

The Sovietization of the Romanian Historiography. Case Study:
Cluj History Institute, 1948-1953.

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Abstract

In the same year with the creation of the new Academy and the new educational legislative act, all former Romanian historical institutions were replaced with one History Institute controlled by the Party. The educational and the scientific institutions were either destroyed or segregated; competence was replaced with devotion towards the regime. Its agenda was to create a “new man”, on the model of homo sovieticus. How did this institution’s structuring affect the former History Institute of Cluj, and what were the ‘actors’ involved in the implementation of the soviet model?

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INTRODUCTION

The perception of the past always had a determinative role, a considerable impact, towards one's understanding of present and future time, aspect which made that the 'adjustment' of the past to be one of the major temptations of the post-war communist regimes of East and Central Europe in their search for legitimacy and identity. Therefore in its attempt to implement the Communist utopia in Romania the State Party initiated a process with the aim of transforming history into an important ideological weapon, an *instrumentum regni*, meant not only to educate the "New Man", according to Marxist beliefs but also to provide constitutive legitimacy and identity to the new ruling power.

The period 1948-1953 was the most prodigious in terms of measures taken by the Romanian Communist Party in order to assure the "revolution of historical writing". Then, history alongside other social disciplines was one of the main victims of this Zhdanovian type policy. It was, as David Prodan, a prolific historian of the Cluj Institute, said, "A difficult period of upheaval, of agitation, of humiliations inherent to great transformations."¹ The historians, who survived the purges, such as Prodan, could no longer work independently under the new etatized cultural infrastructure. The Academy and the History institutes underwent massive and far-reaching restructuring with the educational system being reframed. New basic and mandatory party controlled teaching programs were introduced in the universities' curricula, ideologically dogmatic and doctrinaire. History became reframed to reflect the narrative of "the conclusions of Soviet historiography" as exemplified by Mihail Roller's 'historical front'. This "historical front" was an organization of scholars authorized to work out a Marxist theory of the past

¹ David Prodan, *Memorii*, (Memoirs) București, Ed. Enciclopedică 1993, 51.

after the model of M.N Pokrovskii's historical front in Soviet Russia, and was meant to formalize the bond between scholarship and politics through the belief that historians should assist party authorities in effecting a cultural revolution.

In what concerns Roller he was rather an unknown person before the Communist Regime was instituted in Romania. It is known, however, that he published some modest articles during the interwar period and that he was a member of the Romanian Communist Party who studied in Moscow and made a name for himself when the Party was outlawed. Before the war ended, Roller was in Moscow with his family as part of a new communist structure created after the dissolution of the Comintern, the Research Institute number 205.² After his return to Romania he was deemed 'the little dictator of the History', as used by Lucian Boia, a scholar administrator who possessed both academic and entrepreneurial skills, holding positions in government as well as in the academia and having thus the possibility of shaping the science and the educational policy at all levels. Due to its major influence on the Romanian historical writing, some authors referred to this period as the "Rollerization" of Romanian Historical writing³. Therefore, out of exclusively political consideration a different model became dominant in Romanian historiography after 1948. However, how this process occurred and in what ways it manifested itself is a question of intellectual curiosity, debate and disagreement.

There are multiple studies that examine this process due the different ways in which this topic can be addressed. One of the first one to deal with history production in communist Romania was Vlad Georgescu's *Politică și Istorie. Cazul comuniștilor români 1944-1977* (Politics and History, The Romanian Communists' case, 1944-1977). In his

² Florin Constantiniu. *De la Răutu și Roller la Mușat și Ardeleanu*, (From Răutu and Roller to Mușat and Ardeleanu) Ed., București: Enciclopedică, 2007.

³ *Ibid.*

study, written in 1977 and printed in Munchen in 1981, Georgescu as a Romanian émigré, aimed to present the complete “enslavement” of history to politics in Romanian the years following the ‘glorious liberation’ when, according to him an “unnatural combination occurred between a falsified history and a undemocratic policy.”⁴ The second important study, focused on the complex phenomenon of bonding politics with history Gheorge Gheorghiu Dej’s regime, is Florin Muller’s *Politica si istoriografie in Romania, 1948-1964*, (Politics and Historiography in Romania, 1948-1964). This is a complex study in which the author develops a broad topic starting with the influences of Marxism on Romanian historiography before the war as well after. It continues with how the political language of communism was transferred as a professional type of language in history writing and based on archival documents, how the transformation was reflected in several historiography institutes.

It is also important to mention that besides several other studies concerned with the topic,⁵ two others that appeared recently offer a new perspective to the problem. Florin Constantiniu’s *De la Rautu si Roller la Musat si Ardeleanu*, 2007 (From Rautu to Roller to Musat and Ardeleanu), is a study written by a historian who worked at the National History Institute in Bucharest who uses his personal experience in revealing how history produced and who mastered it during the regime of Gheorghe Gheorghiu Dej and Ceausescu, while the second, Ioan Opris’s , *Istoricii și securitatea*. (The Historians

⁴ Vlad Georgescu, *Politica si istoriografie in Romania, 1948-1964*, (Politics and Historiography in Romania) Bucuresti Ed Humanitas, 1991.

⁵ Al Zub, „ *Orizont Inchis, istoriografia romana sub dictatura* Institutul European Iasi Andi Mihalache, *Istorie si practice discursive in Romania “Democrat Populara”*, Albatros, Bucuresti, 2003; *Pe urmele lui Marx. Studii despre comunism si consecintele sale*, Iasi, 2005, Keith Hitchins, *Mit si realitate in istoriografia romana*, Bucuresti, Ed, Enciclopedica, 1997, Lucian Boia, *Istorie si mit in constiinta romaneasca*, Bucuresti, Humanitas, 1997, 2000, Serban Papacostea, “Captive Clio : Romanian Historiography under Communist Rule” in *European History Quarterly*, Vol 26, 1996, Dennis Deletant , “Rewriting the Past: Trends in Contemporary Romanian Historiography” in M. Pearton, D. Deletant, *Romania observed*, Bucuresti, 1998.

and the Securitatea, 2-vols), contain several documents from the Securitatea's archives which reflect very well the ways in which the historians (Lupas, Dragomir, Lapedatu, Daicoviciu etc) were under surveillance and later purged, while those who survived were under permanent control through a vast network of informers and control institutions.

Beside these types of studies, which focus exclusively on the Romania, several other important studies deal with the complex aspect of Sovietizing the culture of the countries of East and Central Europe. John Connelly's, *Captive University. The Sovietization of East German, Czech, and Polish Higher Education, 1945,-1956*, as well as the one edited Michael David Fox, *Academia in Upheaval*, are the best written so far, where the authors try to present how a particular Soviet academic regime arose, how it operated across varying local, national and international settings. The main hypothesis of the two is that in the end it would be a false assumption to describe the region, at least from a cultural point of view, as a "monolithic bloc". To paraphrase John Connelly even though such enquires have helped chip away at the monolith impression of East European Stalinism, much more remains to be learned about the lands further in the East,(naming here Romania, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia) who are not yet integrated in such a comparative study.⁶

This study will address the complex topic of sovietization of the Romanian historiography from the perspective of the institutional aspect of this process focusing on one of the particular aspect of this process, namely on the process of attempting to transfer a soviet institutional model. Therefore starting from the fact that after the measures initiated in 1948 history production in communist Romania was at all times

⁶ John Connelly, *Captive University: The Sovietization of East German, Czech and Polish Higher education 1945-1956*, 2000, Univ of North Carolina Press, "far more is known about East Germany than about Poland or Czechoslovakia, not to mention the lands further south and East" 6.

under the control of the state and implicitly to that of the Party I will present how this institutional structuring determined the internal politicization and cancellation of previous academic neutrality of a specific historical institution, namely the History Institute from Cluj.

As sovietization in general involved the transplantation of institutions and models developed in the Soviet Union⁷ in the first part of the study I will offer a theoretical approach to this process, focusing on the Soviet model of historiography as well as on some of the facilitating factors for its transfer. I will then offer a short presentation of the main measures initiated in 1948 by the Romanian state at a macro-level in imposing the model, focusing on the creation of an institutional mega-structure meant to coordinate the entire cultural activity, the Academy of the Peoples Republic of Romania, as well as on the newly created History Institute in which all former history institutions emerged. Starting from such preliminaries, the last part will focus exclusively on the History Institute of Cluj and the actors involved in its transformation.

For this study several types of sources have been used. For the general approach I relied on some of the studies indicated above, while for the particular sections of study, such as the institutional transformation of the Academy and History Institute of Cluj I relied on archival documents created by both by the Regional Party Committee and the university. In order to offer a complex interpretation of the phenomenon the study also used organizational regulation of the institutions under study, as well as official press of the time, including such newspapers as: *Scanteia*, *Lupta Ardealului*, *Contemporul*, *Tribuna*, In addition publications issued by the Academy and the History Institute,

^{7 7} E.A. Rees “Theories of Sovietization” in Balázs Apor, Péter Apor and E.A. Rees, ed. *The sovietization of Eastern Europe: new perspectives on the post-war period*. Washington, DC : New Academia Publishing, 2008,1.

Analele Academiei Republicii Populare Române, Studii, Studii si cercetarii de istorie ,
Anuarul Institutului de Istorie din Cluj were as well incorporated into the study.

CHAPTER I: THE SOVIETIZATION OF ROMANIAN HISTORIOGRAPHY: THE MODEL AND AVENUES FOR THE TRANSFORMATION.

The example and experience of the soviet Union makes it easier for the working people of Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria, Albania, Mongolia, China and Korea to do the difficult but wonderful and noble work of socialist reorganization of their fatherlands. ("Basic task of the historians of Soviet Society", Voropsy istorii, 1949)

The Romanian Scholar (...) couldn't use in his laboratory the vast experience of soviet research. The intellectual in general, could not know but just partially and sporadically the soviet way of thinking and felt in awkward manner this emptiness in culture. (Romanian Soviet Annales, I, nr.1. Oct 1946)

I.1. Preliminaries

According to Winston Churchill's mental mapping of the continent, in the aftermath of World War II an insurmountable and impenetrable divide had arisen in Europe. The Eastern part of the continent was separated from the rest by what he called an 'iron curtain', the countries behind it being described in terms of isolation, from the noncommunist world and to some extent from other peoples' democracies, synthetic Russomania which implied a mindless cult of Stalin adulation, intellectual stagnation and ideological sterility.⁸ Western observers were stunned at the apparent totality and uniformity of the transformation and its implications and by the early 1950 a once varied

⁸ Joseph Rothschild, *Return to Diversity: A political History of East Central Europe since World War II*, New York, Oxford University Press, 1993, 14.

landscape of national cultures was thought to resemble what Hugh Seton Watson called the ‘monolithic block’.

The same feeling of a total and uniform transformation was present among the contemporaries from East and Central Europe. In the spring of 1952, Victor Klemperer, specialist in Romance literature at Halle University in East Germany described the region in terms of ‘uniformitas sowjetica postbelica’.⁹ However, how transformation occurred, how a different Soviet model (in politics, economics and culture) was actually imposed is still under great debate in historiography and historians are far from reaching an agreement in respect to the different aspects of the this process of the sovietization East and Central Europe.

This part of the study revolves around such concepts as sovietization and model, narrowing down their use to the situation of history production in communist Romania in the years of cultural Stalinism.¹⁰ It represents a quest for the ‘model’ as well as for the avenues for its implementation, arguing that this was effected with the help of soviet advisers and specialists who offered advice both of technical and of political kind but also carried through by cadres who were Moscow trained, who had spent long periods in exile in the USSR and who were themselves “thoroughly sovietized.”¹¹ Last but not least the study will show that as a part of the sovietization a place of priority was occupied by the cultivation of positive images of the ‘model’, as examined in soviet type institutions and friendship societies or cultural periodicals. In order to do so it will first

⁹ John Connelly, *Captive University: The Sovietization of East German, Czech and Polish Higher education 1945-1956*, University of North Carolina Press, 2000, 6.

¹⁰ Term used by Alexandru Zub in his description of 1948-1964 period in *Orizont inchis, istoriografia romana sub dictatura*, (Dark Horizon, Romanian Historiography under dictatorship, Institutul European Iasi, 2000,21.

¹¹ E.A. Rees “Theories of Sovietization” in Balázs Apór, Péter Apór and E.A. Rees, ed. *The sovietization of Eastern Europe: new perspectives on the post-war period*. Washington, DC : New Academia Publishing, 2008, 11.

clarify the use of the term sovietization due to its importance for understanding its characteristics.

Sovietization was a term initially used in the Soviet Union itself with positive connotations regarding the establishment of a new superior system for organizing of human affairs, to become widely used in a pejorative sense in the 1940s and 1950 by westerns critics of Soviet rule over Eastern Europe.¹² It therefore came into general currency after 1945, to describe the process of transformation imposed on the Soviet occupied countries of Eastern and Central Europe. It was thus a process, as described by Western commentators of the post war era, intimately connected with the onset of the cold war, which proceeded through distinct stages in most of the East European countries.¹³ The use of this term implies the creation of a specific Soviet system with institutional structures and manifestation in economics, politics and culture with the aspiration at the fundamental restructuring of the societies where it was imposed.¹⁴ In terms of decoding the ways in which the phenomenon of sovietization took place and the manner in which manifested itself in cultural life of the countries of the Central and Eastern Europe several considerations need to be made.

¹² See E.A. Rees *Ibid*, 9.

¹³ Probably the most influential interpretation of how the communist seized power in Eastern and Central Europe is the one put forward by Hugh Seton-Watson. He argues that the take-overs took place in three stages: genuine coalition, façade coalition and monolithic bloc¹³. According to such interpretation, during 1945-1947 in the countries that were under the control of the Soviet Union, 'coalition groups', led by local communists, were in power. Political and cultural activities, even though limited, were still possible. But once with 1947 the popular fronts time ended and the local communist started to seize total political power across the region. The change, ordered by Moscow was a reaction to the international context and had as an immediate objective to increase the cohesion and the control of the communist parties of the region., Hugh-Seton Watson, *The East European Revolution*, New York ; Washington : Praeger, 1968.

¹⁴ I use here the three, politics, economics and cultures as the main objectives of sovietization, indicated as such by Vladimir Tismaneanu in *Stalinism Stalinism pentru eternitate* (Stalinism for all seasons) as well as the 'objectives of the Romanian Communist Party' described in party press two years after the instauration of the Republic, see L. Salajean, "Doi ani de la instaurarea R.P.R." in *Lupta de Clasa* (Class Struggle), V, nr, 1, January 1950, 29.

First of all it should be argued that in the post-war years it was a truth for the region as a whole, the fact that Soviet Union as well as local communist parties of East and Central Europe cultivated an unprecedented etatist interest in culture, with concurrent brutal suppression of the majority of its producers, individuals and institutions. The ambitions of the process were enormous: to reshape the organization and direction of science and education, to promote political and economic objectives, to plan the creation, to integrate the academia into the broader communist system of cadre promotion and to create a new scientific intelligentsia while using or replacing the old elite. As stated previous, the goals to be achieved and the methods to be applied by the Party cultural and science-political apparatus were defined all over the region with explicit references to postwar Soviet experiences. However uniformity in intentions does not mean that there really was uniformity in matters of implementation ¹⁵of such objectives, or the fact that the transfer occurred perfectly.

Secondly, it should be stated that the existence itself of a Soviet ‘master plan’ that had as a goal the duplication of a 1920s, or 1940s Russian model is questionable.¹⁶ As Gyorgy Peteri argues persuasively, “neither the creators of the Soviet prototype of the late 1920s and early 1930s nor East Central Europe’s communist policy makers after

¹⁵An example would be the policies toward the professoriate: In East Germany, wartime migrations and a radical denazification caused an unprecedented break among the professoriate, where 80% of the professors did not continue to teach after 1945.¹⁵ In Czechoslovakia party officials did not purge the professoriate until 1950-1951 or assert central Party control at universities until after 1953, instead revolutionary committees, formed by Communist students purged the Czech professoriate of alleged reactionaries. In Poland, by contrast the leadership had proclaimed its intention to engage into cooperation with the professoriate regardless of field. See John Connelly, *Ibid*, 3.

¹⁶One of the frequent questions about the process in the scholarly debate is whether it represented a soviet project with similar or comparable manifestations or rather the result of a Moscow Realpolitik, articulated step by step depending on internal and external events, Alexandru Zub and Flavius Solomon, In cooperation with Oldrich Tuma and Jiri Jindra ed. *Sovietization in Romania and Czechoslovakia History, analogies, consequences*, Iași: Polirom, 2003, 11.

1945 had a <<model>> in the sense of a master plan in their minds.”¹⁷ Focusing on the case study of the Hungarian Academy, Peteri suggest that what brought the Hungarian academic regime in the line with the Soviet arrangements then was not so much a clear idea, “or even less some detailed design or Soviet Model pursued by Hungarian Communists.”¹⁸ According to him, the key factor was the general political development within and outside the country: the rapid escalating Cold War, the establishment of the Cominform, and the Soviet-Yugoslav conflict.¹⁹ Nevertheless, a process of transformation in the cultures of the countries of the region was reflected in the commandeering of science by the state through control over the academia and university. The subordination to a Soviet ‘model’ was also reflected in the celebration of the primacy of Soviet science which meant that direct while links with western centers of learning were closed.

In what concerns the sovietization process applied strictly to historiography, it should be understood as described by Arpad von Klimó, a metaphor that represented the process of institutional changes and ruptures of historiography in the countries of the region under study. Narrowing down his definition Klimó describes sovietization of historiography as a process of attempting to transfer: 1) Soviet Models of ideological contents, 2) Soviet models of narrative structures, and 3) Soviet institutional models into a different academic context.²⁰ But the aspects of the sovietization of historiography are better described with concrete reference to the ‘model’.

¹⁷Michael David-Fox, Gyorgy Peteri, (eds), *Academia in Upheaval, Origins, Transfers and Transformations of the Communist Academic Regime in Russia and East Central Europe*, London 2000, Bergin&Garvey, 203.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁰ Arpad von Klimó, “The Sovietization of Hungarian Historiography. Failures and Modifications in the early 1950s” in Balázs Apór, Péter Apór and E.A. Rees, ed, *Ibid*, 237.

I.2 The Soviet model of Historiography

Looking at the trajectory of Soviet historiography along the decades until the end of the Second World War it is first of all problematic to argue for the existence of a unitary vision and policy toward historians and history production that could have been presented as a model for the sovietized countries, in Klimon's understanding of the process.

In the years of the NEP (1921-1921) cultural policy was marked by the effort to use 'noncommunist hands' in the building of communism. Therefore in the formative years of Soviet historiography, perhaps lasting as late as 1931, historians spoke in a variety of voices. The 'historical front' was not uniform or 'monolithic', to use here Hugh Seton Watson's term used in the epigraph of this chapter, but rather varied between pluralism and polarization with blurred lines between camps. This so called 'front', the chief embodiment of what was known as the "school of Pokrovskii", was a group of young soviet historians immune to the bourgeois influence of the elderly, as intended by its leader, and therefore capable to fully assume Marxist methodology. He controlled them directly as the head of the Society of Marxist Historians (SMH) as well as the non-Marxist ones through a vast institutional network which he either controlled, or had great influence upon: deputy chairman of the People's Commissariat of education (in control there with the state council of scholars -GUS a body that decided major issues in higher education), chairman of the presidium of the Academia, rector of the Institute of Red Professors and member of the Institute of History which evolved latter into history institutes of the Academy of Sciences (a branch of the Russian Association of Social

Sciences Research which was a network of institutes where non Marxists worked and thought under the supervision of Marxists).²¹

In what concerns his views on the role of history in the Russian political context that followed the October Revolution, Pokrovskii had the assumption that a close bond should exist between scholarship and politics, history being seen as a major political challenge. According to such vision, which latter was propagated into the countries of East and Central Europe, it was believed that he who controls the records of the past legitimates the authority to command the present and also to design the future, all this as part of the larger teleological character of communism with its belief in the future establishment of the communist utopia. Thus having ‘control’ over the past gave the possibility to configure it depending on the political and ideological interest in what concerned both the present and the future: “The task of politics and science cannot be put in opposition to one another. Historical truth is not at variance with the political interest of the proletariat (and its vanguard) but supports and logically justifies them.”²²

Despite consistency in some aspects, Pokrovskii was changeable in matters on his own view on historiography. Beginning with the second half of 1928, he changed his policies with respect to the organization of scholarship, playing a major role in the liquidation of Ranin’s Institute of History. Then to justify his policy, he modified his theory of ‘cultural revolution’ abandoning his view that noncommunist hands were

²¹ Enten M. George, Enten M. George, *The Soviet Scholar Bureaucrat. M.N Pokrovskii and the Society of Marxist Historians* University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press.

,Enten M. George, Tatiana Gom and Cheryl Kern, eds, *Soviet historians and the study of Russian imperialism* University Park : Pennsylvania State University Press, 1979, Nancy Wittier Heer, *Politics and history in the Soviet Union* , Cambridge MIT Press, 1971; Andi Mihalache, *Istorie si practice discursive in Romania “Democrat Populara”*, Albatros, Bucuresti, 2003, 24-46; Florin Constantiniu, *Ibid*, 17-23.

²² *Voropsii Istorii*, no 2, 1949, 4.

required for the building of communism.²³ Thus, ceasing to defend pluralism, he championed the quest for uniformity of scholarly opinion. Afterwards in the context of Stalin's triumph over Bukharin, he recast his theory of 'cultural revolution' in such a fashion to enlarge and to exalt the emerging notion of Partiinost (Party mindedness). As Anatole G. Mazour argued, the great problem of soviet historians was not necessarily conformation, but specially the extent in which they had to follow the perpetually changing official 'line'.²⁴ This remark explains best Pokrovskii's trajectory on the Soviet scene. A once praised by the Small Soviet Encyclopedia (1930) individual as the "most important Marxist historian, not only in the U.S.S.R, but in the entire world"²⁵ had passed from greatness to ignominy in just nine years.

Even though he desperately tried to stay within the party line, the Central Committee decree, "On the State of Party Propaganda in Connection with the Publication of History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union" stated that the Pokrovskii 'school' "gave a distorted interpretation of historical facts, treating them, contrarily to historical materialism". It described the development of history writing under Pokrovskii in terms of 'anti-Marxist' anti- Lenininst, essentially liquidationist and anti-scientific in contrast with the new 'line' illustrated by Stalin's short course as interpreted by the Voropsii Istorii magazine:

The past decade is marked by intensified study of science of history. The primary prerequisite for this was the defeat of the so-called Pokrovskii "school". It was not possible to make progress in historical research without first overcoming views which would have liquidated history as a science. The anti-Marxist essence of the historical concepts of M.N. Pokrovskii and his "school" was exposed in

²³ Enteen M. George, *Ibid*, 4. for a review of his main work "History of Russia from the Earliest Times to the Rise of Capitalism", see Samuel H. Cross's article in *The Journal of Modern History*, vol. IV, No.2, Jun. 1932, 282-285.

²⁴ Andi Mihalache, *Ibid*, 27.

²⁵ D. Fedotoff White "Protiv Istoriceskoi Konceptcii" (Against M.N. Pokrovski's concept of History) in *Slavonic and East European Review. American Series*, vol. 2, No.1, March 1943, 257-158.

comments made by Stalin, Zhdanov and Kirov in reference to drafts of history textbooks (1934) and the history textbooks decree of the U.S.S.R.(1936). These comments and the decree played a decisive role in liberating our historians from the influence of these faulty concepts. The publication in 1938 History of the communist Party of the Soviet Union (Short course) had a tremendous effect upon the development of a genuine Marxist historical science. This remarkable work of Comrade Stalin provided our historians with a classic formulation of the methodology of history –the theory of historical materialism- and an affirmation of history as a precise science capable of making use of the laws of the development of society for practical purposes...²⁶

The 1938 ‘Short Course’ was therefore the other important turning point in matters of how history was written in Soviet Union. Even though in 1938 Stalin was just mentioned for his ‘precious’ instructions, by 1946 he was assigned with the paternity of the entire work and until the 20th Congress this became the most important communist history book in the entire socialist camp, a model for falsifying the national history/histories of communized states. In Romania immediately after 23 August 1944 a first edition of this history was published in over 735,000 copies, an unprecedented number in the Romanian publishing history.²⁷

The question that rises is whether the countries of East and Central Europe were to skip the Pokrovskii’s school stage and assume only the conclusions of the schematic and dogmatized formula illustrated by the publication of Stalin’s ‘History of the communist Party of the Soviet Union (Short course) who, “smashed the anti-historical Pokrovskii School.”²⁸ An answer to this question would be that despite variations, Soviet

²⁶ “On Studying modern and recent history of capitalist countries” in *Voropsii Istorii*. No.7, July 1954, 12.

²⁷ Lavinia Betea, *Psihologie Politica. Indivind Lider, Multime in regimul communist*, (Political Psychology, Individual, Leader, Mob In the communist regime) Polirom, Iasi, 2001, 144, Florin Constantiniu, *Ibid*, 226-227.

²⁸ On January 26 Pravda officially condemned his work. In the following years numerous articles appeared in the Soviet Press denouncing his “vulgar materialist positions” guidance of the Bolshevik Party and comrade Stalin perso: “Under the guidance of the Bolshevik Party and Comarade Stalin personally Soviet historians smashed the anti-historical Pokrovskii school... The Party has called attention to the danger of these tendencies in connection with the work of Pokrovskii and his disciples, who, in superstructure,

historiography managed to present itself in the post-war era in unitary format, on the basis of two coordinates, Stalin's short course and Andrei Zhdanov's theories on culture in general and history in particular. The characteristics of this 'Stalinist' period meant the introduction of strictly authoritarian centralizing practices and ideas, as well as certain aesthetic forms, and a tendency toward 'national' forms. At the height of this vision, in the immediate years after the war and therefore on the onset of the cold war, this harsh line has come to be known as Zhdanovschina, due to the role played by its executor Andrei Zhdanov, Stalin's top deputy.²⁹

Historiography and Soviet culture in general, were thus drawn in the complex aspects of the Cold War as important ideological weapons, presented in terms of superiority and originality in contrast with the Western opponents. Regardless of the nature of its opponents, soviet historiography was seen as victorious, and step by step was attacking the retrograde principles of the Western historiography, its reformism, cosmopolitanism, historical pragmatism, bourgeois type historicism and subjectivism:

There is a struggle between two forces going on in contemporary international political life. The advanced progressive forces are fighting for peace, democracy and socialism, against the forces of imperialist reaction and war. Historiography is an active participant in this struggle....Cosmopolitanism in historical research is the ignoring and denying of peoples' national characteristics and a nihilistic attitude toward their national culture-represents renunciation of the very fundamentals of scientific research... In terms of orientation and level of scholarship our historians stand immeasurably higher than any, even the most substantial work of bourgeois science since the soviet works are permeated with a materialist interpretation of history, this great achievement on scientific though.³⁰

distorted the relation of history to politics and virtually eliminated history as a science.", *Voropsii Istorii*, no 2, 1949, 4.

²⁹ Werner G. Hahn, *Postwar Soviet Politics, The fall of Zhdanov and the defeat of Moderation, 1946-1953*, Cornell University Press, New York, 1982, 9.

³⁰ "On Studying modern and recent history of capitalist countries" in *Voropsii Istorii*. No.7, July 1954, 3-12.

According to such coordinates historians in the satellite countries were supposed to assist party authorities, following the Soviet example, in effecting a ‘cultural revolution’, by implementing a fundamental change in the people. They were supposed to help “secularize, modernize, and rationalize”³¹, that is they should make scientific the ‘traditional mentality’.³² An alteration of this sort was considered a prerequisite for building socialism all over the region. The Soviet Press of the time emphasized this:

History in our socialist country represents one of the most important sectors of the general ideological front. It plays a great part in the formation of the scientific Weltanschauung of the Soviet people, in their education as conscientious and active builders of communism and as ardent patriots of their fatherland. Soviet history has an important obligation not only to provide a scientific explanation of <<the events of the past>> but also, by generalizing from historical experience, to aid in the correct understanding of contemporary political events and the perspectives of the further development of human society...The example and experience of the soviet Union makes it easier for the working people of Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria, Albania, Mongolia, China and Korea to do the difficult but wonderful and noble work of socialist reorganization of their fatherlands.³³

The implementation of such policies, despite variations made that by 1953, Soviet model seemed imposed.³⁴ The implementation was directly connected with the dynamics in the institutionalization of scientific research and higher education and therefore history production all over the region, with the political aims stated both by Stalin and Zhdanov, was linked to specific centers and to the scientific research which was at all times under the control of the state and implicitly to that of the Party.

³¹ Enteen M George, *Ibid.*

³² See O.Mishakova, “The Building of Socialism and the communist education of the Working people” (Comrade Stalin teaches that people’s mentality does not change automatically and directly after the change of their social environment...which have been installed by the **old conditions** of life...Therefore a **new mentality** can be formed only by fighting against...obsolete ideas and point of views and overcoming them) in *The Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press*, No 15, vol 1, 10, Minneapolis USA, 3-5.

³³ “Basic task of the historians of Soviet Society” in *Voropsy istorii*, No.8, October 1949.

³⁴ For the evolution of historiography in the other states of East and Central European see “Historiography of the countries of Eastern Europe” in *American Historical Review* 97, 1992,4, p 1011-1117.

I.3 Avenues of Sovietization: Soviet ‘experts’, ‘academic bureaucrats’, soviet type-institutions

The Sovietization, or the attempt to introduce the Soviet model, was not a product of a single homogenous group. It was a process that required adaptations to local circumstances and several factors facilitated this process, the most important within the sovietized countries. In order to assure a constant ‘pressure of the soviet science’³⁵, help was needed from Soviet Union as well. The extent to which this help was efficient in sovietizing the cultures of the region is hard to measure and therefore still debatable. Nevertheless, the precondition for sovietization was the mere Soviet presence in the countries of the region.

The Soviet Union was not only ‘the model’ for the occupied countries but it was also the actor who also controlled the internal affairs of every communist state. In a study concerned with the relationship between Communist leadership and Romanian society, (internal problems of the ruling class as well as the relationship between ‘sovereign Soviet elite’ and local communist one) Stelian Tanase describes the Romanian 1944-1964 context in terms of a neo-colonial regime, following one of Kenneth Jowitt’s thesis.³⁶ Tanase argues that such relationships created an ‘emulation attitude’, adopted by the partner with less power or influence, an attitude manifested in the attempt of the latter to copy or to apply, in matters of culture, social norms and political institutions, the example of the dominant nation.³⁷ The main arguments for this vassalage relationship, established between the centre (Moscow) and periphery (Bucharest) is seen first of all in

³⁵ Al. Zub., *Orizont Inchis, istoriografia romana sub dictatura*, (Dark Horizon. Romanian Historiography under dictatorship) Institutul European Iasi, 2000 21.

³⁶ Stelian Tănase *Elite si societate. Guvernarea Gheorge Gheorghiu. Dej.* (Elites and the Society, the Gheorghe Gheorghiu Dej’s Regime) București Ed. Humanitas 2006, 28.

³⁷ *Ibid.*

the situation of the Communist Party in its homeland before the war, combined with the ways in which communist regime was installed. Tanase thus ascribed Romania in the category of 'communist occupation regimes' following S.P. Huntington's thesis according to which communist regimes can be classified into two categories, occupation and revolutionary regimes.³⁸

As a consequence to this vassalage relationship Moscow continuously had to enforce its domination. It therefore first got rid of less obedient leaders to infiltrate then within the state and party structures, some of its 'experts'. The constant soviet interference was augmented, as years passed, by the international context, thus, more and more 'experts' being sent, with the right to watch and coordinate every aspect of the state to which they were sent. The leaders of these experts were the Soviet ambassadors in the satellite-state capitals.³⁹

According to Dorin Dobrinu's interpretation of a note issued by the Soviet Minister Council Secretary in October 1949, 61 military counselors and 9 civilian counsellors were present in Bulgaria, Hungary Czechoslovakia, and Romania at that moment. Out of the military counselors, 29 were in Bulgaria while all civil counselors were in Romania.⁴⁰ In Poland out of twenty departments in the Ministry of Security, Soviet advisors headed eight and at least five more departmental heads had worked for

³⁸ *Ibid*, 27.

³⁹ "Every popular democracy received an increased number of soviet <<specialists>> of different kind, each of them having the right to supervise a sector of country's life". Jean Francoise Soulet, *Istoria comparata a statelor comuniste din 1945 pana in zilele noastre* (The compared History of Communist States from 1945 up to today) Polirom 1998, Iasi, 78.

⁴⁰ Dorin Dobrinu "The Soviet Counsellor's involvement in postwar Romanian repressive and military structures" in Alexandru Zub and Flavius Solomon, Eds. *Ibid*, 159. Dobrinu underlines the importance of this individuals but also the difficulties of integrating them into the historiographical circuit: "they are the most important sources that cannot be integrated in the historiographical circuit, and that is a real problem in reconstituting the Eastern Europe Soviet Counsellor Institution."

the NKVD or the Soviet armed forces.⁴¹ Whilst the new people's democracies were granted nominal sovereignty, they were bound to USSR by treaties of friendship and mutual co-operation.

This logic of soviet involvement in internal affairs of the countries of the region has been applied in cultural affairs as well. Due to the low number of loyal functionaries in charge of cultural policies, there was a real need of individuals to help duplicate the Soviet pattern. Communist functionaries in Czechoslovakia, East Germany, Poland and Romania desperately wanted to implement politically accepted cultural policy and therefore asked Moscow for professors, advisers or lesson plans for different disciplines. Beginning with 1945 dozens of such specialists in different disciplines visited the countries of the region with the aim of giving practical assistance to the governments of these countries. They had a twofold mission: to help create or restructure central cultural institutions (ministries, higher-educational institutions, etc) and to help train specialists in fields that seemed poorly developed. At the beginning, as it will be shown, Soviet visitors felt that the need was greatest in social science, with explicit reference to history.

This need for explicit Soviet involvement is explained by John Connelly as a consequence of a shortage of 'reliable' intellectuals and as well as to a fear of purges, mingled of course with opportunism and enthusiasm, as communist organizations were purged of anyone whose loyalty toward the Soviet Union seemed suspect. Connelly continues his analysis of this phenomenon, proposing an interesting hypothesis according to which the Soviet leadership showed a relative passivity in East and Central European cultural and educational affairs in contrast with their behavior in other spheres (as presented above). This difference was caused as he said, is that "they trusted local

⁴¹ George Schopflin, *Politics in Eastern Europe 1945-1992*, Blackwell, Oxford, 1993, 77.

communists, within their own established hierarchies, to oversee the import of soviet ideals.”⁴² The other argument offered for the relative passivity in cultural affairs, which seems more plausible, is that Soviet institutions, like the ministry of higher education had more than enough to do in attempting to “micromanage education within the Soviet union, without becoming involved in the details of East European education”.⁴³

This hypothesis is important for this study because the conclusion that emerges is that local communists, in charge with cultural affairs, had both to interpret and implement Soviet models based on their own interpretation of the ‘official myths’. Following this line of argumentation, the process produced relatively similar conditions in matters of history production all over the region due to the presence in Eastern Europe of individuals with knowledge of the Soviet Union and what should be copied and implemented and how to manage this process. Hence these individuals, who held important positions in Party hierarchy and government as well as in Academia, can be described as ‘organizers of scholarships’, or as they were described in communist jargon, members engaged on the “ideological front in their fight against the remnants of bourgeois mentality.”⁴⁴ In Romania these main figures or party ideologists were Leonte Rautu, Mihail Roller, Sorin Toma, Stefan Voicu, Nestor Ignat, P.C. Iasi etc. The “academic bureaucrat” in historiography, using here Enteen M. Georges’s term in describing M.N. Pokorvskii, was Mihail Roller. He was of course not the single actor to impose the soviet model in historiography (this discussion will develop in the 3rd chapter).

⁴² Connelly, *Ibid*, 21.

⁴³ Connelly, *Ibid*.

⁴⁴ Vladimir Tismaneanu, *Ibid*, 150.

Looking at the evolution of Mihail Roller as well as to the activity of some of the soviet ‘experts’ it can be argued that there were indeed ‘prosaic’ difficulties in the sovietization process and that local communist rather had to make sense of a complicated model based on their own interpretation of the ‘official myths’ which implies that the process meant more than simply “passively” acceptance.

The ‘brotherly visits’ in Romania were numerous. An earlier example for this the 1946 visit of V.I. Radvonics, a archaeologist, three historians, V.A Artihovski, B.A Rabakov, P.N. Tretiakov, and a ethnographer, P. G. Bogatirev. Their reception was more than friendly at the meetings of the Romanian Academy which was not yet ‘transformed’. Symptomatic for the new attitude towards the Soviets is that even since June 1945 the Romanian Academy named as its honorary members three Soviet scientists: the agronomist N.V Titin, the biologist V.V Parin and the literature professor A.M Egolin.⁴⁵

But in order to reflect the difficulties of the transfer and up to a point the validity of Connelly’s thesis applied on to the Romanian case, I find of great use the verbatim report of a meeting between a group of soviet advisers with party leaders from Romania. The document reflects the conclusion after a 1949 Soviet adviser’s visit of Anicikov, Gorbunov Ivanov, Rosiski, Obariu, Maximvski and Butighin in some of the Romania’s cultural and ‘scientific’ institutions.⁴⁶ Top Romanian party leaders attended this meeting: Ana Pauker, Iosif Chisinevski, Gh. Apostol, Alexandru Draghici, Ghe. Petrescu, Ofelia Manole, Leonte Rautu, Stela Moghiros, I. Bogdan.

⁴⁵ Adrian Cioroianu, “Lumina vine de la Rasarit. Noua imagine a Uniunii Sovietice in Romania postbelica, 1944-1947.(The Light comes from the East. Soviet Union’s new image in post-war Romania) in Lucian Boia, ed, *Miturile Comunismului Romanesc*, (The myths of the Romanian Communism)Nemira, 1998 Bucuresti, 52.

⁴⁶ 11 November 1949, “The verbatim report of meeting with the soviet delegation who visited some Romanian institutions” in Dan Catanus, ed, *Intelectualii in Arhivele comunismului* (The Romanian Intellectuals in the Archives of Communism) Bucharest, Nemira, 2006, 107.

Reading Ana Pauker's response to some of the considerations made by Gorbunov, the general idea is that the Romanian communist leadership hoped that Soviet professors and advisers would themselves train local scholars who in turn themselves would train future loyal cadres. But this expectation was in vain:

For us is very important to ask the soviets to help us (...) we also want to express one of our discontent regarding you: you are too few here, you have to stay more. There are still lots of scholars, students and Stakhanovist who haven't seen you, activists, ideologists...and you could still see some things.⁴⁷

She continued referring to one of the critiques brought up by the soviets concerned with the newly founded History Institute:

Our entire history was written upside down and we don't have historians, just one [Mihail Roller] who studied in U.S.S.R. (...) For us is very important to ask soviet historians to help us in this matter, this would be a priceless help in such an important discipline as history is.⁴⁸

The comments made by the Soviets can be grouped into two categories, appreciations and critiques. Appreciation with the fact that so many intellectuals 'go along with the party' and dissatisfaction with the progress on the ideological line. Here Gorbunov mentions several 'mistakes of the History Institute:

I looked at what they translated in natural sciences, history, philosophy and I saw a lot of harmful materials...The work of the History Institute is very positive, it gathered plenty of important material, which reflects the approaches between the Russian people and the Romanian. But so far this is all what the institute has. We think that this problem needs to be popularizes more...I will make it so our History Institute will deal with this problem in order to present the connections between the Russian and the Romanian People... Another mistake (referring to the new History textbook) is that the October Revolution is presented extremely narrow and its world importance is not fully shown.⁴⁹

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

⁴⁸ *Ibid*, 110.

⁴⁹ *Ibid*, 107.

The Soviet advisers had in fact little knowledge of the real problems of the locals and during these rituals of subordination⁵⁰ and the locals seemed to be more concerned with avoiding purge. In his remarks to the same History textbook, Gorbunov mentions a mistake which was not present but it was generally known during those years still as a problematic aspect between Romania and Soviet Union in Romanian that was the situation of Bessarabia. The textbook and other writings (see Roller's mandatory program for teaching history in the Universities) stated, contrary to historical reality and everything that was written in the interwar period, that Romania, after World War I, "laid hands on Bessarabia as a imperialistic power". Probably due to not knowing what the 700 pages textbook really contained, Gorbunov said just the opposite, that Romanian historians still say in their writing the seizure of Bessarabia by U.S.S.R.⁵¹ The Romanian Party leader Chisinevski "Moscow's right-hand man in Romania"⁵² born in Bessarabia had to show Gorbunov where in the text was stated the opposite.

To illustrate once more the difficulties of the process I will again refer to some of Ana Pauker's considerations, this time on A.R.L.U.S's (The Romanian Association for strengthening ties with Soviet Union) activity:

To A.R.L.U.S comes an important number of books and the scholars who don't speak Russian ask for the translation of the titles; if they like the title they ask for the translation of the book, without any further knowledge if the book is interesting or not... and us, at Agitation and Propaganda we know few in this respect.⁵³

⁵⁰ Arpad von Klimo, *Ibid*, 240.

⁵¹ The verbatim report, *Ibid*, 109.

⁵² Iosif Chisinevski is described by Florin Constantiniu as the ideological dictator of Romania, the leader of the 'sinister' Leonte Rautu and Mihail Roller the grave diggers of Romanian culture" in Florin Constantiniu, *Ibid*, 145. see also the Final Report of the Presidential Commission for the Study of the Communist Dictatorship, 649.

⁵³ The verbatim report... , *Ibid*, 110.

Therefore whether supportive, critical or disinterested, Soviet experts were not decisive in the implementation of the Soviet Model. Information about the Soviet Model in historiography was transferred above all through native communists who knew the soviet system intimately for lengthy stays in the Soviet Union (Roller) and almost all of them had proved their devotion to the Soviet Union in the Soviet territory.

Such functionaries were thoroughly dedicated to the proposition that Romanian historical writing should become as Soviet as possible but their knowledge of the model was not sufficiently detailed to serve as guide for duplication of Soviet models. Therefore them, and Communists in other people's democracies began to approach Soviet agencies for study programs, textbooks, examination schedules. Requests were usually forwarded via the VOKS representatives in Soviet embassies and the received back by higher learning institutes through Soviet type institutes (The House of Soviet Culture in Berlin, East Germany, the Czechoslovak-Soviet Institute, Polish Soviet Institute or the Soviet-Romanian Studies Institute) or other similar cultural organizations (The Soviet Romanian Annales).

I will offer here just an example of such an institution due to the existence of several studies that deal with the role performed by friendship societies or cultural organization, as one of the authors of such a study has argued, in helping cultivating a positive image of the U.S.S.R.⁵⁴ rosul va domina pentru multa vreme tricolorul asa cum V.G. afirma 37

⁵⁴ I mention here Jan. C. Behrend's study on the League for Polish-Soviet Friendship, "Agitation, Organization, and Mobilization. The League for Polish-Soviet Friendship" in Balázs Apór, Péter Apór and E.A. Rees, ed. *Ibid.*, 181-201. while for the Romanian case, Adrian Cioroianu's "Dilemele mimetismului istoriografic. Episodul Analelor Romano-Sovietice" (Dilemmas of the historiography mimicry, the Soviet Romanian Annals episode (1946-1963), in *Fatetele Istoriei*, Universitatea Bucuresti, 2000 Adrian Cioroianu, "ARLUS, o poveste cu intelectuali", (ARLUS a story with intellectuals) in *Revista 22*, octombrie 1996.

For the purpose of this study and due to its focus on the Cluj History institute is important to mention the activity of the Soviet-Romanian Studies Institute and its branch in Cluj. This was part of a greater network of institutions or cultural organizations, fully interconnected which included: ARLUS the Russian-Romanian Museum, the Russian language Institute “Maxim Gorki”, the Russian Book publishing house and libraries. At the end of May 1947 a group of intellectuals from ARLUS⁵⁵ will publish a manifest for the establishment of the Soviet-Romanian Studies Institute. From its first year the institute edited three journals, the Soviet Romanian Annales (bimonthly) External Problems (monthly) and Problems of Art and Literature (quarterly). From 1949 the Institute had two branches one in Cluj and the other in Iasi. The archival documents reveal the fact that the Soviet-Romanian Studies Institute was an important factor for orientating Romanian culture towards the Soviet model. Its declared purpose was to support the higher educational institutes in “understanding the fact that soviet science and its conquests are the only ones which can give a just ideological orientation and scientific content to study”.⁵⁶ The tasks of the institution were the following:

- ⇒ Making ‘scientific’ and qualified translations in different fields and disciplines.
- ⇒ Completion of the study of other institutes manifested through a series of conferences on Soviet science, the task being expressed in vague terms:

⁵⁵ The initiative of establishing the association belonged to a group of "leftist" who were visiting the house Prof. Constantin Ion Parhon the evening of October 20, 1944, Day of Romanian-Soviet Friendship. see Adrian Cioroianu –Ibid.

⁵⁶ Romanian National Archives Cluj County, (ANDJC), P.M.R Cluj, RWP Regional Committee, fond 2, dossier 138 / 1947, 1.

„on a themathic which usually goes beyond the concerns of a regular institute.” In this respect attention would be given to:

- a) Themes related to the fight of Soviet science against ‘decadent’ burgeoise science and against cosmopolitism manifested in science.
- b) Themes related to the advanced character of Soviet science and its role for the progress of mankind.

⇒ Dissemination of the Soviet material translated at the institute.⁵⁷

In 1963, its last year of existence () the Institute edited 41 magazines, 7 technical science publications, 8 natural science, 5 medical science, 9 social sciences(!), 4 publications of art and literature and 4 Russian language publication, and three other un-periodicals.⁵⁸

⁵⁷ *Ibid*, 2.

⁵⁸ Adrian Cioroianu, Dilemele mimetismului istoriografic (Dilemmas of the historiography mimicry, the Soviet Romanian Annals episode (1946-1963), in *Ibid*, 593.

Chapter II: IMPOSING THE SOVIET 'MODEL': INSTITUTIONAL AND LEGISLATIVE MEASURES.

“School outside life and politics is
only lying and hypocrisy.”
-Lenin

II.1. The reorganization of the Academy and the new History Institute

As argued in previous chapter, Communist regimes all over East and Central Europe cultivated an unprecedented etatist interest in culture with concurrent brutal suppression of the majority of its producers, individuals and institutions. This involved reshaping the organization and direction of science in accordance with the ambitions of the Party namely that of creating a new scientific intelligentsia while using or replacing the ‘old’ experts. In Communist Romania, this “relentlessly upheaval”⁵⁹ began with putting all cultural institutions under the control of a single body which was the Propaganda Department of the Party’s Central Committee and was continued through a far reaching restructuring process of all major cultural institutions. The first to suffer such transformation was of course the Romanian Academy, countries highest cultural and scientific forum.

The Romanian Academy, which functioned until the removal of the monarchy as a independent institution since 1869 under the patronage of the king (organized on three sections literary, historical and scientific) became the subject of increasingly harsh criticism in the Party press throughout the first part of 1948, and the tone used against it foresaw its gloomy future. According to such articles the Academy was seen as a

⁵⁹ *Intellectualii Romani in Arhivele comunismului*, (Romanian intellectuals in Communist Archives) București, Ed. Nemira 2006.

“medieval cast that supported the fascist regime” while its members were described in terms of “compromised individuals through the false science and culture that they supported”.⁶⁰ The temporary president of the institution not yet transformed, C.I. Parhon, (also minister of Agriculture at the time) was in consent with what the press related and argued for the revisal of the traditions of the former Academy and for the immediate release of new organizational regulation. It was no surprise then, when on the 9th of June 1948, a special decree stated that the former Academy was replaced by the Academy of the People’s Republic of Romania a “state institution” directly dependant to the Presidency of the Ministers Council to which it had to present accounts of its activity.⁶¹ According to the new organizational regulation “the first presidium, first active members, and the first honorary members of the Academy will be all appointed by the Great National Assembly (the Romanian legislative), as a consequence to the fact that the institution was, as stated by Prime Minister Groza, “closely linked to governmental concerns”. The immediate implication of this was that from then on priority will be given tot the request that came from the government in matters of research and scientific investigation.⁶²

The supreme governing body of the new institution was the Plenary Assembly formed only active members, who in turn elected the Presidium. The members of the Presidium were directly responsible for their activity not in front of the Plenary Assembly of the Academy, but in front of the Presidency of the Ministry Council (article 3).

⁶⁰Mihai Neamțu „Academia Română, casta medievală a sprijinit regimul fascist” (The Romanian Academy, medieval cast, supported the fascist regime) in *Contemporanul* No.73, Vineri 13 februarie 1948.

⁶¹ First article of the organizational regulations of the Academy published in *Analele Academiei Republicii Populare Române 1948-1949*, The Romanian Academy, the highest scientific and cultural forum transforms itself into a state institution. Its name will be The Academy of the People’s Republic of Romania” (The P.R.R. Academy Annales 1948-1949) București. Ed Acad. R.P.R, 1948-1949, 37.

⁶² *Ibid*, 98.

The new chairman of the institution was a former vice president of the Ministry Council and Agriculture Minister during Groza government, Traian Savulescu. In his inaugural speech Savulescu presented the guiding principles of the new institution:

Autonomy as understood by the former Romanian Academy is totally inappropriate and unacceptable in the new popular and democratic State. Scientists, the literate, the artists, must understand that between today's New State and the new Academy there may not be any conflict or contradiction. The R.P.R. Academy, democratic and progressive institution will integrate without hesitation, totally and definitively into the State assuming specific tasks in guiding and organizing the scientific research...and will never lament for its former autonomy.⁶³

Probably the best description of the way in which the State and implicitly the Party itself related to cultural matters in general and to the new Academia in particular, is the concept of 'cultural centralism' used by Ion Cernea, in his description of the Cluj branch of the Academy. According to this principle, the Academy was meant to become the major institution to coordinate the entire cultural activity of the country. The first measure for attaining such goal was its internal reorganization. Thus, the Academy was reorganized into 6 major sections and 25 subsections with the Technical and Agricultural Sciences Department as the section with most members (18) according to the immediate interests of the Party. The Historical Section had been compressed with the Philosophy Economic and Legal Science Section to have altogether 10 members.

The second important step was to expand its attributions at a national level. This was done by creating two branches of the Academy, one in Iasi and the other in Cluj, both in control of all the research institutes within their range⁶⁴

⁶³ *Ibid*, 107.

⁶⁴ "The role of the institutes is to solve the problems that are put forward by the Government and the Academy's Presidium-art 62) *Analele Academiei Republicii Populare Române* , 62.

In this context on 25 November 1948 in Cluj the local branch of the P.R.R Academy was founded with Emil Petrovici as its president, who was also the rector of the Victor Babeş University. Linguist and specialist in Slavonic languages, Petrovici was described as eminent professor, devoted Party member and a “wonderful examples for the others” by a report written by local Party cells in 1947.⁶⁵ In completing the steps of creating the branch, a structure of six institutes of the Academy was created in Cluj:

- ⇒ Chemistry Institute.
- ⇒ Medical Research Institute.
- ⇒ Psychological and Pedagogical Research Institute.
- ⇒ History Institute.
- ⇒ Literary History and Folklore Institute.
- ⇒ Linguistics Institute.

To sum up, the Academy was transformed in 1948 in a mega-structure in the context of the sovietization of scientific and academic activity of the country, following at least formally the already established model from the Soviet Union. This meant that the Academy was transformed into a omnipotent institution with the aim of ‘bringing science closer to life’.⁶⁶ Thus, in the first two decades of the communist regime, the Academy and its scientific network grew considerably, from 7 research facilities with nearly 400

⁶⁵ National Archives Cluj (ANDJC), Regional Romanian Workers Party Committee, Fond 2, dossier 138/1947, 3.

⁶⁶ Bogdan C. Iacob “Some Characteristics of History Production in Romania under Communism (1963-1974) in *Studia Universitatis Petru Maior Series Historia*, 2006, 176. for the Soviet case see the works of Michael David Fox, (eds) Michael David-Fox, Gyorgy Peteri, *Academia in Upheaval, Origins, Transfers and Transformations of the Communist Academic Regime in Russia and East Central Europe*, London 2000, Bergin&Garvey, *Revolution of the Mind: higher learning among the Bolsheviks, 1918-1929*, Ithaca NY, Cornell Univ. Press, 1997. Vera Tolz, *Russian Academicians and the revolution: combining professionalism and politics*, NY, St. Martin’s Press, 1997.

scientific collaborators in 1948 to 56 institutes or centers with about 2,500 employees in 1966.⁶⁷

The last step in the process of transforming the Academy was that of integrating it into the broader communist system of cadre promotion. This implied that while creating a new scientific intelligentsia derived from the working class, the old experts were either used and therefore reeducated or eliminated. When referring to such issues Prime Minister Groza, strongly emphasized that only the most devoted elements to the cause of the working people could be members of the Academy and its research institutes. According to Groza's description, the new academician was a scholar "delivered by western skepticism, a rational intellectual capable for joining in the process of building the socialist society." In order to carry forward such things new regulation and criteria were set for those who wanted become members of the Academy as well as for those who wanted to continue within its structures

It was no surprise then that the new regulations contained specific criteria of selection for those who wanted to continue or enter within the structures of the Academy.⁶⁸ In the light of this new set of rules only 19 of the former members have been kept as active members and 15 as honorary members (most of them specialists in theoretical and applied sciences) while 100 were eliminated under the pretext of several articles of the new organizational regulations.⁶⁹

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

⁶⁸ "We have to be very scrupulous in choosing our new members...no individual hostile to the democratic regime, which the people has democratically elected...no indolent or passive intellectuals that will distillate the poison of doubt within the progress... The main principles of the R.P.R. Academy", *ibid*, 110-111

⁶⁹ "Those who suffered condemnation for their fascist or reactionary activity, those whose citizenship was withdrawn after 1945, those who had an antidemocratic attitude and served the reactionary and fascist, those who are now outside the country, etc", see Article 34-37 of the P.R.R. Academy organizational regulations in *Analele Academiei Republicii Populare Române*, pag 50 See for the repressive side of the

From the point of view of the history institutions, same radical changes occurred as in the case of the Academy. Thus, on 15 July 1948 by a decree of the Great National Assembly (the legislature of the Romanian People's Republic) a new history institute was created, The History Institute of the Peoples Republic of Romania, concomitant with the abolishment of the former Institute of National History, the Institute for the Study of Universal History, the Institute for Byzantine Studies, all from Bucharest, as well as the National Institute of History from Cluj and Iasi. In continuation of this measure, all former historical institutions merged together under the History Institute from Bucharest. From then on the History Institute of the Academy had 4 sections and two branches in Cluj and Iasi:

- ⇒ National History.
- ⇒ Universal History.
- ⇒ Slavic and Balkan History.
- ⇒ Byzantium History.

At the same time with the new institutional reorganization the most important historical journals had perished: *Revista Istorică*, *Revue Historique de Sud-Est Europeen*, *Revista Istorică Romana and Balcanica*, to be all replaced by a single one entitled *Studii* (Studies). In Cluj, this journal was published between 1950 and 1955 to be latter replaced by *Studii si cercetarii de istorie* while from 1958 untill 1970 the name was again changed into *Anuarul Institutului de Istorie din Cluj*. (The Yearbook of the History Institute of Cluj).

process see also, Lucia Hossu Longin *Memorialul Durerii, o istorie care nu se invata la școala*, Bucuresti, Ed. Humanitas, 2007, 166.

In the same spirit of hipper-centralism the management of the History Institute was changed with Petre Constantinescu Iasi, director of the institute to be as well president of the Historical Section of the Academy. The other people with important position in the management of the History Institute were Letitia Lazarescu Ionescu (History of Romania), Emil Condurachi (Slavic and Byzantium history) and Andrei Otetea (in charge with Medieval, Modern and Contemporary History). All of them along with Mihail Ralea, director of the Philosophical section led the Institute until 1952. What is extremely interesting is that Mihail Roller had no official position in any of the above institutions being just a simple member of the Propaganda and the vice president of the Academy. Nevertheless, due to the power granted to him by the Party, Roller managed to control the whole historiographic activity in Romania between 1948 and 1953 with his speeches setting the standard of interpretation to be followed by all other historians of the time. The main themes of the historical become the conflict between social classes which was regarded as the propellant of historical events, and the praise brought to Soviet Union.⁷⁰

II.2. The 1948 Educational act and the organization of Higher Education

Ten years after the educational legislative act was emitted by the communist government, the central press continued publishing articles in which it underlined its importance for carrying out the cultural revolution and for creating a intellectuality

⁷⁰ Mihail Rollerr “Realizari și sarcini noi pe taramul științelor istorice”, (Accomplishments and new tasks on the field of historical sciences) in *Contemporanul*, nr.157, 7 octombrie 1949,.7, *Probleme de Istorie. O contribuție la lupta pentru o istorie științifică în R.P.R.* (History Problems. A contribution to the struggle for a scientific history in P.R.R) Ed. P.M.R 1957., *Programul Cursului Universitar de Istorie al R.P.R* (The Mandatory Curricula Programe for teaching history in University) Ed. Acad. R.P.R .

strictly connected to the people.⁷¹ Its declared purposes were the following: elimination of analphabetism, education of the young in the spirit of popular democracy and training specialists who will meet the needs of the State and who will consolidate the regime.⁷² In order to attain such goals but also more palpable ones such as creating a technical elite for the industrialization, the new educational system revolved around two major principles namely centralism and scientific realism. This meant that from then on the public education was put under the strict control of the state and reorganized in order to have a more ‘practical’ character in accordance with the immediate needs of the country: “We do not need any kind of engineers and technicians. We need that kind of engineers and technicians capable to understand the politics of the working class...capable of assuming this politic and to do so in a conscientious manner.”⁷³

In what concerned the Higher Education (II- Special Injunctions) the 17th article of the act, stipulated that the Educational Ministry will control directly the activity of the universities. This meant that the Ministry assumed for itself the role of setting the number of the students and the general line of the education according to its interpretation of what the needs of the country were: “Our higher education system is restructured according to the necessity of preparing specialists needed for production and scientific research. It will be strictly connected to practical purposes (Gh. Vasilichi, Public Education Minister).⁷⁴

⁷¹ Teodor Gal, „Un deceniu de la reforma învățământului”, (A decade since the educational reform) in *Tribuna*, II, nr. 31(78), 2 august 1958, 3.

⁷² The public education in RPR is provided by the state () it is organized on the grounds of structure unit and it is based on popular democratic and scientific realist principles. The public education aims at: a) curing/eradicating the illiteracy b) Introducing the youth into the popular democratic spirit, c) Educating the youth in the popular democratic spirit) Training the professors on appropriate scientific grounds in order to match the needs for consolidating the popular democracies and for building the socialist societies. *Lupta Ardealului*, IV nr. 601, 4 August 1948, 8. Curiously the official discourse spoke of ‘valorization of previous traditions’ nevertheless of course improved with the ‘positive experience of the soviet science.

⁷³ *Lupta Ardealului*, IV nr. 601, 4 August 1948, 20.

⁷⁴ *Ibid*, 5 August 1948.

From then on the higher education was organized in three specific institutions, universities, polytechnic schools and higher education institutes, all with the precise task of preparing specialists and cadres (art 18 Special Injunctions).

In its last part, the 1948 legislative act articles specified the modality in which the Ministry will exert its control: indirectly through mandatory curricula programs set out by the Ministry for each department of the university and research institutes and directly through the Control and Guidance Service (Serviciul de Indrumare si Control) which will supervise the activity of the professors. The main purpose of the two would be that of imposing a 'spirit of responsibility of the Chair', which in Leonte Rautu interpretation meant politically obedience. As a consequence to this system in the following years, university professor's attention redirected from their work to careful and just application of the 'line' imposed by the government because as frequently they were warned "needles chairs will be eliminated while others can be as well reorganized."⁷⁵

In what concerns higher education in Cluj, the University suffered important transformation starting earlier than 1948. The first step of the Ferdinand University in becoming a 'captive university'⁷⁶ was the year 1946 when, the autonomy principle under which it functioned before, was canceled by the Groza government. This occurred in the context of the strong nationalistic manifestations of both the professors and students of the Ferdinand University caused by the establishment of the Hungarian University.⁷⁷ The process continued throughout 1947 and 1948 through selective purges which affected the

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*

⁷⁶ Term used by John Connelly in his study, *Captive University: The Sovietization of East German, Czech and Polish Higher education 1945-1956*, University of North Carolina Press, 2000

⁷⁷ Dobos Danuț, *Ingerințe politice în viața universitară clujeană (1945-1948)* (Political interference in the life of the Cluj University) in *Anuarul Institutului de Istorie A.D. Xenopol din Iași*, XXXIII, 1996, Iași, Ed. Academiei Române, 225-239.

professors as well the students and ended in late 1948 with the restructuring of its departments. If before the Ferdinand I University had four departments, Philosophy, Law and State Sciences, Medicine Pharmacy and Sciences, from 1948 until 1959 the University of Cluj had functioned under the new name of Victor Babeş” University with the following six departments :

1. Philology.
2. History and Geography.
3. Philosophy.
4. Pedagogy and Psychology.
5. Mathematics, Physics and Chemistry.
6. Legal Sciences.⁷⁸

⁷⁸ Lucian Nastasa, *Intelectualii si promovarea sociala in Romania sec XIX-XX* (The Intellectuals and the social promotion in Romania 19th and 20th century), Limes, Cluj-Napoca, 2004, 135.

CHAPTER III: POLITICS OF HISTORY IN COMMUNIST ROMANIA: THE HISTORY INSTITUTE OF CLUJ 1949-1953.

“The transformation of the Institute of History and Philosophy into the Patronage Institute of the Academy, lately attached to its branch in Cluj, took place in March 1949.

It hosted especially Romanian and Hungarian researchers and it allowed us to step forward. This constituted the only way in which it could follow a lavish Marxist Leninist ideology and it could lead to higher political level.”

(1952 report on the activity of the History institute of Cluj)

In his study dedicated to the interwar Cluj University Lucian Nastasa argued that Cluj had always been different in the Romanian university life referring to the fact that while the two other provincial institutions, (Iasi and Cernauti) played an antechamber role for the capital⁷⁹, Universitatea Daciei Superioare, (later named Universitatea Regele Ferdinand I - King Ferdinand I University) was a veritable attraction point for the researchers who were there in direct competition with the ‘centre’. The tumultuous past of the Transylvanian city, its multicultural aspect as well as its problematic postwar situation affected made that this difference to persist both during transformation as well as in the following years.

After the University and its institutes returned from the exile in Southern Transylvania (1940-1944) caused by the Hungarian occupation, the problem of creating a Hungarian University, as proposed by the government, determined intense nationalistic

⁷⁹ easy to observe in the ways the professors transferred to Bucharest see, Lucian Nastasa, *Intellectualii si promovarea sociala in Romania* sec XIX-XX (The Intellectuals and the social promotion in Romania 19th and 20th century), Limes, Cluj-Napoca, 2004, 135.

disputes between the professors and the students of the Ferdinand University on one side, and the Sanatescu and Groza governments on the other, which soon turned into antigovernment and anticommunist manifestations.⁸⁰ The climax of these manifestations was 1946 the same year when the autonomy of the university was cancelled (24 August 1946) and thus first step made towards its transformation.

The History Institute of Cluj, founded at the same time with the University (1920), by a special donation of King Ferdinand I, with the precise purpose of studying the history of the Romanians in Transylvania, could not have escaped this process of transformation which affected the entire Romanian culture. Accordingly to these transformations, the former Institute Institutul de Istorie Nationala din Cluj (The National History Institute, Cluj) was replaced by a totally transformed institution, Institutul de Istorie si Arheologie din Cluj al Academiei Romane (The History and Archaeology Institute of Romanian Academy, Cluj 1 May 1949) which was put under the strict control of the Academy, of History Institute in Bucharest and to that of the Party. Thereby, as described in the first chapter as a characteristic of the sovietization history production in Cluj was linked to specific centers and to the scientific research which was at all times under the control of the State and implicitly to that of the Party. The purpose of this chapter is to reflect how this institutional structuring determined the internal politicization and cancellation of academic neutrality of the Institute but because this included more than simply institutional actors (Academia, new History Institute, or the Party) the focus

⁸⁰ Dobos Danuș, *Ingerințe politice în viața universitară clujeană (1945-1948)* (Political interference in Cluj University life) in *Anuarul Institutului de Istorie A.D. Xenopol din Iași*, XXXIII, 1996, Iași, Ed. Academiei Romane, 225-239.

will be frequently shifted towards the historians seen themselves as ‘actors of sovietization’.

III.1. Eliminating undesirable elements: Ioan Lupas and Alexandru Lapedatu

One of the main objectives of the newly installed regime, and the preliminary out of which the sovietization of historiography itself had started, was the process of transforming the professoriate body which meant that the Party initiated a selective process of eliminating the intellectuals of the ancien regime while at the same manifested interest in creating its own intellectuality. The amplitude of such a process as well the terminological fluctuations of the term intellectual itself make it difficult to offer a comprehensive and complete explanation of the process. Nevertheless this study due to the fact that deals with the elimination of the ‘old’ professoriate and speaks about historians as ‘actors of sovietization’ needs to make some general clarification of the problematic aspect of how the Party related to intellectuals as well how the intellectuals themselves related to the Party and the postwar realities. In order to do this it will start by using the perspective of a Western journal, contemporary to the period under study, on the use of the term intellectual in the Eastern countries of the continent, as well as its perspective on how the intellectuals from these countries related to the new ‘pro-communist regimes’.

According to the author of the 1947 article that appeared in *The Economist*, 1947, the terms, intellectual and intelligentsia have a different use to the “one known in England”, having a less ‘academic meaning’ corresponding to what is usually named in West as a “professional class” (who subsumes doctors, professors, engineers

magistrates).⁸¹ Starting from this premise the author then makes a classification of the intellectuals from the countries that were facing sovietization using as criteria the way in which they relate to the new pro-communist governments. He starts with Romania, where the situation is 'confuse', whilst in Budapest the "atmosphere of intellectual freedom is most highly sensed."⁸² Along with some other considerations of how change of regime affected the university life⁸³, the ways in which he describes the Eastern intellectuals can be classified into two major categories. First category consists in those who supported the regime, naming here as the most evident the 'communist intellectuals',⁸⁴ while the second is that of the 'adversaries' of the regime. An insight of these ideologically opposed groups follows this general description.

Within the first group there are intellectuals who while not communist and still critical to some of the communist's methods or political actions, support the regime due to their belief that after the dramatic postwar situation will end the declared progressive intentions of the regime will somehow be accomplished. Besides them there are also intellectuals who support the regime, "as they once supported the fascists", mainly

⁸¹ „Intellectualitatea din Răsărit și Occidentul” (The Eastern Intellectuality and the West) „The Economist 1 Februarie 1947”, see the list of documents in *Intellectualii români în Arhivele Comunismului*, (The Romanian Intellectuals in the Communist Archives) București, Ed. Nemira 2006, 102.

⁸² *Ibid*, 105.

⁸³ “the relative freedom of which universities enjoyed in the former regime was strongly reduced. Many professors were purged in Yugoslavia and Bulgaria... In Belgrade, Sofia and Bucharest the governments have a great influence in naming professors and choosing university lecturers and assistants. In Bulgaria those that want to study at the University in Sofia need to bring certificates elaborated by the Front to prove their political rehabilitation. In Romania such a proof is asked for permitting students access in the canteens (...) In other situation the governments go too far. In Belgrade the courses for students of the English Literature must be a literary history, translated into Serbian by a Soviet Professor, who in his voluminous notes mentions as the only authority for this Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin. The life of the professors is hard no matter despite their interest of adapting to the new situation, *Ibid*.”

⁸⁴ He names Jozsef Revai for Hungary, Theodor Pavlov in Bulgaria and for the Romanian case, even though not specified in the article; Lucretiu Patrascanu would enter this category. In his study of Dej's regime, Vladimir Tismaneanu argues that the top Romanian Party leaders had 'anti-intellectual prejudices' saying that with the exception of Al. D. Gherea and Lucretiu Patrascanu, in the early period the intellectuals were 'obviously absent' from the upper echelon of the Party, Vladimir Tismaneanu, *Stalinism pentru eternitate*, (Stalinism for all seasons) București, Ed. Polirom, 2005.

because of their opportunism. For the author this is the most numerous group, serving the governments, as to serve their own ambitions, or to avoid possible purges.⁸⁵

The group of ‘the adversaries’ is as well formed by several different subcategories. First there were the ‘purged fascists’ followed by the ‘conservatives’ who refused to collaborate with Germany but also cannot trust or accept the communists: “Among these there are several old and suffering friends of England. Not only that they don’t have any political power but also they are excluded from economic life. Everyday is harder for them to gain their living and their livelihood is becoming lower”. Other adversaries of the regimes are leftist who all their life fought for social and politic revolution but they cannot recognize into the daily realities their old ideals: “they accept the politics of the governments but cannot reconcile with the lies, violence, incompetence and organized outcast.”⁸⁶

This short incursion in the problematic aspect of the intellectuals and the ways in which they related to the Party is seen as necessary because it points out two important aspects. First of all, the Communist Party ‘inherited’ from the ancient regime a group of intellectuals, who due to their political background and refuse to cooperate, became undesirable and thus isolated or eliminated. Secondly, the group meant to help impose the soviet model was not a homogenous group at all aspect with important consequences for the process of transformation. For History this tension is best described by Arpad von Klimó in his analysis of the introduction, or the attempt to introduce soviet model into Hungarian historiography. Klimó argues that according to their educational backgrounds and/or Party positions five different groups contributed to historical production in

⁸⁵ *Ibid*, 106

⁸⁶ *Ibid*, 106.

Hungary: These were party theorists, party theorists who held academic positions at the same time, young communist historians, who were not high ranking functionaries, non-communist historians who were ‘tolerated’ and non communist historians who were defamed for their ‘falsification’ of history.⁸⁷

While the study will deal later with the Cluj Institute historians involved in the sovietization process, it will focus first on the elimination of the non-communist historians with a strong anti-communist background who could thus not be ‘used’. No matter how impressive their academic merits the destiny of ‘bourgeois’ historian that refused enrollment was sealed, especially if they held positions that were important to the party. The treatment of the two former directors of the History Institute of Cluj, Ioan Lupas and Alexandru Lapedatu reflects this tendency.⁸⁸

Ioan Lupas, born in 1880 studied literature and philosophy in Budapest and Berlin, establishing during those years the *Luceafarul* magazine (1902) as a manifest for the Romanian intellectuals in Budapest. After 1918 he was constant involved in the activity of the Religious and Cults and Education Ministries. At the Cluj University he was a professor of Recent history of the Romanians and History of Transilvania.⁸⁹ Due to his activity he managed to organize with Alexandru Lapedatu the National History institute of Cluj publishing along with the former, *Anuarul Institutului de Istorie*

⁸⁷ Arpad von Klimo “The Sovietization of Hungarian Historiography. Failures and Modifications in the early 1950s” in Balázs Apor, Péter Apor and E.A. Rees, ed, *Ibid*, 237.

⁸⁸ Other examples of historians from the Cluj Institute that were purged by the communist regime were Silviu Dragomir, Ioan Moga, Ioachim Craciu etc.

⁸⁹ He was a historian interested in research that involved the voievodship of Transylvania but also he was author of several studies of history theory and history of historiography. (*Sensul si scopul Istoriei* 1923, *Heghel si Filozofia Istoriei*, 1932, *Leopold Ranke si Mihail Kogalniceanu* 1936, *Epocile Principale in Istoria Romanilor*, 1928) He was named by Pompiliu Teodor as the last representing of a fundamental tradition of Romanian Enlightenment, Pompiliu Teodor, *Introducere in Istoria Istoriografiei din Romania* (*Introduction to the History of the Romanian Historiography*) Accent, Cluj-Napoca, 2002, 196-200., Stefan Stefanescu, ed, *Enciclopedia istoriografiei Romanesti*, (The Enciclopedia of Romanian Historiography) Ed. Stiintifica si Pedagogica, Bucuresti, 1978, 202.

Nationala (The Year Book of National History Institute). In 1916, at Nicolae Iorga's request Ioan Lupas became a full member of the Romanian Academy.

Nevertheless, once with the instauration of the communist regime the life and the activity of the historian changed radically. Noticing the nature of the regime, Lupas retired first from any public life activities knowing, that he will never be able to be part of the world that was to come. He was aware that he was part of that group of the intellectuals which was in obvious contradiction with what the new ruling power was promoting. Lupas decided to no longer take part in the 'social life' or in any meetings that might lead to discussions with political content: "In the social life I no longer participate only to a small extent and in my meetings with former or new friends I force myself to be as short as possible, avoiding carefully, any discussions of political-militant character".⁹⁰

Despite his early retirement from the public sphere, on the 22 of April 1950 a special order was given so his every action would be monitored. Shortly after, he was interrogated and imprisoned in a working colony until the second half of 1951, when his one year condemnation theoretically had to expire, but was prolonged until 1955. The main accusation brought to Lupas was that of having an "intense activity against the working class during the regime of the bourgeoisie." The punishment for all these was penal servitude for life.⁹¹

This type of accusations used in Lupas's condemnation appeared frequently earlier in time in press, coincidently or not, always in tandem with Alexandru Lapedatu. In a 1948 number of the *Contemporanul* cultural-political weekly (otherwise a suggestive title to reflect the extent to which culture became politicized) described as "faithful

⁹⁰ Ioan Opris, *Istoricii si securitatea*, (The Historians and the Securitatea) vol 1, Bucuresti, Ed Enciclopedica, 2007, 342.

⁹¹ *Ibid*, 345.

servants of the bourgeois-landlord regime”, “verified enemies of the Romanian people”, a “nefarious tandem for the historical writing of the country.”⁹²

In what concerns Lapedatu the cause for his denigration, as the author stressed was found mainly in his obstinacy to admit and write in support of the realizations of the Communist Party: Mr. Lapedatu speaks of the unquestionable merit of the one that initiated the second great land reform of Romania, Mr. Ion Bratianu, without saying anything of the one that took place in 1945 the only real and complete one which occurred without the help of the landlords but against them.⁹³ His refusal in accepting and promoting the official interpretation of the contemporary events became an incriminatory factor in the eyes of the new regime. What was fatal to Lapedatu was his enormous prestige as a democrat, both within the Romanian borders as well as at a international level.

A dedicated Romanian History Professor of the Cluj University from its opening in 1919 until 1938, Lapedatu was the founder and co-director of the History Institute between 1920 and 1938.⁹⁴ As recognition of his activity in Cluj as well as on national level (political figure of the Romanian interwar, part of the Romanian delegacy at the Peace Conference in Paris and an important senator and minister in several governments) the Romanian Academy named him president of the institution (1935-1937) and general secretary during the following years. As a recognition both for its

⁹² The two were attacked in the context of the general critique toward some of the members of the Romanian Academy which was not yet transformed. Ion Aluzetu, “Din Memoriile Academiei Romane” (From the Memoirs of the Romanian Academy) in *Contemporanul*, Nr.72, Friday, 13 of February.

⁹³ *Ibid.*

⁹⁴ During his activity as director and researcher at the History Institute he was interested in the Romanian Middle Ages publishing different studies on the history of the relations between Walachia with Transylvania and Hungary (Vlad Voda Calugarul 1482-1496, 1903; Radu cel Frumos in Transilvania, Noua imprejurare de dezvoltare ale istoriografiei nationale in AIINC, Cluj, 1921-1922; Istoriografia ardeleana in legatura cu desfasurarea vietii politice a neamului romanesc de peste Carpati, 1923) Pompiliu Teodor, *Ibid.*, 183-185, Ioan Oprea, *Alexandru Lapedatu in cultura românească*, București, Ed. Științifică, 1996, pag 308.

academic and political activity in 1947 The World Institute of Research Biography of New York informed Lapedatu that he was included in “Who’s Important in Government.”⁹⁵ It was therefore obvious in the context of the changes that the Romanian society was facing that a man like Lapedatu, will not continue his previous activity in research as well as in politic. Therefore on the 5th of May 1950, just a day before his colleague Lupas, Alexandru Lapedatu was arrested and taken and sent to Sighet as a member of the dignitaries’ lot’ were he died in august, the same year.

For all that the Party desperately needed its own intelligentsia that corresponded to its cultural, economic or political needs its range of selection never included what they called ‘the bourgeois reactionary’. The strategy towards them in the early years of the communist regime was clear and involved isolation and elimination due to their refuse to ideological (re)education. Lupas and Lapedatu are examples of the maximum hardness line adopted by the regime in its first years as a preliminary for assuring the best conditions for the implementation of the new ‘model’ in historiography. The elimination of such important intellectual figures of the interwar period was also a signal for those who escaped the purges and were still wondering about their attitude toward the regime. The frequency with which party members spoke of Lupas and Lapedatu in their accusations brought to the former institute proves this last aspect.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*

III.2 Actors in the Sovietization process

In 1950, Constantin Daicoviciu director of the Cluj History Institute, gave in the periodical *Studii* (Studies) an account of the activity of the institute since its “historical” transformation, in which he described in very positive terms how this occurred at Cluj.⁹⁶ When presenting its immediate effects on research, Daicoviciu follows the official pattern that was promoted then presenting class struggle as the dynamic force in the development of the societies, the important role that the Slaves and then Russians had in the development of the Romanian language and culture all combined with numerous examples from soviet historiography.⁹⁷ What strikes the reader’s attention in Daicoviciu’s account is the way in which the historical tensions between the Hungarians and Romanians were solved by the ‘new’ historiography. As Daicoviciu stressed it was indeed ‘something else’:

Seen in the light of the new science, which is the history of the working class of all times, Transylvania no longer appeared as a multinational conflict region but as the land of concord of the three nations and a fighting arena of oppressed masses, both Romanian and Hungarian, against a common enemy, the ‘oppressors of all nations and all religion.’⁹⁸

In what concerns the historians little information is given. Nevertheless, in his account of the Institute and the new ‘scientific’ historiography, Daicoviciu points out two factors as most important for the transformation and further ‘development’. First it was the support and guidance of the Romanian Communist Party. This was completed by the

⁹⁶ Constantin Daicoviciu, “Cronica. Din activitatea Institutelor si colectiveor de cercetari ale Filialei Cluj a Academiei R.P. R. Institutul de Istorie si Filozofie din Cluj al Academiei R.P.R. Raport sumar pe anul 1949-1950” (The summary raport of the History and Philosophy institute 1949-1950) in *Academia R.P.R., Studii si cercetarii stiintifice*, (Studies)I, 2, 1950, 172.

⁹⁷ *Ibid*, 172-175 For the thematic turn see see Andi Mihalache, *Ibid.*, 2003. Florin Constantiniu, *Ibid.* 23-65. Adrian Cioroianu, *Ibid.*

⁹⁸ Constantin Daicoviciu *Ibid*, 174.

Soviet Union's model as seen in the examples of the works of different historians and Soviet Historiography in general and the "model that is for us the History of the Communist Party (Bolshevik) of Soviet Union" in particular. To sum up Daicoviciu's own ideas about the process, the transformation occurred in the institution he supervised with insignificant shortages and therefore best conditions were assured for further progress: "in these days of political and scientific freedom assured by the Soviet Union the Marxist-Leninist-Stalinist conception on history was applied fully by the Romanian and Hungarian historians of the Cluj Institute" If this was the case with the institute's own view of the transformation, the perspective of the two institutions meant to validate such conclusions proved to be slightly different.

The Cluj branch of the Academy, as stated before in this study was the institution which had to coordinate the entire scientific activity evaluating the general lines of research in the institutes as well as in University.⁹⁹ This new institutional structuring involved an exchange of information between the Institutes and the local branch of the Academy, as well between the latter and the General Secretariat of the Academy in Bucharest. Relevant information about how this happened is found in a 1951 informative note which describes the ways in which the local branch communicated with the 'centre'. According to this note the research institutes had to send every month reports of their activity which were later summarized and forwarded, every quarter, in a single format, to the General Secretariat in Bucharest. Apart from these arrangements, the information exchange was made generally through meetings between locals and the

⁹⁹ "The fact that all existing scientific units of the Academy are grouped around the filial which exerts the coordination guidance role has clarified the organizational framework in which the research activity will develop...this thing was absent in the past when the institutes were part of other ministries, while other were directly respondent to the Bucharest Academy." Romanian National Archives, Cluj county (from now on ANDJC) Romanian Workers Party, fond 13, dossier nr 203/1951, 77

Secretary of the Academy which didn't involve any written format: "With the Academy we keep contact through comrade Grigore Popa, Secretary of the Academy. Comrade Negulescu points out the problems of the Filial each time he goes to Bucharest...about 2-3 times in a trimester, mostly verbally and solutions are given on the spot."¹⁰⁰ In turn, the 'centre' sent information to its local branch only once a year in the format of general working plans. The fact that the information exchange between the two was so rare caused problems in Cluj in matters of avoiding 'sideslips from the line' and frustration within the members of the branch was manifested especially in the first years of the transformation: "The Filial hasn't got a clear perspective in the way how the sessions should be prepared as well as what are the internal objectives...there are then difficulties which arise from lack of a clear organizing principle."¹⁰¹

In this rather complicated system of information exchange between centre and periphery, a 1951 report of the Academy "on the situation in scientific work", included segments dedicated to the history institute and its evolution since the transformation. The short but comprehensive part dedicated to the History institute stated first the premises out of which the transformation began, to argue then what were the main tasks of the institute under its new format:

Assuming Marxism Leninism and soviet historical science was in the last few years the main task of history. Several elements of 'old' background have been deeply and sincerely transformed due to this fact...Despite all these there are in Cluj a great amount of historians, so called specialists who couldn't make this step and who do not have any perspective in doing this. Among them objectivism and cosmopolitanism is manifested.¹⁰²

¹⁰⁰ ANDJC, *Ibid*, Informative Note, 87.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid*.

¹⁰² If looking at their background the majority of the Cluj historians were part of the nationalistic school lead no loon enough by the well known reactionary historian Ioan Lupas ANDJC, *Ibid*, The Report of the P.R.R. Academy, Cluj brach, regarding the scientific work, 1951, 65.

The ‘objectivism’ and ‘cosmopolitanism’¹⁰³ the document referred to, was used there as an accusation against the historians of the Institute who were avoiding to write on topics that were considered to be of an urgent need. The historians in general avoided the topics related to contemporary events in which they could be easily be wrong and thus jeopardize their position. This situation is best described by David Prodan, a Marxist historian student of both Lapedatu and Lupas, who as in the classification offered by the Economist in 1947 became disgusted with the communist post-war realities: “We were entering a world which I didn’t see coming and in which I couldn’t deliberately integrate myself. The utopias of the youth were winnowed away (...) I ceased my activity; I didn’t pick up my Party membership card.”¹⁰⁴

According to Prodan, at modern history (in which he was specialist) every word was supervised and the historians were subjected to unfair allocations and to misinterpretations: The difficulty to teach modern or contemporary history, “in which you could easily be wrong, was one of the things the historian was trying to avoid and therefore he was facing difficulties in adapting himself. Another problem for the historians was also that of writing more ‘combative’ in other ways critical against their former professors. The solution found by the Institute with the help of the Party was that

¹⁰³ Cosmopolitism and objectivism were otherwise frequent themes used in attacking the former historical narrative, an example for their use is the article written by the director of the newly founded History Institute in Bucharest, P.C. Iasi, who was also the president of the Historical Section of the Academy, “Cosmopolitismul in stiintele istorice” (Cosmopolitism in Historical Sciences) in *Contemporanul*, nr. 160, 2 October, 1949.

¹⁰⁴ David Prodan, *Memorii*, (Memoirs) București, Ed. Enciclopedică 1993, 51. This hasn’t stopped Prodan to be one of the most prodigious and influential historians of the Cluj Institute, writing important studies on the modern history of Transylvania. *Rascoala lui Horea in comitatele Cluj si Turda, Teoria imigratiei din Principatele Romane in Transilvania in veacul al XVIII-lea, Iobagia in domeniul barii de Aries la 1770, Supplex Libbelus Valachorum*, see Katherine’s Verdery’s interpretation on the ways in which the past was produced during Ceausescu, where she compares the same historical event (Rascoala lui Horea) presented by Prodan and St. Pascu, Katherine Verdery, *Compromis si rezistenta, Cultura Romana sub Ceausescu, (National Ideology under socialism, Identity and Cultural Policies in Ceausescu’s Romania)* Humanitas, Bucuresti, 1994, 214; Florin Muller, *Politica si istoriografie in Romania, 1948-1964*, Cluj-Napoca, Ed. Nereamia Napocae, 2003, 287; David Prodan, *Ibid.*

of setting working collectives which had a pre-established topic and to putting the ‘hesitative’ historian to work with a co-author more combative:

Annoying were also the working condition in collective, the name abuses, the figuration, all possible now. And all could be imposed without any appeal possibilities. You had to respond for other peoples work or on the other side to promote their incompetence...I was not sufficiently combative and therefore often they imposed me a co-author more combative than me with whom I had to be solidary.¹⁰⁵

According to the report issued by the Academy, the major problem of the Institute was the hesitation of the historians in writing a proper and complete history of the Transylvanian working class as well as other topics “important in order to fully reflect the application of nationalist- Stalinist policy in our country after 23 of August 1944”. Avoiding such tasks was described in terms of “running from interpreting the history of fatherland.”¹⁰⁶

Making account of the observed deficiencies in last years work there were listed on the current year working plan of the History institute problems strongly connected with...the struggle of the working class for peace and against the imperialistic wars of 1912-1916 as well as the traitorous role of the right-wing social democracy between the two wars...¹⁰⁷

A year after the Academy’s rapport a document unsigned and without any address reviews the activity of the institutes since 1949 focusing this time on the historians and not on the institution and the role played by them in the transformation process. The names that appear most frequent are that of the director of the institution, Constantin Daicoviciu, Fracisc Pall, David Prodan, and Stefan Pascu. Reading its content the impression is that it was written by a Party member which was also a historian for the use of the Party. The presentation of its content will clarify some of this assumptions.

¹⁰⁵ David Prodan, *Ibid*, 59.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid*.

¹⁰⁷ ANDJC, *Ibid*, 77.

In its first part the person who wrote the rapport was trying to highlight the 'environment' in which the historians of the newly created institute were formed, in order to illustrate how this affected them in responding correctly to the 'new values'. The terms used for describing the interwar activity of the institute detect best the ways in which the Party saw its activity as well as that of the University: antiscientific, intolerant, reactionary, retrograde and Chauvin, false historical science, nationalism, inimical ideology, poison, idealism, objectivism etc. :

Professors such as Puscariu, Lupas, Lapedatu, Ghibu, Dragomir and others propagated from the desk through conferences, brochures and their books, not only hatred against all that was Hungarian, German or Jewish, but also a mystic and retrograde conception in scientific matters all drowned in a swamp of objectivism and cosmopolitanism. In this University have grown and received the education the members of the institute...founded with the money of the most hated exploiters headed by the agent of foreign imperialism Ferdinand and with heads as the former two directors...There is no surprise that the University and the Institute became in time real nests of the legionary movement.¹⁰⁸

This sort of terminology which belongs to the political language of communism¹⁰⁹ can lead automatically to several conclusions. First of all the same paradigm, specific to communism, that divided the world into good and bad, useful and harmful, was now applied to history in creating two irreconcilable camps. Therefore if for the 'new' history and its institution the terms used revolve mainly around the concept of science and its derivatives, the 'old' revolves around the opposite, unscientific. Hence, if the former Institute and its members were, intolerant, reactionary, retrograde and Chauvin, the history writing during communism, and historians who sincerely transformed themselves, were facing a process of development, construction and progress towards the expected

¹⁰⁸Ibid, .92

¹⁰⁹ For the interpretation of such terms see Francoise Thom, *Newspeak the language of Communism* London : Claridge Press, 1989, George Irimiaș, *Structuri textuale ale discursului politic totalitar*, Cluj-Napoca, Ed. Clusium.200, Andi Mihalache, *Ibid*, 2003.

goal, cultural revolution and socialist consciousness . What decided if one historiography was scientific or not, meant to perish or not was of course ideology.

The individuals educated in this ‘unscientific’ institutional framework as the author argues, did not remain immune to this “poison propagated throughout the school (Universitatea Daciei Superioare) and its research institutes: “All this procession of fake historical science is like a burden upon our shoulders. The whole convoy of false science of history lies therefore heavy upon us.” Starting from such a vision of the past, the first analyzed was Constantin Daicoviciu, the director of the institute. In the political and intellectual context of 1948-1960, Constantin Daicoviciu enjoyed a great position managing to avoid the purges but also to consolidate his position, being named the director of the new institute, despite its former association with Carol the II. His position within the Institute and Party leads to numerous interpretations but as this study has no purpose in accusing or to victimizing any of the historians it will adopt, using here Al. Zub’s term, a “median discourse” between the two tendencies.¹¹⁰ Daicoviciu was a archaeologist and historian of the antiquity, with studies started in Cluj and finished in the West (Rome, Austria, Germany, France and Greece) all leading to the elaboration of his most important study dedicated to the Dacian civilization in Transylvania, *La Transylvanie dans l’antiquite*.¹¹¹ His major mistake, seems to be very minor if comparing

¹¹⁰ Al. Zub, *Orizont Inchis, istoriografia romana sub dictatura*, (Dark Horizon. Romanian Historiography under dictatorship) Institutul European Iasi, 2000, 19. When the communist regime was installed Daicoviciu, as Florin Muller said, “over bided his support to the new regime” assumptions proved by several archival documents starting as early as 1947 when in characterization of the Ferdinand University professors, Daicoviciu was considered to be a intellectual with progressive ideas, an example to be followed by the other historians. ANDJC, fond PCR, nr.2, dossier 38/1947, 2,3. For a detailed picture of Daicoviciu and his relationship with the Party see, Florin Muller, *Ibid*, Andi Mihalache, *Ibid*, Florin Constantiniu, *Ibid*, see David Prodan *Ibid*.

¹¹¹ Ștefan Ștefănescu coord, *op cit*, pag, 117-118.

with what the document had to say about his other colleagues, was that he accorded too much importance in his study to Christianity: Conferring Christianity an exaggerated importance in the development/genesis of the Romanian people and Romanian language, he thus spreads an antiscientific idealist interpretation.¹¹² The fact that the author avoided criticizing Daicoviciu is explainable due his position within the institute as well as within Party structures, where at the time was seen as a dedicated member.

Harsher critique was brought to David Prodan and to his major work *Supplex Libellus Valachorum* (1948), where according to the rapport Prodan had a “Greek-catholic attitude: “In *Supplex Libellus Valachorum* (...) the Union with Rome is seen by Prodan exclusively as a factor of progress and therefore minimizing the role of the class struggle.”¹¹³ Interestingly, a year after this rapport was published, (1953), exactly the same accusations were brought to Prodan, this time in an official context and by a respectably party member, Pavel Apostol, Marxist historian at the Bucharest University. In order to save himself Prodan had accused others and accepted fearfully collaboration: Have I experienced all this heroically withstanding? No, I did it with fear, with fear and insomnia. The heroism could not serve to anything at that time, but its own annihilation. In order to stand up to the expectations, I had to become an accuser for the sake of my own salvation.”¹¹⁴

The fact that historians such as Daicoviciu, Prodan or others were part of the local communist Party structures was a clear sign of their political commitment. The

¹¹² ANDJC, *Ibidem*, 109.

¹¹³ ANDJC, *Ibid*, 97, D. Prodan, *Ibid*, 68. The accusations brought to Prodan by Apostol came in the context of the so called ‘right wing deviationist process, Ana Pauker, Vasile Luca and Teohari Georgescu. This caused an increase of ‘vigilance’ from the Party and in then several professors were removed from their teaching positions or suffered exclusion from the Party. Nevertheless no longer after this Apostol came to be accused and imprisoned.

¹¹⁴ D. Prodan, *Ibid*, 68.

extent in which this manifested in their activity as historians and their reasons are still debatable. Nevertheless some of the historians of the Institute managed for a long period of time to focus exclusively on their work and avoid as much as possible any contacts with the Party. Francisc Pall, an “uncorrupted historian”, as Ioan Opris described him, was one of the historians who managed to work unabashed in the new historical institution until 1953 when he was, as it will be presented, one of the causes for the harsh criticism Roller brought to the Institute and to Daicoviciu personally, for letting into the Institute ‘elements’ who weren’t Party orientated.

After presenting the past and the present activity of the historians, emphasises due to the emergent conclusions the importance of ideological education. In order to assure a good education of the historians had to attend meeting organized by the Institute itself, by the Academy, by the Party as well as other institutions, such as the Soviet Romanian Studies Institute.¹¹⁵ Again David Prodan describes best how this ocured and what was their real purpose: “in the new world it was with out any doubt necessary an ideological education. The workers in the history domain were generally with an old background, they had to be adapted to historical materialism. It was a political dressage.”¹¹⁶

Up to this point several conclusions will be drawn. First of all in order that Cluj Institute would assure properly the “conclusions of the Soviet historiography” it was integrated into an inter-institutional system which determined its constant control. The official institution in charge with the ways in which the new values were internalized was

¹¹⁵ For the task of the Soviet Romanian Studies Institute see chapter I: Making ‘scientific’ and qualified translations in different fields and disciplines. Completion of the study of other institutes manifested through a series of conferences on Soviet science, the task being expressed in vague terms: „on a themathic which usually goes beyond the concerns of a regular institute”.

¹¹⁶ D. Prodan, *Ibid*, 71.

the Academy. The way in which the Academy it exercised its control was complex, with the general working plans, rapports, meetings, and the control over the courses that the historians, who were at the same time university professors, taught :

[The annual plans of the Academy] a steady pilot and a skillful copilot in research work and ideological education instead of an inappropriate, deficient labor market, or, under the individual predilections imposed by the conjecture of ascertainties. This meant the formation of the collective labor with reference to well controlled subject matters and problems.¹¹⁷

The second important control body in charge with assuring a ‘just line’ in matters of activity as well as organization was the Party, who did this through its “comradely and constant watch.” How the line was defined and how the watch was supposed to manifest itself was never clear and this became a source for misunderstandings and pretexts used generally by the centre, when needed, for accusing the institute and its members. Not long after the new values seemed to have been efficiently internalized, as described by those involved in assuring its efficiency, the unexpected happened and the Institute and its members were subject to harsh criticism from its highest control organ, the Historical Section of the Academy.

III.3. The 1953 Scanteia article and the beginning of a new era

Somehow unexpected, on 15 May 1953 the central party newspaper Scanteia in an article entitled Despre activitatea Institutului de Istorie din Cluj al Academiei RPR (About the Activity of the History Institute of the P.R.R. Academy, Cluj) brought serious accusations against the activity of the Cluj institution. The main purpose of the article, as stated by the author who by all probabilities was Mihail Roller, was to indicate the contrast between the conditions assured by the Party for the development of the history

¹¹⁷ ANDJC, *Ibid*, 100.

production of Cluj on a ‘just line’ and the ways in which the Institute ‘betrayed the trust given’:

One of the major tasks of the institute was fighting against the influences of the bourgeois influences especially in eradicating the poisonous relics of nationalistic and chauvinistic propaganda disseminated in the past by the inglorious and hooliganic administration of the National History Institute and Ferdinand University...¹¹⁸

The article continued arguing that the Institute misjudged the importance of ‘party spirit in science’ which led to great deficiencies seen in the lack of published materials as well as in the quality of what was already published: “in the *Studii si cercetarii stiintifice* (Scientific Research and Studies) there was no historical study between 1951 and 1952 ...and the historians run away of scientific interpretation and theoretical interpretation of the studied material”. What was the author saying is that even though there were concrete plans for elaborating a work concerned with the history of the workers movement in Transylvania, the studies dedicated to this subject didn’t finalize in format of a book or a major study.¹¹⁹ But the most obvious manifestations of the deficiencies and the most serious was that the institute maintained “several nationalistic –bourgeois elements, cosmopolite, who promoted obstinately antiscientific and idealistic conceptions”. This unhealthy staff policy was augmented by the ‘hunt for the mistakes, harassment and demoralization of the young elements.’¹²⁰

Such accusations were extremely serious and the first to be found guilty were the Filial of the Academy and the regional committee of the RWP who “haven’t

¹¹⁸ *Despre activitatea Institutului de Istorie din Cluj al Academiei RPR* (About the Activity of the History Institute of the P.R.R. Academy, Cluj) in “*Scanteia*”, 15 May 195, 2.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, 3.

exercised almost no sort of control on the institute”¹²¹ Despite this, if reading carefully one understands that these accusations brought to the Filial and Party were just part of the strategy meant to incriminate the real culprit, the members of the institute and especially its director, who constantly and “deliberately” proved to be liberal and careless. Until then nobody reproached at such extent his management:

Not all the lacking and the errors can be completely imputed to members of the Institute, as part of the guilt is due to the directorate and the managing board of the Institute. The main decrease in the politics of the directorship was the fact that they could not fairly appreciate the necessity of an urgent and thorough action of disapproval towards the legacy of such a tormented past. They have definitely underestimated the danger of the legacy contained in the envenomed Cluj History School, under the two bourgeois-landlord regimes.¹²²

An article with such content created, as premeditated, immediate reactions. The centre, in the interpretation of this study, the Historical Section of the Academy and the History Institute both from Bucharest with its main voice, Mihail Roller, the ‘academic bureaucrat’ responsible with the history production at a macro-level, seconded by Petre Constantinescu Iasi, reacted immediately. The Historical Section of the Academy convoked for the 28th of May 1953, just several days after the article appeared, a meeting in order to discuss the content of the article and its validity. The meeting was led by Petre Constantinescu Iasi, president of the Historical Section and director of the History Institute in Bucharest. Along with P. C. Iasi at the meeting attended also other important scholars from the Institute in Iasi and Bucharest The culprit, the Cluj History Institute was represented by its director and Ladislau Banyai.

The first questions addressed to Daicoviciu came from P.C. Iasi who was eager to find out what were the measures taken immediately by Daicoviciu after the article had

¹²¹ *Ibid.*

¹²² *Ibid.*,109.

appeared in press, but also to also whether the director was aware about the former activity of some of its members. Daicoviciu's first set of answers are short and without the 'self-critique' otherwise necessary in this kind of situations but when Roller assumed form himself the role of the prosecutor the situation changed dramatically. To Roller, the fact that the director of the institute did not know that not all of the scholars were fully devoted to the communist cause was nonetheless a serious mistake with immediate negative effects on history writing:

Roller: "You stated that you knew that some of the collaborators do not have an orientation toward us. If they do not have an orientation toward us it means that they have an orientation toward others. How then you explain that you had then a different point of view?"

C. Daicoviciu: I pointed out that they didn't have an orientation toward us. And when an honest element is not orientated toward us it is not necessarily true that he is against us.

Roller: Was he or was he not oriented toward others?

C.D.: If this is about Francisc Pall, well I did not know that in his past he was either fascist or 'hitlerist'?

Roller: If he was not orientated toward us then toward whom was he orientated?

C.D.: I admit I had a conciliatory attitude (atitudine impaciuitorista). I saw in these people men of science, specialists which I needed.¹²³

As the dialogue between the two continued it was more and more obvious that the harsh criticism that Daicoviciu was subjected was not a consequence for its bad management but a reaction to Roller's interest in attacking one of his possible rivals that started to question his role in mastering the historical writing. According to Roller, Daicoviciu did not fully assumed the real value of criticism and self criticism arguing that there weren't any guarantees that there won't be any longer problems such as those illustrated by the Scanteia article. From the moment when the critiques increased Daicoviciu tried everything in order to reenter the grace of the Party assuming for himself the role of the errant son.

¹²³ ANDJC, *Regional Committee of the RWP*, fond 13, dossier 38/1953, 47.

Between 1953 and 1956 the entire Romanian society knew a period of ideological relaxation caused by changes that occurred in the larger European context and it seemed that the Party tried to reconcile itself with the intellectuals. As a consequence of this policy a number of historians that were incarcerated during 1948-1950, such as Lupas were set free and Romania tried to exit its self imposed cultural isolationism. This time is described in terms of ‘de-Rollerization’ of the Romanian historiography seen in the conflict between several important historians (Otetea, Daicoviciu, Condurachi, Prodan) and Roller. Its first manifestation was seen in the fact that new head of the cultural and science Department of the Central Committee of the Romanian Workers Party, Pavel Tugui, asked Daicoviciu and Otetea to write a report of the Romanian historiography, without mentioning Roller.¹²⁴ In this context, Daicovicu spoke at a meeting of the University professors in Cluj of “academic freedom” as a principle which should be taken into consideration when referring to the courses and research of the professors, thing which under no circumstances could have happened earlier period: “I am also for the freedom of choosing courses, for the free choice of the curricula that is to be taught. If we have a specialist we will not let him start a new school?”¹²⁵

All these convulsions indicated a possible reformation of the entire system but it proved to be a false expectation after the events that occurred in 1956 Hungary. Subsequent to the Hungarian revolution, the Romanian Communist regime came back to its previous methods and historians were once more affected by this. Only after 1964,

¹²⁴ Since 1955, after Stalin’s death, Roller’s position becomes more and more vulnerable when Andrei Otetea and Constantin Daicoviciu accused Roller of plagiarism and lack of professionalism in his work. Dissatisfied with Roller’s authoritarian attitude, his own collaborators turned against him as well. In the summer of 1958, during the Communist Party’s Congress, Roller was again under attack as one of the people who had criticized Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej’ activity. Therefore, a few days after the congress was over Roller committed suicide, see Florin Muller, *Ibid*, Andi Mihalache, *Ibid*, Florin Constantiniu, *Ibid*.

¹²⁵ ANDJC, *Ibid*, fond 13, dosssier nr 29/ 1956, 39.

once with the changes initiated by the regime, the level of the repression was diminished but the arbitrary and aggressive involvement on the politics in the works of the historians, specific to the years of sovietization, continued thereafter.

CONCLUSION

The Treaty of pace signed by Romania on 10 February 1947 legalized the Soviet military presence and gave a free hand to the occupier for an undermined period. The occupation was to last more than a decade, until 1968 a period when the Stalinist model in economy politics and culture was strictly followed without being totally abandoned afterwards. What did this mean for Romanian culture in general and historiography in particular? As a competent analyst of the phenomenon of sovietization concluded “an entire structure of the cultural life, of research and education was destroyed and replaced with less developed structures which were moreover perverted.”¹²⁶

Numerous scientific fields such as sociology, philosophy and history which had flourished during the interwar period were subdued to politics or simply destroyed. The first institution targeted was the Romanian Academy whose dissolution and the creation of an institution submitted to the regime (the Academy of the P.R.R) had severe results in the scientific field. In what matters the education, starting with the reform of education in 1948 and up to 1958 the Romanian school was practically a carbon paper copy of the Russian system. Of course the history production could not avoid these transformations. Therefore in the same year with the creation of the new Academy and the new legislative act regarding higher education, all history institutions were replaced by a single Party controlled History institute. Thus only a year after the Republic was installed the soviet institutional model seemed imposed.

¹²⁶Vlad Georgescu, *Ibid* 286 see also Al Zub and Flavius Solomon, In cooperation with Oldrich Tuma and Jiri Jindra ed. *Sovietization in Romania and Czechoslovakia History, analogies, consequences*, Iași : Polirom, 2003, 11.

But as the case study of the Cluj History institute proved it the ‘revolution of historical writing’ meant more than institutional transformation. This process occurred in Cluj also by means of repression, leading historians being arrested and sent to prison or expelled from the History Institutes, as well as by means of persuasion, some of the them being willing to collaborate and accept to promote the Party’s interest. Therefore the historians themselves became actors of sovietization. The first consequence to this was that history started to be rewritten in Cluj according to the Party’s propaganda purposes. The main themes become: the conflict between the social classes, (which was seen as the propellant of historical events), the benefactor role of Soviet Union in the development of the Romanian people and the condemnation of the bourgeoisie and the nobility. The model that was followed in the transformation of the narrative structure was Roller’s 1947 textbook, which despite its flaws was the first synthesis of Marxist history that was written in Romania, a massive volume of more than 700 pages.

Furthermore, as the process proceeded, the previous historical tensions between the Romanian and Hungarian historians were solved and the multicultural Cluj appeared as the land of concord of the two nations and a fighting arena of oppressed masses, both Romanian and Hungarian, against a common enemy “the oppressor of all nations and all religion.”¹²⁷ In order to attain such ‘astonishing’ results the historians of the Cluj institute had to suffer a political dressage ¹²⁸ which was ‘ensured’ by the organs to which the Institute was subordinated, the local branch of the Academy, the Historical Section of the Academy and the Party.

¹²⁷ Constantin Daicoviciu, “Cronica. Din activitatea Institutelor si colectiveor de cercetari ale Filialei Cluj a Academiei R.P. R. Institutul de Istorie si Filozofie din Cluj al Academiei R.P.R. Raport sumar pe anul 1949-1950” (The summary raport of the History and Philosphy institute 1949-1950) in *Academia R.P.R, Studii si cercetarii stiintifice*, (Studies)I, 2, 1950, 172.

¹²⁸ D. Prodan, *Ibid*, 71.

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