

## **Scientific Synthetical Report for the entire Project**

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*"The Saint of Montparnasse" From Document to Myth: a Century of Constantin Brancusi Scholarship (October 2011- September 30, 2016)*

www.arhiva-brezianu.ro

In 2011 the Institute of Art History „G. Oprescu” launched the project *"The Saint of Montparnasse" From Document to Myth: a Century of Constantin Brancusi Scholarship*, project under the symbolical patronage of Barbu Brezianu Centre for Brancusi Studies (Centrul de Studii Brâncușiene “Barbu Brezianu”). **The project had as its main goals the research and organization of art historian Barbu Brezianu’s archive**, donated to Institute by his son, the writer Andrei Brezianu.

The team fulfilled the objectives and activities of the project, despite the fact that the initial schedule was affected by several budget reconfigurations and payment delays.

Since 2014 the project’s director PhD. Sr. Researcher Ioana Vlasiu retired from the Institute. Her duties and responsibilities have been taken over by the PhD. Sr. Researcher Adrian-Silvan Ionescu, Director of the Institute of Art History “G. Oprescu”.

### **The archive and its inventory**

The organization and classification of Barbu Brezianu’s archive containing books and various types of documents (press excerpts, notes, working drafts, letters, photos, a small number of videos and audiotapes) started in October 2011. The research team invited to its working sessions librarian specialists and archivists in order to identify the best solutions, not only for classification, but also for adequate conservation and storing of the library and archive. A difficulty occurred in respect of the purchase of appropriate furniture taking into account that the current legislation did not allow it.

After an incipient partition of books and documents in general categories, the items of the library and the documents passed through a more detailed process of classification. Every team member had his own task in research field, besides working together in structuring and organizing the archive.

Irina Carabas, Ruxanda Beldiman, Virginia Barbu, Corina Teaca, Olivia Nitis, Ioana VlasIU initiated the files inventory, while Maria Anghelescu, Antoaneta Alexandru and Marina Aposteanu drawn up the inventory of the library (1811 titles), and the documents which came along within many books preserved in 89 files. The process of archiving was completed in 2012. The other sector consisting in 236 thematic files was kept in the original form, dressed by Barbu Brezianu himself. Each file was endowed with a list of contents carefully recording each item. For a better handling and access to the archive the team decided to store the files in boxes ordered by number. Books were included into the on-line library's catalogue of The Institute of Art "G. Oprescu" with the mention "Fond BB", for keeping the trace of their former owner.

## **Documentary Files**

The material to be found in the archive and the library brought to the light the diversity of research lines pursued by Barbu Brezianu: Brancusi's relations with his precursors, for instance with the French sculptor Auguste Rodin; Brancusi's relations with his Romanian friends (Victor Popp, Ion Gheorghian) maintained also by correspondence that revealed artist's personality; detailed studies on Brancusi's sculpture starting with its materiality (see the dossier about Pietrari and correspondence regarding the stone used in the ensemble from Targu-Jiu), up to the general historical and cultural context of his work. In addition to materials related to Constantin Brancusi, files includes documents on Barbu Brezianu's activity as a researcher at the Institute of Art History, such as reports on his scientific activity, travel accounts, reviews on art history publications required by various publishing houses.

A different category of files refers to Barbu Brezianu's scientific inquiries in relation to various Romanian artists: Nicolae Grigorescu (interesting documents about the mural painting in the Church of Puchenii Mari, its state of conservation and its successive restorations), Constantin Lecca, Nicolae Tonitza, Cornel Medrea, Stefan Luchian, that demonstrate his interest in certain major figures of the Romanian art. The files represent also a rich source of

information regarding the creative side of the art historian's work, which emphasize his immense scientific curiosity and determination in his search for valid sources and answers.

## **Letters**

The letters received by Barbu Brezianu (around 700) have been registered and alphabetically classified. Over 1700 pages of correspondence have been scanned and are now available in digital format. Many letters are regarding Barbu Brezianu's professional relationship with officials and institutions as: The National Museum of Modern Art, The Centre Georges Pompidou in Paris, occurred with the occasion of the Brancusi's first retrospective exhibition in 1995, The Thames and Hudson Publishing House, a relevant correspondence with many remarkable figures of art history, widely known specialist in modern art, modern sculpture and/or in Brancusi's work ( among them Herbert Read, Sidney Geist, Margit Rowell, Frederic Teja-Bach, Doina Lemny, Ionel Jianu).

The correspondence received by Barbu Brezianu from art historian and critic Ionel Jianu, exiled to Paris since 1961, was transcribed by all team members and partly annotated. Two researches of the team were assigned to process the manuscript and prepare for the publication in September 2016. Part of Brezianu's correspondence has been presented in several workshops organized at Institute of Art History „G. Oprescu” (workshops scheduled within the regular scientific meetings organized by the Institute under the title *The Wednesday Meetings*).

## **Photographies**

Many documentary files contain a consistent amount of photos taken by various professional and amateur photographers used by Barbu Brezianu as research tools. In addition, a number of photos were donated together with the archive. They were separately stored and archived and partly scanned. Some of them are posted on the project site - [www.arihiva-brezianu.ro](http://www.arihiva-brezianu.ro).

## **Research activity**

### **1. Conferences and colloquia**

During the project, the team members participated in a number of colloquia and conferences with the purpose of presenting the project and their research related to Barbu Brezianu archive. The research group also participated in national and international conferences dedicated to sculpture, Brancusi's work, or to subjects of wider interest as the Avant-garde and the European modernism.

The most important event organized in the frame of the project was the international conference "After Brancusi" in October 2013 that counted guests from exquisite institutions like Centre Pompidou, Paris, Université Michel de Montaigne, Bordeaux, Henry Moore Institute, Leeds, Leeds University, Zentralinstitut für Kunstgeschichte, Munich, etc.

## **Participation in conferences and colloquia in Romania**

**Ioana Vlasiu, "Centrul de studii brâncușiene *Barbu Brezianu*",** a project of Institute of Art History „G. Oprescu”. At the commemorative session “Constantin Brancusi. New Documentaion Sources”, The Romanian Academy, February 16<sup>th</sup>, 2012

**“Brancusi – photo, film.”** Colloquium organized by the Institute of Art History “G. Oprescu” in collaboration with University of Arts Bucharest, October 31<sup>st</sup>, 2012. Participants: Ioana Vlasiu, Irina Carabas, Virginia Barbu, Olivia Nitis, Corina Teaca, Ruxanda Beldiman Elena Dumitrescu, and Alexandra Croitoru.

**“Brancusi, our contemporary”.** Conference held by Ph.D. Doina Lemny (The Museum of Modern Art, The Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris), Institute of Art History “G. Oprescu”, November 22<sup>th</sup>, 2012

**After Brancusi.** International Conference, Bucharest and Targu-Jiu, October 4<sup>th</sup>, 2013 organized in partnership with The National University of Arts, Bucharest. From France were invited Doina Lemny (Centre Pompidou, Paris) and Adriana Sotropa (Université Michel de Montaigne, Bordeaux), from United Kingdom - Jonathan Wood (Henry Moore Institute, Leeds) and Alexandra Parigoris (Leeds University), from Germany - Christian Fuhrmeister (Zentralinstitut fuer Kunstgeschichte, Munich) and Peter Jacobi (artist). Participants from Romania: Ileana Pintilie (West University, Timisoara), Cristian Nae (University of Arts “George Enescu”, Jassy). Ruxandra Demetrescu and Cristian Velescu (National University of the Arts, Bucharest), Magda Predescu and Magda Radu (National Museum of Contemporary Art, Bucharest), Alexandra Croitoru (artist, Bucharest), and of course, the team members: Ioana Vlasiu, Ruxanda Beldiman, Irina Carabas, Virginia Barbu, Olivia Nitis, Corina Teaca.

**Ioana Vlasiu, “The Centre for Constantin Brancusi Studies “Barbu Brezianu”, a project**  
The Institute of Art History “G. Oprescu”, Targu Jiu, March 17<sup>th</sup>, 2013.

**Ioana Vlasiu, “Vida Geza – popular ethos, style and craftsmanship”,** Romanian Academy, May 2013.

**Virginia Barbu, “Barbu Brezianu and the historiography of art”,** Targu-Jiu, October 27<sup>th</sup>, 2013.

**Adrian-Silvan Ionescu, “Preaiubiti parinti...- impresii din America in corespondenta lui Carol Stork 1877-1880”** (My dearest parents... impressions from America in the letters of Carol Storck 1877-1880), presentation at the commemorative conference “Stefan Luchian si epoca sa”, Romanian Academy, June 28<sup>th</sup> 2016.

### **Presentations within *The Wednesday Meetings* organized by The Institute of Art History “G. Oprescu”:**

Ioana Vlasiu, “**Out of the correspondence of Barbu Brezianu. Letters from Eric Shanes and the dispute around the Endless Column’s restoration at Targu-Jiu**”. February 27<sup>th</sup>, 2013.

Corina Teaca, “**The correspondence of Barbu Brezianu with Thames and Hudson Publishing House**”, February 27<sup>th</sup>, 2013.

Virginia Barbu, “**George Enescu in the archive Barbu Brezianu**, June 26<sup>th</sup>, 2013.

Olivia Nitis, “**Brancusi in correspondence: the importance of the source**”, June 26<sup>th</sup>, 2013.

Ruxanda Beldiman, “**The correspondence of Barbu Brezianu with outstanding figures of Romanian exile and the details regarding the publication of Brezianu’s monograph at Thames and Hudson Publishing House.**”, June 26<sup>th</sup>, 2013

Olivia Nitis, Irina Carabas, “**About editing and publishing the volume “After Brancusi”,** April 29, 2015

Irina Carabas-Olaru: **Barbu Brezianu and the avant-garde scholarship**

Virginia Barbu: **From the Correspondence of Barbu Brezianu - Sidney Geist.**

Ruxanda Beldiman: **Pages of history of Institute’s Department of modern art** (Barbu Brezianu’s activity within the Institute)

Olivia Nitis: **Barbu Brezianu archive and the contemporary art archive**

Corina Teaca: **Theodor Pallady in Barbu Brezianu archive**

September 2016

Virginia Barbu, Corina Teacă, **Launching the volume *Mărturiile toamnei. Corespondență Ionel Jianu – Barbu Brezianu***, Ed. UNARTE, Bucuresti, 2016.

## Workshops

**“Retorica si memorie. Sculptura romaneasca de for public”** (Rhetoric and Memory. The Romanian public sculpture) , May 31<sup>st</sup>, 2016. Participants: Ruxanda Beldiman, Irina Carabas, Virginia Barbu, Olivia Nitis, Adrian Guta (National University of the Arts, Bucharest), Marilena Preda-Sanc (artist, National University of the Arts, Bucharest), Ionel Istoc (sculptor, Bucharest), Alin Ciupala (scientific secretary, Institute of Art History “G. Oprescu”).

## Abroad:

- Irina Carabas participated at the Third Conference of European Network for the Study of Vanguard and Modernism, “Material meanings”, organized by University of Kent in Canterbury, United Kingdom, September 7<sup>th</sup> – 10<sup>th</sup>, 2012. The network conferences established in 2008 are the most important European events related to the research of Vanguard and Modernism. Irina Carabas’ presentation was related to Brancusi’s reception in Romania in the 1960s, following the political discourse in art history and in contemporary art practice as well: **“The Wooden Avant-Garde and the reception of Brancusi in Romania”**. The junction of three areas form her individual area of research as part of the project that will develop in the next step. Within the same conference Irina Carabas organized a panel debating the conditions and forms of existence of vanguard of the 1960s in Romania: **“Elusive Avant-Garde. Materials, practices, Connections to post-war Romania”**, inviting three Romanian researchers who investigate the topic in independent surveys or related to their PhD thesis.
- Corina Teaca, **“Apcar Baltazar, Ștefan Luchian and Theodor Pallady: dialogues with the Symbolism”**, participation in the international colloquium, „Symbolisme et esthétiques modernes dans Les Balkans: Réexamen(s) critique(s)”. November 8th-9th, 2013, Paris Université Paris I Panthéon-Sorbonne.

## Books

Within the project, were published 2 volumes:

- Irina Carabas, Olivia Nitis (ed.), *After Brancusi. Proceedings of the International Conference organized in the frame of the project "The Saint of Montparnasse" from Document to Myth. A Century of Constantin Brancusi Scholarship*, UNARTE, Bucharest, 2014.

ISBN 978-606-720-022-5.

The book was reviewed in publications as Art History, september 2016 and ARTA, no. 20, 2016

- Virginia Barbu, Corina Teacă (ed.), *Mărturiile toamnei. Corespondență Ionel Jianu-Barbu Brezianu*, Ed. UNARTE, Bucharest, 2016.

ISBN 978-606-720-056-0

## Articles

- Ioana VlasIU, "**De ce sculptura în lemn?**", in *Arhetipuri sculpturale. Sculptura în lemn. Opere din patrimoniul Galeriei Naționale. 1918-1999*, Muzeul Național de Artă al României, 2012.
- Ioana VlasIU, "**Centrul de Studii Brâncușiene „Barbu Brezianu”, un proiect al Institutului de Istoria Artei „G.Oprescu”**", in *Academica*, nr.6-7, iunie-iulie, 2012.
- Ioana VlasIU, "**Noguchi /Brâncuși. Date noi din corespondența dintre Isamu Noguchi și Barbu Brezianu**", in *Studii și cercetări de istoria artei*, 2012 .
- Irina Cărăbaș, "**Literary Representations of Brancusi's Studio**", in *Revue Roumaine d'Histoire de l'Art*, 2012.
- Olivia Nițiș, "**Istoriografia de artă americană despre Brâncuși după 1990: contribuția Annei Chave**", in *Studii și cercetări de istoria artei*, 2012.
- Ioana VlasIU, "**Despărțiri: Maitec, Gorduz, Vasilescu, Spătaru**", in *Arta*, nr.8-9, 2013.
- Ioana VlasIU, "**Sculptura românească după Constantin Brâncuși**" (interview by Adriana Oprea), in *Arta*, nr.8-9, 2013.

- Ioana VlasIU, “**Vida Geza, Etos popular, stil și tehnicitate**”, in *Academica*, nr. 7, 2013
- Virginia Barbu, Ioana VlasIU, Irina Carabas, Corina Teaca, Ruxanda Beldiman, “**Barbu Brezianu’s archive. Letters from Constantin Antonovici, Alexandru Istrate, Ionel Jianu, Udo Kulterman, Herbert Read And Thames and Hudson Publishing House**” in *Revue Roumaine d’Histoire de l’Art*, tome LI, 2014.
- Olivia Nitis, Corina Teaca, Ruxanda Beldiman, Virginia Barbu, Irina Carabas, “**Sculpture camps in Communist Romania. Case studies: Magura and Galati.**, In *Revue Roumaine d’histoire de l’art*, tome LIII, 2016 ( in print ).
- Corina Teacă, “A Brief Survey on Ion Nicodim’s Monument dedicated to the Victims of the Romanian Revolution ”, in *Revue Roumaine d’Histoire de l’Art*, 2016 (in print )

### **Reviews, cronicles**

- Ioana VlasIU, “**Doina Lemny, Brancusi & Gaudier-Brzeska. Points de convergence, L’Echoppe, Paris, 2009**”, in *Studii și cercetări de istoria artei*, 2012.
- Ioana VlasIU, “**Sorana Georgescu Gorjan, Așa grăit-a Brâncuși**”, in *Studii și cercetări de istoria artei*, 2012.
- Corina Teacă, “**Doina Lemny, Cristian-Robert Velescu, Brâncuși inedit**”, in *Revue Roumaine d’Histoire de l’Art*, 2012.
- Virginia Barbu, “**Doina Lemny, Lizica Codréano, une danseuse roumaine dans l’avant-garde parisienne**”, în *Studii și cercetări de istoria artei*, (recenzie) p. 233, 2012.
- Virginia Barbu, “**Paul Rezeanu, Brâncuși. Tatăl nostru**”, SCIA 2013
- Corina Teaca, “**Greg Dickinson, Carole Blair, Brian L. Ott (Ed.), Places of Public Memory. The Rhetoric of Museums and Memorials**, The University of Alabama Press, Tuscaloosa, 2010, 282p. + il”. (review), in *Studii și Cercetări de Istoria Artei*, 2013.
- Ruxanda Beldiman, “**Cronica Conferinței After Brâncuși, 4-6 octombrie**,” in *Studii și Cercetări de Istoria Artei*, 2014.
- Virginia Barbu, “**Brancusi, the last Dacian. Three chapters of life**”, Autograf MJM, Craiova, 2014, 243 p., in *Studii și Cercetări de Istoria Artei*, 2015.



- Corina Teaca, “**C. Medrea. Sculpturi în colecția Muzeului Municipiului București, Editura Muzeului Municipiului București, 2015**”, in *Studii și Cercetări de Istoria Artei*, 2016.
- Virginia Barbu, “**Idel Ianchelevici comemorat la Chișinău, Republica Moldova**”, in *Studii și cercetări de istoria artei*, 2016 (in print )
- Corina Teacă, „**Retorică și memorie. Sculptura românească de for public**”, in *Studii și cercetări de istoria artei*, 2016 (in print)

## **Other activities**

- Connected to the research within Barbu Brezianu archive, Olivia Nițiș developed her own investigation around the concept of public monument into an exhibition that she organized at ARCUB Gabroveni Centre in 2016: Olivia Nițiș, *Expoziția internațională Istoriei MonuMentale*. 17 martie-8 mai 2016. *Istoriei MonuMentale*, /cat./ Ed. Vellant, București, 2016. ISBN 978-606-8642-90-1

## **Website**

- **The project's website [www.arhiva-brezianu.ro](http://www.arhiva-brezianu.ro) was launched in June 2013. It was conceived in order to present Barbu Brezianu’s personality and work (extended biography and complete bibliography of his publications) and to make widely available the contents of his archive.** It also structured the work of archiving from inventories of files to lists of correspondents and other documents. The site is intended to inspire new research projects and to open to institutional collaborations. In 2013 a range of activities were carried out before website’s launching:
  - Design of the site’s configuration
  - Gathering of documentary material to be presented on site
    - -list of thematically classified files
    - - selection of scanned documents
    - -inventory of letters sent and received by Barbu Brezianu (around 700)
  - -the research regarding the biography and professional paths of Barbu Brezianu with the purpose to provide a completed bio-bibliography.

- the bibliography of Barbu Brezianu's writings with a scanned selection of items
- translations into English of the document

Since then the site was constantly updated with news and publications.

### **Artists involved in research**

- In its initial form, the project intended to open the research to other fields of investigation than art history. The artists interested in Brancusi's personality and work, by their own art research have brought a fresh perspective on the subject, creating also an interesting dialogue between domains. Thus the project converted into an opportunity to promote artistic research, an essential direction in contemporary culture, still little known in Romania.
- A detailed research regarding Brancusi's *Ecorché* and its beginnings, and also Brancusi's collaboration with Dr. Dimitrie Gerota, professor of anatomy, was developed by **Elena Dumitrescu**, sculptor and lecturer at Sculpture Department of the National University of Arts, Bucharest. She examined each copy existent at Bucharest, Craiova, Cluj-Napoca, Jassy and observed their current condition from the point of view of conservation status. Her study
- *Ecorșeul Brâncuși/ Gerota. Cercetări recente* was published in 2014 at UNARTE Publishing House. **Alexandra Croitoru**, assistant at Foto-Video Department of The University of Arts Bucharest took at starting point Brancusi's aphorisms and meditations, the fiction texts and plays dedicated to him, various files from Barbu Brezianu archive to initiate 2 artistic projects. Beginning with the poetry dedicated to Brancusi, she conceived a performance within the frame of International Conference **After Brancusi** in 2013. She has incorporated the experience of working with Barbu Brezianu's archive into her Ph.D thesis defended at the National University of Arts Bucharest in 2014 and later developed into a book: *Brâncuși – O viață veșnică*, Cluj- napoca, Idea Print design, 2015.

### **Documentation journeys**

- In 2012 Virginia Barbu, Ruxanda Beldiman and Corina Teacă traveled for documentation purposes to Paris, France. During their visit, they investigated Brancusi's sculpture and the cultural and artistic environment where the Romanian artist completed his artistic education. The main institutions providing an important information were particularly the museums: Musée national d'art moderne-Centre Georges Pompidou (Brancusi's studio), Musée Bourdelle, Musée Rodin (French sculptor who let his fingerprint over Brancusi's early work), Musée d'Orsay, Musée Gustave Moreau (French artist whose work has a particular importance in the study of Theodor Pallady's work), Musée de l'Orangerie, Musée de la vie romantique, Musée de la Ville de Paris, and some of their libraries and archives. Also the Montparnasse cemetery was visited to see *in situ* Brancusi's sculpture "The Kiss", and the funeral stone of Brancusi's own tomb as well. A special attention was paid to Brancusi Archive from Bibliothèque Kandinsky at Centre Georges Pompidou, containing a large correspondence significant for the intellectual ambiance, artist's friendships and relationships, and his exhibitions. The access to this archive was facilitated by the art historian Doina Lemny. Musée Bourdelle with its archive, important for its collection of letters received by Antoine Bourdelle from his Romanian pupils, was also visited. The French sculptor Antoine Bourdelle gained many admirers in Romania, among them, the art collector Anastase Simu, the founder of an important museum in Romania opened in Bucharest at the beginning of 20th century. Bourdelle's work influenced the sculptural vision of Romanian artists as like: Margareta Cosăceanu-Lavriller, Milița Petrașcu, Oscar Han, Ion Jalea, Romul Ladea, Richard Hette, Fanny Moscovici-Fainsilber (her portrait titled "The Romanian girl" created by Bourdelle belongs to the art collection of Musée Bourdelle).
- Through the contact with Brancusi's work and also with the work of other French artists of the time, this study travel, offered to researchers a more clear perspective about the ambiance where Brancusi lived and created.
- In 2014 Irina Carabas and Olivia Nitis made a documentation travel to Berlin.
- This travel provided them rich sources of research related to the history of modern and contemporary sculpture by means of many exhibitions, museums, public monuments, libraries, research institutes. They have met members of the artistic community active in the field of the sculpture, interested in the evolution of the contemporary sculpture which Brancusi influenced so deep.

- The main activities have included research and documentation at Kunstbibliothek in the Kulturforum, one of the most prestigious libraries of art history of European space.
- The two researchers visited *The 8th edition of the Berlin Biennial* displayed in three areas: KW Institute for Contemporary Art, Dahlem – Staatliche Prufung Museen zu Berlin, Haus am Waldsee. The original curatorial concept pointing out the relationship between artistic practice and ethnographical representation, on one hand, and the presentation in a re-contextualizing frame of the archaic object, on the other . The problems posed by the Berlin Biennial as well as the problem of art's *museification* and artistic processes catalyzed by the active presence of viewer intersect with Brancusi's own concerns.
- Significant for the researchers were their visits at the Museum Georg Kolbe, Neue Nationalgalerie, Hamburger Bahnhof, Pergamon, Neues Museum, Kathe Kollwitz Museum, Kunsthalle Deutsche Bank, the collection Scharf-Gerstenberg .
- Irina Carabas travelled to Eisenhuettenstadt located in the former German Democrat Republic a place that allowed to examine relations between art, architecture, socialism and Post-socialist memory.
- Irina Carabas and Olivia Nitis have also visited Forum fuer Transregionalestudien which has a special program dedicated to art history and The Institute for Advanced Studies Kolleg Wissenschaft zu Berlin where the institution's administrative director Thorsten Wilhelmy presented them the research programs.
- The dialogue with the director of Kunstlerhaus Bethanien, Christoph Tannert gave the opportunity to visit studios artists in the program Open Studios. In these studios, a series of international artists develop their personal sculpture projects for a period of minimum 6 months.
- In 2015, the team visited two of the most important sculpture camps in Romania: Magura (Buzau County) and Galati.
- At Magura, the participants took a large number of photos of the open-air sculptures. This material became the core of a photographic archive of Romania contemporary sculpture that continues past documentations made in various programs of the Institute of Art History. During this trip, the team members engaged themselves in a debate about the all 16 editions of the sculpture camp and the artists that worked there along the years, emphasizing its role of creative laboratory of these symposia.
- Virginia Barbu, Ruxanda Beldiman and Irina Carabas visited the sculpture camp of Galati. They also visited the Visual Arts Museum, the County Direction for Culture and specially the Mobile and Immaterial National Cultural Department. They also photographed the sculpture works exhibited outdoors, created by various artists along

three editions of the Sculpture Camp in Galati. During the same trip, a counsellor from the Mobile and Immaterial National Cultural Department of the County Direction for Culture presented them the main architecture monuments in the city.

- The pictures representing modern and contemporary sculpture works taken during this trip were also added to the archive of sculpture images.

Project's Manager

Ph.D. Adrian-Silvan Ionescu