

**NICOLAE TITULESCU – PROFESSOR  
AT THE UNIVERSITY OF IASI**

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*Abstract*

*After graduating with remarkable results from the Faculty of Law in Paris, Nicolae Titulescu was appointed a substitute professor, at the Department of Civil Law, at the Faculty of Law, University of Iasi. In his teaching capacity, Professor Titulescu tried to eliminate outdated methods and courses, designing attractive lectures and emphasizing the nature of law as a social science. The academic work of the future Romanian foreign minister was guided by the principles of professional ethics. He left the University of Iasi on January 29, 1910 when the Minister of Education, Spiru Haret, decided to transfer him to the University of Bucharest, where he remained until 1931. The scientific and academic work developed by Nicolae Titulescu in Iasi earned him the respect of colleagues and students alike.*

**Keywords: Nicolae Titulescu, professor, students, Faculty of Law, University of Iasi.**

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Nicolae Titulescu is known for his diplomatic achievements, but he also developed a meritorious teaching career.

We propose to analyze Titulescu's activity as a substitute teacher during the interval he taught at the Faculty of Law at the University of Iasi.

After graduating from the Faculty of Law in Paris, with remarkable results, Titulescu was appointed on 23 March 1905, by Order no. 15 018 of the Public Education and Religious Affairs Minister, D. Hurmuzescu, as substitute teacher of Professor Dimitrie Alexandrescu, one of the most famous Romanian jurists of that period<sup>2</sup>, at the Department of Civil Law: "Mr. Rector, I am to let you know that the ministry has appointed Mr. Titulescu as a substitute for Mr. Alexandrescu until the end of the current school year, at the Department of Civil Law at the Faculty of Law"<sup>3</sup>. Shortly after his appointment, because he was enjoying a greater trust among colleagues, on 14, 18 and 19 June 1905, Titulescu was included, along with C. Stere and I. Th. Burada, in the examination committee of students who took the Civil Law exam<sup>4</sup>.

Titulescu's ideas on the reorganisation of the Romanian legal education is reflected in his books "Note on the reorganisation of the faculties of Law"<sup>5</sup> and "How should we understand the legal education"<sup>6</sup> and in "The analytical programme of the course of Civil Law for the first year"<sup>7</sup> of 1905, at the Faculty of Law. Professor Titulescu supported the elimination of the obsolete methods of teaching, the elaboration of attractive lectures, and emphasized the fact that Law was a social science. In teaching, the future Romanian foreign minister was guided by the principles of professional ethics. Titulescu requested that the legal text should no longer be the sole focus of the lesson, and emphasised the social and economic side of legal science<sup>8</sup>.

The subject matter of the civil law course that Titulescu delivered consisted of the main sections of this branch of law - privileges and mortgages, persons and succession. Due to his extensive legal culture and remarkable oratorical talent, Titulescu gained from the outset the admiration of his colleagues and students<sup>9</sup>. He believed that acquiring a humanitarian method of interpreting the laws was nothing but the first step in the process of legal education, "an admittedly minimal one" because "law evolves alongside the social needs".<sup>10</sup>

Making an analysis of the Romanian education system at that time and pointing out his vision of reform, Titulescu argued that: "If the current state of affairs is bad, if we decide to change it, there would be no utility in a work confined to details, the foundations of the entire edifice are flawed, so let us rebuild it from the foundations"<sup>11</sup>.

Analysing the curricula of the faculties of Law for the license exam, in 1904, Titulescu considered it was "incomplete" and "irrationally" drawn "in a backward spirit". He thought that the most

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<sup>2</sup> Elena Deleanu, *Activitatea didactică a lui Nicolae Titulescu*, în Laurențiu – Guțică Florescu, Dorin Teodorescu (coord.), *Nicolae Titulescu. Eternitatea unui destin exemplar*, Slatina, Editura Fundației "Universitatea pentru toți", 2005, p. 181.

<sup>3</sup> Arhivele Naționale Istorice Centrale, (în continuare A.N.I.C.), filiala Iași, *Fond Universitatea "Al. I. Cuza"- Iași, Rectorat, dosar nr. 1 / 1904 – 1906*, f. 140 ; A.N.I.C., filiala Iași, *Fond Universitatea "Al. I. Cuza"- Iași, Facultatea de Drept, dosar nr. 2257 bis*, f. 50.

<sup>4</sup> D. Ivănescu, Emil Popescu, *N. Titulescu – profesor la Iași*, în Gh. Buzatu (coord.), *Titulescu și strategia păcii*, Iași, Editura Junimea, 1982, p. 481.

<sup>5</sup> Nicolae Titulescu, *Observațiuni asupra reorganizării facultăților de drept*, București, Tipografia Ziarului "Cronica", 1904.

<sup>6</sup> Idem, *Cum trebuie să înțelegem educațiunea juridică*, București, Tipografia Ziarului "Curierul Judiciar", 1907.

<sup>7</sup> Idem, *Programul analitic al Cursului de Drept civil pentru anul I*, București, Tipografia Ziarului "Curierul Judiciar", 1905.

<sup>8</sup> Nicolae Titulescu, *Observațiuni asupra reorganizării facultăților de drept*, p. 7.

<sup>9</sup> Elena Deleanu, *op. cit.*, p. 181.

<sup>10</sup> Nicolae Titulescu, *Cum trebuie să înțelegem educațiunea juridică*, p. 18.

<sup>11</sup> Idem, *Observațiuni asupra reorganizării facultăților de drept*, p. 13.

important classes were missing and the existing ones were wrongly distributed relative to the years of study, so that the professors had no possibility of using a scientific method. In this situation, Titulescu proposed that the future curriculum to be developed in conjunction with the scientific requirements, the "new directions such a science has taken"<sup>12</sup>. Titulescu proposed the introduction of new subjects such as History of national law, Comparative civil legislation, and granting an increased to the course of Sociology that already existed at the Faculty of Law.<sup>13</sup>

To a large extent, Titulescu's ideas were put into practice by the reorganization of the years 1904 to 1912<sup>14</sup>. Thus in 1913, in Bucharest the course Encyclopedia of Law was introduced for the first year, while both in Bucharest and in Iasi a course of History of Law was introduced for the third year of study, referring to old Romanian law<sup>15</sup>. Also in 1913, a course of Political Economy was introduced for the first year, both in Bucharest and in Iasi<sup>16</sup>.

As a sign of Titulescu's value as a substitute teacher, on 17 May 1906, the chair holder, Dimitrie Alexandrescu, requested the assent of the Minister of Public Instruction, so that the young academic should help him to deliver the Civil law course. The Minister's approval came on the same day in Iasi. This caused confusion, due to the simultaneous presence of the holder and of the substitute at the same desk, which was a novel event at the University of Iasi. It was elucidated by means of a new intervention to the Minister, in June 1906, this time by the Dean of the Faculty of Law, S.G. Longinescu. The Minister's reply assured Titulescu's stability at the chair<sup>17</sup>.

On 23 October 1907, Titulescu sent a request to the Minister of Public Instruction and Religious Affairs, in order to enter the contest for a chair at the Department of Civil Law, at the Faculty of Law in Bucharest. There were a total of ten candidates for the job. The document was accompanied by a statement of evidence and written works to date, and read as follows: "Mr. Minister, Please be so kind to order my registration for the contest held for the appointment at the Department of Civil Law at the University of Bucharest, which became vacant following Mr. Şendrea's death. In the attached memorandum I submit for your assessment the titles and the works that I invoke in support of my application. Some of the works and titles are submitted with this petition, which is sent from Paris. The rest will be submitted on time, in Bucharest"<sup>18</sup>. Two committees were formed, one in Iasi and one in Bucharest, which will reach different results. The commission in Iasi included Professors D. Alexandrescu and M. Cantacuzino, while the Bucharest commission included Professors V. Urseanu, C.G. Disescu and Em. Antonescu. The former recommended George Tabacovici, for Iasi, while the latter supported G.M. Sipsom. Sipsom took over the chair in Bucharest, while Tabacovici remained in Iasi<sup>19</sup>, where he will gain the title of professor on January 23, 1910. The Bucharest Commission appreciated Titulescu's articles and studies, especially his study on the "Parting of inheritance", concluding that Titulescu's study is done from a legal, social and economic perspective, with a critical analysis of the principles governing that matter and continuously filled with the jurisprudence specific to each issue. The work is commendable, excels in clarity and precision"<sup>20</sup>.

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<sup>12</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 31.

<sup>13</sup> Ion Burduja, *Nicolae Titulescu. Preocupări în domeniul învățămîntului superior*, în "Revista învățămîntului superior", anul al VIII-lea, 1966, p. 42.

<sup>14</sup> Vezi Traian Ionaşcu, *Opera de drept civil a lui Nicolae Titulescu*, în "Studii şi cercetări juridice", anul al XI-lea , 1966, p. 209 – 221.

<sup>15</sup> Ion Burduja, *op. cit.*, p.42.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 42 – 43.

<sup>17</sup> D. Ivănescu, Emil Popescu, *op.cit.*, p. 481 – 482.

<sup>18</sup> A.N.I.C., filiala Iaşi, Fond Universitatea "Al. I. Cuza"- Iaşi, Rectorat, dosar nr. 10 A / 1906 – 1907, f. 1.

<sup>19</sup> Valentin Al. Georgescu, *Un text inedit al lui N. Titulescu despre cariera sa universitară*, în "Studii şi cercetări juridice", anul al XVII-lea, 1972, p. 165.

<sup>20</sup> D. Ivănescu, Emil Popescu, *op. cit.*, p. 482.

Another phase of Titulescu's teaching activity relates to the title of *Docent* in Civil Law. In connection with this, on 6 February 1908, Titulescu sent a postcard to the secretary of the Faculty of Law, in which he wrote: "Dear Mr. Brandea, What did you do regarding my *Docent* title? I'm still awaiting the provisional telegram. Please notify me urgently result. With all consideration, N. Titulescu"<sup>21</sup>.

Following the requests made by N. Titulescu and V. Bușilă on 27 May 1908, the Council of the Faculty of Law decided to open the Docent exam in Civil law and Roman law<sup>22</sup>. Due to the formalities, the title was obtained no sooner than April 13, 1909 when the Minister, Spiru Haret, confirmed that it was awarded to Titulescu: "Mr. Dean, Taking into account the recommendation by the commission created for the examination of Mr. N. Titulescu's habilitation as a docent in the field of Civil law; Taking into account the report by the member of the Permanent Council for education that studied the habilitation folder, enabling research file; Seeing the opinion of the Permanent Council for education, the undersigned, in accordance with art. 25 and 26 of the Rules for the appointment of docents, aggregates and university professors, appoints Mr. Nicolae Titulescu a docent in the field of Civil Law, at the [above mentioned] faculty"<sup>23</sup>.

Titulescu stayed in Iasi until January 29, 1910, when the Minister, Spiru Haret, decided to transfer him in the capital, where he remained until 1931, following approval given by the Faculty of Law in Bucharest: "Mr. Dean, I have the honour to let you know that following the advice of the Faculty Council at the Faculty of Law in Bucharest, the Ministry has approved the transfer to Bucharest of Mr. Titulescu, a docent at that university"<sup>24</sup>.

Years later, on 7 February 1935, in recognition of Titulescu's worth, the Faculty Council at the Faculty of Letters and Philosophy in Iasi unanimously, proposed Titulescu for the Nobel Peace Prize for 1935<sup>25</sup>.

During the time he taught at the Faculty of Law of the University of Iasi, as a lecturer, Nicolae Titulescu was appreciated both by his colleagues, and by the students. He thought the students were the best "judges" of a professor's work. Even though he worked in Iasi for a relatively short period of time, Titulescu won a deserved place in the pantheon of the Faculty of Law.

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<sup>21</sup> Biblioteca Centrală Universitară „Mihai Eminescu” din Iași - Fondul Colectii Speciale, Arhiva 238 – 6, Carte poștală trimisă de Nicolae Titulescu către Brandea, secretarul Facultății de Drept din Iași, 6 februarie 1908.

<sup>22</sup> A.N.I.C., filiala Iași, Fond Universitatea "Al. I. Cuza"- Iași, Facultatea de Drept, dosar nr. 2267 / 1907 - 1908, f. 45.

<sup>23</sup> Idem, dosar nr. 2264 / 1908 – 1909, f. 109. Vezi și A.N.I.C., filiala Iași, Fond Universitatea "Al. I. Cuza"- Iași, Rectorat, dosar nr. 1 / 1908 – 1909, f. 248.

<sup>24</sup> A.N.I.C., filiala Iași, Fond Universitatea "Al. I. Cuza"- Iași, Facultatea de Drept, dosar nr.2266, f. 8.

<sup>25</sup> Idem, Rectorat, dosar nr. 1 / 1935, fila 282.

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