald became the first English language teacher in Japan. Despite being put on a boat back to America a year later, MacDonald wrote a statement to the US Congress stating that the Japanese police was very good, and that the Japanese people had the utmost exemplary behaviour by the highest standards. Despite the fact that MacDonald was not credited or rewarded, the significance of his contribution to the development of higher education in Japan will be evident later.

#### **4. The latter half of the 19th century. The first universities**

##### **4.1. The first Romanian university**

On any occasion, the Alexandru Ioan Cuza University of Iași flaunts its "Royal Order no. 13795 of October 20, 1860", signed by Alexandru Ioan Cuza himself (1829-1873) one year after his election as the ruler of the United Principalities. The single page document is the essence of what was to be the Romanian university education, but merely reading it, although extremely interesting, is not enough for a profound characterization.

Primarily, reference is made to the "Regulation of Public Instruction of the Year 1851", another act underlying the project of establishing the first Romanian university, identified under the official title of "The Settlement for the Reorganization of Public Teaching in the Principality of Moldavia". This act was drafted by Mihail Kogălniceanu, in collaboration with Vasile Alecsandri, Dimitrie Ralet, Constantin Hurmuzaki, August Treboniu Laurian and Lascăr Rosetti, and formed the basis of the organization of public education during the reign of Grigore Alexandru Ghica by dividing the "instruction" (education) into three grades of primary, secondary and high education, all of which have compulsory Romanian as a language of instruction. Besides the establishment of a large number of primary schools and 63 elementary schools, the regulation provided for the establishment of two faculties, Law and Philosophy in the Michaelean Academy, the organization of seminars as faculties of theology, and a faculty of medicine at the Gregorian Institute.

Consequently, the Royal Order of 1860 reveals that there have been obstacles to the "foundation of higher education" and affirms that they have been "largely" removed. The funding issue was resolved in 1858 and 1860 by

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<sup>6</sup> Although initially the samurai title belonged to the Japanese military nobility, it is improperly defined so when referring to a period other than that between the 10th and 12th centuries. In essence, the samurai were warriors associated with what might be called the "home war art", protection of a family, or a community; thus distinct from soldiers.

the votes of the members of the Legislative Assembly (chamber), which made it possible to allocate a "budgeting" by granting loans. The most substantial one among these loans was aimed at solving the location problem where the academic activities were to be conducted. The support that Alexandru Ioan Cuza received from the members of the Legislative Assembly was significant too, since these were representatives of the aristocracy, the bourgeoisie and the church, personalities who opposed many of the reforms initiated by Alexandru Ioan Cuza, which led to a coup in 1864 marked by the dissolution of the Legislative Assembly and the establishment of a new government and new office, the "prime minister". An investigation into these issues goes beyond the scope of this study.

#### **4.1.1. The location**

The founding document of the Alexandru Ioan Cuza University mentions the name of the former owner of the "old palace" that the state bought, again "according to the chamber vote", and "forever". Mr. Muruzi was that name (Babeş-Bolyai University [UBB], 2014), none other than Alexandru Moruzi, the Phanariot ruler of Moldavia and Wallachia.

It is interesting to learn from the writings of Curierul de Iaşi (2012) that the "old palace" was at the time one of the most beautiful buildings in Iaşi, built in 1760 by Matei Cantacuzino, brother of ruler Şerban Cantacuzino, of the great scholar Constantin Cantacuzino and of Prince Constantin Brâncoveanu's mother. The palace was the Princely Court of the Moldavian princes, Moruzi and Scarlat Callimachi. In 1859, the 2,056 sqm estate (Sasu, 1999) was owned by Alecu Rosetti Roznovanu' widow, and was valued at 20,489 guilders, but the sale was made on the amount of 18,000 guilders, of which 5,000 were paid upon signing the contract, and the rest within three years.<sup>7</sup> The very fact that Alexandru Ioan Cuza's wife, Elena Cuza, was herself part of the Rosetti family, could be a collateral explanation for the success of the transaction. In order to understand the power of guilder at that time, one can compare the transaction with another: the first pharmacy in Târgu Jiu was sold in 1859 with 400 guilders (Pătraşcu, 2012). This building later accommodated the Faculty of Medicine, inaugurated in 1879.

#### **4.1.2. Purpose and organization**

A university is an ensemble of approximately identical structural and functional units called "faculties" with a structural support matrix called

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<sup>7</sup> By indexing the gold price with today's comparable values, the real increase in gold value is more than 3 times since the transaction year to date (Axenciuc, 2000). As it is considered that the guilders would have valued about 2,000 Romanian lei today, we can deduce that the palace bought by the state in 1859 would now be worth 36,000,000 lei.

"administration", jointly fulfilling a specific educational function. In order to understand how a university works, it is necessary to understand how it is organized at different levels. Article I of the constitutive act of Alexandru Ioan Cuza University stipulates that the university "is a juridical person with the right to manage itself in both scientific and disciplinary matters", which shows that the university had broad autonomy in terms university activities (Miroiu & Florian, 2015). The first university in Romania was organized as a trading company.

As early as Article II of the constitutive act of the university we find that the "ensemble of units" consists of four faculties: Philosophical, Legal, Theological and Medical, collectively forming a "National Institute" in which people can "study all branches of science without any exclusion". Following the German and Austrian university models, all members of the University of Iași were now part of a privileged caste in society, becoming "high clerks". Barbu Catargiu<sup>8</sup>'s words show what this distinction meant at the time (Demetrescu, 1886):

*"...should we assume two individuals of obvious equal skill, but of two distinct classes, certainly the one from the higher class is more suitable than the plebe to become a statesman, because the knowledge required in this complex specialty is not the knowledge from books and rags, but the knowledge that is gained from the study of the concrete man [...]. This knowledge is not acquired in the cabinet workshop or in the dead words of printed books. The one who wants to possess it [...] ought to visit the high clerks."*

This quote is representative of understanding the status of the university members in the society of those days, and how important was their being organized in an university.

The academic structure of the University of Iași had a collective body, *the academic council*, which consisted of all the teachers with at least ten years of seniority and the returnees, the honorary professors. The role of the academic council was to decide on the interests of the university. The council was the only one who could hire or dismiss a university member, with the Lord's agreement, and had the right to award academic honors or sanctions to teachers and students. The individual body of the university, the *rector*, was the one who led the academic council. He was elected annually by the vote and among the teachers, with the recommendation of the State Secretary of the Department of Religious Affairs of the Ministry of Religious Affairs and Instruction, and appointed with the consent of the Lord. In turn, each faculty was led by a *dean*, also elected every year and among the teachers. The Dean had the role of supervising teachers and students in his faculty.

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<sup>8</sup> Prime Minister of the United Principalities under Cuza.

The administrative structure of the university had a collective body, the *chancellery*, headed by an individual body, the *chancellor*, under the leadership of the *rector*. The chancellery had administrative responsibilities related to the teaching activity, such as admission of students, staffing, promotion, archiving, accounting, inventory of goods, repairs, etc. The university also had a *financial division* and a *quaestor*, whose role was to check the use of university money. The attributions of this "quaestor" were similar to those of the censor in today's trading companies. Upon the academic board's request and at the proposal of the rector, the quaestor checked the budget execution as well as records and financial accounts of the university, library, and collections.

#### **4.1.3. Legal framework**

For understanding the organization of higher education within a certain university it does not suffice to understand its organizational chart, but also the law by which the university is organized. Universities, as well as any other schools, fulfill their mission within the boundaries of a legal framework that confers rights and duties. It is the law that creates a school and gives its governing bodies the power to administer, impose taxes, acquire property, hire and fire personnel, set up curricula, educate students, etc. For example, the statutes of the university and those of each faculty stood beyond of the administrative jurisdiction of the state, and were subject to the decision of the legal bodies. The Minister of Religious Affairs and Public Instruction was responsible for annually presenting the budget of the university and its annexes to the legislative body.

The following article from the law of that time, namely the *1866 Constitution* and the *1868 Public Procurement Law*, guides the understanding of how it influenced the university operation. Article 23 of the 1866 Constitution states the following:

*"Education is free. Freedom of education is guaranteed as long as its exercise does not affect good morals or public order. The repression of offense shall be regulated by law only. Gradually, primary schools will be established in all communes of Romania. Education in State schools is provided free of charge. Primary education will be compulsory for young Romanians, everywhere where primary schools exist. A special law will regulate everything with regard to public education."*

In other words, the power to control education was assumed by the state. One may notice the state's promise to set up a very large number of schools using public funds. This promise shows that at that time the development of Romanian education system was in full swing. The "special law" governing all public education at that time was the Public Instruction Law. The vague language used in the constitutional text leaves room for legislation

to establish and support a certain type of schools. This type is described in general terms, usually referring to how schools will be governed, funded, organized, and for what purpose.

The extremely interesting promises made by Article II of the Royal Decree of 1860, certainly, were according to the law:

- education within the four faculties would be "free of charge, free and in the Romanian language";
- "all members of the University [...] will be Romanians", except the foreign languages teachers foreign languages, who may be foreign provided they possess all necessary rights (probably rights of residence, work, free practice, etc.);
- "university members can not be dismissed", except through special procedures.

In 1860, the Romanian Principalities did not have a constitution. The Organic Regulation that underpinned the common governing system between the two Romanian Principalities before the union was burned in public in 1848. The Paris Convention of 7/19 August 1858 was the only act in accordance of which the Cuza Ordinance for the establishment of the University of Iași could have been given. Protocol No. 14 of the 1858 August 9 Meeting begins with the statement that the previous protocol was adopted. The previous protocol was No. 13 of the Session of July 30, 1858 and the answer sought here is found in Article 7, in which the conclusions of the Principal Commission on Education Issues emerge (Zub, 1971):

*"Creation d'un système complet d'éducation pour toutes les classes de la société. Etablissement d'académies pouvant conférer des degrés universitaires."* (Creating a complete education system for all classes of society. Establishing academies that can award university degrees.)

One may notice in the first sentence an interesting word that was not adopted in the official documents of the Romanians until later. The use of the word "education" instead of "instruction" should not be overlooked. If the Romanians talked about instruction, in the sense of transferring knowledge from the one who possesses them (instructor) to the one that is to be trained, in French the word used is "éducation", which means much more. A man can be instructed to dig holes, but in order to become an archaeologist he needs a whole archeological education that combines natural sciences with social sciences.

The emphasis on nationalism is probably the most fashionable aspect, since in our times Cuza might have been accused of discrimination or xenophobia. Cuza's Ordinance deprived foreign teachers of the chance to profess at the first Romanian university, the only alternative for them



remaining the informal education that they provided in private to youngsters from families like those of Elena Cuza and Mihail Kogalniceanu, Cuza's prime minister. Today, Alexandru Ioan Cuza University has policies to attract foreign professors (Alexandru Ioan Cuza University [UAIC], 2010), while at the University of Bucharest, another university founded by Alexandru Ioan Cuza, currently work 26 foreign professors.

The immovability of university members is another extremely important aspect to the understanding of the status that members of this university enjoyed at that time. Immovability is one of the highest rights of liberty, and Cuza's Ordinance conferred upon these professors rights that were equal to those of judges. In his capacity as Minister of Cults and Public Instruction, Dimitrie Bolintineanu tried to extend this extraordinary right to all teachers and instructors, alas without any success (Teiușan, 1963).

Several other interesting provisions on these issues were included in Articles III to VIII, which will be discussed in detail below. The last two paragraphs of Article VIII of the Ordinance read:

*"As of the date of this Act, any owner of Romanian diplomas from foreign universities will not be able to exercise his profession in the country before justifying their titles before the Academic Council. As of today, no Romanian young man will be sent abroad at the expense of the State, before graduating from a faculty of the United Principalities."*

This radical decision may be interpreted as a measure that the Lord had taken to remedy the wastage of state budget funds on the scholarships that some Romanians received to study abroad. Moreover, this fragment was considered to be "at least the second important reason that led to the founding of the University of Iași", the first being of course the establishment of a Secondary Education of the United Principalities (Miroiu & Florian, 2014). Certainly, this cannot be the only explanation. All one ought to do is take into account the exodus of today's intellectuals to imagine that the effects of studying abroad in Cuza's time must have had something in common with the present ones.

In 1853, when the Crimean War began, the Romanian diaspora was formed mainly of intellectuals. They supported overseas the propaganda for the unification of the Principalities through conferences, press, relations with foreign political and cultural personalities of that time etc. (Cronica Română, 2008). It is not immediately obvious if most of them received money from the state to study abroad and remained there, but no doubt that many of them became intellectuals through a chance similar to Gheorghe Asachi's, who studied at the University of Lviv in Ukraine in 1802, or Scarlat Sturdza, who studied in Leipzig. Some sources reveal that in 1820 four students from Bucharest were sent to study in Italy and France in order to obtain the scientific

knowledge needed to open schools with a modern program in Romania (Drace- Francis, 2016). This reconfirms that, according to the constitutive act of the Alexandru Ioan Cuza University, there were "teachers able to teach science in the Romanian language". These professors were intellectuals who studied Latin, Greek, or French (Nastasă, 2006); one can assume, either in the country, in private with foreign teachers, or in institutions of higher education abroad. The Lord determined that the number of these intellectuals was sufficient to satisfy the country's needs, and that the state will not finance any other higher studies than those on pursued on the Romanian territory and under the the guidance of "the state's high clerks", all being Romanian citizens.

As eloquent as this ordinance may appear, it is not without exaggeration. "The capable teachers" were soon outnumbered for the ambitions of the university set up by Alexandru Ioan Cuza in Iași. To solve this problem, in the year of its signing, it was decided to send abroad 32 Moldovan, 9 of whom became professors (Berlescu, 1960; Nastasă, 2006), despite the Ordinance itself eradicating scholarships for higher education overseas. After all considerations it will be hard to deny that the Order given by Alexandru Ioan Cuza for the establishment of the first Romanian university has not satisfactorily fulfilled its mission to give the Romanians of that time the chance to study in their own country and in their own language.

#### 4.2. The first Japanese university

Perhaps, for most Romanians, Yukichi Fukuzawa needs more introduction than Alexandru Ioan Cuza. Yukichi Fukuzawa was one of the founders of modern Japan and his portrait is on the obverse side of the most valuable Japanese yen bill in circulation, the 10,000 yen (about 365 lei)<sup>9</sup>. Fukuzawa (1835-1901) was born in a poor samurai family and soon understood that the pen brought more success than *katana*<sup>10</sup>. He studied medicine and Dutch at the private school of a Japanese medic<sup>11</sup>, and Rangaku<sup>12</sup> scholar (Rubinger, 2014).

The Japanese elderly tell that Japan had to open to the world because of the "black ships". In 1853, Fukuzawa was 19 when the Americans, represented by Marine Commander Matthew C. Perry<sup>13</sup>, forced diplomatic relations with Japan by displaying their naval power, aiming at signing a trade treaty. One might recall Ranald MacDonald, the first English language teacher and his story in a previous section. He taught English in close proximity

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<sup>9</sup> 100 yen = 3.6503 lei at the NBR exchange rate of 31 May 2018.

<sup>10</sup> Japanese sword used by samurai.

<sup>11</sup> Ogata Kōan (1810-1863).

<sup>12</sup> Rangaku (Dutch studies) was a collective term for Western science, culture and technology.

<sup>13</sup> The President of the United States of America, Millard Fillmore, assigned this mission to Perry.

to Dejima<sup>14</sup>, precisely the place where the Rangaku originated, and one of his students was Einosuke Moriyama, the English language interpreter who was instrumental in Perry's negotiations aimed at opening Japan to the world.

#### 4.2.1. The location

Young Fukuzawa, seeing his country "suddenly in contact with a superior civilization" (The Keiogijuku University, 1932), quickly understood the importance of the English language and began studying it using Dutch textbooks. In 1858 he opened a small private school in his own residence with the aim of teaching foreign languages and Western civilization. This school received the name "Keiō<sup>15</sup> Gijuku<sup>16</sup>" in 1868, moved to Mito, in Tokyo, developed rapidly and continues to exist today under the name of "Keiō University". The first faculties, of literature, law, and economics, however, appeared only in 1890, with 1,000-yen donation from the Meiji Emperor, and in the year 1900 another 50,000-yen<sup>17</sup> donation. Keiō's medical school was established only in 1917, again with a 30,000-yen gift from the Emperor, as well as other donations and generous contributions of former graduates and friends (The Keiogijuku University, 1932). One may observe that this progress towards higher education in Japan was made with a 40 years delay compared to that in the United Principalities (now Romania) and, at the same time, that the origins of this first Japanese private university in Tokyo are fairly humble in the light of those of Alexandru Ioan Cuza University in Iași.

#### 4.2.2. Purpose and organization

The declared general objectives of the Keiō Gijuku "foundation" were "to educate young people according to the life-guiding principles established in the Fukuzawa Moral Code, and to send in the world a large number of young *men*, healthy in mind and body, of character and full of aspirations for purity in personal life as well as for in a career of service to the benefit of the society"<sup>18</sup>. The first lines stating the objectives of the school read, "Although the school is no less worthy than others emphasizing the importance of intellectual culture and technical training, it attaches a much greater importance to noble manhood." (Ibidem). It should be noted that, until 1948, apart from Tokyo Women's Normal School (established in 1875, the

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<sup>14</sup> Dutch enclave, Dejima, was an artificial island in Nagasaki, built in 1634, the only place in Edo era (1603-1868) for trade and exchange between Japan and the world.

<sup>15</sup> Named after the Keiō era (1865-1868).

<sup>16</sup> Private school (cram school).

<sup>17</sup> According to historical exchange tables, in 1900, the Japanese yen was worth \$2.006 (United States Department of Agriculture, 1938). At that time, in the United States, one dollar could buy 13.5 liters of milk (Batchelor, 2009) and in Japan with 1 yen they could buy 6 pounds of rice (The Japan Chronicle, 1912), which would now cost over 2,000 yen.

<sup>18</sup> Fukuzawa's Moral Code.

predecessor of Ochanomizu University), the Nursing Technical School of Keiō Gijuku's Medical Faculty was the only one to enrol women in higher education. Only male students therefore formed the student body. Another important statement is that of academic freedom, along with an account of the fact that it was often missing in state educational institutions.

The founding document of today's Keiō University is an agreement signed by at least three-quarters of those present at the Advisory Committee Assembly, consisting of 50 councillors. It stretches on many pages and includes 9 chapters: General Provisions, Properties, Executive Committee, Supervisors, Counsellors, Alumni, Honorary Chancellor, Additional Providers, and Keiō Gijuku Foundation Staff. The supplement to this act is precisely Fukuzawa's Moral Code that encompasses 29 rules, articulated around the ideals of independence and self-esteem, truly worthy of being followed by anyone, anywhere, anytime<sup>19</sup>.

Contained therein is a detailed description of the buildings in which the Keiō Foundation's activity was to take place. Article VII (a) describes that there are three properties located in different locations in Minato, Tokyo, with a combined area of 46,962 sqm. The same article mentions that in case of dissolution, the foundation will return the properties of the rightful donors or their heirs.

The essential distinction between Keiō Gijuku and the first Romanian university is, obviously, the economic domain to which each belongs. Keiō Gijuku was and is a private education institution, while Alexandru Ioan Cuza University was and remains a public institution. Details on taxes can be found in a document that dates back to the beginning of the faculties at Keiō University, entitled "University Regulations". The tuition fee at the Faculty of Engineering, established in 1944, as well as at the Faculty of Literature, Economics and Law, was 9,000 yen per year. The admission fee for any faculty (non-reimbursable) was 1,000 yen, at that time about 90% of the purchasing power of ordinary workers in Japan<sup>20</sup>. An extra 300-yen fee was paid upon admission. The students were also charged for transfers, re-examinations and experiments.

It is axiomatic that at the end of the Second World War the selection of students at Keio Gijuku depended on the level that the prospective student's family occupied in the society. The days of 1871, when a poor boy like Nakamigawa Hikojiro, the famous Japanese businessman, was able to graduate (Roberts, 1973), were long gone. Old Japanese publications in English, such as

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<sup>19</sup> Available in English at <http://www.kf.keio.ac.jp/english/moral.html>, accessed:2 20.08.2018.

<sup>20</sup> The real purchasing power per capita of the Japanese in 1944 was 73 USD (The United States Strategic Bombing Survey, 1947), and before the Bretton Woods Agreement 1 USD was the equivalent of about 15 JPY.

the monthly Business Tokyo magazine (1988, volume 2, article „Not Just Rich” p.35) shows how grand were efforts made to guarantee that the Keiō graduates' success was not merely due to the fact that they all came from rich families, but also to the special kind of education that they received from Keiō. The expression "Keio boys" is still used today to refer in popular language to "rich boys".

Fukuzawa gave Japan what he promised and Keiō continues his tradition successfully even today. More than three hundred of Keiō's graduates are internationally known, including scientists, astronauts, business people, writers, artists and three of Japan's former prime ministers. In his paper, "Promoting Learning"<sup>21</sup>, Fukuzawa wrote: "It is said that heaven does not create one man above or below another man. Any existing distinction between the wise and the stupid, between the rich and the poor, comes down to a matter of education." These perfectly-sound words remind one of the well-known United States of America's Declaration of Independence, and of George Orwell's much-paraphrased metaphor, "All animals are equal, but some are more equal than others." And yet, one might ask how would Fukuzawa make this distinction today, when all smart and all stupid, all rich and all poor (with the "help" of loans) have access to education. Undoubtedly, whatever answered might be given, it will allude to the quality of education accessed.

#### 4.2.3. Legal framework

At the time when the first quasi-constitutional Romanian document was promulgated (1831) and implemented (1834), the Japanese were subject to a system of laws based on Confucianism that included a criminal code and an administrative code. The administrative code did not make any reference to education, but established two social classes: the *ryōmin* (lit. "good people") and the *senmin* ("people"). Japan's first written constitution was the Meiji Constitution promulgated in 1889, 23 years after Romania's first constitution, and, along with its preamble, it was about 4,000 words less than the Romanian one<sup>22</sup>.

Just as the 1831 Belgian constitution was a model for the first Romanian constitution, in the process of drafting the Japanese constitution too, a series of models were proposed, yet none was accepted. The US Constitution was too liberal, the French and Spanish too despotic, and the British one gave the Parliament too much power. Although the Meiji Constitution borrowed ideas from the Westminster and Reichstag systems, it remains a highly original

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<sup>21</sup> *Gakumon'nosusume* (1872-1876) - „Encouragement of learning”.

<sup>22</sup> 1,000 Japanese characters are usually estimated to result in 400 words in a language using the Latin alphabet. The Meiji Constitution is around 2,500 characters long, and the preamble is under 1,000.

constitution. One remarkable thing is that Emperor Meiji, aware of Japan's shortcomings in the legal field, included Max Weber's professor, Rudolf von Gneist, in the drafting committee. The Meiji Constitution, too, mentions nothing of education, but Article 10 declares that the Emperor has the power to establish governmental bodies, one of which may be responsible for education. What is worth adding is that the distinction between social classes has been preserved with the establishment of the superior chamber *kizoku-in* (Tatsukichi, 1934).

According to Article 10 of the 1868 Meiji Constitution, the Educational System Order was established in 1873, becoming the legal and administrative basis of the Education Department in Japan. Under the provisions of the Educational System Order, universities were to be set up as schools providing the highest level of education in science, chemistry, law, medicine and mathematics, and could award bachelor degrees to graduates. In the same year, additional regulations were made whereby higher education institutions, with foreign teachers, were redesigned for students over 16 and with at least 2 years of foreign language education.

Although the University of Tokyo was the first higher education institution established by imperial order in 1877, the fact that Keiō University was the first university in Japan is not disputed, even though at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century it had still not received government authorization operate as a university.

## **5. The beginning of the 20th century**

### **5.1. Romania**

In terms of higher education, the 19<sup>th</sup> century ended and the 20<sup>th</sup> century began with Spiru Haret, the first Romanian mathematician of genius with a doctorate from Sorbonne University, at the head of the Ministry of Instruction as minister five times, altogether ten years in the service of Romanian public education (Gorun, 2015) (according to other sources three times, eight years: between 1897-1899, then 1901-1904 and 1907-1910 (Livezeanu, 1995)).

Spiru Haret is eulogized for establishing the modern public education system in Romania through the Law on Secondary and Higher Education passed in 1898. As far as universities were concerned, Haret focused primarily on science. Universities were to be scientific nuclei, and their freedom was essential. His vision went beyond instruction, to education, proposing in the structure of universities the pedagogical seminar, whose role was to train future teachers. Reforms made by Haret produced modern intellectuals on local education structures. The law of 1898 provided for a series of initiatives

aimed at developing universities beyond the theory, thus developing the practical nature of university education, such as by setting up laboratories.

The same law brought about changes in the administrative structure. Collective bodies were now the *faculty council* of each faculty, the *university senate* of each university, and the *university council* that symbolized their solidarity. The university senate was a new collective body consisting of several members: the rector, the deans, and one representative from each faculty.

In his second term as minister, Haret continued to challenge the traditional educational system that favoured cities. Putting the emphasis on practice, he made reforms to get the villagers out of the "hard life," giving them agrarian education, mathematics, etc., that is, the kind of education they needed to produce and manage the production (Livezeanu, 1995).

After Spiru Haret's third mandate, Romania gets the proof of its excellence upon the 1912 census, which revealed amazing progress. According to the data collected at the 1899 census, only 22% of the population was literate. After only 13 years this percentage was double. Haret not only modernized public education, his major contribution was in fact the growth of Romania's cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1972).

## 5.2. Japan

The Japanese imperialist ambitions of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century delayed progress in higher education. Higher education in Japan was dominated by a prototype of scientific research borrowed from the Humboldt university model (Nagai, 1971), fact reflected in each of the three imperial universities, the University of Kyōto, the University of Tōhoku and the Kyūshū University, established before the First World War, after the University of Tokyo.

The meritocratic education system implemented by the Meiji government was designed to catch up with Western civilizations. At the beginning of the century, only the best of the children who attended a primary school had the chance, through competition, to continue with junior high school courses and then, again through the competition, to high school. Less than 5% of Japanese boys had the chance to study at the imperial universities. The purpose of these universities is to produce men that could lead the country by occupying high positions, which were not many. The alternative was the few private universities such as Keiō and Waseda, but these were also devoted to the production leaders, though in industry.

The condition to qualify for a tenured teaching position in national universities was to have a doctorate and to have studied abroad (Bartholomew, 1989). At the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, teachers already had 20 years of experience and begun to award PhD degrees and to accumulate articles published in international scientific journals. Gradually, the demand for

industry specialists rose and became difficult to satisfy through the few public universities that existed at the time. Consequently, the Japanese government adopted the 1918 University Code, which contributed to the rapid development of private universities, the responsibility for education being shared between the state and the private sector.

## 6. The interwar period

### 6.1. Romania

While the period before the First World War marked the laying of foundations and identity building of national education (Gorun, 2015), the interwar period marked its expansion. In 1923 the new constitution gave Romanians even more advantages through Article 24:

*"Education is free under the conditions laid down by special laws, and it will not be contrary to good morals and public order. Primary education is compulsory. In state schools this education will be given free of charge. The state, the counties and the communes will provide aid and facilities to students deprived of means, at all levels of education, to the extent and in the manner prescribed by law."*

One may notice that all provisions from Article 23 of the 1866 Constitution are readopted and complemented with the principle of helping pupils from modest families to study in all stages of study, including the university. These "grants" were in fact money for living expenses for the duration of studies, which were free of charge.

Education in the interwar period was steered by Constantin Angelescu, Minister of Public Instruction under ten governments (Gorun, 2015). In 1925 Angelescu elaborated the *Law on Private Education*. Chapter II, Article 8 of this law reads: "normal schools and higher-education colleges in the form of university cannot be established by private means." In other words, the higher education received in private institutions of education was not recognized, the future specialists of the country being educated only in state-owned educational institutions.

*The 1932 law on the organization of university education*, under Nicolae Iorga's governing mandate, which extended to the Ministry of Public Instruction (Gorun, 2015), brought something in addition to his own law one year earlier regarding university autonomy. This law defined the goals of universities - the University of Bucharest, the Alexandru Ioan Cuza University, the Babeş-Bolyai University, the University of Chernivtsi (presently Ukraine territory) and the Faculty of Law of Oradea - to advance the science, to form the intellectual elite of the country and to contribute to the development of Romanian culture. With



the establishment of *the Interuniversity Council*, consisting of all rectors and deans, and by promoting the idea that Romanian higher education is "one entity" (Nastasa, 2011), Iorga introduced his ideal of solidarity in universities too.

## 6.2. Japan

In 1920, Keiō University received from the Japanese government the long awaited license to operate as a private university, an event that marked the expansion of the private higher education sector in Japan. In the interwar period, six imperial universities were set up under orders of Emperor Taishō: University of Hokkaido, University of Keijō (presently territory of South Korea), and subsequently, under orders of Emperor Hirohito: University of Taipei (presently in Taiwan), University of Ōsaka and University of Nagoya. From 1918 to the beginning of the Second World War, in 1939, 26 private universities were set up, and only 15 national and public universities<sup>23</sup>.

Despite the large number of universities at that time, competition remained an obstacle for young Japanese aspiring to higher education. Those who were *unsuccessful* were called *ronin*<sup>24</sup> and many of them chose to study abroad. However, such choice did not return many advantages, as foreign education was considered inferior to Japan's, and employers preferred to hire candidates that graduated from a Japanese university (Stephens, 1991).

The issue of offering women access to higher education was still unsolved. In the pre-war Japanese university system, education was quasi-militaristic and delivered to a strict disciplinary regime based on a program focused on patriotic indoctrination along with moral and military training (Beauchamp and Rubinger, 1989/2017). The devotion and confidence of the Japanese people in their university education gave way to a spectacular breakthrough. Although at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century higher education was the peak educational level that only members of the elite could reach, in the 1930s Japan recorded a number of students similar to that of Canada, and much higher than France, Sweden and Finland (Mosk and Nakata, 1987). This is all the more impressive given the fact that all university-level education in Japan was, and still is, not free of charge.

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<sup>23</sup> The fundamental difference between Japanese national and public universities is that public universities are managed locally and have a duty to serve the local community, whereas national universities have a stronger role in research at the national level. In terms of tuition fees, the two types of universities do not differ significantly.

<sup>24</sup> A derogatory word for masterless samurai and the unemployed.

## 7. Conclusions

The first bricks in the foundation of higher education in both Romania and Japan were laid at about the same time, but in distinct ways. The first universities in both Romania and Japan were established as legal entities with the right of self-administration and capital accumulation. The development of university education in Romania had the sole and full involvement of the state, whereas in Japan, private efforts prevailed. The first Romanian higher education institutions aimed at promoting science and the tuition was free or charge, while in Japan the higher education system was for the elites and students paid high tuition fees.

In order to solve the location problem where the university activities could commence, Alexandru Ioan Cuza received the vote to use a large amount from the state budget, a loan and a staggered payment in order to acquire the Roznovanu palace in Iași. For the same purpose, in Japan, Fukuzawa received donations from the Emperor, graduates and friends, with whom the foundation acquired three properties in Tokyo. One may acknowledge here the solidarity of the Japanese, to which Nicolae Iorga aspired.

Because, until 1866, the Tokugawa shōgunate forbade Japanese to travel outside Japan, Japanese students studying abroad were rare, among whom the nineteen young men from the Satsuma Domain who went to study in the West in 1865<sup>25</sup>, helped by Thomas Glover<sup>26</sup>. By contrast, studies abroad before the Iași university were not only fashionable, but the costs associated with them were borne by the state. In Romania, there still is a persistent belief that studies abroad are superior to those in Romania, and thus affect the job market. In Japan, diplomas obtained abroad after Japanese universities were set up were considered inferior to those issued by Japanese universities.

Although before the Second World War many Japanese universities were private institutions, young students, although paying high school fees, were trained in the spirit of servitude to the state, including the military one (many students lost their lives fighting the Second World War). The law gave Romanians higher education free of charge and, some student status holders could even qualify for exemptions from military service (Telegraful Român, 1864).

Japanese universities not only did not admit women as students, but the teaching staff too had no female representatives. Gender neutrality remained only an ideal in Japanese higher education until 1948, which was the true norm in the history of Romanian education.

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<sup>25</sup> According to the inscriptions on the marble plate at the Kagoshima-Chûô train station in Kagoshima, Kyushu, Japan.

<sup>26</sup> Scottish merchant, key character in the industrialization process of Japan.

Presently, Keiō University occupies 192rd place in QS Global World Ranking 2018, with a total of 33,500 students and 3,905 teachers. Alexandru Ioan Cuza University is ranked much lower, somewhere between 801 and 1,000, with 21,941 students and 959 teachers. The indices, matrices, and algorithms used for this type of classification humiliate unjustly a study such as the one presented here, by creating the illusion that a comparison between institutions so distant in rankings would be pointless.

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