

WOMEN'S INITIATIVES SERVING FEMALE STUDENTS IN CLUJ. FROM THE FEMALE STUDENTS' HALL OF RESIDENCE COMMITTEE TO THE FEMALE STUDENTS' WELFARE ASSOCIATION (1920-1935)

CLAUDIA SEPTIMIA SABĂU*

GHIZELA COSMA*

Abstract In 1921, the society of the Female Students' Hall of Residence Committee founded the first Romanian hall of residence for female students in Cluj, aiming to respond to the social need for accommodation for the increasing number of young women who attended University. A canteen was also added to it, both remaining operational until 1925. When the University opened its own hall of residence for female students, the association's residence and the canteen were closed down. The Female Students' Hall of Residence Committee was reorganised and continued to operate under the name of Female University Students' Welfare Association of Cluj, focusing on granting interest-free loans to female students for various needs.

Keywords Female students, Grințescu Hall of Residence, interwar period, Cluj, Alice Grințescu, women's associations.

Introduction

During the interwar period, the students constituted a well-individualised socio-professional age category. A characteristic feature was their growing number, carrying on a hesitant pre-war process that was common throughout Europe, striking mostly in the states formed or unified after the First World War.

In Romania, the territorial and demographic growth of the country, through the Great Union of 1918, was reflected upon the number of university youth. Then, while in the Old Kingdom

* *The History Museum of The Babeș-Bolyai University of Cluj-Napoca.* claudia.sabau@ubbcluj.ro.

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6998-2573>.

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* *Octavian Goga Country Library Cluj.* cosmaghizela@yahoo.com.

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0009-0003-2585-0159>.

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the rush towards higher education was mainly due to social considerations, in the territories united with Romania in 1918, a national aspect of the problem emerged. In addition to the increasing number of students, we can observe a change in its predominantly aristocratic profile from the pre-war period. As an innovative feature, we notice the strong influx of sons and daughters of peasants, teachers, and priests from villages to higher education institutions. As a result, during the early postwar years, the profile of most students was defined by turmoil and material insecurity.¹

The financial support provided by families was often minimal or completely absent. In order to ensure the necessary funds for students' grants and the organisation of residence halls and canteens where meals had low prices, efforts were made by both public and private institutions, and individuals.² Among the civil society's initiatives to support Romanian students, an important role was played by women's societies.

Several women's societies were focused on the university youth in Cluj, as well, where they established programs for students' benefits.³ Through our research, we aim to highlight a series of initiatives taken by women from Cluj in order to support female students in this university centre, established by The Female Students' Hall of Residence Committee, which was then turned into The Female Students' Welfare Association in 1925.

A brief history of these societies falls into the sphere of women's history as a historiographical endeavour. It concerns feminine initiatives for the benefit of women. However, it can also be included in the field of local history and, lastly, in that of social history.

In developing our historiographical discourse, we employed a valuable original material from the National Archives of Romania, Cluj County Service, as well as various articles collected from the press of that time. The approach we use is mostly descriptive, with logical and chronological development of data collected from the various sources mentioned, and analytical, to the extent that different aspects and highlighted contexts during the re-enactment allow it.

The Female Students' Hall of Residence Committee of Cluj

In the early years after the Great War, the number of women opting for higher education studies rose across the country.⁴ The statistical data that we own starting with the academic year

¹ Ghizela Cosma, "Stil și mod de viață la studenți în România interbelică," *Studia Universitatis Babeș-Bolyai. Historia*, XXXVI, 1-2 (1991): 163-165.

² *Ibid.*, 175.

³ Noteworthy examples include: The Holy Mary Association of Romanian Greek-Catholic Women, which opened a Greek Catholic students' hall of residence on October 1, 1927; Caritatea Society, concerned with fighting and treating tuberculosis among students, built a sanatorium in Colibița, where a healthcare program for students was carried out, in collaboration with the University; Christian Women's Association, which had among its objectives helping poor students at the Conservatory and collecting funds for a student residence hall and canteen. Ghizela Cosma, "Activismul feminin românesc în Clujul interbelic," *Lectura*, Series III, 1(43) (2022): 67, 72-73, 77-78.

⁴ Their percentage of 17% of the total student population in 1919/1920 reached 30% in 1929/1930, see Cosma, "Stil și mod de viață la studenți în România interbelică," 168.

1924/1925 shows the same phenomenon in Cluj. This year, the number of female students at the University was 390, plus 52 from the Academy of High Commercial and Industrial Studies and 3 from the University of Agronomic Studies, making a total of 440 female students. In the academic year 1929/1930, the number grew up to 922 female students of which: 827 at the University, 90 at the Academy of High Commercial and Industrial Studies and 5 from the University of Agronomic Studies.⁵

Like other university centres across the country, in Cluj, too, accommodation was the main problem for female students, as it was more difficult for them than for the males. In 1919, The Romanian University of Cluj lacked a hall of residence for its female students, even though there had been attempts for establishing it, immediately after the higher education institution was taken over by the Romanian authorities. This concern is notable in the contents of the minutes at the second meeting of the provisional University Senate, which took place on 28 September 1919. In the context of discussing the poor situation of the residence halls in town, the necessity for establishing one for female students was clearly expressed, the Ruling Council's help being requested.⁶

The situation seemed somehow better in the university centres of Bucharest and Iași. For fixing the students' accommodation issue, the Students' Hall of Residence Society was founded in the capital in 1918. With its help, 6 halls of residence and canteens were established, 5 for the male students, and one for the female ones. The hall of residence on Sf. Ștefan street accommodated 75 young women. The state financially supported all of them.⁷ Other female students from the University of Bucharest were accommodated in the "Spiru Haret" Private Female Students' Hall of Residence, organised by Clotilde Averescu (wife of the general, later marshal Alexandru Averescu), the president of the Society for the Protection of Young Girls.⁸ Opened up in 1908, it accommodated, at first, 26 female students, the number increasing every year. In 1925, the residence accommodated 150 female students, and a great number of young women who paid for meals only.⁹ In Iași, after 1919, the University decided upon the hall of residence division, for male and female students. It was a solution that temporarily fixed the need for a residence only for young female university students.¹⁰

As mentioned previously, in the early postwar years in Cluj, the University lacked a hall of residence for female students. The appeal made by the higher education institution was released in March 1922 and is significant to the context in which the Female Students' Hall of Residence

⁵ Constantin Kirițescu, "*Problema educației dirijate*" în *legătură cu suprapopulația universitară și șomajul intelectual* (Bucharest, 1936), 9-10.

⁶ The National Archives of Romania, Cluj County Service (from now on ANRSJC), collection *Universitatea din Cluj*, inventory no. 1.020, register 390 (1919-1920), f. 6-7.

⁷ Emilia Alexandrescu, N. M. Cioroiu, *Contribuțiune la problema căminelor studențești* (Bucharest: Imprimeria Fundațiunei Culturale "Principele Carol," 1924), 8.

⁸ Ion Țik, "La un cămin de studente. Căminul 'Spiru Haret,'" *Ilustrațiunea Română*, I, no. 22 (November 21, 1929): 6.

⁹ C. Papacostea, "Fapte," *Convorbiri literare*, LVII, no. 7-8 (July 1, 1925): 604.

¹⁰ "Evoluția spiritelor în Universitatea ieșeană. 1918-1925," *Adevărul*, XXXVIII, no. 12.606 (January 31, 1925): 1.

Committee of Cluj was founded, which proposed a temporary solution, within acceptable limits, to the female students' accommodation issue.¹¹

According to this document, the Romanians on this side of the Carpathians had a great need for culture and solid education, but also the least material means for it. This happened mostly during the times when the town lacked accommodations and had a very high cost of living. It was noted then that it was easier for male students to find accommodation, as they could more easily obtain the financial means to pursue their studies, benefiting from scholarships provided by the government and having access to two residence halls, where they could be accommodated for 400 lei per month (whereas in town, they would have needed at least 1,000 lei).¹² In contrast, female students were much more affected by the lack of cheap accommodation places and means of education. They could hardly find an accommodation in town, and although there were 300 students enrolled at different faculties, in those years, the University was still lacking a residence hall for them.¹³

The lack in residences and the impossibility of accommodating female students from all over Transylvania, who were coming to the new University, determined the idea of founding The Female Students' Hall of Residence Committee of Cluj. It was the civil society's expression of commitment in finding solutions to this urgent issue.

According to the official documents, the Female Students' Hall of Residence Committee was founded on 2 November 1920, its main purpose being the establishment of a female students' hall of residence.¹⁴ But, on 14 August 1920, through Nicolae Bănescu, the University Senate was already informed about the founding of a ladies' committee, together with university officials and university residence halls directors, which aimed at organising a female students' residence. The Senate formally acknowledged and decided to support it.¹⁵

¹¹ "1922, februarie 15, Cluj. Apel," Adrian Onofreiu, Claudia Septimia Sabău, Ana-Maria Stan and Cornelia Vlaşin (eds.), *Intelectuali din judeţul Bistriţa-Năsăud şi Universitatea din Cluj (1919-1940). Restituiri documentare* (Cluj-Napoca: Mega, 2021), 62-64.

¹² In the early years of the Romanian University of Cluj, the students were accommodated in two residence halls: one was owned by the University (the residence hall on Avram Iancu street, known as Mensa Academica, inherited from the time of the Franz Joseph University) and the other was under the administration of university authorities, with the agreement of the Ruling Council, former Teacher's house in Ştefan cel Mare square, later named the Latin College. See, "Raportul rectorului Sextil Puşcariu despre activitatea Universităţii din Cluj de la înfiinţarea ei, cetit cu ocazia şedinţei inaugurale din 10 octomvrie 1920," *Anuarul Universităţii din Cluj*, year 1919-1920, (Cluj: Tip. Inst. de Arte Grafice "Ardealul," 1921): 17.

¹³ "1922, februarie 15, Cluj. Apel," Onofreiu, Sabău, Stan and Vlaşin (eds), *Intelectuali din judeţul Bistriţa-Năsăud şi Universitatea din Cluj (1919-1940)*; "Căminul studenţilor," *Patria*, IV, no. 61, (March 21, 1922): 2; "Pentru clădirea unui cămin al studenţilor," *Înfrăţirea*, II, no. 473, (March 22, 1922): 6.

¹⁴ ANRSJC, collection *Tribunalul Cluj* Sec. I 1664/1926, file Asociaţia pentru Ocrotirea Studenţilor Universitare Cluj - *Memorii prevăzută la art. 99 din Legea pentru persoanele juridice*, f. 8.

¹⁵ ANRSJC, collection *Universitatea din Cluj. Procese verbale ale Senatului universitar 1919/1920*, file 390 - PV. 1460 - 1920 - *Procesul Verbal din şedinţa Senatului Universitar din 14 august 1920*, f. 247.

The Female Students' Hall of Residence Committee of Cluj adopted its Statutes relatively late, only on 18 October 1921.¹⁶ According to it, the society's objective was "to establish a residence where female students could find shelter and care". The committee was formed by active members of Romanian nationality, 3 university professors and 10 persons outside the University. It was responsible for the assigned funds, proper organisation, and functionality of the residence. Likewise, an official, a delegate was appointed for signing the Committee's documents. The Committee's activity consisted of monthly general assemblies, and, for making a decision, at least 7 members had to be present. In accordance with the statutory provisions, the society's income was coming from donations and testaments, as well as from students' payments for the residence.¹⁷

Among the founding members were: Alice Grințescu, Laetiția Ghidionescu, Elisa Grecianu, Alexandrina Urechia, Veturia Borza, Elena Popescu-Voitești, Lucia Bologa, Sidonia Docan, Eleonora (Nora) Lemenyi, and the university professors Dimitrie Călugăreanu, Victor Papilian, and Ioan Lupaș.¹⁸

The structure analysis of this first steering Committee allows some remarks. Except the three academics, it was composed of women, most of them with university studies: Alice Grințescu, Laetiția Ghidionescu, Elena Popescu-Voitești, Sidonia Docan, Nora Lemenyi. Alice Grințescu and Nora Lemenyi had doctorates acquired in Geneva, respectively in Cluj. The fact that three of them studied at the University of Geneva, Alice Grințescu, Elena Popescu-Voitești, and Nora Lemenyi, is equally interesting. Then, the majority of them were professionals, Laetiția Ghidionescu and Elena Popescu-Voitești were teachers. Lucia Bologa was the director of The Sisters' Institute of Care, the first institution of the type in Romania. Sidonia Docan had a degree in medicine from Vienna and was inspector for the Ministry of Social Protection, and Nora Lemenyi was department advisor for the Department of Social Protection and Hygiene. Furthermore, almost all of them were connected to the academic community of Cluj, most of them were university professors' wives or related to them: Alice Grințescu was married to the botanist Ioan Grințescu, Laetiția Ghidionescu to Vladimir Ghidionescu, pioneer of experimental pedagogy, Alexandrina Urechia was physician's Constantin I. Urechia wife, Veturia Borza was Alexandru Borza's wife, botanist, founder of the Botanical Garden, and Elena Popescu-Voitești was married to professor Ioan Popescu-Voitești, geologist, palaeontologist. Then, Lucia Bologa was Valeriu Lucian Bologa's mother, university professor, physician, and Sextil Pușcariu's sister.

With regard to the three university professors, Dimitrie Călugăreanu was a professor at the Faculty of Sciences, Victor Papilian at the Faculty of Medicine, and professor Ioan Lupaș, with a background in History, was the director of the University Students' Hall of Residence since 1919.¹⁹

¹⁶ ANRSJC, collection *Tribunalul Cluj* Sec. I 1664/1926, file Asociația pentru Ocrotirea Studentelor Universitare Cluj, f. 2.

¹⁷ ANRSJC, collection *Tribunalul Cluj* Sec. I 1664/1926, file Asociația pentru Ocrotirea Studentelor Universitare Cluj - *Statutele Căminului Studentelor din Cluj*, f. 44.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Ghizela Cosma, *Din istoria Clujului la feminin. Crochiuri biografice* (Cluj-Napoca: Casa Cărții de Știință, 2019), 44-48; 69-75; Cosma, *Activismul feminin românesc în Clujul interbelic*, 79; Maria Vaida, "Femeile române și Marea Unire," *Curtea de la Argeș*, IX, no. 12 (97), (December 2018): 12; Mihai Sorin Rădulescu, "Vladimir

Finally, it is interesting to notice the various connections between the group members, primarily with sciences and medicine, as was the case of two academics, through studies for Alice Grințescu or through the husbands' activity fields in many cases. Together with the great number of female students enrolled in the two faculties, at some point, this aspect would be reflected in the hall of residence policy, through the accommodation priority given to female students from sciences and medicine. On the other hand, all these highlighted details may be seen as consolidation factors of the group.

Based on the sources researched so far, it is difficult to determine whether the initiative to establish this society came from a specific person, but Alice Grințescu stood out, being appointed by the Committee as an official, a delegate. The society did not possess permanent special bodies: director's office, administration council etc. The committee discussed and made decisions through the general members assembly and it empowered, in accordance with point 4 of the Statutes, Mrs. Alice Grințescu, to represent the society and to manage its fortune.²⁰ Thus, she became the most visible person in the hall of residence's activity, which she managed according to the Statutes, which is why the name *Grințescu Hall of Residence* became established in the community of Cluj, with reference to this residence.

Alice Jeanne Pierrette Grințescu²¹ was from Geneva, born to parents of French origin. She pursued her studies up to the doctoral degree in Geneva, being the first woman who obtained this title in sciences in this university centre. Until 1912, she worked at the Secondary and Higher School for Girls in Geneva and, at the same time, at the University. She published several articles in the field of natural sciences.²² In 1906, she married Ioan Grințescu, whom she had met while he was studying in Geneva. Later, the family settled in Romania, where Ioan Grințescu worked as a professor at the Agriculture School of Herăstrău²³ and head of the Experimental Station for Tobacco Cultivation at Belvedere in Bucharest.²⁴

Ghidionescu - Figură proeminentă a pedagogiei românești. Pe marginea unor documente inedite," *Acta Moldaviae Meridionalis*, IX-X, (1987-1989): 303; Victor Stanciu, *Viața și opera Prof. I. P. Voitești* (Cluj: Institutul de Arte Grafice "Ardealul," [s.a.]), 53; *Clujeni ai secolului XX. Dicționar essential* (Cluj-Napoca: Casa Cărții de Știință, 2000), 50, 65, 182, 242, 327.

²⁰ ANRSJC, collection *Tribunalul Cluj* Sec. I 1664/1926, file Asociația pentru Ocrotirea Studentelor Universitare Cluj, f. 7.

²¹ In order to retrace Alice Grințescu's biography, Ana Glavce's personal archive deserves special attention. It was kindly provided for our research by Mrs. Ana Glavce, Alice Grințescu's great-granddaughter, to whom we express our warmest gratitude.

²² *Actes de la Société helvétique des sciences naturelles. Partie administrative, 141 Session annuelle du 22 au 24 septembre 1961, à Bienne*, 209-210.

²³ *Anuarul Universității Regele Ferdinand I Cluj pe anul școlar 1934/35* (Cluj: Institutul de Arte Grafice "Ardealul," 1935): 295; Decision no. 227, given in Bucharest on February 3, 1915 and signed by King Ferdinand I, *Monitorul Oficial*, no. 247, Sunday 8 (21) February 1915: 11.050.

²⁴ ANRSJC, collection *Universitatea Regele Ferdinand Cluj*, file Cadre universitare, no. 83 (Grințescu Ioan), *Stat personal*, f. 3.

After coming to Romania, Alice Grințescu ended her professional activity. During the Great War years, while her husband was called up for military service,²⁵ she worked as a volunteer nurse for the Romanian Red Cross and organised an aid facility for the families of those who were in the military: a daycare centre for children and placement for their mothers.²⁶

At the end of the World War, the Grințescu family moved to Cluj. Ioan Grințescu entered the academic staff of the Romanian University, unofficially nicknamed the Romanian University of Upper Dacia, and since 1923, in that of the Academy of Higher Agronomic Studies.²⁷ While professor Grințescu engaged in a successful academic and research work, Alice continued to devote herself enthusiastically to social activism. She left behind in Cluj some social projects carried out through associations she helped establish and managed as president. One of these was the Romanian University Women's Association, founded on 1 April 1921, which marks the beginning of graduate women organisation in Romania.

Female Students' Hall of Residence or *Grințescu Hall of Residence*

The ladies' group from the Female Students' Hall of Residence Committee acted quickly to provide a convenient accommodation for the young women. During the opening ceremony of this institution, on 2 February 1921, the university professor Ioan Paul, delivered a speech on behalf of the University Committee for the Management and Supervision of Students' Halls of Residence, in which he mentioned the following: "The ladies understood, in time, the urgent need for a female students' hall of residence and, since last spring, they have formed a steering committee and begun to work with all their energy and enthusiasm [...]. Discreetly and without any personal ambitions, they formed a steering committee, without a president, secretary, cashier, but only ordinary members, hard-working bees with equal zeal and enthusiasm for achieving their noble cultural goal. [...] In this beautiful mission, they have been helped by a delegation of university professors."²⁸

The first step in achieving the Female Students' Hall of Residence Committee's goal was to raise the necessary funds through subscriptions. "Ladies from the most distinguished Romanian society," pointed Ioan Paul, "became respectable and persuasive beggars, knocking on every door and addressing every generous heart and hand [...]."²⁹

Then, in the beginning, a residence hall was quickly improvised in a building on No. 11 Șaguna Street, today, Emil Isac Street. It was put at the Committee's disposal for a limited period

²⁵ Ana Glavce's personal archive [further on PA Glavce], *Din corespondența prof. Ioan Grințescu cu nepotul său Const. Th. Grințescu geolog la Târgoviște*. (Copy), Bucharest, January 1962; *Memoriu explicativ despre activitatea Farmacistului Colonel [Ioan Grințescu n.n.] în rezervă în cele două Campanii de război (1913 și 1916-18)*.

²⁶ PA Glavce, Ioan Grințescu, *Viața și opera naturalistei Alice Grințescu - Rodrigue* (Bucharest: 1960), f. 2.

²⁷ Ioan Ciupea, Virgiliu Țârău, *Liberali clujeni. Destine în Marea Istorie*, vol. II. *Medaliaoane* (Cluj-Napoca: Mega, 2007), 166.

²⁸ P. C., "Un cămin al studentelor la Cluj," *Glasul Bucovinei*, IV, no. 633, (February 15, 1921): 1.

²⁹ Ibid.

of time by the military authorities, then by the Public Instruction Department.³⁰ However, as Ioan Paul highlighted in the above-mentioned speech, the building was extremely ruined, therefore immense expenses were needed to restore it. Besides, the furniture and other bare necessities were missing. Yet “The ladies [...] didn’t give up hope, but got to work more vigorously and with their noble beggary, they succeeded in collecting the necessary amount for these bare necessities.” Donations were obtained from different banks (Marmorosch Blank, Albina, Central Bank, Agrarian and Forestry, Economul, Vatra), from the University and from the Faculty of Sciences. From the collected amount of 49,500 lei, restoration was carried out and some of the furniture was purchased. Furniture and other objects were given away by generals Petala and Anastasiu, colonel Vlădescu, the Agrarian Bank, university professors Moldovan, Scriban, Papilian, Borza, Mrs. Comșa, and German. Low-priced sugar and a wagon with wood were donated by Petrini³¹, the Secretary-General of the Ministry of Agriculture. Lastly, an appeal was made to the Ministry of Public Instruction to approve the budget for the next fiscal year, in order to ensure the functioning of the new institution.

Regarding the Committee’s relation with the University, some details need to be mentioned. As pointed out previously, the University was informed of the steering committee’s founding for the Female Students’ Hall of Residence in Cluj and the Senate acknowledged and decided to support it. On 24 September, the Senate appointed Nicolae Bănescu as the University’s official in the Female Students’ Hall of Residence Committee.³²

The residence hall opened on 1 December 1920³³ and the inauguration ceremony took place on 2 February 1921. The schedule for the official opening event had been approved by the University Senate on 31 January 1921, the University being represented at this manifestation by Nicolae Bănescu.³⁴ During the same meeting, professor Bănescu presented the Code of the Residence Hall, which was approved by the Senate, with amendments.³⁵

Moreover, in the same period, the Female Students’ Hall of Residence Committee of Cluj requested the Senate to be given official status by introducing some of its members in the Student Halls of Residence Committee. The Senate declined the request, reasoning that, from a statutory

³⁰ ANRSJC, collection *Tribunalul Cluj* Sec. I 1664/1926, file Asociația pentru Ocrotirea Studentelor Universitare Cluj - *Memoriu prevăzut la art. 99 din Legea pentru persoanele juridice*, f. 9; PA Glavce, Ion Grințescu, *Viața și opera naturalistei Alice Grințescu - Rodrigue*, (Bucharest: 1960), f. 2.

³¹ “Căminurile studențești. Cuvântarea D-lui Profesor Universitar I. Paul rostită cu prilejul inaugurării căminului studentelor Universității din Cluj,” *Înfrățirea*, I, no. 143, (February 5, 1921): 3; *Înfrățirea*, I, no. 127, (January 18, 1921): 6.

³² ANRSJC, collection *Universitatea din Cluj. Procese verbale ale Senatului universitar 1920/1921*, file 391 - PV. 202. 1920/1921 - *Procesul Verbal din ședința Senatului Universitar din 24 sept. 1920*, f. 22.

³³ ANRSJC, collection *Tribunalul Cluj* Sec. I 1664/1926, file Asociația pentru Ocrotirea Studentelor Universitare Cluj - *Memoriu prevăzut la art. 99 din Legea pentru persoanele juridice*, f. 8.

³⁴ ANRSJC, collection *Universitatea din Cluj. Procese verbale ale Senatului universitar 1920/1921*, file 391- PV. 1425, 1920/1921, *Procesul Verbal din ședința Senatului Universitar din 31 ian. 1921*, f. 134.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, f. 136.

point of view, only University members could be part of this Committee.³⁶ Nevertheless, for the proper administration of the Female Students' Hall of Residence, it was decided that from the Ladies Committee, which was going to act as supervisor, an official would be appointed in the Halls of Residence Committee, but only with advisory voting rights.³⁷ After a few months, on 15 June 1921, the Senate debated and approved the appeal lodged by the Female Students' Hall of Residence Committee of Cluj, through which it expressed its desire to end the "formal" ties that bound it to the University, so that it could claim status as a private institution.³⁸

In this context, in order to move beyond the provisional arrangements, the Committee raised the question of purchasing a building of its own for the female students' hall of residence and furnishing it. It began seeking and collecting funds for this purpose. In addition to the loan granted by the Albina Bank of Sibiu, the female members of the Committee also advanced sums of money as loans, thus enabling the purchase of the new premises needed for the hall of residence. From the sums collected later through subscriptions, the money offered in advance by the members of the Committee was reimbursed, all furnishings were covered, and another storey was added to the purchased building, thus increasing the number of places.³⁹ The new hall of residence was located at No. 6 Avram Iancu Street and it began operating there in October 1922. A canteen for the female students was already opened at this address in December 1921.⁴⁰

As previously mentioned, life in the hall of residence was organised based on the Code approved by the University Senate.⁴¹ According to it, the female students admitted to the hall of residence were those who were committed to serious study and to complying with the Society's Statutes and the Code of the Hall of Residence. They were provided with accommodation, a range of services, heating, lighting, and breakfast. The fee that the students had to pay for these was set, in 1921, at 40 lei per month for accommodation, services, heating, lighting, and 2 lei per day for breakfast.

³⁶ The students' halls of residence in Cluj were subject to the University's direct authority, which exercised its power through the directors of residence halls, The Halls of Residence Committee and the University Senate. The residence halls were managed according to the laws in force and to the university codes. "The Halls of Residence Committee" managed the students' residence halls and was formed of a president, appointed by the University Senate, of University's ordinary professors, one appointed and one substitute professor from each faculty. New elections for the members of the Halls of Residence Committee were held every year. See, *Statutele "Căminurilor Studențești" ale Universității din Cluj* (Cluj: Tipografia națională Societatea Anonimă, 1929), 3-4.

³⁷ ANRSJC, collection *Universitatea din Cluj. Procese verbale ale Senatului universitar 1920/1921*, file 391 - PV. 672-1920/1921, *Procesul Verbal din ședința Senatului Universitar din 31 ian. 1921*, f. 71.

³⁸ ANRSJC, collection *Universitatea din Cluj. Procese verbale ale Senatului universitar 1920/1921*, file 391 - PV. 2225, 1920/1921 - *Procesul Verbal din ședința Senatului Universitar din 15 iun. 1921*, f. 221.

³⁹ PA Glavce, Ion Grințescu, *Viața și opera naturalistei Alice Grințescu - Rodrigue* (Bucharest: 1960), f. 2-3.

⁴⁰ ANRSJC, collection *Tribunalul Cluj Sec. I 1664/1926*, file Asociația pentru Ocrotirea Studentelor Universitare Cluj - *Memoriu prevăzut la art. 99 din Legea pentru persoanele juridice*, f. 9.

⁴¹ ANRSJC, collection *Tribunalul Cluj Sec. I 1664/1926*, file Asociația pentru Ocrotirea Studentelor Universitare Cluj, f. 2.

Several articles of the Code established behavioural norms that the students were required to follow. The students were obliged to “give the proper respect and obedience to the Managing Committee and to the Administrator.” In relation to the other residents, they were obliged to behave kindly and decently. Visitors could be received only in a designated room and between 3 and 5 p.m. Men were allowed only if they were relatives and had been presented to the administrator in advance. The doors of the hall of residence were closed overnight. Leaving the premises after 9 p.m. for concerts, theatre, or conferences required the approval of the administrator, was allowed only in groups, and no more than once a week. Lastly, an absence of one or more days from the hall of residence had to be approved by the Committee. When leaving and returning, the student was obliged to appear before the administrator. The main punitive measure for breaking these provisions or for failing to pay the fee in time was the immediate expulsion from the hall of residence.⁴²

Each student signed the Code, thereby pledging to follow it, a mandatory condition for admission to the hall of residence. Its contents may seem extremely restrictive today, leaving the impression of a soldierly life. However, especially in private halls of residence, more clearly defined principles of cohabitation and stricter control over the residents’ lives could be observed, including requirements regarding calm behaviour, order, and cleanliness. The aforementioned Code of the “Spiru Haret” Private Female Students’ Hall of Residence in the capital is relevant in this context, as it may have inspired the regulation of life and cohabitation at the hall of residence in Cluj.⁴³ Moreover, even if we are not yet certain, it is very likely that the private establishment for female students in the capital might have served as a model for the one in Cluj.

Opened on 1 December 1920, the Female Students’ Hall of Residence in Cluj operated without interruption until 30 June 1925, offering shelter to 174 students over its five years of activity. A total of 38 students were accommodated in the academic year 1920-1921, 40 students in 1921-1922, 32 students in 1922-1923, 34 students in 1923-1924, and 30 students in 1924-1925.⁴⁴

The canteen, which also operated until 30 June 1925, distributed a total of 74,748 lunches and dinners, broken down by academic year as follows: in 1921-1922, 13,651 lunches and dinners at 10 lei/day; in 1922-1923, 23,785 lunches and dinners at 300 lei/month; in 1923-1924, 19,713

⁴² ANRSJC, collection *Tribunalul Cluj* Sec. I 1664/1926, file Asociația pentru Ocrotirea Studentelor Universitare Cluj - *Regulament*, f. 44.

⁴³ The daily schedule was also strictly regulated in the case of the “Spiru Haret” Private Female Students’ Hall of Residence in Bucharest: “We wake up at quarter to seven; after half an hour we take tea or coffee, read in the study hall or in the library, and at 10 a.m. we receive sandwiches. The feeble girls receive a steak, in accordance with the requirements of the high-calorie regimen. Lunch is served between 12:30 and 1:30 p.m. and it always consists of 4 courses. In the afternoon we attend classes, work in laboratories, libraries, at the Academy, at the Foundation, or at conferences. [...] In the evening, we have dinner at quarter to eight. At eight the gate closes... [...] Airtight... However, we are allowed to go out twice a week, to the theatre, but only in groups,” see Țik, “La un cămin de studente. Căminul ‘Spiru Haret’,” 6, 7 and 12.

⁴⁴ ANRSJC, collection *Tribunalul Cluj* Sec. I 1664/1926, file Asociația pentru Ocrotirea Studentelor Universitare Cluj - *Memoriu prevăzut la art. 99 din Legea pentru persoanele juridice*, f. 9.

lunches and dinners at 500 lei/month, and in 1924-1925, 17,599 lunches and dinners at 600 lei/month.⁴⁵

The Hall of Residence Committee published various announcements in the press regarding the number of available places, the services offered, the documents required for enrolment and the eligibility conditions. According to an announcement from 25 January 1921, the students who wanted to be admitted to the hall of residence had to submit the applications to the Hall Administration. The admitted students were to bring sheets, pillows, and bed linens from home. The students who were receiving a scholarship were "obliged to live in the hall of residence".⁴⁶ In the academic year 1921-1922, the enrolment application had to be accompanied by a set of documents: the Baccalaureate certificate for the first-year students or the Course Register for those in higher years; a medical certificate; a declaration signed by the student, in which she disclosed her family situation and financial means.⁴⁷ This was because the students admitted to the hall of residence were, first, those in their final year of study; next, those whose parents were financially burdened and had many children in school; and finally, the students with the best academic results.⁴⁸ The same requirements were maintained for the academic year 1922-1923.⁴⁹ In addition to submitting the Baccalaureate certificate, the first-year candidates had to state the faculty they intended to enrol in on their application, while students in higher years had to prove that they had passed at least half of their exams.⁵⁰ In the academic year 1923-1924, only students from the Faculties of Medicine and Sciences were admitted to the hall of residence. The canteen admitted students from any faculty, provided they were officially enrolled. The residents were required to have their meals at the canteen.⁵¹ In the academic year 1924-1925, students from the Faculties of Medicine and Sciences were also given priority for admission to the hall of residence. Moreover, the canteen was open to all university students and to students from other higher education institutions, provided they could show proof of enrolment and regular course attendance. The residents were required to have their meals at the canteen. To conclude, admission to the hall of residence was based on an assessment of applications, carried out by the Committee, which gave priority to students in higher years, those with exceptional academic results, and those with a precarious financial situation.⁵²

The hall of residence fulfilled its purpose honourably until the year 1925, when the press reported that although residence halls had reopened for students after the cessation of their

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ *Înfrățirea*, I, no. 133 (January 25, 1921): 4.

⁴⁷ "Căminul studenților din Cluj. Locurile libere - Condițiunile de admitere," *Patria*, III, no. 184, (August 20, 1921): 2; "Condițiile de primire la Căminul Studenților," *Înfrățirea*, II, no. 293, (August 11, 1921): 2.

⁴⁸ "Căminul studenților din Cluj," *Viitorul*, XV, no. 4031, (August 22, 1921): 4.

⁴⁹ "Căminul Studenților din Cluj," *Patria*, IV, no. 192, (September 5, 1922): 2.

⁵⁰ "De la Căminul Studenților din Cluj," *Înfrățirea*, III, no. 605, (September 6, 1922): 7.

⁵¹ "Înscrierea la Căminul studenților din Cluj," *Viitorul*, XVI, no. 4650, (September 8, 1923): 4.

⁵² "Bursele Căminului Studenților din Cluj," *Înfrățirea*, IV, no. 1145, (August 6, 1924): 3; "Căminul studenților," *Patria*, VI, no. 163, (August 5, 1924): 2.

strike,⁵³ the so-called *Grițescu Hall of Residence* remained closed. There were indications of plans to dissolve it and sell the building.⁵⁴ The academic year 1924-1925 was, therefore, the last period of operation for this hall of residence.

According to the balance sheet for the last year of activity, 1924-1925, in terms of income, the society started with a cash balance of 59,753.75 lei, to which various sums from the property and interest, the liquidation of certain inventory items, and the subsidy of 10,000 lei from the Albina Bank etc. were added, for a total of 22,123.40 lei. To these, the payments made by students upon enrolment, for various services (bath, luggage) etc. were added, amounting to 202,680 lei. Thus, the total income reached 284,557.15 lei. Moreover, the Ministry of State Domains donated 20 tonnes of firewood to the hall of residence. Expenses included: the maintenance of the premises, furniture and household articles, heating, lighting, salaries, piped water, food (meat and fat, fruits and vegetables, colonial goods, butter, eggs, cheese, bread, milk) etc., amounting to 276,384.85 lei. The Society was left with a cash balance of 8,172.30 lei.⁵⁵

According to the Report of the Female Students' Hall of Residence for 1924-1925, the hall of residence did not operate in April due to the student strike. The canteen served 6,822 breakfasts and 17,599 lunches and dinners. The average cost of food was 16.41 lei a day/student. The average maintenance cost for the months of April, May, and June increased due to the reduced number of students caused by the student strike. All maintenance expenses for the hall of residence were covered by the fees paid by the residents, leaving a surplus of 3,184 lei. The operating and outfitting expenses of the premises were relatively high due to the hot water installation in the kitchen. Barrels and glass containers were also purchased for making preserves. Salary expenses were low, as they covered only the employees' wages. The positions of director, administrator, secretary, economist, and auditor were held free of charge by women in the Committee. The hall of residence had a debt of 300,000 lei with Albina Bank, contracted upon purchasing the building, of which 54,800 lei was repaid in 1924-1925.⁵⁶

The transformation of the Female Students' Hall of Residence Committee of Cluj into the Female Students' Welfare Association

As we have mentioned above, in June 1925, the Female Students' Hall of Residence ceased its activity. We do not know exactly what the rationale behind its closing was. It is possible that it was

⁵³ For more information on student movements in Cluj between 1923 and 1925, see Maria Ghitta, *Clujul universitar și geneza noului naționalism (1919-1925)*, doctoral thesis, (Cluj-Napoca: 2020).

⁵⁴ "30 studențe rămase pe drumuri - Ce fac autoritățile universitare," *Patria*, VII, no. 55, (March 11, 1925): 2.

⁵⁵ ANRSJC, collection *Tribunalul Cluj* Sec. I 1664/1926, file Asociația pentru Ocrotirea Studentelor Universitare Cluj - *Bilanțul Căminului Studentelor din Cluj 1924-1925*, f. 10-11.

⁵⁶ ANRSJC, collection *Tribunalul Cluj* Sec. I 1664/1926, file Asociația pentru Ocrotirea Studentelor Universitare Cluj - *Dare de seamă despre mersul Căminului Studentelor din Cluj / strada Avram Iancu 6/ pe anul școlar 1924-1925*, f. 14.

related to the fact that, in the meantime, the University had opened its own hall of residence for female students.

The building in which the first Romanian hall of residence for female students in Cluj operated, at number 6 Avram Iancu Street, was put up for auction. According to the announcement published in the "Patria" newspaper on 16 June 1925, the auction was to take place on 30 June at 5 p.m., on the premises of the residence hall. The opening price was 1,800,000 lei. It was emphasised that: "the building is completely free on 10 July 1925 and can be used by the buyer from this date." Detailed information could be obtained from Alice Grințescu.⁵⁷

Although the hall of residence was closed, the Society was not dissolved. At the end of 1925, the association had 12 members, who were also part of the Committee: Dimitrie Călugăreanu, Ioan Lupaș, Victor Papilian, Alice Grințescu, Nora Lemenyi, Ioana Gabor, Teodora Manolescu, Maria Șerban, Sidonia Docan, Sofia Anastasiu, Alexandrina Urechia, and Veturia Borza. This shows that the Committee underwent changes, both through departures and the co-opting of new members. The new members of the Committee, who had not been part of the original founding committee, were: Ioana Gabor, teacher at the Girls' Normal School, Teodora Manolescu, teacher at the Girls' High School, Sofia Anastasiu, chairwoman of the Cluj regional branch of the Society for the Protection of War Orphans and the wife of a general, and Maria Șerban, who was active in various women's societies in Cluj (Caritatea Society, Orthodox Women's Society, University Women's Association) and the wife of Mihail Șerban, university professor at the Academy of Higher Agronomic Studies of Cluj.⁵⁸

In this context, on 29 January 1926, on behalf of the Female Students' Hall of Residence Committee of Cluj, Alice Grințescu submitted an application for the registration of the association in the Register of legal persons.⁵⁹ The application was approved by the Cluj Court on 18 March 1926.⁶⁰

This was followed by the change of the society's name to the Female University Students' Welfare Association of Cluj and the amendment of its Statutes, which was approved on 22 June 1927, then by the request for and the obtaining of legal personality, on 20 October 1927.⁶¹ An important prior moment was the general meeting of the association on 14 February 1927. This meeting decided to establish a leadership composed of: Alice Grințescu as chairwoman, Nora Lemenyi as secretary, and Sidonia Docan and Veturia Borza as auditors. Alice Grințescu proposed the admission of 8 additional women in order to reach a number of 20 members, in accordance with the requirements of the Law on the recognition of legal persons.⁶² Consequently, the

⁵⁷ *Patria*, VII, no. 128, (June 16, 1925): 2.

⁵⁸ ANRSJC, collection *Tribunalul Cluj* Sec. I 1664/1926, file Asociația pentru Ocrotirea Studentelor Universitare Cluj - *Memoriu prevăzut la art. 99 din Legea pentru persoanele juridice*, f. 8.

⁵⁹ ANRSJC, collection *Tribunalul Cluj* Sec. I 1664/1926, file Asociația pentru Ocrotirea Studentelor Universitare Cluj, f. 2.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, f. 20.

⁶¹ PA Glavce, *Asociația pentru ocrotirea studentelor universitare Cluj* (Cluj: Institutul de Arte Grafice "Ardealul," 1928), 3.

⁶² Law no. 21 of 6 February 1924 on legal persons (Associations and Foundations) was promulgated by the High Royal Decree no. 452 from 1924 and published in "Monitorul Oficial," Part I, no. 27 of 6 February 1924.

association co-opted: the teachers Eugenia Belu, Valeria Grimm, Leontina Nemeș, Maria Papadopol, Virginia Stan, and Victoria Bădescu, then Raluca Ripan, associate professor at the University, and Valeria Bologa, physician. During the same meeting, Alice Grințescu also presented the draft for the amendment of the Statutes.⁶³

According to the new Statutes, Article 1 stipulated the change of name from the Female Students' Hall of Residence Committee of Cluj to the Female Students' Welfare Association, an association with legal personality. Its purpose, as defined in the Statutes, was to provide female university students in Cluj with monetary aid in the form of open-ended and interest-free loans, with the moral obligation of the students to repay the amounts received as soon as possible. It was also mentioned that if, after fulfilling the justified requests, there were funds remaining at the end of the fiscal year, it could be donated to other societies with similar purposes.⁶⁴

Regarding the available financial means, the Statutes specified that the association managed a fund of 1,400,000 lei, originating from the sale of the former female students' hall of residence building, which had belonged to the Female Students' Hall of Residence Committee of Cluj. This fund was inalienable, with only the interest being used.⁶⁵

The association had 20 members; 12 were members of the former Female Students' Hall of Residence Committee of Cluj, from whom the members of the association's leadership were selected, and 8 additional co-opted members. It was also specified that their activity was unremunerated. The governing bodies of the association were the General Assembly and the Managing Committee. As the supreme body, the General Assembly was composed of all the members and it was convened annually or whenever deemed necessary. It made decisions regarding the composition of the Committee and controlled its administration. It was the only one that could decide to dissolve the association or to change its purpose. The Managing Committee was composed of the 12 members of the former Female Students' Hall of Residence Committee and retained its previous duties. The association was represented before the authorities by the chair or, in their absence, by the vice-chair.⁶⁶

The position of chair of the Female University Students' Welfare Association of Cluj was held by Alice Grințescu. Ioan Lupaș held the position of vice-chair, Nora Lemenyi that of secretary, and Sidonia Docan, Veturia Borza, and Alexandrina Urechia served as auditors. All of them were founding members of the former Female Students' Hall of Residence Committee of Cluj.⁶⁷ Alongside them, in 1927, the list of co-opted members also included: Raluca Ripan, Elena Negru,

⁶³ ANRSJC, collection *Tribunalul Cluj* Sec. I 1664/1926, file Asociația pentru Ocrotirea Studentelor Universitare Cluj - *Copie. Proces-Verbal*, f. 40.

⁶⁴ ANRSJC, collection *Tribunalul Cluj* Sec. I 1664/1926, file Asociația pentru Ocrotirea Studentelor Universitare Cluj - *Modificarea Statutelor. Copie*, f. 43.

⁶⁵ Ibid.; PA Glavce, *Asociația pentru ocrotirea studentelor universitare Cluj* (1928), 4.

⁶⁶ ANRSJC, collection *Tribunalul Cluj* Sec. I 1664/1926, file Asociația pentru Ocrotirea Studentelor Universitare Cluj - *Modificarea Statutelor. Copie*, f. 43 (verso).

⁶⁷ PA Glavce, *Asociația pentru ocrotirea studentelor universitare Cluj* (1928), 4; PA Glavce, *Asociația pentru ocrotirea studentelor universitare Cluj*, (Cluj: Institutul de Arte Grafice "Ardealul," 1932), 4.

Valeria Bologa, Victoria Median, Ioana Gabor, Maria Giuglea, Valeria Grimm, Eugenia Belu, Victoria Bădescu, Virginia Stan, Marioara Șerban, then Adrian Ostrogovich and Titu Gane.⁶⁸

An analysis of the profile of the members and leadership of the society during this period highlights the similarity between the group's cohesive factors and those present at the establishment of the Female Students' Hall of Residence Committee. Therefore, it can be observed that all female members of the society held university degrees, some from universities abroad (Alice Grințescu and Nora Lemenyi in Geneva, Marioara Șerban at universities in Budapest, Munich, Uppsala, Oslo, and the Sorbonne), some even held doctorates in: sciences - Alice Grințescu, letters - Nora Lemenyi, chemistry - Raluca Ripan and Victoria Median, medicine and surgery - Elena Negru. The majority of the society's members were professionals: Ioana Gabor, Maria Giuglea, Valeria Grimm, Eugenia Belu, Victoria Bădescu, and Virginia Stan were teachers in pre-university education, while Elena Negru, Valeria Bologa, Raluca Ripan, and Victoria Median, taught in university education. Others were fully devoted to social work, being active in other women's societies, such as: Alice Grințescu and Nora Lemenyi in the leadership of the University Women's Association, Sidonia Docan as the chairwoman of the local branch of the Red Cross, Maria Șerban in the University Women's Association, in the Caritatea Society, and in the Orthodox Women's Society, soon also becoming chairwoman of the Cluj branch of the Charity Fund of H.R.H. Princess Elena.

Moreover, a large number of the members of this society were wives of academics: Elena Negru was the wife of physician Dimitrie Negru, Valeria Bologa, wife of physician Valeriu Lucian Bologa, Maria Giuglea, wife of philologist and Romance linguist Gheorghe Giuglea, Valeria Grimm, wife of literary historian and translator Petre Grimm, Maria Șerban, wife of Mihail Șerban, university professor at the Academy of Higher Agronomic Studies of Cluj, Alice Grințescu, wife of botanist Ioan Grințescu, Veturia Borza, wife of botanist Alexandru Borza, and Alexandrina Urechia, wife of physician Constantin I. Urechia.

The society also included three university professors: historian Ioan Lupaș, who had been part of the leadership from the very beginning, even since the time of the Female Students' Hall of Residence Committee; Adrian Ostrogovich, chemistry professor at the Faculty of Sciences; and Titu Gane, physician, and paediatrics professor at the Faculty of Medicine. The professional relationships among the members of the society seem to have also played a role in the group's cohesion. For instance, Elena Negru was a paediatrician, associate professor at the Faculty of Medicine, and collaborator of Titu Gane; Valeria Bologa, physician, another collaborator of Professor Titu Gane; Victoria Median, chemist, was a collaborator of Professor Adrian Ostrogovich; Raluca Ripan was a chemist, associate professor at the Faculty of Medicine and Pharmacy, and, later, also at the Faculty of Sciences. Furthermore, the fields of science and medicine continued to be the most represented among the society's members, both through their own education and professional activity for most members, and, in some cases, through the husbands' fields of activity. From this perspective, besides Professor Adrian Ostrogovich, Raluca Ripan and Victoria

⁶⁸ PA Glavce, *Asociația pentru ocrotirea studentelor universitare Cluj* (1928), 3; PA Glavce, *Asociația pentru ocrotirea studentelor universitare Cluj* (1932), 4.

Median also had professional affinities with the sciences, as did Alice Grințescu, through her specialised training and her husband's field of activity, and Veturia Borza through her husband's specialisation. Then, in addition to Titu Gane, Elena Negru and Valeria Bologa had professional connections to the medical field through their studies, as did Sidonia Docan, and Alexandrina Urechia through her husband's specialisation.

There was also a group of individuals with affinities for the humanities. Alongside historian Ioan Lupaș, others who can be included in this group are Nora Lemenyi and Marioara Șerban, who had studied philology, and Maria Giuglea and Valeria Grimm through their husbands' specialisations.⁶⁹ Thus, the members of the society had connections to academic disciplines that, during the period under consideration, were pursued by most female students.⁷⁰

From among all the members, the one who stood out as a leader, in her capacity as chairwoman, was Alice Grințescu. She continued to be one of the most involved members in the activity of the society, overseeing various aspects. Therefore, not incidentally, the students' loan requests had to be submitted to Alice Grințescu (at No. 7 Calea Mănăștur, from Monday till Saturday, between 12 and 1 p.m.).

The students' loan requests had to be accompanied by a supporting document attesting to the parents' financial situation and by a certificate from the Dean's Office of the faculty where the applicant was studying, indicating the exams passed and the results obtained. Monthly loan requests were accepted until 22 November, whereas one-time loan requests were accepted throughout the entire academic year. The loans were interest-free and open-ended but had to be repaid to the association based on a written commitment.⁷¹ The sums granted to the students ranged between 1,000 and 26,200 lei.⁷²

Between 1925 and 1928, 82 students received financial aid, (25 from the Faculty of Sciences, 24 from the Faculty of Letters, 21 from the Faculty of Medicine, and one from the Faculty of Law), amounting to 289,800 lei. In addition, 11 ill students received assistance totalling 33,000 lei.⁷³ By 1931,

⁶⁹ Ghizela Cosma, *Din istoria Clujului la feminin. Crochiuri biografice*, 44-48 69-75, 84-87, 101-108; Cosma, "Activismul feminin românesc în Clujul interbelic", 73, 79; Lucian Nastasă, *Intimitatea amfiteatrelor. Ipostaze din viața privată a universitarilor „literari” (1864-1948)*, (Cluj-Napoca: Limes, 2010), 104, 135; Cecilia Cârja, Ioana-Mihaela Bonda, "Alma Mater la feminin. Doamnele Universității Românești din Cluj în perioada interbelică," *Anuarul Institutului de Istorie 'George Barițiu' - Series Historica - Supliment*, LX (no. 1, 2021): 197-200; Maria Vaida, "Femeile române și Marea Unire," *Curtea de la Argeș*, IX, no. 12 (97) (December 2018): 12; Florea Marin, *Vieți dedicate omului. Personalități medicale clujene. Valeriu Lucian. Bologa*, 3, (Cluj-Napoca: Dacia, 1995): 39-46; *Anuarul Universității Regele Ferdinand I Cluj pe anul școlar 1928-1929* (Cluj: Tipografia Națională S.A., 1929): 233; *Anuarul Universității Regele Ferdinand I Cluj* (Cluj: Institutul de Arte Grafice "Ardealul," 1931): 241; *Clujeni ai secolului XX. Dicționar esențial*, 50, 124, 182, 237, 327.

⁷⁰ Kirițescu, "Problema educației dirijate" în legătură cu suprapopulația universitară și șomajul intelectual, 23.

⁷¹ "În ajutorul studenților," *Patria*, XII, no. 244, (November 14, 1930): 4.

⁷² PA Glavce, *Asociația pentru ocrotirea studentelor universitare Cluj* (1932), 6.

⁷³ PA Glavce, *Asociația pentru ocrotirea studentelor universitare Cluj* (1928), 6.

the number of aided students reached 129, the loaned amount rising to 600,506 lei, to which the aid of 33,000 lei for ill students was added, thus bringing the total to 633,506 lei.⁷⁴

The statistical data recorded in the Society's 1928 Report, which had been collected since 1925, also indicate another aspect. After the dissolution of the female students' hall of residence, the society immediately switched to another form of assisting the young women, even though the change of the society's name, the new Statutes, and other legal formalities would not be completed until 1927.

However, during the course of the students' financial support program, it was observed that they were not in a hurry to repay the loans received from the Association. Thus, after three years of activity, in 1928, of the 289,800 lei lent to the students, only 7,500 lei had been repaid.⁷⁵ After six years of activity, by 1931, of the 600,506 lei lent, only 41,400 lei had been repaid. Under these circumstances, the Committee thought it necessary to replace simple receipts with bills of exchange in order to pursue students who defaulted on repayment.⁷⁶

In 1935, due to the unrepaid loans, this program dedicated to poor students was suspended. Several press releases were published, stating that the total amount of unrepaid loans had reached 708,400 lei, and that, faced with such a default, the students who had benefited from the loans were asked to repay them, even in monthly instalments. Otherwise, the committee threatened to publish the list of debtors, emphasising that the students who could no longer receive such loans were the ones who would lose out.⁷⁷

After 1935, no further information appeared regarding the Female University Students' Welfare Association of Cluj, suggesting the cessation of its activity. A hypothetical reason that can be considered is, as we have shown, the lack of reciprocity with regard to compliance with the agreement between the association and the students who had received loans, which led to the depletion of the funds. Moreover, in 1936, Alice Grințescu left Cluj and moved with her husband to Bucharest, which could also probably be linked to the cessation of the society's activity.

Conclusion

The Female Students' Hall of Residence Committee of Cluj was established in response to the accommodation difficulties encountered by female students when coming to the University, considering that, at that time, it did not have a hall of residence for them. The steering committee, united around the goal of opening a hall of residence for the female students, managed to achieve its purpose. It also added a canteen to the hall of residence, the establishments being operational until 1925, when they were closed. However, the Committee redirected its efforts, continuing to focus on supporting female students, by granting loans to cover various needs. In this context, the

⁷⁴ PA Glavce, *Asociația pentru ocrotirea studentelor universitare Cluj* (1932), 6.

⁷⁵ PA Glavce, *Asociația pentru ocrotirea studentelor universitare Cluj* (1928), 7.

⁷⁶ Ibid., 6.

⁷⁷ "O hotărâre a Asociației femeilor române din Cluj," *Dimineața*, XXXI, no. 10.096, (February 4, 1935); "De la Ocrotirea studentelor din Cluj," *Universul*, LII, no. 37 (February 7, 1935): 3.

Female Students' Hall of Residence Committee became the Female University Students' Welfare Association of Cluj, adopting new Statutes, in accordance with its new programmatic purpose.

The steering committee was composed mostly of women. Over time, Alice Grințescu had established herself as its leader. She was surrounded by dedicated women, who all directed their efforts and energy towards other women. It was an effort sustained by educated women for the future educated women whom the university would produce.

In Cluj, the associative initiatives discussed in this study were part of the rich range of women's initiatives through their associations, with the majority of the 11 societies of Romanian women active in 1929 pursuing exclusively charitable objectives, or sometimes combining them with other purposes.⁷⁸

In accordance with its stated purpose, our study aimed to complete the existing monographic studies on women's societies in interwar Cluj, given that only some of them currently have such historical reconstructions, while others remain unexamined, areas of historical investigation open to future historiographical endeavours.

⁷⁸ *Clujul. Viața culturală românească* (Cluj: Ed. Ligii Culturale, Secțiunea Cluj, 1929), 113-116.