

EVALUATION REPORT – FOREIGN EVALUATOR

Univ.-Prof. Dr. Dr. Wolf D. Gruner

wolf.gruner@uni-rostock.de

Chair of European History, combined with the Jean Monnet Chair in European Integration

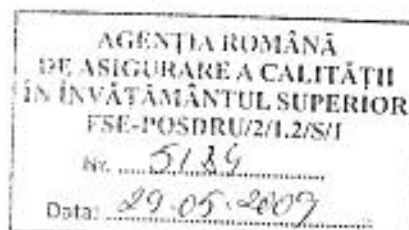
History and European Studies

Department of History

University of Rostock

August-Bebelstr. 28

D-18055 Rostock Germany



MISSION AND OBJECTIVES OF BABEȘ-BOLYAI UNIVERSITY CLUJ

UBB is the oldest institution on Higher Education in Romania. Transylvania has had a multiethnic, multilingual and multiconfessional tradition for many centuries. Transylvania is an interesting historical landscape for identity building and could provide a European model for the peaceful living together of ethnic minorities. Thus it is also a good location for studying.

Today's Babeș-Bolyai University at Cluj has a longstanding tradition for different levels of education. It changed its character during its history, from a Hungarian University during the period of Habsburg rule over Transylvania to a Romanian University after World War I. After World War II a Romanian and a Hungarian University were established which were merged 1956 to "Babeș-Bolyai University". For the quality and self perception of UBB 1995 became an important year. The Senate of UBB decided to reorganize the university into a trilingual university, setting up a Romanian, Hungarian and German study line. Thus programmes, courses and degrees were being offered in the historical languages of Transylvania, which had shaped its culture over centuries. The reorganized structure was accepted by the student population and opened new perspectives.

Today UBB is the only trilingual university and the only university outside German speaking Europe which offers programmes and degrees from a Licentiate / Bachelor - level to a PhD programme, and also Postdoc programmes in German. Trilingual study lines mean an attraction for Romanian and international students to come to UBB and it is an important asset for the role and status of UBB in Romania and among the universities of South-Eastern Europe.

The mission and objectives of UBB are stated in the Charter. The general aims of promoting education and research in “agreement with the demands of a knowledge based society”, providing an ongoing education (life long learning) and international values and its tasks and obligations for the region can be found in many University Charters. It is special, however, that UBB intends to provide “a framework for multicultural, multi-linguistic and inter-confessional contacts; it offers equal training opportunities, in Romanian, Hungarian and German”. Teaching, learning and research follow the Humboldtian principle: “The ‘Babeş-Bolyai’ University is a Humboldtian institution of higher education and research”.

Does UBB fulfil these objectives? Do the three study lines achieve the aim of keeping “with the historical and cultural structure of Transylvania”? Can the Bologna process allow for education and research on the basis of the principles of Humboldt?

MULTILINGUAL – MULTICULTURAL – MULTICONFESSSIONAL CHARACTER

International evaluations have been highly positive.¹ There are published materials available by the OSCE, the EUA, the Salzburg Seminar, the UBB Quality Management and also speeches which underpin the functioning system of 3 study lines and how the minority issue is solved. The opportunity to have access to study lines in different languages – Romanian, Hungarian, German and English (in European Studies and Economics) attracts students. The multicultural and multiconfessional setting has a positive impact. In addition it is quite interesting to see that students from Romania do not necessarily study in the line of their mother tongue. Many Romanian and Hungarian students for example study Economics and History in the German study line or do European Studies in English and German. There are some basic advantages. Many students from Transylvania or the Banat have a chance to study German in school. Thus they have a basic knowledge in German or more. The highest investment in Romania according to statistics available comes from German speaking Europe (Austrian and German companies from industry, producers, wholesale chains like Metro or Praktiker to financial institutions). There are many branches of German companies in the Cluj area and in Transylvania and there is also a German Chamber of Commerce for North Western Transylvania. German companies offer training periods and jobs (for the summer and beyond) to UBB students doing International Management or specialize in other fields of Economics. Some professors at the Faculty of Economics published books on the Economic History of

¹ International Evaluations at Babeş-Bolyai University 2008, edited by the PR Department. Cluj 2008, for example: Knut Vollbaeck: Education for Democracy, Pluralism and Citizenship, *ibid.*, 128-137.

Transylvania and on European Economic History in general to serve for an important basic knowledge in Economic history and economic developments from modern times to the present. The Faculty of Economics with its study lines in Romanian, Hungarian, German and English and the possibility to study some special fields in French offers good professional perspectives for graduates in Transylvania, Romania and all over Europe.

The evaluator attended lectures and seminars in History and Economics in the German line and gave lectures and seminars himself in German and English, which brought together German Romanian and Hungarian speaking students. Their language skills were amazing. During the evaluation week the Austrian Library offered a lecture on Austria, Romania and Europe by Professor Götz from UBB's sister university, the University of Vienna. The lecture was given in German dealing from a comparative point of view with the expectations, experiences and perspectives of Austria and Romania on their way into the EU. More than 30 students were present, besides the students from Vienna many students with a Romanian or Hungarian background. From my own experience of teaching under the Erasmus scheme at the German line of the Faculty of Economics and the Faculty of History as well as in summer schools I can state that the students choose the respective study line according to their own interests and professional expectations. Thus, despite the fact that the Germans today are the smallest minority in Transylvania, there are many students who study in German or English in a study line which is not being taught in their mother tongue. From my observations I draw the conclusion that the German and Hungarian minorities are integrated, that the model set up in 1995/97 and improved ever since is functioning and well accepted and that there is no discrimination of any of the ethnic groups, especially as far as the Germans and Hungarians are concerned. A debate initiated a few years ago in the wake of Romania's membership in the EU by some Hungarian national interest groups sponsored – I am sorry to say – by the important German Daily "Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung" provided against better knowledge a misleading view of the role and status of the Hungarian minority at UBB and in Transylvania. A look into the University Charter, into the leadership structure of UBB (rector, prorectors, senate, academic council) and into the faculties and their Hungarian lines will prove that the Hungarian students and staff are well integrated into a living and dynamic university. From my perspective the successful efforts of UBB for setting up a multi-ethnic and multilingual university may serve as a model for other multi-ethnic regions in Europe, be it in the Baltic States, in Spain, in Kosovo or in Bosnia or outside Europe, like in the Middle East.

INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMMES – Partner (Sister) Universities

UBB has partner institutions in Europe, Asia, North- and South America, Australia and Africa. For Chinese Studies a branch of the Beijing Confucius Institute – there are only few universities being honoured with a Confucius branch Institute – was founded at UBB. There are also special programmes with Korean, Indian and Japanese universities. The cooperation programmes have a wide range from research cooperation to double degree / joint degree programmes. Most partner universities come from France. This, to some extent, is due to the fact that there are many functioning double degree Master programmes, and especially at the PhD level. There are some double degree Master Programmes with Michigan State University (American Studies), the University of Munster and starting this autumn a Master in European Studies with the University of Magdeburg. New Joint Master's programmes in the History of South-Eastern Europe have been established between UBB, the University of Graz and the University of Ljubljana. Students are obliged to an obligatory semester abroad at one of the partner universities. In science there are Master programmes in Physics (Universities of Aachen, Salzburg, Padova, Gent and the Université Louis Pasteur Strasbourg), in Chemistry (University of Georgia, Eötvös Loránt Budapest, Braunschweig Institute of Technology, University of Lund). UBB and the University of Rostock launched a double degree BA programme last year, starting with biology being followed by Economics this coming autumn. History, German Language programmes and programmes in education are in preparation. In the case of the double degree BA programme it proves to be advantageous that German students may study in German at UBB and at the same time learning another language which might be useful for their future job profile and their careers.

UBB is also host for summer schools for universities from Europe and overseas. There is one established on the Culture of Romania and the South East together with Arizona State University in Tempe / USA. The booklet on "The Internationalisation at UBB" gives more information on summer schools and summer courses with 17 countries participating (2003).²

Most inter-university contracts between partner universities not only offer the possibility of student mobility and staff exchange but also oblige the partners to cooperate in research and become partners in applying e.g. for European research programmes which expect the cooperation in special fields of research between three or more European universities – to

² Lucia Hotiko: The Internationalisation at Babeş-Bolyai University. Cluj 2003.

establish research clusters and centres of excellence – or Transatlantic cooperations (3 European partner institutions plus 2 North American). Since the early 2000s UBB managed to improve its standing in science and technology. There was European money besides government funds to develop new fields for research, setting up new buildings especially for science and installing the most recent machinery, equipment and technology. This is true for departments like Chemistry, Biochemistry, Physics, Engineering and Development, also implementing new Nanotechnology and Nano science in cooperation with other universities and industrial partners (often from the area). UBB becomes interesting for other institutions to cooperate. There is also a cooperation programme on the way between UBB, the Karlsruhe Institute of Technology and the Karlsruhe Nuclear Research Institute (Kernforschungszentrum Karlsruhe).

UBB shows a dynamic policy for internationalization as far as teaching, research, international cooperation and the setting up of special institutions (cultural institutes, language programmes) is concerned. UBB was given endowed chairs sponsored by foreign governments or foreign institutions, like a chair in German literature or in other languages or in science. It is often difficult for a university to keep up the responsibilities and find the funds connected with such a chair after the end of the endowment (sponsorship). It is, however, a major incentive for the reputation of a university. UBB should work hard to keep these special chairs and guarantee permanent funding. In Economics – German line – there is also a necessity to hire a professor in order to guarantee the double-degree programme with the University of Rostock. The process and the negotiations are on their way right now.

The special institutions and international cooperation offer UBB students a great opportunity to get to know the culture of other countries, to have a chance to study abroad, to learn new languages and to be exposed to different cultures, new approaches and outlooks and – quite important – to make new friends, set up networks all over Europe and overseas, depending on the place they went to. Thus graduates will be well equipped and well trained with an international outlook and perspective when they leave UBB for their job. I would appreciate if my own institution and other European universities I had a chance to visit would be as dynamic overall. To some extent this is true for many German and other European universities. They will have to make the best out of a period of dramatic changes at all levels, from teaching to research and the acquisition of funds. In this respect it is important to establish a tradition of alumni who help to set up a network, who share their experiences with UBB students,

staff and freshly graduated students and who, in the long run, are willing and prepared to donate money and other resources to UBB like this is the case in the United States of America. The talk of the evaluators to alumni and graduates against this background was quite useful and satisfying. Since European universities have no strong tradition in this respect setting up a functioning alumni net work is necessary. UBB is trying to set up such a tradition. Like in other European universities it will take time and most probably never reach the level of US universities. One problem being that the respective legal framework for donations and sponsoring is not yet come into effect.

EUROPEAN PROGRAMMES (Erasmus et al.)

Starting in 1998 UBB successfully offers student- and staff mobility programmes under the Erasmus scheme in different fields of study. At present the incoming and outgoing students come from or go to 17 European countries. In 2008-2009 there were 70 incoming students. The highest share comes from Germany, Italy, France and Portugal. The highest portion of outgoing students study in France, Germany, Italy, Spain and the Benelux countries. They include all levels from BA and MA to PhD. From 1998/99-2008/9 about 3000 UBB students profited from the programme, 80 in 2008/9. Teaching mobility reached its highest figure in 2008/2009 when 85 were using the possibilities offered by the programme. The majority coming from the Faculty of letters and also from the faculty of sports and athletics. The numbers would be higher, also docent mobility, if there would be more transparency as far as the assigned money by contract at UBB (between the participating universities) is concerned. The money allocated to the respective contracts between Departments of participating universities (e.g. History has funds for 10 places for student mobility per academic year and 3 places for docent mobility). *The funds should not be given to other departments or staff unless the respective department informs the Erasmus Office that they will not use the money during the respective year. This is a basic rule for the Erasmus Programme.* According to the national statistics UBB represents 14% of the number of mobilities at a national level. UBB offers intensive language courses for incoming and outgoing students. Because of rising demands UBB was granted funds from the EU to offer 3 courses instead of 2.

UBB could be a good example for other universities participating in the Erasmus Programme as far as activities for their Erasmus students are concerned. Incoming students besides intensive language courses are offered many activities from city tours, excursions and

various activities like making pottery, painting, representing their home countries as far as culture is concerned. UBB also hires student tutors who look after the incoming students. Mostly they are students who have been abroad on the Erasmus programme. More details about the excellent activities at UBB are shown in a booklet "Erasmus, in imagini la UBB!"

The evaluator had a chance to meet exchange students under the Erasmus programme and other exchange programmes. He met students of Law, International Relations, European Studies and Cultural Studies. They were staying for one or two semesters and were leaving the end of this semester. Their home institutions were in Britain, Italy, France, Austria, Germany and Korea. The majority had a good experience and good study results. They enjoyed being at UBB, exposed to a different teaching system, culture and mentality. It was easy for them to adjust. Many of them plan to return privately or for studying again at UBB. 2 students were dissatisfied and thought being here has been a waste of time. In their case, from my own experience as Erasmus coordinator at my home university, the selection process at the home institution was not appropriate and the outgoing students were not well prepared and seemed not to be able to follow the level of teaching at UBB. This may be pure chance. It would be, however, advisable to ask the partner institutions only to send first rate students who are able to follow courses at a university level or sending them back early. There should be more focus and awareness on the "Universities of Applied Sciences" which do not have the status of an excellent research oriented university. In the USA the status between research universities and teaching institutions is quite clear.

INTERNATIONALISATION

UBB is running many international programmes and offers international activities and experiences for their students. During the evaluation week, to single out a few examples, there were two lectures by an American chemist from the University of Georgia at Athens, Professor Schaefer III and, invited by the faculty of European Studies, the European Commissioner on Multilingualism and presented by the Austria Library a lecture from a Vienna Professor of Political Science on Austrian and Romanian experiences in the negotiation process for full membership in the EU. The lectures and other events are posted at many faculties and in the major University Buildings and students, staff and interested persons are also informed about public events electronically, for example at the entrance to the Old University Building. The

information system for events could still be improved, especially as far as some faculties are concerned.

Many faculties host regularly international conferences and bring in speakers from different fields from Europe and overseas allowing for a lively academic discourse. It is quite advantageous for UBB students and faculty to be exposed to a variety of lectures and international conferences enriched by summer schools between partner (sister) universities being held at altering sites. For example UBB and the University of Rostock organize summer schools since 2005 in Cluj and Rostock on agreed on topics bringing together students and staff from both universities and thus setting up closer relationships in teaching and research, allowing a get-together of students from different universities. The money comes from funds in both universities and as in the case of UBB and UR also from the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD).

The President of the Students (Prefectul studentilor), Andrei Ciubuc, mentioned to the reporting evaluator during an interview that the UBB student Union plans to set up relations with the student unions of all – at least as many as possible – partner universities of UBB and organize summer schools on the culture of the country where the respective partner universities are situated. This would be an interesting idea and it is to be hoped this idea will materialize also as far as funds and further student engagements are concerned.

TEACHING AND RESEARCH

UBB has one of the best library resources in Romania. Besides the main library there are special libraries in many of the faculties providing resources for teaching, studying and research as well as area institutes like the Transylvania Institute, the Austria Library, the German Institute and Cultural centres (Germany, France, Italy, Great Britain, China, Korea, Japan, United States) as well as language programmes. There are also special libraries for the different lines of study in the Faculty of Economics and in the Faculty of European Studies. Some of the special libraries received large donations from public and private sources thus offering important materials and teaching/research literature to the respective users. UBB should keep an eye on providing over time solid financial support for its libraries – as an important basis for teaching and effective research. These special libraries must keep their quality, also by allocating money from UBB sources and not relying on foreign donations and support only.

Compared to other great University- and State libraries in the United States, Canada, Japan, Britain, Germany, Italy, Austria and France which the reporting evaluator has used there should be more direct and faster access to library resources, especially in the “Lucian Blaga Central University Library”. The process of ordering and lending should and must be accelerated. In the main library of the University of Georgia, of Indiana University, of Yale University or of the University of California at Berkeley students and researchers have direct access to books in the library. There are also offered special “carrels” or even “rooms” in the library for their research, especially at the PhD level and for professorial staff. It is also considered as important for users to have the possibility of browsing. Books which are not housed in the main library are being delivered within one hour or less. They can be ordered on-line without the need to use ordering slips. Effective service is also true for the British Library or the Munich State Library. It would be advantageous for students and staff if the use of library resources would be facilitated and improved. This is also true for some library branches and special collections. A speeded-up service system would make UBB still more competitive and attractive. It would become a place where people like to teach, learn and do research from all over Europe and beyond.

It is suggested that for the European Studies Programme there should be more books and other resources be available in French and German (asked for by students and staff during my stay and from interviews) beyond English and Romanian. As far as French materials and books are concerned – because of their structure and set up – they provide good bases for studying and learning. You may like this structure or not, but the textbooks French style are excellent, also for short memory learning.

To keep up the quality of teaching and research UBB should try to allocate more funds to the main library and to the special libraries.

It needs to be mentioned that the UBB University Presses to some extent are unique in publishing multilingual monographs, research collections,³ papers from symposia and documentaries in many languages – sometimes special books in more than one language – besides

³ For example: Ladislau Gyémánt / Marius Jucan / Cristina Rotar (Eds.): *Globalism, Globality, Globalisation. Ten Years of European Studies in Cluj*. Cluj Napoca ²2009 (2005). Andrei Marga / Theodor Berchem / Jan Sadlak (Eds.): *Living in Truth. A Conceptual Framework for a Wisdom Society and the European Construction*. Cluj 2009.

Romanian (e.g. English, German, French, and Italian). BBUP is also publishing special journals for differing fields. There is a journal "Europea" which brings together articles on European issues. They are printed in the language of the author. Another journal within the university is "Philologia". There are several series in different fields and from different faculties published by the University Press. They give national and international credit to UBB and are important for the national and international rating and UBB's reputation.

GENERAL REMARKS

UBB because of its historical, political, multilingual and economic environment and its traditions is a good place for learning, studying and research. Its geographical situation also needs to be mentioned as an advantage. The evaluation week has shown that UBB is well set up and has a good international reputation. It is one of the leading universities of South Eastern Europe let alone of Romania with a broad multilingual study programme and an amazing dynamic. UBB does not have to fear any comparisons with other major European universities. Despite minor shortcomings and necessary improvements UBB is a place for students from Romania and abroad to come to for their higher education, for research and a multi-ethnic experience. According to the Romanian version of methodological guidelines (Modificari_ghid.pdf) – there is no III.4 point 10 in the English version – the reporting evaluator according to his findings during the period of evaluation would classify UBB as "grad de încredere ridicat" (a highest degree of confidence – very good and high quality standards).

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

In any university system and in any university there are means for improvement. This is also true for UBB. UBB over the last few years experienced a dynamic progress and upswing and might now be in a phase of consolidation. In the paragraphs above the reporting evaluator had made some suggestions concerning staff, endowed chairs and library resources as well as the handling of the Erasmus Programme (student mobility, staff mobility). Compared to other European universities and institutions of Higher Education overseas it would be useful and improve the competitiveness of UBB if *all staff with a professorial status* (Assistant Professors, Associate Professors, Full Professors) – they are those who are qualified and who have a national and international reputation in research and are "habilitated" (in US the publication of a "second book" in order to become Associate Professor or in Germany and France the

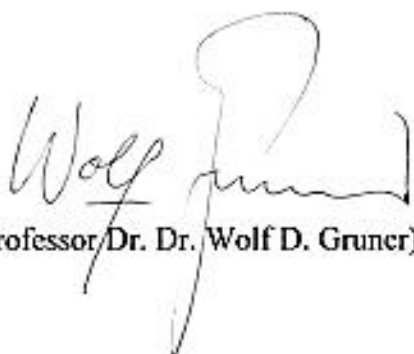
“Habilitation” or *“Thèse d’État”*) are entitled to be advisors for PhD students. In Germany any University teacher who has passed his or her “habilitation” can have PhD students who work under their guidance. This is European standard. It would make sense if all professors would be entitled to be advisors for PhD candidates (or in special PhD programmes). The universities should also have the right to confer a PhD directly from their own autonomy. This is also European standard.

Overall UBB, from my point of view and my studying of the possibilities and resources during evaluation week, is an excellent university for research and studying with genuine programmes, especially as far as the three study lines are concerned.

There is one question remaining which is also of general interest: UBB claims to be a university of teaching and research according to the Humboldtian ideas. From my view the Bologna process does not allow for an education in Humboldt’s sense. The system of BAs and MAs sets up limits and narrows down broader education. It becomes more a system of “inputs” than of “reflection”. What we need in Europe are well trained and educated students who have knowledge beyond their special fields and who are able for solid judgement and reflection. This is what Europe needs in order to be competitive at global scale.

To wind up my report I would like to repeat my opinion that UBB should be rated as:

“grad de incidere redicat” (excellent and highest degree of confidence)



(Professor Dr. Dr. Wolf D. Gruner)