

<b>Institution:</b> Oxford Brookes University		
<b>Unit of Assessment:</b> 28, History		
<b>Title of case study:</b> Science and Ethnicity: Uncovering the Suppressed History of Racism and Eugenics in Romania		
<b>Period when the underpinning research was undertaken:</b> January 2010–December 2017		
<b>Details of staff conducting the underpinning research from the submitting unit:</b>		
<b>Name(s):</b>	<b>Role(s) (e.g. job title):</b>	<b>Period(s) employed by submitting HEI:</b>
Marius Turda	Professor in 20 <sup>th</sup> Century Biomedicine	[text removed for publication]
<b>Period when the claimed impact occurred:</b> January 2018–October 2020		
<b>Is this case study continued from a case study submitted in 2014?</b> N		
<p><b>1. Summary of the impact</b></p> <p>Marius Turda's research into the suppressed history of racism and eugenics in Romania has had a significant impact on civic education, learning, policy and law within Romania, and has promoted greater understanding internationally.</p> <p>The impact is a direct result of two exhibitions curated by Turda in Romania, one dealing with race and anthropology, the other with biopolitics and eugenics. These have brought previously unknown – and highly controversial – events in the country's history to the attention of the Romanian and international public. They have prompted a change in the current debate around anti-Roma racism, anti-Semitism and the Holocaust. Civic organisations and educational practitioners across Romania have used exhibition materials in their social activism and teaching, introducing the younger generation to these significant historical events and giving them the opportunity to consider the implications for Romanian society today.</p> <p>Further, Turda's research has led to the foundation of the Centre for the History of Racism and Eugenics in Romania, changing how racial discrimination will be taught in schools. His research has also been instrumental in the implementation of legal changes to address anti-Roma racism in Romania.</p>		
<p><b>2. Underpinning research</b></p> <p>Marius Turda's book <i>Modernism and Eugenics</i>, published in 2010, offered a global perspective on the history of eugenics. It connected eugenic movements in East-Central Europe to developments elsewhere for the first time [R1]. Turda then secured funding to research the eugenic movements in East-Central Europe during the first half of the twentieth century. This was pioneering work, as these movements were virtually unknown to scholars of eugenics and historians of East-Central Europe. A year later, <i>Modernism and Eugenics</i> was translated into French and then, in 2014, into Romanian, bringing Turda's innovative methodology to a wider readership. One of the main arguments put forward in the book was the need to open up the history of biopolitics, racism and eugenics to younger generations and the general public.</p> <p>Until very recently, many aspects of this history were suppressed. They were ignored or marginalised in history textbooks and scholarly work. Turda's research led to the publication of two more books on global and East-Central European eugenics [R2, R3]. The Romanian case featured prominently in both publications. Once again, Turda argued for the need to bring the past into line with the new social and cultural situation in Romania, especially with respect to the Holocaust of the Jews and the Roma. In another book published in 2018, co-authored with Maria Sophia Quine and later translated into Romanian, Turda has called for the history of racism and race to be studied together, showing how that can be applied to Romania [R4].</p> <p>Turda's research addressed significant gaps in the scholarship, for example on the different</p>		

eugenic and racist traditions leading to the Holocaust. His intensive research in Romanian archival and library collections identified some unique features, such as the intention to cleanse the country of 'undesired' individuals and ethnic minorities including Jews and the Roma during the early 1940s. One highly significant aspect of Turda's research was the discovery of new archival material in Romania relating to the Institute of Racial Biology 'Marshal Ion Antonescu', established at the end of 1943. As Turda showed, this Institute aimed to provide the scientific expertise the state needed for its programmes of social and biological engineering during the Second World War. Its existence had been hidden for decades, until being revealed by Turda's research.

The research between January 2010 and December 2017 resulted in Turda writing two exhibition catalogues [R5, R6]. These were aimed at the general public and communicated Turda's interpretations of the scientific racism and eugenics in Romania during the interwar period. They have helped to explain how programmes of ethnic extermination became possible during the Second World War. Turda's research continues to inform public debates on the wider scientific and political impact of eugenic ideas, as well as on their legacy in today's collective behaviour in Romania, especially towards the Roma.

### 3. References to the research

#### Books:

**R1.** Marius Turda, *Eugenism și modernitate. Națiune, rasă și biopolitică în Europa (1870–1950)*, Iași, Polirom, 2014. This is an enlarged Romanian translation of Turda's book *Modernism and Eugenics* published by Palgrave in 2010 (ISBN: 9780230230828). A French edition under the title *Modernisme et eugénisme* was published in 2011.

**R2.** Marius Turda, Aaron Gillete, *Latin Eugenics in Comparative Perspective*, London, Bloomsbury, 2014 (paperback 2016). ISBN: 9781472522108

**R3.** Marius Turda, ed., *The History of Eugenics in East-Central Europe: Texts and Commentaries, 1900–1944*, London, Bloomsbury, 2016. (paperback 2018). ISBN: 9781472533562

**R4.** Marius Turda, Maria Sophia Quine, *Historicizing Race*, London, Bloomsbury, 2018. The Romanian translation is published under the title *Istorie și rasism: O Istorie a ideii de rasă de la Iluminism la Donald Trump*, Iași, Polirom, 2019.

**R5.** Marius Turda, *Știință și etnicitate. Cercetarea antropologică în România anilor '30*, Bucharest: Muzeul Municipiului București, 2018 (exhibition catalogue in Romanian)

**R6.** Marius Turda, *Science and Ethnicity II: Biopolitics and Eugenics in Romania, 1920–1944*, Bucharest: Muzeul Municipiului București, 2019 (bilingual Romanian-English exhibition catalogue).

#### Grants:

GBP115,779 was awarded to Marius Turda by the Berendel Foundation for the project 'Suppressed Histories: An Encyclopaedia of Central European Eugenics, 1914–1944' (01/11/2010–31/10/2013).

### 4. Details of the impact

Turda's research has had a significant impact on cultural understanding and civic values in Romania, which is shown by the establishment of a Centre for the Study of Racism and Eugenics by the Romanian Academy of Sciences. Its impact on public policy has also resulted in changes to the law relating to anti-Roma racism. This research has international significance for understanding ethnic diversity and social inclusivity beyond Romania. For example, it has contributed to debates on these issues in the UK.

Following the translation of *Modernism and Eugenics* into Romanian, in November 2017 Turda was invited to discuss his findings on Romanian eugenics in Bucharest. The event was streamed online by the Municipal Museum of Bucharest, reaching a wide audience. It became clear during the debate and afterwards that younger generations and the general public were largely unaware of the history of biopolitics, racism and eugenics in Romania. It was also evident that they were interested in learning more about this aspect of the country's past. This resulted in Turda organising an exhibition of the archival and historical evidence revealed by his research. This material had been unknown even to specialists in Romanian history, medicine, anthropology and

sociology. The Municipal Museum of Bucharest accepted Turda's proposal to host two exhibitions featuring his research. It was the first time a Romanian institution had exhibited materials on this controversial topic.

Between March 2018 and October 2020, two exhibitions were designed and curated by Turda, titled 'Science and Ethnicity I: Anthropological Research in Romania during the 1930s' and 'Science and Ethnicity II: Biopolitics and Eugenics in Romania, 1920–1944'. The exhibitions traced the scientific and intellectual sources of Romanian biopolitics, racism and eugenics in the first half of the twentieth century. It also integrated the history of various ethnic groups (Hungarians, Germans, Jews and Roma) within the national policies of the Romanian state: social marginalisation, exclusion and, ultimately, ethnic cleansing and genocide.

According to the data collected by the Municipal Museum of Bucharest, within a week of its opening (24–31 March) the first exhibition ('Science and Ethnicity I') was visited by 400 people. A further 2,500 people visited between 1 April 2018 and 30 July 2018. The second exhibition ('Science and Ethnicity II') attracted 609 visitors on one night, 18/19 May 2019, the so-called Long Night of Museums, out of the 15,156 visitors to all the Bucharest museums [S1]. Up to 10 June 2019 a total of 1,533 people had seen the second exhibition.

The reception of 'Science and Ethnicity I' was equally impressive in other towns: in Timișoara there were 1,800 visitors between 17 November and 17 December 2018; in Zalău, 762 visitors between 22 January and 28 February 2019. In Cluj the Central University Library hosted the exhibition over a longer period, from October 2018 to May 2019, attracting over 2,000 visitors (according to their estimates) from across Transylvania. Many of the visitors were university students but there were also two international groups: the Jewish Women's Association from Hungary and the Centre for International Studies, Salzburg [S2].

**These exhibitions increased public awareness and have helped shape public attitudes and understanding of the past.** The exhibition catalogues written by Turda have reached a wider audience within the community, with educators and teachers using them in the classroom. Through education the impact on social and cultural values is significant, and Romanian pupils in the high schools visited by Turda were interested in learning a new interpretation of history. This is evident in the delivery of curriculum and syllabi in schools. The feedback from the opening of each exhibition revealed that many people in Romania had never engaged with these sensitive topics before, at either school or university [S3]. 'Science and Ethnicity I' prompted a group of high school students in Bucharest to make a documentary about racial discrimination in April 2018 [S4].

**Turda also proposed that the exhibition catalogues could be adapted for teaching,** and he worked with high school teachers in Bucharest, Cluj, Zalău, Satu-Mare and Bârlad to translate the visual material of the exhibitions into classroom activities. A teacher from the National College 'Gh. Lazar' in Bucharest commented: 'in high school textbooks and university courses it is important to have either chapters or significant portions which tell [this] story ... it is equally important to educate ... the young generation ... to awaken civic consciousness on [the] real traumas that such ideas inflicted on people. I can now use the catalogues ... as alternative textbooks for our students' [S5]. Further pedagogic applications took place in Zalău. Using the exhibition as a model, the teacher classified her students into three ethnic groups (from 'superior' to 'lower' race categories) as a learning exercise, and to prompt discussion about the historical sources of contemporary racism in Romania [S6].

Both exhibitions received **wide media coverage in the national and regional press, radio and TV, which highlighted their significance for current debates on racism in Romania.** Speaking at the opening of 'Science and Ethnicity I' on 24 March 2018, in Bucharest, the then British Ambassador to Romania considered it 'extremely important' since 'the topics it explore[d] are sensitive, politically and socially, but crucial to understanding ... Romania's complex interrelationship of identities' [S7]. The Israeli and British Ambassadors to Romania attended the Bucharest opening of the second exhibition in March 2019. For one, the exhibition offered 'an answer' as to how the Holocaust was possible in Romania [S8]. Another visitor, the President of the Jewish Community of Bucharest, appreciated Turda's 'courage to extract from the archives the true history, in the interest of political leaders in Romania, Europe and the entire world' [S9].

**The openings of both exhibitions in Romania were accompanied by public lectures that**

**contributed to debates and changing attitudes towards the Roma minority.** In November 2019 Turda gave lectures at the Faculties of Philosophy and Sociology, the Romanian Academy's Institute of Anthropology and the National Centre of Romani Culture-Romano Kher in Bucharest. The latter was described by the Roma organisers as 'historic' – it was the first time a non-Roma scholar had addressed the public reticence about anti-Roma racism and Romania's past. Hoping for 'a long-term collaboration ... towards fighting racism', the Centre's Director noted: 'the public exposure of the information regarding ... the way [Romanian biopolitics] directly affected the Roma population ... is a reference moment in the history of this minority' [S10].

**These activities have had an impact on public policy as well as current debates on anti-Roma racism in Romania.** In the current pandemic situation, interwar racist arguments are being revived to target the Roma communities, reinforcing their stigmatisation and marginalisation. The significance of Turda's research was noted by two Roma MPs, who attended the opening of the combined exhibitions in Bârlad on 2 November 2019. On their return to Bucharest the two MPs proposed a new law in the Romanian parliament to prevent and combat anti-Roma racism (*antițigănist*). Turda's academic reputation and his research on eugenics and racism were mentioned as supporting evidence in the documentation prepared by the two MPs [S11]. The upper chamber of the Romanian parliament adopted the proposal on 2 December 2019, and the lower chamber passed it into law on 15 December 2020. It is Romania's first ever law to combat anti-Roma racism.

The success of 'Science and Ethnicity I' led to invitations from other cities in Romania to host these exhibitions. These included the University of Medicine 'Gr. T. Popa', Iași; the National Museum of the Banat, Timișoara; the Museum of History and Art, Zalău; and 'V. Pârvan' Museum, Bârlad. Financial and logistical support for these exhibitions came from the British and Israeli Embassies in Romania; the Jewish and German Communities of Timisoara; University Libraries in Cluj and Iași; the Centre for the Study of the Romanian Jews and the National Centre for Romani Culture, both in Bucharest.

**Both exhibitions were displayed at Tranzit House, a former synagogue in Cluj, Romania, in September 2020, providing evidence of their wider significance.** This foundation promotes alternative models of cultural diversity and aims to integrate the marginalised communities in Cluj. The directors recognised the 'evident educational value' of the exhibitions, and saw that collaboration with Turda was 'an excellent opportunity' to bring this material to 'a wider and more diverse audience' [S12]. This view was shared by City Hall and the Mayor of Cluj, Mr. Emil Boc, who agreed to sponsor the event. The wider debate on the history of racism in Romania prompted by the exhibitions resulted in Turda being interviewed on the main channel of Romanian National Television (TVR1) on 1 May 2020. This was a unique opportunity to discuss his research on racism and eugenics, and to challenge the current irresponsible recycling of old ethnic conflicts in Romania. The interview, posted on the programme's Facebook page, has had over 46,000 views [S13].

**The exhibitions also had international significance, with an impact beyond Romania on public attitudes and understanding of racism and eugenics.** The 'Science and Ethnicity I' exhibition was shown in London at the Romanian Cultural Centre in December 2018 and in June 2019, with financial support from Imre Kertész Kolleg, in Jena. Turda presented the 'Science and Ethnicity II' exhibition at the opening of the Kolleg's annual conference, 'Fearing for the Nation'. It has since been displayed at Sapienza University of Rome in December 2019, and will be integrated within a major exhibition on global eugenics which Turda will curate at the Wiener Holocaust Library in London in September 2021.

**Turda's research has also impacted broader debates about racism and eugenics in Britain** via BBC4's 'Eugenics: Science's Greatest Scandal', aired in November 2019. More recently, on 26 June 2020, Turda gave a talk on anti-racism to the civil servants in the UK government's Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy, and on 22 July he took part in the public 'Virtual Conversation: "Race Science" and Eugenics in Historical and Contemporary Context', organised by the Wiener Library in London. He has also launched his own podcast series on the history of eugenics, available on Spotify, Apple Podcasts and YouTube.

**The significance and wider public interest generated by Turda's exhibitions has been**

**acknowledged by the Romanian Academy.** At Turda's suggestion, the Academy's Institute of History agreed to establish the country's first Centre for the History of Racism and Eugenics (Centrul de Istorie a Eugeniei si a Rasismului) in Cluj and entrusted Turda with leading it. On 10 July 2020 Turda was again interviewed on Romanian National Television (TVR1) about the proposed Centre and its activities [S14]. The Centre was established in September 2020. It now hosts the two permanent exhibitions, and enables students and teachers to further explore the history of racism and eugenics. Without these two exhibitions this achievement would not have been possible. It clearly confirms the significant impact of Turda's research on the current attempts to fight discrimination in Romania, leading to a new anti-Roma racism law being introduced in the country. It has also led to broader debates on the relationship between science and ethnicity.

#### 5. Sources to corroborate the impact

- S1. Visitor numbers for the Long Night of Museums, Bucharest, 19 May 2019
- S2. List of organised tours to see 'Science and Ethnicity I' in Cluj, Oct 2018-May 2019
- S3. Exhibition visitor feedback, Bucharest and Târgu Mureş, March-July 2018
- S4. Documentary about racism made by high-school students, Bucharest, April 2018
- S5. Testimonial from high-school teacher, Bucharest, November 2019
- S6. Report from the Museum of Zalău on 'pilot teaching workshops' with Romanian and Hungarian high-school students, February 2019
- S7. Testimonial from the former British Ambassador to Romania, March 2019
- S8. Israeli Ambassador to Romania's comments at the opening of 'Science and Ethnicity II', March 2019
- S9. Testimonial from Auschwitz survivor and President of the Jewish Community of Bucharest, April 2019
- S10. Letter of thanks from Director of the National Centre of Romani Culture-Romano Kher, November 2019
- S11. Turda's research cited (p.5) in a proposal for a new law to combat anti-Roma racism, introduced in the Upper Chamber (Senate) of Romanian Parliament on 2 December 2019
- S12. Letter of invitation to display both exhibitions in 2020 at Tranzit House, Cluj
- S13. Turda interviewed on 'Garantat 100%' (TVR1), 1 May 2020
- S14. Turda interviewed on 'Actual Regional' (TVR1), 10 July 2020