**A. PUSHKIN AND M. EMINESCU IN THE NATION-BUILDING PROCESS
IN ROMANIAN AND RUSSIAN CULTURAL SPACE
DURING THE INTERWAR PERIOD**

by

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Abstract

The current thesis deals with political use of images by two national poets in the period between two World Wars, Alexander Pushkin (1799-1837) and Mihai Eminecu (1850-1889). The main intent is to concentrate on political and propagandist agenda promoted by official media and within the framework of literary studies represented by specific circle of comprehensive studies named Pushkiniana and Eminesciana. Certain orientation and peculiarity of the rhetoric around national poets was inevitably caused by a number of ideological needs within 1920s and 1930s. Comparative analysis of the dynamic in the process of adjustment of poets names, biographies and creative legacy made it possible to detect the dynamic of nation-building process in the Soviet Union and Greater Romania. So-called national-poet-campaigns, manifested by massive public celebrations, monument raising or museum building must be studied within the theoretical framework of Russian and Romanian nationalism. Striking resemblance of rhetoric while praising Pushkin and Eminescu can be explained by their similar function in newly set up cultural pantheons, but with special emphasis on differently oriented identities.

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Introduction

Permanent exposition in All Russian Pushkin Museum situated in the house at 12 Moika River Embankment in Saint Petersburg, the last accommodation of Alexander Pushkin, contains one noteworthy element[1]. This is constantly refilling cup of hot tea, which poet Pushkin left while leaving for his last duel and never drank till the end. By keeping hot tea in the cup, museum employees are trying to save an image of poet's presence and even keep the slightest hope that ill-fated duel would ever result with other outcome and Pushkin will safely come back to his evening tea.

This instance of personal, trembling and tender treatment with national poet by museologists is exemplary not only for Russian cultural space. Every entity, be it limited by nation, state or broader category, finds its utmost expression in list of cultural heroes or images, that are destined to serve to various functions for the given group; among other contribute its identity and justify political system of current age, becoming in its turn valuable component for constructing heroes' mythology.

Speaking about Russian and Romanian cultural space, which are in the focus of current thesis, two prominent figures became central for national consciousness: national poets, Alexander Pushkin and Mihai Eminescu. History of their worshiping growing into well-grounded cult started in the 19th century and keeps developing by lots of means, from narrowly specialized monographs to mass-oriented anniversaries, organized by state authorities.

It was the specific circle of comprehensive studies named Pushkiniana and Eminesciana (as literary studies played significant role in providing ideological narrative) that advanced ideas of poets' geniality, prominent status and exceptional contribution to

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1   I am very grateful to Frithjof Benjamin Schenk for this reference.

Russian and Romanian national heritage. It is evident that Eminescu and Pushkin are broadly perceived not only as great poets or as creators of classical literary languages, playing significant role in construction and maintenance of national identity. Both of them are full-fledged cultural heroes. Till nowadays, historical perception of both poets' figures passed through several significant changes – from total negation to passionate attitude and idolization.

Official cult was mostly established through mass educational system and commemoration ceremonies devoted to biographical dates, accompanied with republication of both author's works. The later most spectacular anniversaries were in 1899, 1937, 1949 for Russia; 1900, 1939, 1950 for Romania. It is of extreme importance that in 1937/39 both poets were officially recognized as representatives of national character and pride as before (in 19th cent.), but the narrative was reshaped and adjusted for current political and ideological needs. Pushkin was declared to be a state martyr crushed by Imperial rules; truly people's poet, supported by Stalin. In Romanian case one of the most important function of Eminescu, among number of images promoted during interwar years, was to support continuity of Romanian cultural canon – important issue under conditions of emergence of Greater Romania as new state. It was announced that prophetic aptitude of the poet let him to foresee unification of the country (happened after 1918). Thus visions and perceptions of poetic figures were reshaped due to dominant ideological discourses, in both cases justifying political changes in the area.

Although studying literature, its heroes and authors as they has been perceived by variety of sides and actors is relatively new[2] in comparison with immense legacy of literary criticism, present-day historiography is already introduced to number of approaches:

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2   A. Reiblat, *Kak Pushkin Vishel v Genii. Istoriko-sotsiologhicheskie Ocherki o Knijnoi Kul'ture Pushkinskoi Epohi* [How Pushkin Became a Genius. Historical and Sociological Sketches about Book Culture during Pushkinian Epoch] (Moskva: NLO, 2001), 204-206. Translation from Russian and Romanian is mine, A.F.

Pushkin and Eminescu are studied in their status of National Poets during their lifetime and early periods of cult establishment (Levitt[3], Reiblatt[4], Debreczeny[5], Costache[6], Georgescu[7]) or from imperial era till modern Russia and from late 19th century till modern Romania (e.g. Zaghidullina[8], Virolainen[9], Sandler[10], I. Bot[11]). These volumes seek to explain the history and fundamental mechanisms of the "Great National Poet" cultural myths, trying to balance at the frontier between literary history and cultural studies. Although the level of topic's elaboration is rather high and detailed, there are two major dimensions of preference. First concentrates only on literary/philological side of the problem, discussing the set of poems promoted or overshadowed during the given time period, focusing on certain development of literary criticism and circles of literary critics involved. Second simplifies, deliberately or unintentionally, historical background, social and political conditions that predestined specific dynamic of poet's cult/myth during various periods, but especially for the Soviet one. Thus, 1920s are seen as period of total negation and disdain of Pushkin because of his belonging to cultural strata and legacy of imperial Russia, and common rhetoric of building totally new culture in the limits of Soviet state. V. Mayakovsky and others' the 1912 Futurist publication *A Slap in the Face of Public Taste* serves as constant example of such treatment.

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3   Marcus Ch. Levitt, *Russian literary politics and the Pushkin Celebration of 1880* (Sankt-Peterburg: Akademicheskii proekt, 1994).
4   Reiblat, *Kak Pushkin Vishel v Genii.*
5   Paul Debreczeny, *Social functions of Literature: Alexander Pushkin and Russian Culture* (Stanford (Calif.): Univ. Press, 1997).
6   Iulian Costache, *Eminescu. Negocierea unei Imagini. Construcţia unui Canon, Emergenţa unui Mit* [Eminescu. Negotiations of an Image. Construction of a Canon, Emergence of a Myth]. Bucureşti: Cartea Românaescă, 2008.
7   Nicolae Geogescu, *Moartea Antumă a lui Eminescu (1883-1889)* [The Lifetime Death of Eminescu (1883-1889)] (Chişinău: Librăriile Cartier, 2002).
8   Marina Zaghidullina, *Pushkinskii Mif v XX veke* [The Myth of Pushkin in the 20th Century] (Cheliabinsk: Cheliabinskii Gosudarstvennii Universitet, 2001).
9   Maria Virolainen, ed., *Leghendi I Mifi o Pushkune, Sbornik Statei* [Legends and Myths about Pushkin. Collected articles] (Sankt-Peterburg: Akademiceskii pro'ekt, 1999).
10   Stephanie Sandler, *Commemorating Pushkin: Russia's Myth of a National Poet* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2004).
11   Ioana Bot, ed., *Mihai Eminescu, Poet Naţional Român – Istoria şi Anatomia unui Mit Cultural* [Mihai Eminescu, Romanian National Poet – History and Anatomy of a Cultural Myth] (Cluj-Napoca: Dacia, 2001).

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Thereby, considerable sides of problem are still taken into disregard in historiography, for instance, constant references of Pushkin by Russian futurists[12]. Similar view is applied to late 1930s and 1937 Jubilee in particular, describing Stalin's contribution to Pushkin's myth taken for granted and ignoring authorities' motivation for reshaping the poet taken in broad historical perspective together with cases of discursive "deviations" as D. Mirskii's publications and two-way influence of Russia Abroad[13].

In current thesis comparative historical perspective is called upon for overcoming the peril of oversimplification of the dynamic myth-making process by revealing the agenda of different professional groups and circles involved in the discussion and paying intent attention to institutionalization of poets and their cults. It must be specified beforehand that due to apparent difference in number of secondary literature and scholarly legacy devoted to Russian and Romanian cases, current research initially is not planned as totally symmetrical comparison but all the theoretical issues must be covered with similar level of awareness.

Topicality of the problem becomes obvious referring to recent discussions about Romanian Poet in famous number of *Dilema* magazine "Eminescu Case" (No. 265, 27 February – 5 March 1998), when ideas on deconstruction of the Eminescu cult provoked stormy debates. A year after, in 1999, Russia celebrated 200th anniversary of its National Poet's birth. Surprisingly, split of researches connected with Pushkin's myth dethronement, incited by this jubilee, found a broad positive response among Academia and gained completely other character than in Romanian case. The widest scope of festivities and morbid reaction of intellectuals seeking National Idea make the thesis problem vital.

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12 For evidence in contrast to that flow see Jurii Molok, *Pushkin v 1937 godu* [Pushkin in 1937] (Moskva: NLO, 2000).

13 See Kyrill Kunachovich's paper as exception: "The Pushkin Centennials of 1937: Russia Abroad, the Soviet Union, and the Politics of Russian National Identity." *The Russian National Idea in the 19th and 20th Century*, Conference Speech. University of Oxford (6-7th June 2008).

Thesis Statement

In current thesis I evaluate particular influence of national poet's official cult on national identity search in Russian and Romanian cultural space during interwar period. It is shown (see chapters below) that the roots of praising Eminescu and Pushkin as the heads of poetic pantheon and cultural canon together with their modern perception lie in political and cultural environment out of which debates about poets arose. Although the mechanisms of mythmaking contained similarities, I emphasize the nature of difference that was determined by ideological needs in both countries.

I examine the ways of constructing both poets' images as they were recognized in official discourse as well as the evolution of mentioned images. Here the main actors, public personalities such as Nicolae Iorga or Eugen Lovinescu; societies such as OLRS[14] or Junimea Society, politicians such as Joseph Stalin, are of extreme importance. I concentrate on different ways of establishing cultural memory through national poets prism: literary memory constructed by number of debates among different circles of Pushkin and Eminescu scholars, were constantly published in literary journals, public speeches pronounced on the occasion of Jubilees or solemn commissions meeting. Particular attention is payed to evolution of poets' appearance and selection of their works in school textbooks on history of literature and language during 1920-1930s, since this kind of sources can be examined as the main instrument of indoctrination. In case of Eminescu, one more source must be added, where different facets of establishing Eminescu as Romanian genius on international scene are reflected: series of volumes *Corpus Eminescu,* published on the occasion of 150th anniversary of poet's death. Construction of visual memory is significant for any cult building by means of erecting monuments, involvement of the figure into city space by

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14 Obschestvo Ljubitelej Rossijskoj Slovesnosti, possible translation is the Society of Admirers of Russian Language and Literature.

calling streets and institutions in his honor and founding the network of museums as places of memory. I analyze dates, specific conditions, actors involved and especially the agenda promoted through creating objects or places of memory in every particular case.

The research is limited within interwar period due to its high significance for constructing identities in the borders of newly emerged states. The core of Romanian national identity is be compared with complex Soviet identity by parallel comparison of means of adjusting Eminescu and Pushkin. Here highly controversial and precarious position of Pushkin during 1920s and his "rehabilitation" in 1930s which peak was realized in pompous 1937 jubilee must be brought into correlation with gradually increasing popularity of Eminescu, penetration of his cult into masses which partially was realized by including his figure among ideological precursors of generation of 1927.

The comparison between Russian and Romanian discourses and explanation of major shifts in poets' cultivation form the core of this thesis.

Research questions

<u>Cultural Mythologies in connection with State:</u> How the stages of poets' heroization fit into general ideological tendencies and national paradigms? How did constantly changing images of national poets reflect ideological shifts in both regions? What were the purposes for reshaping mode of interpretation of both poets?

<u>Similarities and Differences in Romanian and Russian Cases:</u> What structural similarities and differences can be found in both mythologies? What qualities of poets' personalities and literary heritage were in late imperial, early Soviet, interwar and post-war narratives emphasized? What functions did public commemorations of the poets' life and death serve? By what means were Pushkin's and Eminescu's positions as national poets consolidated?

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Structure of the thesis

Thesis structure includes current introduction, 1st chapter describing theoretical framework and 2 more chapters directly devoted to research: comparative perspective of development of Pushkin and Eminescu cults with close analysis of social and political conditions predestined that development. Chapters are divided by temporal criterion: 1920s and 1930s are made up separately in order to emphasize paradigmatic change in mass perception of Pushkin and continuity of Eminescu cult. Conclusion, bibliography and appendix complete the thesis.

Theoretical framework is based upon recent studies of heroization in its relation to national identity in various countries of Eastern Europe. Aiming to reveal universal features of cult establishing, I include into analysis not only cultural figures, as poets, but political, as state rulers and military leaders in broad time perspective. Commemorative practices and monuments as places of memory also belong to theoretical background for current topic. Literary politics and the role of state authorities in creation of canon are reflected in works by D. Brandenberger[15], L. Boya[16], K. Hitchins[17], I. Livezeanu[18], K. Petrone[19], etc.

Research chapters are composed with the help of comparative analysis (for all the facets of both poets' images); parallel chronologies; elements of content analysis (for public speeches and other texts); statistical analysis of data (for quantity of built monuments, printed set of works by poets and other materials related to them); Appealing to variety of primary sources, in addition to several mentioned above, supplements the whole picture:

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15   David Brandenberger, *National Bolshevism: Stalinist Mass Culture and the Formation of Modern Russian National identity, 1931-1956 (*Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2002).

16   Lucian Boia, *Două Secole de Mitologie Naţională* [Two Centuries of National Mythology] (Bucureşti: Humanitas, 1999); Lucian Boia, *History and Myth in Romanian Consciousness* (Budapest: CEU Press, 2001); Lucian Boia, *Romania: Borderland of Europe* (London: Reaktion Books, 2001).

17   Keith Hitchins, *Myth and Reality in Romanian Historiography* (Bucharest: ed. Enciclopedică, 1997).

18   Irina Livezeanu, *Cultural Politics in Greater Romania: Regionalism, Nation Building, & Ethnic Struggle, 1918-1930* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, c1995).

19   Karen Petrone, *Life Has Become More Joyous, Comrades: Celebrations in the Time of Stalin* (Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press, 2001, c2000).

printed volumes with occasional public speeches; memoirs of the jubilee events participants; official reports on the monuments, busts construction; artistic albums (represents lines of monuments, sculptures and other sets of visual memory)[20]; statistical data on place names called in honor of Eminescu and Pushkin; bibliographical collections (in order to identify general discourses[21]), etc.

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20 Victor Craciun, ed., *Eminescu. Un Veac de Nemurire. Album* [Eminescu. A Century of Immortality. Album] (Bucureşti: Minerva, 1999); Ekaterina Pavlova, ed., *Pushkin v Portretah (Kniga I Al'bom)* [Pushkin in Portrays. Book and Album] (Moskva: Sovetskii Khudojnik, 1983).
21   Irina Strelina, ed., *A.S. Puşkin şi Basarabia. Bibliografie* [A. Pushkin and Bessarabia. Bibliography] (Chişinău, 1999).

Methodological and Theoretical Framework

The chapter below is devoted to an attempt to define several concepts that are relevant for the current thesis from theoretical point of view and that to a certain extent set the pitch in the system of methods and principles used in particular research. In order to not to theorize vacuously, I discuss historiographical discussions about the concepts as applied to the frame of current thesis.

Why National Poets?

Among the vast variety of personalities who happened to achieve status of cultural heroes[22], be it state rulers, heroes of the revolts or church leaders, national poets stand detached. In his book *Remaining Relevant after Communism: the Role of the Writer in Eastern Europe* Andrew Wachtel focused on the outstanding role of the category of national writer (or poet) for cultural space of countries in Eastern Europe[23]. By using comparative approach for area of Western and Eastern Europe, he noticed the phenomena of traditional overvaluation of serious literature and those who produce it together with the high level of prestige accorded to literature and its producers as common feature for Eastern Europe[24]. Although Wachtel never defined the region properly, the area was outlined as "from Russia to Hungary, from Croatia to Estonia"[25]. According to author, in comparison with Western canonical writers (Shakespeare, Dante or Goethe) who dominate the entire English, Italian or German literary traditions respectively, they didn't play crucial role in creation of the modern states, unlike Adam Mickewicz, Taras Shevchenko, Christo Botev, Sándor Petőfi or

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22 About the notion of cultural hero see Maria Todorova. *Bones of contention: the living archive of Vasil Levski and the making of Bulgaria's national hero (*Budapest; New York: CEU Press, 2008): 175-202.
23 Andrew Baruch Wachtel. *Remaining Relevant after Communism: the Role of the Writer in Eastern Europe* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006).
24 Wachtel. *Remaining Relevant After Communism,* 4.
25 Wachtel. *Remaining Relevant After Communism,* 219.

Mihai Eminescu[26]. As possible historical reasons for such role of writer and tradition in his (not her!) worshiping in Eastern part of Europe, Wachtel sees so-called period of "national revivals" (quotation marks added), when writers or poets were credited, usually posthumously, with being the founding fathers of the particular country, together with being fathers of literary languages, for these countries were seen as having been created on the basis of a shared national language and a literary corpus[27]. He goes on with the argument that the majority of East European countries were in substantial measure invented by writers. New identities and new socio-political realities were frequently created by literature. In absence of political unity writers were necessary as a tool to pull a nation together, to make fellow citizens aware of their very nationhood by creating the conditions for community[28]. It is striking, though, that Wachtel included in his scheme at least two personages, who do not fit into his scheme according to the accepted definition – Polish romanticist Adam Mickiewicz (1798-1855) and Russian poet Alexander Pushkin (1799-1837). Both of them can't be ascribed to the period around 1848 first, simply because of their lifespan (no connotation of "national revivals" in Eastern Europe and status of Pushkin as first Russian poet, then, the first poet of Romanov empire), second, in spite of both of them played significant role in development of Polish and Russian literary languages respectively, in fact they articulated the utmost extent of already existing national literatures[29]. Thus existing scheme of definition Eastern European national writer or poet is more or less applicable to Mihai Eminescu (1850-1889).

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26 Several passages below Wachtel discussed the canonical status of not only the figures of particular poets, but even of the notion National Poet itself. It is interesting that the utmost importance and power of the concept can be illustrated by the fact that even Wikipedia contains the page *List of national poets* (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/National_poets, last visited on March 15, 2010), where all the figures coincide with those being enumerated by Wachtel on p. 15.
27 Wachtel. *Remaining Relevant After Communism,* 5.
28 Wachtel. *Remaining Relevant After Communism,* 14.
29 On the question of ambiguity of Mickiewicz as national canonical figure and his polymorphism when used by Poles and Lithuanians see Timothy Snyder, *The Reconstruction of Nations: Poland, Ukraine, Lithuania,*

In many cases founders of national poet's promotion were local intellectuals, who strongly supported the idea of capability of the poet to capture such vague essence as the nation's collective spirit (scheme typical for Romanian case with Eminescu). These authors were generally presented as codifiers of the national literary language – core function for both poets in this research – and producers of literary work that is claimed to have expressed the nation's spiritual core, its soul[30]. Thus, both Pushkin and Eminescu (not mentioning their colleagues from neighboring countries) were claimed to succeed in finding and voicing a code for national self-expression.

For the current thesis it is essential that serious literature and writers remained vitally important during the communist period. It happened so, that literary fathers of the 19th century were altered by communist critics proclaimers of communist system[31], and the state also paid great attention to those contemporary writers willing to work at its behest as "engineers of human souls"[32]. By this statement, Wachtel maintains the existence of particular parallels between the process of making National Poets/Writers in the whole area of East Europe. My aim is to investigate the complex structure of this phenomenon and reveal correlation of discrepancies and similarities for Soviet Russia and Greater Romania conditioned by historical and political contexts. I would argue, that it is particularly nation- and state- building agenda that determined not only the way poets were perceived, valued, worshiper or neglected, but predestined continuity or intermittence of poets' cults.

Although I consider Wachtel's explanation of origins of writers' significance rather satisfactory for Eminescu case, it must be thoroughly developed as soon as one wishes to trace the development of myth-making process in the 20th century. I believe that one of the

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Belarus, 1569-1999 (New Haven [Conn.]: Yale University Press, c2003): 34-39, 70-72, 222-223 (and not only these pages).

30 Wachtel. *Remaining Relevant After Communism,* 15.

31 It happened with Pushkin in 1930s, similar narrative is applicable to Eminescu in 1950s.

32 Wachtel. *Remaining Relevant After Communism,* 5.

most distinctive features here would be orientation of politics and culture from elitist appeal towards the masses. This inclusion of the masses as target audience determined to a large extent the nature of Pushkin and Eminescu myths during interwar years and was accompanied with trends not typical decades ago, such as vast replication and immense number of books and other materials devoted to poets as well as objects which would portray symbolical connection with them on all levels of society (figurines, badges, posters, stamps). For more precise elaboration of the topic see chapter 3.

Another distinction of cult of a creative personality would be ideological inclination of authorities to make a symbolic tie between the writer / poet and a ruler to demonstrate his loyalty towards the government. In Russian case it started with 1899 Jubilee commemoration when conjectural symbolical connection between Pushkin and Nicholas I was officially voiced[33]. The question of relations between authorities and Pushkin has always been and still remains one of the most topical and controversial among Pushkin scholars due to its inevitably high level of ideologizing (especially Pushkin and Stalin topic). It is relevant here to point out that the ruler himself tends to be mythologized even more strongly than poet since he represents the power of state and can directly contribute justification of the current power on duty. The examples are endless, for the time period under consideration see Alexander Nevskii[34], Ivan the Terrible or Peter the Great[35], etc. for the case of Soviet Russia and Mihai Viteazul[36] (Michael the Brave) for Greater Romania. Adjustment of the historical rulers for the ideological need of newly emerged states has been profoundly studied. But the point here is that both state ruler and poet succeeded in

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33 See Marcus Levitt, "Pushkin in 1899," in *Cultural Mythologies of Russian Modernism: from the Golden age to the Silver Age,* eds. Boris Gasparov, Robert P. Hughes, and Irina Paperno (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992): 183-203.
34 Frithjof Benjamin Schenk. *Alexandr Nevskii v Russkoi Kul'turnoi Pam'ati* [Alexandr Nevskii in Russian Historical Memory] (Moskva: NLO, 2007).
35   Brandenberger, *National Bolshevism,* 77-94, 144-159.
36   See Boia, *History and Myth in Romanian Consciousness,* 15-29.

reaching that general "nationwide" acceptance, but under specific conditions. Such recognition was possible thank to the potential of personal appeal to rulers and poets that was widely implemented not only by ordinary citizens but by list of prominent intellectuals (also during interwar years), providing overlapping of centrifugal and centripetal tendencies.

In view of the aforesaid I must make the final comment in this section. Although current research has in its core two national poets, I am hardly interested in poets themselves but in the vast variety of strategies and specific ways of treating both Eminescu and Pushkin during selected time frame – interwar years; the particular extent of poets' cults contribution to newly emerged identities and the question of whether these projects were finally able to succeed.

Collective Memory and Mythmaking

In her book *Bones of contention: the living archive of Vasil Levski and the making of Bulgaria's national hero,* Maria Todorova recognizes that Levski story as national hero

engages organically in a variety of general theoretical questions. It offers insights into the general problem of history and memory, with all its concomitant aspects: the problem of "public" or "social" or "collective" or "people's" memory as treated by historians; the nature of national memory in comparison to other types of collective memory; the variability of memory over time and space; alternative memories; memory's techniques like commemorations, that are mechanisms of creating and transmitting memory; the changing nature of memory over time, on the one hand, and on the other hand, the changing salience of memory over time[37].

Although the author didn't perform detailed analysis of all the theoretical categories that were mentioned, she demonstrated how these issues were reflected in Levski treatment over the time. I am also more interested in the ways collective memory and elements of common "useful" past were consolidated with the help of national poets, than in minute

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37 Todorova, *Bones of Contention,* 183.

examination of how national memory differs from more general category of collective memory. I stress that the notion of collective memory by all means implies memory shared by masses and functioning of core symbols of the shared past – phenomenon, that gained decisive importance during interwar years. Initially, before the 20th century, the entity that was shaped and even created with the help of shared common past was undoubtedly the nation, but there is no way one can skip challenges for this theory brought by Soviet Russia and its specific strategies of modifying common, but not by all means national past (see chapter 2).

There is vast variety of representative tools that help promoting shared visual memory. I concentrate on museums and monuments devoted to both national poets of Russia and Romania (see below). But in addition to visual representation there also exist possibility of manipulation through images of poets created by text. Here literary criticism, speeches of authorities' representatives and spokesmen, and finally written biographies are included. Let us revise the classical way of telling the hero's biography[38]: birth (usually unloved by parents) – initiation – conquering the beast – marriage – death. Todorova convincingly shows how these and other elements of scenario of hero's life and death have been consecutively performed, manipulated and "cultivated" by Levski scholars and biographers. My aim is to trace distinctive features in telling the story of Pushkin and Eminescu life and death – reveal the elements of classical hero biography implanted into the stories, stress part of their lives that were intentionally overshadowed in order to insert poets into leading narratives of interwar years as "painlessly" as possible. However it would be pointless to maintain that official deliberate "abuse" of poets life stories has been carried out "from scratch". Quite the contrary, it is of certain importance to reveal actual and valid

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38 See Vladimir Propp, *Morphology of the Folktale (*Austin: University of Texas Press, 1968); Todorova, *Bones of Contention,* 191.

elements in poets biographies that let them be so successfully turned into "all people's poet" and "precursor and mentor of radical forces" respectively.

The notions of mythology, myths and myth-making have been mentioned several times throughout the chapter. Taking into account immense historiography devoted to origins, types, correlations and evolution of myths, I must specify the way the notion of mythology is refereed to in current thesis. It is certainly not the picture of the word created by stories of eschatology typical for native groups, and not conglomeration of improbable stories usually perceived in negative mode. Myth-making is rather system of perception and image construction that reflects value system and functions in close connection to cult establishment and constantly changing ideological trends.

The current thesis is be mainly focused on political mythology and images spread "from above", but the picture will not be full without mentioning spontaneous appearance of local legends (предания), that involve official myth and subject of "high" cult into sphere of "low" culture – gossips, humorous catchphrase or tales. After collapse of the Communist system, there emerged quite topical historiographical trend of fighting with old myths and their consecutive deconstruction. Field of literary studies in general, or Pushkin and Eminescu scholars in particular, were not an exception[39]. Especially ardent was yearning to deconstruct of national poets as communist "state fawners" after 1990s. I would argue that this approach is no less biased and irreparable than traditional worshiping of poets. This is the reason why I am going to investigate specific mechanisms of how various myths typical for interwar period functioned rather than trying to reveal "the truth" or show the "veritable poet".

39 See Jurii Drujnikov, *Duel' s Pushkinistami: Polemicheskoe Esse* [The Duel to Pushkin-scholars: a Polemic Essay] (Moskva, 2001 [1992])*,* 265-294.

Exhibiting biographies: The Meaning of Museums

As it has been mentioned above, history of literary museums' spread in Soviet Russia and Greater Romania, serves as one of the sources for current research. Evolution of museums from private cabinet collections to accumulations of priceless treasures of national and even universal value implies expansion and diversification of museum's functions. Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett discerned the multi-functionality of contemporary museum[40]: it can serve as a vault, a cathedral of culture, a forum, a tribunal, a theater, a party, an advocate, a place of mourning, an artifact in its own right and a tourist attraction. Such broad variety of possible roles that museum can play inevitably leads to various possible functions that are performed by museum. Thus research chapters (see below) include information on what functions prevail in literary museum or museum dedicated to a creative personality – to preserve? to educate? to demonstrate or to entertain? By now I assume the possibility of various combination of these functions, but with the dominant role of museum as preserver of so-called "high culture" and as institution of education.

For interwar years the function of the museums as political tool remained obvious, this duty was also transcended to literary exhibitions as the way to demonstrate desire of the authorities to keep the past personally connected with national poets alive and taking care not only for their creative legacy but for poets themselves embodied by remnants and graves that were carefully equipped. In comparison with general historical or petrographical, etc. museum, that are also quite powerful in promoting value system, the museum established in honor of only one personality encounters with list of challenges that mainly consists in simple lack of objects to exhibit. Problems of this kind become more evident when it comes to the network of museums instead of only one exhibition. Creation of such a network

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40   Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, *Destination Culture: Tourism, Museums, and Heritage* (Berkeley : University of California Press, c1998): 138-139.

which marks every place of Pushkin or Eminescu sojourn is typical for both counties. One more dimension is worth to point out here – implied quality of museum as institution with authority and credibility. The displays and other museum pieces must be personal belongings of poets or at least of members of his family. In practice what is exhibited, if the best happened, belongs to the same epoch poet lived in or even decades after his death, that was brilliantly displayed in Sergei Dovlatov's novel *The Sanctionary*[41]. I would argue that such state of affairs reduces the power of the museum as a mean of effective delivering of a specific narrative to the public. Unfortunately, due to obvious lack of time and sources it seems impossible to mirror in current paper all the elements of exhibition design and their implicit function and influence on public, I have to limit myself with catalogs of exhibitions and museum brochures that nevertheless must be enough to trace the strategies of construction of museum narratives and the method of exhibition (stylistic choices, etc).

When discussing museum networks (establishing branch offices, etc) one must constantly refer to time frame when museums were built or established. I show the dynamic of both Pushkin and Eminescu museums spread and point out the agenda transcended by these dynamic. For the period of interest it is essential that almost all the museums were nationalized and coordinated by state structures, which meant constant financial support, creation of infrastructure (ways to get to the branches out of the cities, developing routes, etc). Symbolic location of the museum, if ever had place, is also in the focus of interest.

It would be interesting to get to know the audience museums are oriented to. For instance, in what languages are excursions offered or if there exists common practice of obligatory visits and excursions by schoolchildren. Also, if there is any nominal payment for

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41 See Sergei Dovlatov, *Zapovednik* [The Sanctuary] (Ann Arbor: Hermitage, 1983); *Jekaterina Young,* "Dovlatov's Sanctuary and Pushkin," in *Two Hundred Years of Pushkin*, Volume 1: "Pushkin's Secret": Russian Writers Reread and Rewrite Pushkin, edited by Joe Andrew and Robert Reid, 135-152. Amsterdam/New York: Rodopi, 2003.

entrance and who actually sponsor museum's existence. Here such phenomenon of today as paying its way museum serves for striking contrast with literary museums of "fine taste", which, after all, still are in demand for audience.

In case of national poets one more dimension is quite distinctive. I already mentioned the possibility of emotional, personal appeal to poets that is similarly applicable for state ruler. This trend was fully implemented in places of poets' memory: Eleonora Lebedeva claims that such verbs as "to bow", "to receive communion", "to become purer" are constantly used when one discusses mass actions towards Pushkin[42]. Festive concerts are called "heave offering to the Poet", visitors – "pilgrims" and guides – "priests and priestesses". It is interesting that such ritual practices are called in alternating way among Pushkin scholars circles as pagan or Christian (worship or remembrance in prayer staying next to the poet's grave, monument or museum). This, in its turn, brings to the discussion of poets as secular saints and the existence of secular religion in authoritarian societies or when official religion is banned. In this case museums would serve not only as places of preserved memory but as quasi-sacred places of organized worship. In research chapters I bring out the exact practices of commemoration that can be judged as quasi-religious for interwar years but I would claim that the concept of secular religion must be used with substantial reserve in connection with national poets.

The Construction of Monuments

Ladina Lambert sees specific function of monuments and monumental space (!) in strengthening the sense of communities by offering its members an image of their membership. Monument create social spaces by evoking feelings of identity and

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42   See Eleonora Lebedeva, "Mif o Pushkine v muzejnom voploshchenii" [A. Pushkin's Myth in Museum Implementation], *Pushkinskaja epoxa (po materialam tradicionnyx xristianskix pushkinskix chtenij)*, no. 1-4 (1996): 51.

belonging[43], she claims. Several more dimensions could be added – not only the monument as an object but even the process of its erecting is highly symbolical. With the help of monuments there can be shaped certain relations between state and society. Such practices have a long tradition. Allan Ellenius[44] argues that practices of extensive visual representations of the state as propaganda and legitimation were broadly developed in the middle ages or in the Baroque state. The role of ceremonies and other symbolical acts, including the process of building monuments to members of royal family in Romanov empire, was discussed by Richard S. Wortman45. But the outbreak of building the monument in honor of people of culture remains relatively new phenomenon which started in the 2nd part of the 19th century.

Katherine Verdery raises an assumption that statues symbolize a specific famous person while in a sense also being the body of that person. By arresting the process of that person's bodily decay, a statue alerts the temporality associated with the person, bringing him into realm of the timeless or the sacred, like an icon. For this reason, desecrating a statue partakes of the larger history of iconoclasm[46]. Her argument fully reflects the way how statues of authoritarian political leaders and their mentors were treated in 1990s but that hardly ever happened with national poets. To my thinking, these indirect ties and associations of the poets, particularly Pushkin and Eminescu, only strengthen and intensify the cult since the message embodied by their monuments can be changed in quite flexible manner, in comparison with politicians.

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43   Ladina Bezzola Lambertand Andrea Ochsner, eds., *Moment to Monument. The Making and Unmaking of Cultural Significance* (Bielefeld: Transcript Verlag, 2008): 11.
44   Allan Ellenius, ed., *Iconography, Propaganda, and Legitimation* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998): 27-9.
45   Richard S. Wortman, *Scenarios of Power: Myth and Ceremony in Russian Monarchy (*Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, c1995), 2 volumes.
46   Katherine Verdery, *The Political Lives of Dead Bodies: Reburial and Postsocialist Change* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999): 5.

Andrew Wachtel emphasized visible difference between East and Western European cities, or any city in the US. The latter would have the pedestals generally reserved for political and military figures, which contrasts with monuments to poets and writers in any East European city, together with main streets and town squares named for writers[47]. Although I am persuaded of author's exaggeration (cities like Budapest, Prague, Warsaw, Bucharest, Sofia, Moscow, Kiev or Chisinau share coexistence of monuments devoted to variety of national pantheon representatives, including state rulers or prominent generals), he pointed out quite significant issue – figures of poets or writers, who contributed to nation-building processes, and their status in cultural pantheons, are solidly secured and mirrored in the city-space. This implies not only presence of monument to Pushkin and Eminescu almost in every Russian and Romanian city or town, but existence of so-called "compulsory set" of names immortalized in city space, with poets among them. By giving the name of the poet to streets, squares, public buildings or even to the whole settlement (examples of Tsarskoe Selo or Dolna) increases manyfold symbolic penetration of the figure into cultural canon and pantheon, creating urban landmarks, and again, effectively strengthens the cult. However, as it was mentioned above, these mechanisms have strong centrifugal tendency which can result in emergence of pretty strong association between place (originally square around monument) and anti-government rhetoric (of freedom, for instance). In order to fulfill the aims of the current paper, I trace possible existence of connotations of this type of rhetoric in case of numerous Pushkin and Eminescu monuments. I also trace the dynamic of city objects' renaming during interwar years (in honor of poets) and exact thematic location of those streets and other objects, since I believe it must be in the central, not peripheral parts of the city/town. In case of territorial expansion

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47 Wachtel, *Remaining Relevant after Communism*, 4.

and emergence of new states monuments to national (!) poets could serve as specific markers of this expansion on the borders of the states, visually defining new territorial frames (this phenomenon is especially significant for Greater Romania). While dealing with monuments I reveal (where it is possible, maximum for 3 monuments) the process of decision-making – what version of poet's depiction is to accept, what agenda laid behind declining of certain models and from what funds the erection was sponsored.

Writing Textbooks and School Curricula, Poets Institutionalized

Marc Ferro cited official approach of the Communist Party to history taught in school voiced in 1934:

"History must inspire children and give them a lively image of the events that let to Marxist vision of history. There is no other way. […] A good historical education should convince people that capitalism must go bankrupt […] and that everywhere, in science, agriculture, industry, peace and war the Soviet people leads all others, its achievements being unequaled in history"[48].

This particular quotation gives quite manifest evidence of core function of disciplines taught in schools and textbooks as their subsidiary tool: to convince people, particularly school pupils of basic statements of state ideology and give the possibility for emotional incorporation of the pupils with glorious ancestors of the state they live in. This function of textbooks can be spread to other disciplines, such as history of literature and characterize not only Soviet state but any state ideology regardless of political system. Textbooks serve as the main instrument of indoctrination, and quite powerful instrument. It is analyzed in chapter 2.2 how the image of Mihai Eminescu as national poet was shaped in textbooks conditioned and must have been adjusted to new realities of broadened state borders and inclusion of several non-Romanian groups into it. I pay special attention to stylistic mode of telling the story of Eminescu life, exact moments of his biography

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48   Marc Ferro, *The Use and Abuse of History, or, How the Past is Taught to Children* (New York: Routledge, 2003): 175.

discussed in details (if discussed) and message transcended to pupils by biography of the prominent poet. The selection of poems given in every textbook is also important, as well as personalities of textbooks' authors and compilers. I pay special attention to dynamic of changings introduced in school curricula in Soviet Russia, when in late 1930s the necessity of detailed studying Pushkin in schools was officially recognized on the highest level (by decree) and the way of examining the poet before 1937 was called "unsatisfactory".

It is very important to trace the exact school levels when national poets are mentioned. My argument stresses that if the poet occupies central position in literary canon and cultural pantheon, he must, with variable frequency, be discussed in curricula at all levels of school education – primary / elementary classes, gymnasium and senior high school / lyceum. Whether this argument can be corroborated, see the outcome of my research in chapters below, when school textbooks printed in Greater Romania were used as primary sources.

This inclusion of poets and writers into nation- and state-building processes via education resulted in "traditionally literary-centric educational system" in Wachtel's interpretation, whose argument seems quite problematic[49]. One can argue, that sonnets written by Shakespeare share similar level of hypothetical-ordinary-citizen-quoting as quotes from Pushkin among school-leavers in Russia, but this would only strengthen my reason of poets' myth-making orientation towards masses. Although this process started much earlier than interwar years, period under consideration for current thesis, in 1920s and 1930s it went forward at a steady gait. Particular examples of such treatment are given in chapters 2 and 3.

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49 Wachtel, *Remaining Relevant after Communism*, 4.

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The Poetics of Commemoration

Analysis of such cultural events, as public celebration of centenary of Pushkin's death in 1937 and more modest, but significant anniversary of Eminescu's death (50 years) in 1939, leads to broad area of studying symbolical meaning of mass celebrations. The group of major festivals were established and consolidated in Stalin's Russia by the period of late 1930s , such as May Day, the anniversary of the October Revolution, etc. Groups of festival of the "second order" included several memorial days, "Day of Harvest and Collectivization", "Day of Industrialization", etc[50]. Newly established holidays functioned as measures to replace traditional days of reference in every-year practice. This Soviet "colonization of time" functioned as an effective method of indoctrination[51]. Still, anniversary, conducted separately, implied slightly different functions. One of the main ideas of organizing mass festivities consisted in mobilization of all the members of the community in mutual act, that would strengthen its unity within the state. Attending a national celebration or a local festival defines and confirms the social ties that connect people to a specific community[52].

It is noteworthy, that although Soviet festivals has always been seen as important part of the Soviet propaganda repertoire and as an effective method of breaking up religious bounds53, number of events – parts of festivities were held by scenarios, similar to religious practices, with involvement of quasi-pagan or christian symbols and scenarious during mass celebrations. It partially caused appearance of image of Pushkin as semi-hallowed hero - as logical result of large-scale Jubilee celebration, involved the whole country. For 1937 anniversary of Pushkin's death were mobilized substantial funds, as for the part of Pushkin-

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50 Malte Rolf, "Constructing the Soviet Time: Bolshevik Festivals and Their Rivals during Five-Year Plan," *Kritika* 1 (3) (Summer, 2000): 451.
51 Rolf, "Constructing the Soviet Time", 470.
52 Lambert, *Moment to Monument,* 11.
53 Rolf, "Constructing the Soviet Time", 453.

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campaign, which reflected ideological turn to the complex rhetoric of Russian substance in Soviet culture, and Russian poet as part of this turn (see chapter 3). The very essence of Pushkin celebration as mass event conditioned it's certain ambiguity – while for mass perception there was designed simplified version of national poet, professional Pushkin scholars cherished more complex and elaborated image of the poet. This division would seem natural, as the image of Eminescu in writings by Romanian intellectuals is incomparably more complex than, for instance, in school books. It is much more important, that during Jubilee events, in Soviet case, these images were separated (see case with Volume 7 of complete set of works), creating divergence between proletarian and academic celebrations. The dynamic of praising national poets and break or continuity their cults is presented in researc chapters by comparing Jubilee events in 1921, 1924, 1937 in Soviet case and 1929, 1939 in Romanian.

1920s: Emergence of the New States and Postwar Challenges for National Poets

The beginning of the 20th century was marked by significant historical crises – WWI and its aftereffects, such as political collapse of 4 empires, recarving of European borders and foundation of new states – latter affected both Russian and Romanian areas, which are in the focus of interest in current thesis. Both newly emerged states were multinational in its nature and highly politically centralized. Both states experienced inclination to authoritarian ideology, resulted in seizure of power by Stalin late in 1920's and establishing authoritarian rule in Romania by general Antonescu in 1940 following the elections in 1937. I. Livezeanu, pointing to interconnection of political orientations between two areas, assumed Soviet Russia's and later the USSR establishment to be one of the circumstances that determined attractiveness of right-wing deviation among Romanian politicians[54].

New Russia in need of Alexander Pushkin?

General historical overview

Emerging from the ruins of Romanov Empire, as the result of Russian revolution and civil war, newly formed multiethnic Bolshevik state, officially established as USSR in December 1922, was the first of old European states, that applied a strong effort to confront the rising tide of nationalism[55]. The intensive restructuring of the economy, industry and politics began in the early days of Soviet power.

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54 Livezeanu, *Cultural Politics*, 14.
55 Terry Martin, "An Affirmative Action Empire. The Soviet Union as the Highest Form of Imperialism," in *A State of Nations: Empire and Nation-making in the age of Lenin and Stalin*, edited by Ronald Grigor Suny and Terry Martin, 67-89 (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002): 67.

Terry Martin called the Soviet Union the world's first Affirmative action Empire for its confronting the rising tide of nationalism and responding by systematically promoting national consciousness, institutions and languages (number of them didn't exist and were created with the help of Soviet philologists) of its ethnic minorities during 1910-1920s[56]. Departing from Lenin's argument that working masses of other nations are full of distrust towards Great Russia (as a kulak and oppressor nation as part of imperial policy's legacy) – Russians as "advanced" nation were found historically guilty of imperial exploitation of the lesser and "more backward" nations[57]. While attacking so-called great Russian chauvinism Lenin claimed that only the right of self-determination could overcome that distrust. The logical consequence drawn from this was that the nationalism of the dominant nation was suspicious on account of its intrinsic chauvinist nature, whereas the nationalism of the oppressed and backward nations was deserving of support as long as it did not infringe upon the still higher interests of the international proletariat[58]. This attitude led to an active strategy of promoting non-Russian nation-building by institutionalization of ethnicity through autonomous republics as units of and for members of titular nationality, who gained preferential treatment, including support of local nationalism while dealing with local elites, increased percentage of local representatives in official institutions in the republics, proliferation and codification of local languages and creation of native educational institutions.

Till the beginning of 1930s local elites in the republics were encouraged to take an active part in local governance, there were applied efforts to strengthen revolutionary movements even in the remote regions where the latter were traditionally weak in

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56 Martin, *An Affirmative Action Empire*, 67-69.
57 Veljko Vujacic, "Stalinism and Russian Nationalism: a Reconceptualization," *Post-Soviet Affairs*, issue 23 (2007): 159.
58 Vujacic, *Stalinism and Russian Nationalism*, 159.

accordance to area's specificity. Theses trends became known as policy of "indigenization",
korenizatsia. Soviet Union proved to be more successful in treatment with minor
nationalities inhabited the vast area of the country due to more flexible national policy in
comparison with Greater Romania. This kind of policy was possible to introduce due to the
strong apparatus of control in the institutional dimension and of everyday life.

In its drive to transform peasants into proletarians the Soviet state together with
orientation towards masses followed crucial task – to overcome backwardness of the
majority of population and thus push the whole system to modernization (industrialization
and collectivization were the part of the project). Due to Soviet conception, multinational
state from the ideological point of view must have been united with the help of concept of
class, and category of national turned into a supporting ground, Stalin's well-known formula
"socialist in content, national in form".

The logic of titular nation vs. oppressed one during 1920s, early 1930s could imply
the drive to suppression of not only nationalism of Russian people but the people itself.
However, Russians were in fact numerically dominant entity in the borders of the Soviet
Union, ethnic Russians living in the RSFSR could enjoy preferential treatment only as
proletarians— i.e., on the basis of class, not ethnic origin[59]. Special task ascribed to
Russians: to help non-titular nations to overcome their "backwardness". However,
theoretically, the special role of the Russian proletariat would last only until the last vestiges
of peripheral backwardness were removed, entitling the proletarians of all nationalities to be
proud "in the socialist sense[60]" Keeping in mind the absence of ideological orientation
against Russian peasants during collectivization campaign and the amount of victims of
Stalin's purges among Russians, Vujacic argues that the turn to Russocentrism starting from

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59 Vujacic, *Stalinism and Russian Nationalism*, 160.
60 Vujacic, *Stalinism and Russian Nationalism*, 161.

early 1930s could not be considered as an act of strengthening of specific Russian identity but rather turning into possibility of creating a new Soviet Russian national identity[61].

In the Soviet case promoting local nationalism must become a step in supporting Soviet proletarian paradigm (during 1920s), later changed by modified russocentric discourse. Russian peasantry was taken as an obstacle (including kulaks as a class, forcible collectivization) in attaining of the new Soviet man, the task to transform Russians (i.e., peasants) into proletarians.

In Soviet Russia's case one must reason about rejecting of tradition (of Imperial Russia) for establishing new one, especially it was significant for the period before 1930s and coincided with general revolutionary polemics that implied an ultimate break with old, traditional in that sense, rule, world-view, state of affairs and creation of new points of rest.

Competing Russian Nationalism

As it was stated above, systematic promotion of the national consciousness of ethnic minorities with posterior establishment for them many of the characteristic institutional forms of the nation-state by Russia's new revolutionary government pointed at preserving the territorial integrity of old Russian empire and enabling the construction of a new centralized, socialist state[62]. Still, Bolsheviks aspired not to be associated with imperial rule or Romanov Empire and wished Soviet power to seem indigenous rather than an external Russian imperial imposition[63]. Non-Russian nationalism was primarily a response to tsarist oppression and was motivated by a historically justifiable distrust to Great Russians[64]. Under these conditions traditional Russian culture was stigmatized as a culture of oppression, heroes of Revolution and Civil War were brought to the fore. Such cultural policy left no space for Pushkin, who first and foremost, was perceived as imperial poet and

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61 Vujacic, *Stalinism and Russian Nationalism*, 167.
62 Martin, "An Affirmative Action Empire", 67.
63 Ibidem, 74.
64 Ibidem, 71.

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embodiment of traditional Russian culture, together with other classics. This association of Pushkin with culture of Imperial Russia, closely related to central monarchic power was strongly supported by Pushkin cult, developed in Romanov Empire with Jubilee events of 1899 as its peak. Moreover, Pushkin's poetic legacy contradicted current flows in Russian art. Famous manifesto *Slap in the Face of Public Taste*, written in 1912 by Futurist and Proletkult's circles who tended to consider the poet's legacy to be irrelevant urged to throw the poet "overboard off the ship of modernity" – offered Mayakovski. In 1918 he extended his claim: "we are shooting old generals – why not shoot Pushkin too?[65]". Futurists accused Pushkin of turning into fixed monument, object of cult, instead of being a poet, a creative person. Pushkin's canonization created an opportunity to oppose poet's figure and monument. Although Futurists rejected Pushkin to be their mentor and reference point, in futurist texts it is possible to reveal not only parahprases from Pushkin, but even semi-parody poems on sculpture topic in Pushkin's legacy[66]. Thus Futurists initiated polemics around Moscow monument, sculpted by Opekushin, and to a certain extent supported it till late 1920s, in comparison with participants of Proletkult movement, who neither appreciated Pushkin as poetic authority, nor referenced to him in any way but stern rejection. It is not surprising that objects, connected to Pushkin were either marked by indifference by authorities (Pushkin family estates in Mikhailovskoe and Trigorskoe were in the poorest condition after the revolution and civil war, Mikhailovskoe emerged in official cultural life only in 1924, becoming national preserve in connection with 25th anniversary of Pushkin's birth, thanks to efforts by Petrograd academic community[67]), or   certain measures were

65 Brandenberger, *National Bolshevism,* 78.
66 See Molok, *Pushkin v 1937*, 187-203.
67 See Sandler, *Commemorating Pushkin,* 47-55.

taken to reduce his presence to minimum (Krupskaia's quiet purge of Pushkin's works from public libraries during 1920s[68]).

But there was a group of poets, for whom Pushkin as embodiment of direct tradition offered special value. Such poets as A. Blok, F. Sologub, A. Akhmatova and several professional Pushkin scholars gathered in Petrograd in 1921 to celebrate modest Pushkin days. For them Pushkin symbolized traditional Russia of so-called "old" intelligentsia. This is why their point of connection also was not Jubilee of 1899, but Pushkin days of 1880, when the Moscow monument was raised – these days are traditionally considered to be "celebration of intelligentsia", marked by prominent speeches of F. Dostoevsky and I. Turghenev[69]. Evidently, there was no place for Pushkin in proletarian culture of 1920s according to one more reason. When Bolshevik government was competing Russian nationalism, it also implied deliverance from bearers of Russianness. Mostly bearers of Russian identity represented those who considered embodying an obstacle for Soviet regime - "old" intelligentsia, feeling sympathy for old state system. Considerable part of these people left Soviet Russia and constituted core of Russian emigration, or Russia Abroad, as they called themselves. Living abroad, emigrants perceived themselves to be preserver of pld, veritable, as it was seen, Russian culture, cherishing symbols and cultural legacy of "classical" national culture and literature. Marc Raeff claimed that Pushkin's works were not only easily memorized, but they evoked myriad images of the homeland, following by veritable cult of Pushkin that developed in Russia Abroad. In emigration the educated Russians rediscovered Pushkin as someone truly their own, the poet closest to them not only

68 Brandenberger, *National Bolshevism,* 78.
69 Levitt, *Russian Literary Politics and the Pushkin Celebration of 1880*, 179.

by language, but also by his stress on individual creative freedom, destroyed in Bolshevik Russia[70].

Mihai Eminescu and Nation-Consolidation in Greater Romania

General historical overview

As one of the outcomes of WWI, due to the treaty of Saint-Germain-en-Laye (ratified in 1919), the Treaty of Trianon (1920) and the Treaty of Paris (1920), new sizeable territories were included into the borders of Romanian principalities. Thus Greater Romania came into being as a state, achieving at that time its greatest territorial extent (almost 300,000 sq km). Taking into account that after the incorporation of Transilvania, Bessarabia and Bucovina provinces the balance of population altered considerably, the country turned into multinational state with rural ethnic Romanian population numerically prevailing over urban. For newly set-up state it was necessary to challenge novel tasks of nation-building in new setting of multinational milieu. The state became politically highly centralized, moreover, the center turned to be the core in political meaning (so-called Old Kingdom), strengthening state ideology through consolidating new type of identity, based on the concept of unitary Romanian nation and pro-Romanian nation-building policies.

In fact, traditionalist narrative and discourse in question of defining national essence of Romanians, oriented towards peasantry and rural system of values, was promoted by conservative political thinkers already in pre-war Romania. In post-war Greater Romania these trends gained significant support and to a considerable extent influenced search for identity under new conditions, where bearers of local (regional) identities tended to resist total substitution of the greater, national, more abstract identity.

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70 Marc Raeff, *Russia Abroad: a Cultural History of the Russian Emigration*, 1919-1939 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990): 95-96.

For the current chapter it is important to emphasize peculiarities of national policy and nation-building strategies in Greater Romania with the view of national consolidation and adjustment of non-titular ethnic minorities in opposition to the titular ethnic group. Unification meant the incorporation of large minority populations that were more urban, more schooled, and more modern that the Romanians[71]. Aspiration to create a unitary state, the desire for rapid national consolidation (with one leading ethnic group, represented in the majority of state institutions) led to relative suppression of minor ethnic groups with anti-Semitism as a part of official discourse. Several crucial needs followed the new state formation. One of them was the need to expand Romanian elites to the size of the new territories and the priority of establishment a Romanian presence in crucial cultural and urban spheres[72]. Romanization, supported by the government, consisted in replacing minorities in elite positions with ethnic Romanians[73] (especially in urban areas where ethnic Romanians were in a minority). Incorporation of newly acquired territories was perceived as reunion of indigenous/native lands with their historical motherland, and the concept of Greater Romania implied the idea of uniting all ethnic Romanians and the contiguous territories where they lived into one state[74].

In intellectual sphere polemics about tradition opposed to modernity served as the core issue in debates about veritable essence of Romanian nation starting from the middle of the 19th cent. At this time the Romanian public spirit suffered a number of important mutations. After 1900 there appeared an expanding ideological constellation centered on the affirmation of the specificity of Romanian civilization, which was seen mainly, or even

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71 Livezeanu. *Cultural politics in Greater Romania,* 5-8.
72 Livezeanu. *Cultural politics in Greater Romania,* 8.
73 Livezeanu. *Cultural politics in Greater Romania,* 17-18.
74 Livezeanu. *Cultural politics in Greater Romania,* 4.

exclusively, in terms of the rural store of values[75]. Under the pressure of the crisis of modernity and influence of the Western currents of thought, a new narrative about folk and country was adopted and/or created by the Romanian intellectuals, which led to a new rhetoric flooding the Romanian public space, and was characterized by appearance of many writers on the political stage[76]. As it has been emphasized by K. Hitchins, "it was largely sociologists, literary critics, theologians, and poets, who carried on the speculative and prophetic traditions in the Romanian thought and who, consequently, found themselves in the forefront of a great debate over the nature of Romanian ethnicity and culture"77. Intellectuals gathered around leading literary circles and journals of the time played influential role in defining Romaniannes. Substantial role of literary criticism is reflected in L. Boia's thesis, that in the process of creating Romania, cultural action preceded the political act. Romania was made first of all in people's consciousness[78]. It might be said that Romania was created by men of letters: writers, historians, teachers and so on. They gave shape to a common history and a spiritual space, and through them the Romanians acquired an identity[79].

Among Romanian elites, mostly concentrated in the borders of Old Kingdom, national culture was perceived as a response towards modernity challenge. Set of opinions that arose during interwar years on the role that West had played in the past and would play in the future of the region might be divided into at least three broad groups, belonging to one of which would generally frame intellectual's focus: the Europeans, the autochtonists,

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75 Boia. *History and Myth in Romanian Consciousness,* 59-60.
76 Răzvan Pârâianu, "National Culture as a Plot against Modernity," *Studia Hebraica*, no. 4 (2004): 103.
77 Keith Hitchins, "Gîndirea: Nationalism in a Spiritual Guise," in *Social Change in Romania 1860-1940*, edited by Kenneth Jowitt (Berkeley: University of California, 1978): 140.
78 Lucian Boia, *Romania: Borderland of Europe* (London: Reaktion Books, 2001): 242.
79 Ibidem

and the advocates of the third way[80]. The traditionalist concept of choosing village as the matrix of Romanian spirituality mirrored sociological reality, when 71% of Romanian population lived in rural areas[81]. National culture was proclaimed to be an expression of the national spirit. Nationalist intellectual trends were represented in a rich literary and journalistic production. For instance, between 1860 and 1945 Romanian criticism represented a discussion of literature with a tendency toward moral judgment, psychological description, political ideology. The most celebrated controversies in the history of Romanian literature have a precise political and ideological significance and are, in a sense, debates about the whole orientation of Romanian public life[82].

By 1920s the trend of peasant narrative as true Romaniannness was holding increasing value. National politics was therefore regarded as the struggle of national culture against the foreign invading modernity, this was a new plot for a narrative in which the nation and modernity were antagonistic[83]. Peasantry, together with local type of identity, were idealized by significant figures of Romanian canon. Simultaneously, among liberal circles the intention to incorporate westernized values was quite significant, what led to uncertainty between tradition and modernity in general Romanian political thought.

In spite of core contradictions and conflicting views on the majority of points concerning political, economic or cultural course of development that must be accepted by newly established Romanian state, intellectuals of different orientation kept referring to the same meta-narratives of representative Romaniannes. One of this basic concepts was canonical key figure of national poet, embodied by Mihai Eminescu.

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80 Keith Hitchins, "Imagining Europe: Autochthonist Social Thought In Southeastern Europe, 1920-1940." *Anuarul Institutului de Cercetări Socio-Umane "Gheorghe Şincai" al Academiei Române*, no. 4-5 (2002-2003): 298.
81 Livezeanu, *Cultural politics in Greater Romania,* 36.
82 Virgil Nemoianu, "Recent Romanian Criticism: Subjectivity as Social Response," *World Literature Today* 51, no. 4 (Autumn, 1977): 560-563.
83 Pârâianu, "National Culture as a Plot against Modernity", 104.

Eminescu

Mihai Eminescu (1850-1889), who unquestionably is considered to be the most famous, influential and most representative poet of Romanian nation, is classical representative of romantic poetic tradition. Metaphysical, mythological and historical subjects are frequently used in his poetry. He was born in Botosani[84], principality of Moldavia, in 1850. Studied in Chernovitz[85], Vienna and Berlin, worked as director of the Central Library in Jassy[86], substitute teacher, school inspector for the counties of Jassy. The poet was an active member of the *Junimea* literary society and worked as an editor for the newspaper *Timpul*, the official newspaper of the Conservative Party. Suffering in his last years from manic-depressive psychosis, he died in Bucharest in mental hospital in 1889.

Eminescu organically fitted into the concept of unitary Romanian culture based on common national grounds. Generally poetry by Eminescu is characterized by a late romantic air of melancholy and a rich musicality of language, as well as his concern with the national past and present[87]. The fact that the poet died in mental hospital strengthened the image of martyr, misunderstood genious and was speeded up by publishing by T. Maiorescu in 1883 set of poems, later reissued time and again. Maiorescu is considered to be one of the first and main contributors to Eminescu cult, because it was him who acknowledged the literary talent of the young poet and published his first volume of poetry in 1883, although his attention to Eminescu was devoted already in 1872, when he valued poet's talent highly, calling him "poet in all the power of this word[88]". Still, as an object of strong mythologisation Eminescu appeared from the year of his death, 1889, and since then, his

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84 Botoşani, in Romanian.
85 Cernăuți, in Romanian.
86 Iaşi, in Romanian.
87 Boia. *History and Myth in Romanian Consciousness,* 269.
88 Titu Maiorescu, cited from Cimpoi, Mihai, Victor Crăciun, et al., eds. *Eminescu – Pe mine mie redă-mă. Contribuții istorico-literare până la 1939* [Eminescu – Return to Myself. Historical and Literary Contributions up to 1939]. Corpus Eminescu series, Volume 5 (Chişinau-Bucureşti, 2000): 23.

cult exceeded the limits of *writer's cult*. As a *figure*, or as a *distinctive construction* of the whole national culture, Eminescu was transformed into a phenomenon which exceeds limits of literary studies area[89]. While he was relatively marginal during his lifetime, Eminescu emerged as the most important figure of the modern Romanian cultural canon[90] and presented there as the first of all Romanians, the supreme fulfillment of the Romanian genius[91], a poet of unparalleled value and as a symbol of the Romanian nation, the supreme, concentrated expression of Romanianism[92]. Nature and peasantry were idealized in solid poetic heritage by Eminescu. Both were seen as the sole preservers of national identity and were contrasted to the image of the city leech, usually a Jewish or Greek merchant, or a Romanian who was superficially westernized. Eminescu himself advocated return to the rural sphere and peasant traditionalism. He was a constant critic of liberalism, with which he associated everything that, in his opinion at least, vitiated Romanian values. For him, Romania's rural character had to be preserved unaltered, with the peasant as the guardian of innocence, and purity. As political thinker, Eminescu produced a literary representation of the local type of identity, and virulently criticized the universal; he represents rural and patriarchal Romania, although his peasanthood was more metaphysical[93]. In general, Eminescu appears as a transfigured image of the eternal Romanian peasant. He was nationalist and a 'reactionary' (in every sense, including the political), his political articles in *Timpul* (where he promoted not so much conservative ideology as his own personal ideology), expressed a refusal of modernity and a fear of foreigners.

In newly established conditions of interwar years cult of Mihai Eminescu as national poet of Romania met no serious resistance. Quite the contrary, it gained consolidation and

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89   Bot, *Mihai Eminescu, Poet Național Român,* 17-18.
90 Course material for *Political Modernities and Nation-Building in Central and Southeast Europe*, class 10.
91 Boia. *Romania: Borderland of Europe,* 243.
92 Boia. *History and Myth in Romanian Consciousness,* 5.
93 Boia. *Romania: Borderland of Europe,* 246-247.

continuity precisely because of opportunity to promote unitary national-oriented agenda. Generally the potential of canonical figure to represent the essence of nation at this time became core function for national poet. Aspiration for homogenization of minorities into unitary nation contributed the spread of Eminescu cult to national level, which was also mirrored in the fact that his image as poet of all Romanians appeared not only in literary critique, but in school curriculum. Thus, dominant status of Romanian people served as condition for mass praising and general acceptance of Eminescu figure, according to task of state's consolidation and meeting political needs.

Ioana Bot concluded three crucial descriptions of functioning of Eminescu myth that have been sanctioned during interwar years:

1. Political usage of myth, exploiting global and irrational characteristics, together with nationalistic components;

2. Definitive association of *Eminescu problem* to national Romanian identity in intellectual discourse above any political bearings. Any appeal to Eminescu myth makes reference to debates of national identity topic, which is, in return, organic and essential element of *academic disciplines and their related practices;*

3. Religious rhetoric, used to invoke the myth; often in an indistinct discourse, always archaic, replacing clarity of manifestation with metaphor, empathy and analogical image, invocation to Eminescu image is seen to be ossified in pseudo-religious clichĭs, with roots insisted to be inside the national tradition, being in christianity *a la roumaine*[94].

Majority of leading intellectuals, who belonged to various circles, be it modernists or autochthonal thinkers, went on referring to Eminescu to consolidate their own ideas and promote their own agenda. Among these thinkers were such prominent personalities of

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94   Keith Hitchins, *Mit şi Realitate în Istoriografia Românească* [Myth and Reality in Romanian Historiography], cited in Bot, *Mihai Eminescu, Poet Naţional Român,* 52, 55.

Romanian political culture and history as E. Lovinescu, C. Noica, N. Iorga and even radical A.C. Cuza[95].

According to I. Bot, after Titu Maiorescu, Nicolae Iorga was the most important director of Eminescu myth establishment during first decades of 20th century. In *Istoria literaturii române. Introducere sintetică* [History of Romanian Literature. Synthetic Introduction] (1929) Iorga suggested syntagma *integral expression of Romanian soul* to characterize a figure which exceeds the limits (in a programmatic way) of an astral poet's contours: *instead of melancholic and contemplative poet, Iorga discovers and puts in the forefront political and social fighter, techer and prophet of people (nation)*[96]. In this discourse, as an essence of national identity (that was, as it is supposed, represented by Eminescu) dimension of a race is added (for *power/force of a healthy race*, vision of Eminescu is comparable to an Annunciation by Iorga)[97]. To N. Iorga Cultural and political promotion of the traditional values of Romanian rural life, opposition to modernization and, in different periods, varying degrees of xenophobia[98] were not alien.

Thanks to efforts of these prominent thinkers, regardless of their political and aesthetic orientation, Eminescu scholarship was developing effectively in the course of time, reaching the level of solid literary flow. Simultaneously, Eminescu cult was supported by state: during 1920s and 1930s there were raised network of monuments devoted to the poet in different parts of Greater Romania (financially supported by money, collected by local enthusiastic groups and donated by state), so by 1939 every province gained its bronze or granite embodiment of Eminescu, which were placed on the borders of Romanian state,

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95 For brilliant selection of texts, authored by these and other intellectuals, referring to the poet, see *Corpus Eminescu* series.

96   Gheorghe Ciompec, *Eminescu Poetul Național. Antologie* [Eminescu as National Poet. Anthology] (Bucharest: Editura Eminescu, 1978): 15, cited from Bot, *Mihai Eminescu, Poet Național Român,* 52.

97   N. Iorga, in *Semănătorul* [the Sower], no. 46 (1903), in Ciompec, *Eminescu Poetul național*, 138, cited from Bot, *Mihai Eminescu, Poet Național Român,* 52.

98 Leon Volovici, *Nationalist Ideology and Antisemitism: the Case of Romanian Intellectuals in the 1930s* (Oxford: Pergamon Press, 1991): 31.

creating symbolic "girdle", which repeated contours of state borders[99]. On the opening ceremony of one of such monuments, in place called Sînnicolaul-Mare-Timiş in Banat (monument was raised in 1925), Octavian Goga (1881–1938), rightist oriented politician, poet, playwright and future Prime Minster of Romania, and pronounced welcoming speech. There he especially pointed out specific sense and importance of placing the monument on the border of Romanian land (to mark this border additionally), plus, this monument must have embodied and reminded to residents of the town and Banat regional area about their Romanian national consciousness, about proper values and differences from other peoples. Praising Eminescu must imply, Goga has noted, pride for race, it was precisely Eminescu's writings that voiced the idea of Romanian national integrity and called upon to read *Doina* (short description of this poet see below), calling it to be a political gospel of Romanianness. Literary unity was proclaimed to be preparatory formula for political unification. It is noteworthiness, that political act of 1918 was additionally justified by vision of Romania by Eminescu "from the river Dniester to the river Tisa" (from Bessarabia to Transilvania) [100] - in similar way Bolshevik state system was justified through Pushkin's freedom-loving poetry (for instance, "the Village") in late 1930s, as if prophetic vision of Pushkin was enough to let him foresee liberation of all the peoples from imperial oppression.

In spite of quite firm position that Eminescu held in awareness of literary scholars, there were no pompous mass jubilees celebrated during this time, but certain tradition of festivities has already come into being. For instance, twenty-fifth anniversary of Eminescu death (in 1914) was observed mostly within specific institutions, such as Teachers' Association. There were conducted a number of sessions in the capital every district, where

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99 For the list of monuments and dates of their rising see Victor Crăciun, ed., *Eminescu. Un Veac de Nemurire. Album* [Eminescu. A Century of Immortality. Album] (Bucureşti: Minerva, 1999): 406-7.

100   Ocatavian Goga, "Monumentul lii Mihai Eminescu," in *Eminescu – Steaua Singurătăşii. Efigii şi secvenţii literare* [Eminescu – Star of Loneliness. Literary Effigies and Sequences]. Corpus Eminescu series, Volume 3, edited by Cimpoi, Mihai, Victor Crăciun, et al., Chişinau-Bucureşti, 2000. 121-123.

the Association had offices, conferences where participated professional literary scholars were devoted to Eminescu's personality and life story. For pedagogues Eminescu has particular importance not only as the poet, but as their colleague: in 1874 - 1877 he held position of school inspector in Jassy and once voiced an idea that school reader "must be an object of national concern, just as text of the Holy Bible"[101], which gained specific significance for teachers. Among other jubilee activities were public lectures about Eminescu and Creangă (1839-1889), Moldavian-born Romanian writer, best known for his novellas and short stories for children, since their anniversaries coincided, public readings, singings, special conferencies for peasantry in villages, and for pupils in schools[102]. Already in 1914 both writers were called not only connoisseurs of Romanian people's soul, especially peasant soul, but also teachers of the whole nation[103]. Thus two divisions of poetic cult were contributed siultaniously – Eminescu as exponent of rural, autochthonal spirituality and myth of extraordinary friendship between two genius of Romanian people, not alien to cults of other famous poets.

Educational system

Before moving to case study on Mihai Eminescu as he was treated in school textbooks on literary history during the period under consideration, let me outline in short function that education as process gained under new conditions of unitary state. Educational system proved to be an instrument in nation-building strategy for Greater Romania. Substitution of personnel in majority of administrative and cultural institutions by representatives of the titular nation took place in the country. The peasant became the symbol of the nation and the ally of the state and was invited to become educated, to enter

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101   Onisifor Ghibu, *Prolegomena la o Educaţie Romînească,* no. 3 (Bucureşti, undated [1927]): 383.
102   Dumitru Moldavanu, "Eminescu şi Creangă, 25 de ani de la Moartea acestora" [Eminescu and Creangă, 25 Years from their Death], Ş*coala*, anul V (Bucovina, 1914): 90-92.
103   Moldavanu, "Eminescu şi Creangă, 25 de ani de la moartea acestora", 91.

the middle class, to move to town[104], gained new rights, male suffrage. To educate illiterate peasants also implied to relieve them from backwardness, and consequently to raise the status of the whole country in general, make an effort to move away from an image of undeveloped area. Measures were taken to assimilate the minorities by trying to turn their representatives into bearers of ethnic Romanian identity by means of active promotion of Romanian culture and language in the regions. Such measures as retraining non-Romanian speakers and discouraging the use of other languages for purpose of instruction, also prevention non-Romanian schools and clubs from developing freely, and attempting to keep minority students from attending Romanian universities in too large proportion took place in sphere of education[105]. Among the most important instruments of national integration and mobilization was "high" Romanian culture provided in a nationalistically charged way by schools and other institutions[106].

If we pay attention to the discussions that took place among professionals involved in educational system of the time in a number of pedagogical journals, we will reveal topics on the significance of primary and secondary school as institute of indoctrination. After 1918 educational system underwent sweeping changes, becoming one of the most efficient systems of unification of the new provinces, Romanization of ethnic minorities from these provincies and promoting national unity. Among ethnic Romanians, literacy was at a low level, in the borders of the country more educated proved to be non-Romanian population, one topical Eminescu functions became educational one. Certain laws concerning public education were introduced to achieve these goals (for instance, the primary school's unification) together with political initiatives, aiming at homoginization of administration, electoral and land reforms (1921). In this conditions such disciplines as archaeology,

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104   Livezeanu, *Cultural Politics in Greater Romania*, 11.
105   Livezeanu, *Cultural Politics in Greater Romania,* 300.
106   Livezeanu, *Cultural Politics in Greater Romania,* 299.

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general and national history or history of language and literature gained specific importance. In addition to their potential to further unification on social and cultural scale, such disciplines were quite efficient tool to advance the idea of homogenity of Romanian people all across the country, that, in its turn, would historically justify Romanian claims over the newly acquired territories. The concept of uninterrupted development in the Romanian history was supported in school program, being already an integral part of existing national paradigm of ethnic homogenization. Still, not all the initiatives coming from the centre were always welcome in the provincies. Thus, I. Gabrea in his booklet on development of school system complained that there was lack of harmony in the process of desinging Romanian people into a nation and then into national Romanian state. This discord was caused by extremely difficult circumstances in which nation-building was performed and by relatively short time period, when Romanians were rallied into unitary national state[107]. Onisifor Ghibu called all the parts of Romanian people to work on cultural walk of life in order to achieve the goal of efficacious education[108]. Still, according to Ghibu, certain achievements in domain of national pedagogy must be acknowledged, first of all, because forein school legislation vanished after 1918, that „held us back in veritable spiritual bondage"[109]. Radical opinions would claim that "generations that obtained culture in schools under Hungarian rule, learned falsified, biased and mendacious history"[110]. The rejection of former curriculum in newly acquired districts caused replacement of supplies in districts, especially it concerned the humanities, including history. Textbooks on Romanian history that were in use before the war adopted new geographical tranformations. For a long time history

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107   Iosif I. Gabrea. *Şcoala Creiatoare, (*Bucureşti, 1927): 16.
108   Onisifor Ghibu, *Prolegomena la o Educaţie Românească* [Prolegomena on Romanian Education], no. 3 (Bucureşti, 1926): 255.
109   Onisifor Ghibu, *Doisprezece ani de pedagogie românească (1919-1930)* [Twenty years of Romanian Pedagogy, 1919-1930] (Bucureşti, undated): 4.
110   Ardeleanu I. Senioru, "Istoria în şcoalele din Transilvania" [Histoty in Transilvanian Schools], *Şcoala Noastră*, Anul IX, no. 1 (Ianuarie, 1932), 9.

schoolbooks were the most widespread, efficient, and also the cheapest means to disseminate the image of illustrious characters and to shape the common memory of the people[111]. On this ground a society of newly emerged state could build a sense of common membership within the community which wass distinguished by these characters.

School was understood as necessary institution for Romanian society, primary school was proclaimed to be integral part of modern state, since it succedes in awakening and advance of national consciousness through introducing national cultural values to all the citizens[112]. This is the reason why school policy must become state policy. Implementation of this policy meant including into curriculum disciplines that would support broad promotion of national Romanian values into the system. Thus, program of primary school, which contained 7 grades, included obligatory religious and moral guidance, Romanian language, history and geography[113]. Teaching in state schools was directed in Romanian language, with the exception of schools for minorities where local languages were floated, but with reserve that Romanian language, history, geography and civilv law must be taught in Romanian[114].

The strategy of obligatory moral education was supported by number of pedagogs, who kept insisting on the necessity to teach pupils not only basic knowledges, but spiritual disciplines. „Only inward activity of generations spiritualizes national territory[115] […] pedagogic secret then is to inspire and to spiritualize nature and life around the child […]

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111   Mirela-Luminița Murghescu, „School Textbooks and Heroes of Romanian History," selected papers from a conference *Culture and the Politics of Identity in Modern Romania*, edited by Alexandru Duțu, Andrei Pippidi, et al. (Bucharest, May 27-30, 1998).
112   *Anuarul Învățămîntului primar* [Annual of Primary Education] (1933): 19.
113   Also arithmetic and elementary geometry, topics on civil law, topics on natural sciences, hygiene, drawing, singing, physical training.
114   *Buletinul Oficial al Ministerului Instrucțiunii Publice*. București, issue VIII, no. 4-5 (Aprilie-mai 1926), 401, 406-7
115   Apostol D. Culea. Temelia Educației Naționale [the Basis of National Education]. Școala Basarabiei, no. 6 (Aprilie, 1919, anul 1), p. 21.

these are bases on national education"[116]. In the mood of autochthonal intellectuals, some teachers expressed misgivings about children raised in the cities (for instance, children of civilian employees or industrial and office workers), as if these children, being raised apart from nature and traditions of common people, would grow up rootless among their compatriots. Meanwhile, traditional customs, songs and tales are best means to prepare the child for the cult of motherland, closely connected with ground[117]. For such traditionally oriented educational system Eminescu remained to be the poet of Romanian nature and native land, exponent of Romaniannes, bearer of rural values and founder of literary language. The last function also became significant after the annexation of 1918, since lots of peripheral dialects (so-called Muntenian, Moldovan, Bessarabian, Bucovenian Transilvanian or Dobrogean versions) were substituted for proper, literary Romanian language, that must contribute cultural / spiritual unification of lands. Precisely in these functions the poet was shown in majority of textbooks.

Eminescu in School Textbooks on Literary History
(Case Study)

Mihai Eminescu has been introduced to the reading audience not only by volumes of his poetic and other creative works, but also in a number of school readers, chrestomaties, anthologies of modern Romanian poetry. He was also included as part of obligatory program in school textbooks on history of Romanian literature, rarely on Romanian grammar. It is significant for the current research how Eminescu was represented among other authors of his time, if he was marked out on the background of his colleagues by the compliers of textbooks or was simply introduced as one of many talented romantic poets and other men of letters from the 19th century. I am also interested if editors or authors of

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116   Apostol D. Culea. "Temelia educației naționale", 25.
117   Apostol D. Culea. "Temelia educației naționale", 27.

textbooks and reading books were able to include short biography of Eminescu into the course, and what kind of message they managed to transcend to pupils by notes on the prominent poet's life story. For the process of Eminescu establishment in his status of national poet it was important to determine his most influential piece of writings, which is also reflected by selection of his poetic works in textbooks. Naturally, such selection resulted in certain simplification of the poet's legacy, reducing Eminescu to several most influential or well-known poems, in partial perception of his broad poetic repertory. Moreover, short interpretation given below the poems would inevitably narrow the scope of poet's writings, simplify it, but it explains the aim of reaching the broadened audience, who doesn't obtain higher level of education. As a result, lesser-educated pupils would keep in mind precisely this selection of poems reflecting general cultural framework represented by schoolbooks.

As it was noticed by Mircea Anghelescu, author of the only available essay on Eminescu in school books, the poet enters manuals as a unique, emblematic figure of Romanian literature and creativity from the very beginning, which is late 19th century[118]. Eminescu appears in schoolbooks pretty early, in 1875, still during his lifetime (when he was 25 years old) – in *Conspectul* [the Synopsis] by Vasile Gherman. There the poet called „one of the most beautiful talents" or "the most distinguished talent appeared on the scene of new motion in our [Romanian] literature"[119]. It was the first time when Eminescu was introduced into educational curriculum, although the book itself still can not be called proper school manual. Rather, there were books written or composed by private persons, most likely, Romanian intellectuals, adopted by school system as educational supplies.

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118   Mircea Anghelescu, "Eminescu în Manualele şcolare" [Eminescu in School Textbooks], in *Mihai Eminescu, Poet Naţional Român – Istoria şi Anatomia Unui Mit Cultural*, edited by Ioana Bot (Cluj-Napoca, editura Dacia, 2001): 153.
119   Anghelescu, "Eminescu în Manualele şcolare", 151-2.

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Gherman's *Conspectul*, as well as other handbooks appeared in 1860s and 1880s, was more or less evidently influenced by authoritative critical study of Eminescu by Titu Maiorescu, stated in his *Direcţia nouă în poezia şi proza română* [New Direction in Romanian Poetry and Prose], printed in 1872.

Once Eminescu entered school manuals on modern Romanian literature, he was never excluded from any of it, and always praised as one of the most outstanding writers of his time, which reflects continuity of canon-building and securing of high position in the pantheon of Romanian men of letters. The extent of reported information on Eminescu personality and poetry could vary from several lines, as in 1910s[120], to dozens of pages, as in late 1930s, but every comliler would generally treat him as the most distinguished Romanian poet of modern times and exponent of modern Romanian literature, whose superior status among other authors is unquestionable, but still no canon was framed strictly. Canon-continuation and gradual succession are also reflected in the fact, that certain amount of textbooks in use during interwar years were nothing short of new editions of books from 1890s-1910s, with slight changes made. Eventually general frame of discussing Eminescu in textbooks coincided with the leading trends in literary critique. In 1920s the main points at issue remained aesthetic and cultural importance of Eminescu first of all as a poet, infrequently as political thinker. Discussions of literary value of his creative legacy would tally in the opinion that his versatile talent made it possible to create poetic works of different genres, which, in its turn, enabled school reader's compilers to include a number of his works in different sections in textbooks.

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120   For instance, Joan Lăzăriciu in his *Istoria Literaturei Române*, printed in 1904, devoted to the poet hardly more than a page, where he praises Eminescu as the one who holds superior position in comparison with his poetic predecessor. Eminescu is shown as the master (maestro) of language and style, mainly tragic poet. Gh. Arbore in his *Noţiuni de Istoria literaturei Româneşti pentru şcolilor comerciale şi licee* printed in Galaţi in 1903 treats Eminescu in the same manner. Both compilers refer to T. Maiorescu.

Till the end of the 19th century the set of illustrious poems that would represent Eminescu poetry has been more or less set up, this set was not reshaped a lot during interwar years, only several poems were included or excluded in chrestomathies depending on the decision of compilers[121]. The frequency of selection of poetic works is rather blur, but it doubtlessly reflects the meaning of patriotic poems authored by national poet, who united Romanians from all the provinces. Patriotic poems were included in every textbook or reader for their propaganda function, since they hold an option to teach how to value and appreciate the homeland.

Surprisingly, inter-war manuals on literary history are represented in astonishingly dispersed way, which complicates the task of full description of general trends of the period. Even Anghelescu quoted only 5 items, issued in 1918, 1926, 1930, 1936 and 1938[122]. There are several reasons for this lack of sources. First, low level of materials' safety in regional libraries due to posterior war and consequent revision of libraries' funds after 1945 by the Communist-dominated power-holding structures. Second, such materials as old textbooks are rarely cataloged in a proper way which complicates their search. It explains why textbooks introduced by the following case study do not cover every year of the period. However, taking into account that majority of textbooks printed in 1920s or 30s were not completely new studies, but re-editions of texts from 1890-1910s with slight changes in comparison with the original version, and limited number of people occupied with textbooks

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121   For instance, one of early anthologies on history of Romanian language and literature, compiled by G. Adamescu and issued in 1897, contained 4 poems (*Melancolie*, 1876 [Melancholy], *Doina*, 1882 [Doina - the name is a traditional type of Romanian song], *Satira I*, 1884 [Satire №1], *Strigoii*, 1876 [Ghosts]), 2 of them would continually be included almost in every chrestomathy or textbook, composed by this author.

122   The 2nd edition of professor's Gh. Adamescu *Noțiuni de istoria limbii şi literaturii româneşti,* issued in 1918; *Istoria Literaturii Române pentru clasa a VII-a* by Gh. Nedioglu, printed in 1938; *Carte de citire pentru clasa a IV-a, primară* de Spiridon Popesu et al., printed in 1926; manual for 7th grade authored by M. Dragomirescu and N. Russu from 1936 and Petre V. Haneş. *Carte de citire, Compoziţie, istorie literară*. Manual de clasa a VII-a, Bucureşti, issued in 1930 [1906].

writing, this rather random sampling is enough to indicate general tendencies of how was Eminescu interpreted in school curriculum of the period.

After the beginning of the 20th century the place that Eminescu occupied in schoolbooks became not only more important, but more certain and confident, later on, during the period between two world wars the image of the poet has been enriched and to some extent altered in comparison with 1910s[123]. All the poetry of 1ate 19th century was officially put under incontestable brand of Eminescu's influence, not only by simple statement of fact, but by selection of texts written by poets of posterior decades – majority of pieces either dedicated to Eminescu, or represent critical studies of his works[124]. The enrichment of 1910s brought Eminescu on the universal level – his works claimed to be universal masterpieces, he was declared as the one who succeeded to voice Romanian poetical genius, creative potential of the nation. This approach can be exemplified by the manual authored by Petre V. Haneş, printed in 1930[125]. Haneş brings into audience's attention 15 poems by Eminescu[126] and labels him to be a poet of universal level, together with Gh. Nedioglu, who in his manual, issued in 1938, claims that Eminescu „is the most poetic embodiment of Romanian genius, who […] reproduced the sublime vision of humanity's suffering"[127]. In the manual authored by M. Dragomirescu and N. Russu, the poem *Împărat şi Proletar* (1874) was categorized as universal masterpiece. In fact, elevation of creative pieces from post-romantic cultural heritage on the universal level was typical of this time period, but having a national icon of universally recognized greatness would bring

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123   Anghelescu, "Eminescu în Manualele şcolare", 158.
124   Ibidem.
125   The manual on Romanian literature for 7th grade, it was already the 9th edition of the book, 1st appeared in 1906.
126   For the exact list of poems see Anghelescu, "Eminescu în Manualele şcolare", 158, 160.
127   Quoted from Anghelescu, "Eminescu în Manualele şcolare", 160.

additional acknowledgment for young Romanian "high" culture. Still, in textbooks claims on universal validity of Eminescu poetry implied precisely literary subtext.

Gh. Adamescu was one of authoritative professors, whose textbooks were constantly re-edited for at least 40 years, in sum he compiled more then 30 manuals for school pupils and future teachers – students of normal schools. His first book appeared in 1894[128], where Eminescu was not included in the list of authors under consideration, only some enthusiastic review was added in the beginning. However, all subsequent books complied by Adamescu payed intent attention to national poet's legacy.

One of his textbooks, supply for pedagogical students *Istoria Literaturii române pentru şcoalele normale* [History of Romanian Literature for Normal Schools] run into at least 5 editions. The second edition was printed in Bucharest, in 1914 and included short biographical notice on Eminescu, general critical revision of his poetry[129], autograph and selection of poetry, 4 pieces in sum[130]. In critical note it was specially stated as a nonsense, that once the poet was contested by his opponents, who would claim his poems to be beatifully written, but without any proper form. Adamescu tried to prove absurdity of such approach, claiming that the status that Eminescu gained in national culture is an argument in favor of his absolute unsurpassed poetic skill . Eminescu is praised as poet-innovator, who gave Romanian poetry completely new direction, unknown forms and unique style. Adamescu mentions Eminescu writing not only poems, but also fairy-tales[131], narrative[132] and a novel133. Poems are systematized in by genre, such as patriotic, erotic, philosophical

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128   Gheorghe Adamescu. *Noţiuni de Istoria Limbii şi Literaturii Româneşti* (Bucureşti, 1894).
129   Gheorghe Adamescu. *Istoria Literaturii Române Pentru Şcoalele Normale* [History of Romanian Literature for Normal Schools] (Bucureşti, 1914): 605-609.
130   *Ce-ţi doresc eu ţie, dulce Românie,* 1867, *In fereastra despre mare,* 1869, *S'a stins viaţa,* 1884, *Se bate miezul nopţii,* 1884, in Gheorghe Adamescu. *Istoria Literaturii române pentru Şcoalele normale* [History of Romanian Literature for Normal Schools] (Bucureşti, 1914): 609-617.
131   *Făt frumos din Lacrima,* 1875.
132   *Sărmanul Dionisie,* 1872.
133   *Geniu pustiu,* 1867.

poems, praising nature, elegies and poems in popular, or fork style[134]. Eminescu is called

national poet of Romanian people precisely for his familiarity with the popular style in

language and way of thinking. Not any other Romanian poet succeeded (except for

Alecsandri) in reproducing boundless nuances of folk style in such a charming manner[135]. In

the contents Eminescu introduced among other writers of his generation, arranged

chronologically, by time of writing, after Ion Creangă (1839 - 1889) and before Ioan Slavici

(1848 – 1925). In the 5th edition (1922) some changes in selection of poems took place,

introducing another romantic pieces where Romanian nature was praised[136]. Similar changes

occurred within the 6th edition of the book (1924)[137].

In cooperation with M. Dragomirescu, G. Adamescu authored several books for

secondary schools, for instance, *Manual de Limba Română pentru clasa V a şcoalelor

secundare,* printed in Bucharest in 1929. The main point of the handbook was to represent

the variety of genres that exists in Romanian language and literature. Eminescu is given as

author who wrote elegies[138], meditative lyric[139] and lirical poems[140]. Elegies by Eminescu

are evaluated as examples of people's poetry, which contains folkroric value, since

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134   Among them *Ce te legeni, codrule,* 1883*; Doina* 1882.
135   Gheorghe Adamescu. *Istoria Literaturii române pentru şcoalele normale* [History of Romanian Literature for Normal Schools] (Bucureşti, 1914): 607.
136   *Călin,* 1876 [Guelder], *Scrisoarea I,* 1881 [Epistle №1]. Overall in 1922 edition were included *Ce-ţi doresc eu ţie, dulce Românie,* 1867, *In fereastra despre mare,* 1869, *S'a stins viaţa ,*1884, *Se bate miezul nopţii,* 1884, *Scrisoarea I,* 1881, *Călin,* 1876-7, *La steaua,* 1886.
137   In selection of poems Adamescu came back to the variant of 1914.
138   *Ce te legeni, codrule?, S-a stins viaţa,* in Mihai Dragomirescu and Gheorghe Adamescu, *Manual de Limba Română pentru clasa V a şcoalelor secundare* (Bucureşti, 1929): 55-56.
139   *Scrisoarea I* [Epistle №1]*, p. 79.*
140   *Luceafărul,* 1884 [The Morning Star]*,* which in the textbook is labeled as one of the most beautiful examples of sublime in Romanian language, but still not the major work of literature created by the poet. pp. 66-78.

they serve as evidence of the character of Romanian soul[141]. In early version of this textbook, from 1918, the emphasis was made on philosophical lyric[142].

It is significant that precisely during inter-war years Eminescu appears in school textbooks not only as a poet, but as publicist and political writer – specific function of him, which became especially popular in 1930s and resulted in announcing the poet to be predecessor of extreme rightist movements (see chapter 3.1). Petre V. Haneş (manual for the 7th grade, 1930) claims Eminescu's activity as editor of conservative-oriented newspaper *Timpul* to be „one of golden pages of our journalism"[143]. According to Lucian Boia, the fact that the poet was "discovered" by the nationalistic wave after 1900 reflects taking shape of "Eminescu as ideologist" myth[144]. In 1930s many of Eminescu's ideas about the organic nature of Romanian civilization and the necessity of resisting modernization were incorporated into a new nationalistic discourse. Appearance of nationalistic rhetoric on Eminescu in school textbooks reveals breadth of this phenomenon of radicalization of the discourse in late 1930s. Another sign of this trend was inclusion *Doina* poem into selection of Eminescu poetry in the readers, followed by critical notices. *Doina* is a piece of literature, where the author appeals to Moldovan medieval ruler, Ştefan cel Mare (Stephen the Great, 1457-1504), he demands justice and calls for help to get rid of foreign invaders, who congested native land in prejudice of Romanian people, and patriotic tone of Eminescu comes down to xenophobic accents. In texbook by M. Dragomirescu and G. Adamescu for the 7th grade (2nd edition in 1906) it is stated that local sentiment, praised by the poet in *Doina* emphasizes one of Eminescu political tendencies, in the same way as they are

141   Dragomirescu, Adamescu. *Manual de Limba Română pentru clasa V a şcoalelor secundare* (Bucureşti, 1929): 55.
142   Mihail Dragomirescu and Gheorghe Adamescu. *Manual de literatura română pentru clasa VIII-a*, ediţia a II-a (Bucureşti, 1918). The book included philosophical poems *Împărat şi Proletar* (pp. 226-233) and *Sarmanul Dionis,* (pp. 335-351).
143   Anghelescu, "Eminescu în Manualele Şcolare" 160.
144   Boia. *History and Myth in Romanian Consciousness,* 5.

manifested in poet's political articles[145]. Gh. Nedioglu in his manual in 1930[146] also includes *Doina* among other poems, with the state that "*Doina* gives an expression of seething pain, that turns into a revolt […] against foreign invaders"[147]. Later Nedioglu brings *Doina* and as evidence that for Eminescu patriotic love to his country manifests through revolt against foreigners[148]. Another illustrious example is the reader for elementary school, *Carte de citire pentru clasa a IV-a primară* from 1926 by Spiridon Popescu et al., where *Doina* is the single text by Eminescu offered in the book[149]. In fact, textbooks for primary school are even more demonstrative for the current analysis, since there basic points on Eminescu biography or poetry were represented in the most simplistic, selected and personalized way; the poet must be an example for imitation, an illustrious person for children. This method of approaching Eminescu was distinctly applied by C. Ienică and D. Goga in their reader for the 4th grade of elementary school, issued in 1928-29[150]. Aftef introducing 3 poems by Eminescu where he praised native land[151], short biography of a poet is given. The poet is shown as the greatest among Romanian poets, who during his school years displayed a rare assiduity and amazed his surroundings by scholastic achievement. In addition to particular love to local language, which in his writings is the most beautiful and refined, Eminescu status of true Romanian poet was supported by the fact that during his youth he travelled all over Romanian lands and gathered great number of folk

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145   Anghelescu, "Eminescu în Manualele Şcolare", 161.
146   G. Nedioglu. *Manual on Romanian literature,* for the 7th grade (Bucureşti, 1930), next edition took place in 1938.
147   Anghelescu, "Eminescu în Manualele şcolare" 161.
148   Ibidem
149   Anghelescu, "Eminescu în Manualele şcolare", 162.
150   Constantin Ienică, Dimitrie Goga. *Carte de citire pentru clasa IV-a primară, conform programa analitica din 1925* (Cluj, 1928-9).
151   *Ce te legeni, Codrule,* 1883 (p. 27), *Rugăciune,* 1878 [the Pray] (p. 89), *Somnoroase păsările,* 1883, (p. 164).

songs and tales[152], which inspired him to create inimitable pieces of poetry where he glorified the beauty of Romanian river heads, woods, local people and merits of ancestors[153]. Thus one particular textbook performs a function, common for all educational supplies on national history or history of national literature (in current case) – it creates certain framework of values with special emphasis on patriotic feelings and adherence to native land, supported by Eminescu, with the poet as rightful member of so-called national gallery of illustrious characters, taught in a way that a school child is able to identify him/herself with such a character.

Short excursus in history of Romanian literature, given in several school books, are important for current analysis because of compilers' attempts to structure long-lasting period of writings' development towards interwar status of Romanian literature. The existence of common cultural heritage, and literature as its part, would emphasize spiritual unity of Romanian lands, and partially justify political act of unification. Chronologically Romanian literature would be divided into 3 epochs, as in *Istoria literaturii Române* by Sextil Pu□cariu issued in Sibiu in 1920 – an old era, the longest one and the most futile, new era, which begins "from our regeneration as a Romanic people"[154], and finally, modern era, "the beginning of which is marked by the founding of independent and united Romania". Slavic and Greek influences on the essence that later will become true Romanian culture were claimed to take part during the old, or ancient period, together with impacts from the Orient, which resulted in the flow called Orthodoxism. Simultaneously, Romanian culture could not escape Western cultural ascendancy, but the junction of influences resulted in the ability of

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152   Indeed, this episode took place in reality, when in 1867 Eminescu joined theatrical troupe of actors as clerk and prompter, and spent with them all his time till 1869, but this episode was quite seldom specially pointed out in textbooks. Compare with Pushki's "associating himself with the common people".
153   Ienică, Goga, *Carte de citire pentru clasa IV-a primară,* 165.
154   Sextil, Puşcariu. *Istoria literaturii române. Cursuri populare.* Vol. I, *Epoca veche*. (Sibiu: Biblioteca "Astra", 1920): 1.

Romanian literature to start searching its national direction. Chroniclers were claimed to become the first exponents of this direction in literature since they first pointed to "our Romanian origins and ethnic unity of all Romanians". Textbooks authors would evaluate religious literature (16 - 18th century) and clerical books not as proper literature, since every text appeared in that period was nothing but translation, written under foreign influence. Still, the main value of ecclesiastical writings consisted in establishment of unity of language. For instance, G. Adamescu emphasized that translation of *the Holy Bible* issued in 1648 was performed thus to be understood by Romanians from different provincies (Transilvania, Țara Româneasca)[155]. It was also declared that no proper national literature is able to come into being under the impact of foreign cultural trends, be it Slavonic, Greek or Latin schools, which contributed Romanian literature in 17-18th centuries. The search of Romanian consciousness expressed in literature would be developed further in history, gaining its peak in the union of Romanian principalities (1859). Eternal Romanian dilemma of cultural influences was resolved by pointing out the importance of 19th century as the period when popular, folk literature was discovered, which added new power into literary movement and resulted in achievement by Romanians their own appropriate modern literature[156]. Unification of 1859, being the foregoing act versus 1918, together with intensive literary activity by Junimists and finally with appearance of Eminescu literary genius, according to Pușcariu, marked new, modern era in Romanian cultural and literary history. Since then, men of letters and other arts are destined to promote "great Romanian ideal" into masses through their creative legacy[157]. In this scheme Eminescu was announced to represent a strong creative force of novelty and eventually became one of the main pillars of modern Romanian literary flow. His uncommon rhymes and form of poems

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155   Adamescu, *Istoria literaturii române* (1920), 12.
156   Adamescu, *Istoria literaturii române* (1920), 13.
157   Pușcariu. *Istoria literaturii române,* 3.

consolidated his status of "father-founder" of modern Romanian language, literature and Romaniannes in its current, inter-war understanding. This way of praising the poet as bearer of representative narrative of national essence to a large extent coincises with rhetoric of Russiannes represented by Pushkin, but with one main difference. The gist of Romaniannes presupposed ethnic rhetoric and implication, throwing back to successive tradition, whereas in Pushkin case official discourse of praising him as Great Russian poet intersected with his status of the first state poet of multinational union of Soviet Socialist republics (see chapter 3).

1930s: Stalinism, Reactionary Movements

and Extreme Politicization of Poets

It happened that in its ideal-typical form, the affirmative action empire persisted for a mere decade. Fundamental revision of the Soviet nationalities policy started with the series of resolutions, issued by Soviet Politburo in December 1932, which often has been portrayed as the abolition of *korenizatsia*[158]. In January 1934 Stalin declared that "non-Russian mistrust" has been overcome, that implied the "rehabilitation", as it is often called in historiography, I would prefer the term re-adjustment, of Russian culture and nationalism as part of official ideology. Throughout the 1920s little attention was devoted to creating an image of the Soviet Union as a unified multiethnic state, but by the middle and especially by the end of 1930s Russian people together with Russian language, appears in official propaganda. The function of Russians as "helpers in overcoming backwardness" was kept, but not through local but through Russian culture, language and its legacy. Thus, in the 1920s, the voluntary invisibility of the Russian nationality was meant to unify the multiethnic state (by disarming non-Russian distrust of their former oppressor); in the 1930s, the visibility and centrality of Russians would serve the same function[159].

The most common theme of new propaganda was to justify "pride" and the right of the Russian people to be proud its rich culture and elevated language, the language of Pushkin, Gogol, etc. The greatest attention was devoted to the teaching of Russian, in 1938 Russian language became a mandatory subject in all non-Russian elementary schools. Thus dominant ethnic group was turned into the main ethnic glue of the new Soviet state, what, in

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158   Martin, *An Affirmative Action Empire*, 80.
159   Martin, *An Affirmative Action Empire,* 81.

its turn, was a contribution to Stalin's forcible creation of a new Soviet-Russian identity[160] and concluded the return of pre-revolutionary historical figures into cultural canon.

Let me now discuss why Pushkin was foremost manipulated as Russian only in late 1930s, but not immediately after the Revolution.

Pushkin, Stalin and Russia Abroad

Time framework of late 1930s is characterized by extremely significant turn to introduce national poet on the level of increased reading audience, it also was one of the periods of distinct manipulations with Pushkin's biography and literary legacy for political purposes. During late 1930s the grand anniversary took place in the Soviet Union, centenary of Pushkin's death, widely celebrated in February of 1937.

In general Pushkin's main mission was to become a "bearer (or exponent) of national idea", meaning Russian – idea, culture, language, heritage, etc. The very fact that the poet was celebrated on such a wide scale in late 1930s in comparison with quite modest attention given to him by authorities in 1920, makes this case study revealing the broader question of so-called ideological "rehabilitation" of representatives of the old regime and their inclusion into common Soviet "usable" past. By 1937, Soviet-Russian identity was no longer submerged – it was celebrated at every turn – but it was still identified closely with the State. The most common theme of late 1930s propaganda in press was the motive of "justifiable pride" of Russian people; Russians were from now on praised to be "first among equals". Before 1930s the Soviet heroic pantheon was constructed from the ranks of the society's most famous Old Bolsheviks, Red Army commanders, industrial shock workers, champion agricultural laborers, heroes from the Civil War, etc. (Pushkin has not been praised on the upper all-Soviet level). But the purges which resulted in destruction of these

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160   Vujacic, "Stalinism and Russian Nationalism: a Reconceptualization", 161, 178.

prominent personalities between 1936 and 1938 and thus became caused not only social but cultural shock, radically impaired propaganda motives and created the need of symbolic contributors of the USSR's "usable past". D. Brandenberger would claim this "free space" in the canon to be successfully filled/occupied by heroes of pre-revolutionary past — famous individuals like Aleksandr Nevskii, Minin and Pozharskii, Ivan Susanin, Suvorov, Kutuzov, Lomonosov, Pushkin, and so on[161]. I would rather argue that *no* pre-revolutionary heroes', including Pushkun's full-scale rehabilitation and triumphal comebck into Soviet cultural canon took place, but careful adjustment of their images, which was cardinally reshaped/transformed according to the needs of late 1930s. This is why one must discuss the Stalinist "revival" of great names from Russian history with particular reserve - such figures were expected to bolster the regime's legitimacy, the classical canon increasingly favored themes that emphasized patriotism and pride concerning the Russian national past, with Pushkin lending credibility to Soviet literature. This was an embodiment of famous Stalin's formula, when traditional form was filled with socialist content. D. Brandenberger would insist on "russocentric etatism" to be an instrumental tool for mobilizing mass support for an unpopular regime and thus of Nation-building, I would introduce the remark of V. Vujacic, who claims the relationships between Stalinism and Russian nationalism to be more problematic, if taking into account the mass terror against the Russian population and forcible collectivization of Russian peasantry. All this actions of violent nature towards Russians resulted in a chasm between the Soviet state and the Russians[162]. In this connection

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161   See extract from *Pravda* newspaper "the Russian people have produced from their midst no few individuals who, by means of their talent, have raised the world's cultural level – Lomonosov, Pushkin, Belinskii...".

162   Vujacic, "Stalinism and Russian Nationalism: a Reconceptualization, 178.

I would rather follow V. Vujacic who takes Pushkin as an ideological tool to cement the role of Russia as the "ethnic glue" of the Soviet state[163].

This "rehabilitation", but in fact re-adjustment of old authorities, promotion of respect for cultural personages, revival of tsarist patriotic heroes together with Russian nationalism, was used as an argument for N. Timasheff's thesis of "Great retreat[164]". He argued that Stalinism, as a departure from socialism and an abandonment of revolution promoted return to the traditional values. Since critique of "Great retreat" approach is not an issue of the current chapter[165], I will not go into details but advance a reason that although return to traditional cultural forms partially took place, those authority figures and their ideological impact as a part of collective memory and Soviet identity were cardinally transformed in order to bear and promote socialist values and justify Soviet state system. This was an embodiment of famous Stalin's formula, when traditional form was filled with socialist content.

Simultaneously to the new attitude towards Pushkin in the Soviet Union, the image of poet as bearer of Russian values, with the link of monarchical tradition, was continuously cultivated among Russian emigrants. Russian Abroad boasted the present of the distinguished Pushkin scholar Modest Gogman, S. Lifar, and the poets V. Khodasevich and M. Tsvetaeva, for whom Pushkin was the perennial model of the formal excellence of Russian poetic language[166]. Pushkin's birthday as the Day of Russian Culture, and Pushkin's accommodation of tsarist regime for fear of popular anarchy, as well as his occasional praise of Russia's nationalism and imperialism, were especially welcome to intellectuals living far

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163   Vujacic, "Stalinism and Russian Nationalism: a Reconceptualization, 168.

164   Nicholas S. Timasheff, *The Great Retreat: the Growth and Decline of Communism in Russia* (New York: Arno Press, 1972 [c1946]).

165   See David L. Hoffmann, "Was There a "Great Retreat" from Soviet Socialism? Stalinist Culture Reconsidered." *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History* 5, no. 4 (Fall 2004): 651-674, and other articles in the same issue of *Kritika* – detailed, although not absolutely full-fledged critique of Timasheff's work.

166   Raeff, *Russia Abroad,* 96.

from geographical borders of Russian state[167]. Under the conditions of praising Pushkin in the Soviet Union, these images of poets became straightly opposite. Thus tho Pushkins symbolized two different Russias.

Coming back to biographical issue as the central one for this essay, I must introduce an extremely important dimension added by Karen Petrone[168], who showed that not only Mikhail Zoshchenko in his article in Krokodil magazine in early 1937, or Daniil Kharms in his famous Anecdotes from the Life of Pushkin or other sketches written between 1933 and 1939 were able to reflect the reality of totalitarian rule and reveal the ambiguity of Pushkin festivities, but even several episodes in official biographies written by prominent Soviet Pushkin scholars, such as for instance, V. Veresaev (1867-1945) in his famous *Life of Pushkin*, surreptitiously expressed dissatisfaction and protest against Soviet authorities and Pushkin campaign as official ideological enterprise[169]. Such approach gives the opportunity to reconsider the topic not only from temporal perspective but to add new details in discussion about official structuring of selection of biographical facts of a person who shares canonical status.

Biography

Although Pushkin scholarship was already developed as mature branch of Russian literary studies, the mode to discuss the biography in numerous copies for mass circulation was not alien to populist one. Literary critics of the time often pointed out their dissatisfaction and regret for the most recent trends in Pushkin studies performed by professional scholars, such as numerous excursus on topics of little importance, and lack of

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167   Ibidem.
168   Karen Petrone, *Life Has Become More Joyous, Comrades: Celebrations in the Time of Stalin.* (Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press 2001, c2000).
169   Petrone, *Life Has Become More Joyous, Comrades,* 146-147.

breadth of generalization[170] (since such writings were not intellectually accessible for the broad masses and therefore no ideological message could be successfully and effectively transcended by such kind of narrow studies). An outstanding exception to this manner was the book by V. Kirpotin titled *Pushkin's legacy and Communism*, written, as the story goes, in one night by order of J. Stalin personally. Critics primary praised the book and highly appreciated it for its simple style, clear and precise manner of description. Precisely this mode of exposition ought to be used in writings on Pushkin in order to reach audience of many millions[171]. Obviously, this kind of treating Pushkin depicted his figure and legacy in oversimplified manner, but it was the most efficient way to "reach" the new urban masses who were peasants by origin and workers by occupation[172]. Still, to discuss Pushkin for these strata meant to receive communion to advanced culture. Furthermore, the love of advanced culture was defined as love of country[173]. Soviet culture then was defined as an advanced, progressive, European culture, based on Russian culture, that had the power to transform the less advanced non-Russian cultures of the Soviet Union[174]. Interminable linkages to Pushkin resulted in reinterpretation of every small detail of his biography to ascribe his superiority in every area, be it economy or agriculture, which also remained one of the Jubilee features. Sometimes he remained to be only a pretext for particular author's agenda, the status of national poet was enough to justify the discussion on every topic.

Here the story of publication of Pushkin's complete set of works serves as the model case of divergence of opinion within Pushkin scholars and those who worked on so-called "ideological front". In 1935 under the guidance of Pishkin Commission (previously

170   A. Dimshits. Retsenzia na knigu "Nasledie Pushkina I Communism" [Book review on "Pushkin's Legacy and Communism"], *Pushkin: Vremennik Pushkinskoi Komissii*. no. 3 (March, 1937): 462-466. http://feb-web.ru/feb/pushkin/serial/v37/v372462-.htm
171   A. Dimshits. Retsenzia na knigu "Nasledie Pushkina I Communism, 462-466.
172   Volkov, Vadim. "The Concept of 'Kul'turnost': Notes on the Stalinist Civilizing Process." In *Stalinism: New Directions*, edited by Sheila Fitzpatrick (London: Routledge, 2000), 214.
173   Petrone, *Life Has Become More Joyous, Comrades,* 127.
174   Petrone, *Life Has Become More Joyous, Comrades,* 131.

reorganized in 1933) edited by D. Jakubovich (plus under verification review of S. Bondi) there was published the 7th, so-called "test volume" of the new version of Pushkin's complete set of works (1937-1949, timed to the 1937th centenary, the work on it was started in 1933) – *Dramatical pieces*. There was given extensive and detailed commentary to all the texts included in the volume. Surprisingly in July 1935 precisely these comments by professional Pushkin scholars caused negative reaction of "directive organs", which was followed by the decision that the issue of the definitive edition of Pushkin's works by analogy with the 7th volume must be suspended. According to legend, the edition overloaded with textual details and professional comments was banned personally by J. Stalin[175]. There was adopted the decision to publish volumes of the definitive edition without any commentary but short reference on text's source, which provoked certain bewilderment and discontent among circles of Pushkinists but changed nothing. The issue was urgently completed by next Jubilee, in 1949 (150th anniversary of Pushkin's birth) and consisted of 16 volumes (20 books). This particular case clearly indicates the desire of Soviet authorities to mobilize both intellectuals and less well-educated people to participate in official Soviet culture, which resulted in specific quasi-religious discourse about an immortal and hallowed Pushkin whose words performed magical deeds[176]. Thus biography becomes an integral part of poet's cult or, if one wishes, myth, and Jubilee serves as driving force of this myth-making, a lot of biographies and biographical sketches were written or republished in its connection.

It must be pointed out that biographical facts, carefully described in various manner on the occasion of the Jubilee, in fact did take place in reality and were narrated in

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175   This version was voiced by famous pushkinist Serghei Fomichev in recent documentary film *On Pushkin's Background... 1937* directed by Bella Kurkova in 2007 for *Kul'tura* TV channel, see episode 1, *The Smokescreen*.
176   Petrone, *Life Has Become More Joyous, Comrades,* 120.

chronologically correct way since Pushkin's life story was several time recorded beginning with his first biographer, Pavel Annenkov, who is also known as the founder of Pushkin studies (*pushkinistika*), first biography was written by him in 1855 and titled *The materials for A. Pushkin's Biography*. What has the basic importance for current essay is the ideological meaning and sense which this facts acquired according to new official vision of national poet.

Stephanie Sandler interprets Pushkin's ability to see himself as Russian as one of the crucial factors why he was finally selected to promote Russianness in the Soviet Union[177]. She mentions several changes in Pushkin's image while adjusting him for the reality and ideological needs of 1930s: his class background was discussed only in order to show that his love for Russian language and people overcame the liabilities of being an aristocrat, although it is known that Pushkin himself took great pride in his aristocratic ancestry[178]. Another chapter of his life story, that became topical for the official discourse, was the spiritual closeness to simple people that he gained in early childhood through peasant nanny, Arina Rodionovna Jakovleva (1758-1828). Pushkin's nanny was pretty popular personage and finally became full member of Pushkin's milieu, to a large extent surpassing Pushkin's mother, Nadejda Gannibal (1775-1836). From now on it was declared that the old serf nanny was an outstanding mine of Russian folk heritage who was constantly telling to little Sasha popular tales and songs. She was Pushkin's grandmotherly person, and the one who deliberately or not but suggested the storyline of numerous fairy tales written later by Pushkin under impression of her tales which she continued telling in Mikhailovskoe, an estate in Pskov region, where the poet was exiled in 1824-26. In comparison with Pushkin's

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177   Stephanie Sandler, *Commemorating Pushkin: Russia's Myth of a National Poet* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2004): 107-119.
178   See David Bethea and Sergei Davidov, "Pushkin's life", in *The Cambridge Companion to Pushkin,* edited by Andrew Kahn, 11-25 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006).

mother who was shown as self-loving aristocratic woman, whose main prerogative and entertainment was high life and never-ending appearances in society, nanny Arina was modest and loving creature who was virtually like a mother to abandoned Sasha. While interpreting this casting of persons who pretended to be Pushkin's mother, no matter ether biological or, what is even more important, spiritual one, we must keep in mind that Nadejda Gannibal was first of all aristocratic figure, bearer of noble values and doubtless, French language which was Pushkin's native. As it is known, his basic function in cultural pantheon traditionally consists in his role as "the Founder of Russian literary language". Although it is impossible to deny his outstanding public service in Russian literary language's development, one must keep in mind the political meaning of *The Great Russian Poet* in 1937, when French Language as basic in communication together with noble appearance were inadmissible for the main poet of the Soviet Union.

In connection to Russian language and Pushkin as the promoter of its correct use, one more dimension must be added here. The concept of *Kul'turnost'* became especially prominent in everyday discourse from 1935. It implied a relative level of personal culture and education, normative behavioral regulations as code of manners, the rules of hygiene, dress-codes, forms of conversation[179]. Pushkin became an important element of the *Kul'turnost'* as the one who used literary language in the most elegant manner and who set an example to those who wishes to speak using correct, literary-speech manner. Although Pushkin, as it was declared, truthfully expressed the Russian national spirit[180] his significance on the individual level was more pragmatic – associated with correct patterns of speech as contribution for a struggle for *Kul'turnost'* as true virtues of Soviet Man.

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179   Volkov, "The Concept of *'Kul'turnost'*: Notes on the Stalinist Civilizing Process", 210.
180   Volkov, "The Concept of *'Kul'turnost'*: Notes on the Stalinist Civilizing Process", 223.

Unfortunately the limits of the essay would not allow me to stop at every moment of poet's life, I must describe in passing several "pillars" of the story such as Lycйe in Tsarskoe Selo, the most progressive educational institution of its day Russia where took place first Pushkin's public debut while reading of *Recollections in Tsarskoe Selo* during the qualifying examination at the end of the Junior course in front of G. Derzhavin, the greatest Russian poet of the 18th century. Both professional scholarship and unqualified "crude" pushkinists, who hosted Pushkin evenings in their homes and gave speeches about Pushkin, thus transcending simplified version of biography and Pushkin's figure "for masses", would point out that it was Lycйe where Pushkin found his closest friends, some of them, which is even more valuable, later became members of Decembrist movement.

The next significant chapter that became truly significant to promote his intelligibility to ideals embodied by Soviet power and system would traditionally narrate about Pushkin's administrative transfer to Southern border of the empire (1820-23) in order to punish him for radical poems which circulated privately, in manuscript , in scholarship they were labeled as "freedom-loving poetry" as the transfer itself as "the southern exile". It is the first point when Pushkin starts to be pointed out as political sufferer and fighter for freedom, in spite him being a landowner with serfs. In Bessarabia, during the exile, Pushkin got connected with members of Decembrist movement. This aspect of poets biography was ardently promoted, which to a large extent contributed the development of the Decembrist myth as an integral part of Soviet "usable past". In short, during his southern exile, while staying in Kishinev the poet frequented the society of Decembrists, did sympathized with the movement, but unfortunately never was included in their ranks and never took essential part in their activity. The reason why Pushkin never became member of the movement was narrated as Decembritsts, who excessively valued Pushkin and took care of him, could

predestine their fatal fate and didn't want the same lot for talented poet. The most recent idea in current scholarship would rather tally with an opinion that these were Pushkin's lifestyle, impetuosity and hotheadedness that convinced conspirators not to take him as a member of this enterprise in order not to expose the whole matter to risk. The Decembrist episode, together with young Pushkin's sympathies to Greek rebels who crowded Kishinev in 1822, were successfully used to promote and agitate for ideas of revolution, and fight for freedom in 1917th mode, even though the essence of Decembrist rising historically can't be brought into correlation with the October revolution[181].

It is widely known that Pushkin was famous for his numerous intimate affairs during his young years and till the very moment of marriage, his "Don Juan list" became an object of study much earlier than 1930s, but to maintain his public image of an exemplary monogamous family man, all his previous affections, before the moment of getting to know Natalia Goncharova (1812-1863), who later became his wife, have been gradually reduced to innocent, even virgin spiritual ardour. It must be emphasized that in 1930s marriage and the family became sacred institutions, although it was a return to the traditional institution of the family but not the traditional patriarchal family of Russian peasant society, and Pushkin biographers kept pointing out marriage as one of the turning points in Pushkin's life.

Doubtless, the concentration of every full-fledged biography, since the first book written by P. Annenkov and especially in works written after 1917, were Pushkin's fatal duel and death, according to its high political coloring. In fact, Pushkin's death happened to be poeticized right after it took place, due to its high resonance, and resulted in long-lasting tradition to treat Pushkin's duel and subsequent death as a tragic and symbolic event[182].

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181   See Sergei Ehrlich, *Istorija Mifa. Dekabristskaia Legenda A. Gertsena* [The History of a Myth. Decembrist Legend by A. Herzen] (Kishinev, 2006).
182   See Leslie O'Bell, "Writing the Story of Pushkin's Death," *Slavic Review*, Vol. 58, no. 2, (Summer, 1999): pp. 393-406; Sandler. *Commemorating Pushkin,* 26-46.

From 1937 perspective, the poet has fallen "in an unequal duel with noble, autocratic Russia of landowners"183, of the repressive regime of Nicholas I. His death gets highly anti-monarchical and anti-autocratic political tinge, pointing out the fact of conspiracy which had deliberate aim to exterminate freedom-loving poet, disliked by monarchy. The solid monograph by P. Schegolev *Pushkin's Duel and Death* saw the 3rd edition in 1928 and was repeatedly re-edited and re-published.

It was more difficult for literary critics to portray Pushkin as revolutionary in the last decade of his life, when Pushkin held an official position at court, and was financially dependent on the tsar[184], who finally took on Pushkin's debts after the duel. Nevertheless they succeeded in consolidating an image of a martyr to autocracy. Moreover, since the discussions around *Pushkin and Communism* theoretical area were announced to be the most topical, revolutionary rhetoric was also included. A. Dimschits, for instance, in his book review for *Pushkin's Legacy and Communism*, points out that Kirpotin "sins against the verity" of not depicting Pushkin as political fighter or revolutionary[185]. This dimension also coincided with particular desire to reveal the only one possible True, veritable poet. The same Dimschits kept announcintg that "now, staying on the threshold of Communism, Pushkin obtained unprecedented and **veritable** (emphasis added) nationwide scale, he becomes the beloved and desired guest on the fest of socialistic labor... ; analysis of *Pushkin and Communism* topic will give us the possibility to define world-view bases of the greatest Russian literary artist **correctly** (emphasis added), it will also open up the way to broad, profound knowledge of Pushkin, it will show, how close (intimate) and dear is Pushkin to many-millioned army of Soviet people (folk)"[186]. In fact precisely period of late 1930s,

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183   Dimshits. Retsenzia na knigu "Nasledie Pushkina I Communism",462-466.
184   Petrone, *Life Has Become More Joyous, Comrades,* 115.
185   Dimshits. Retsenzia na knigu "Nasledie Pushkina I Communism", 463.
186   Dimshits. Retsenzia na knigu "Nasledie Pushkina I Communism",464.

which is rather late since 1917, became the starting point for official instructions of how to interpret the figure of the poet and his life story in the ideological framework of Communism. It was officially announced that Pushkin from now on proclaims to be not only *The Great Russian Poet*, but a poet for *the toilers of all nationalities.* In general he was promoted to be a "proto-Communist" and a prophet of Socialist society. Closeness to people becomes almost biographical feature. Among other trends there must be called the idea of Pushkin's loneliness, social sense of his conflict with reality, universal validity of his creative works, and any influences on his poetry by foreign men of letters were getting political meaning.

Among other tools that helped to shape the image of correct Pushkin as the main Soviet poet in its official discourse, was selection of his poetic items that were broadly distributed on mass level (often as small book of poetry given for free to workers or schoolchildren) and censored beforehand. It must be said that such practice took place regardless of time, for instance, it is known that in 1899 when Pushkin's poetic legacy was officially proclaimed to be nationwide cultural heritage within the empire, sets of his selected stories were to be distributed among children for free, but with preliminary withdrawal of certain texts, such as *The Tale of the Village Priest and his Workman Balda* for its anticlerical mood, or *The Gabrieliad*, for the same reason[187.] In late 1930s the emphasis was done in favor of so-called revolutionary lyrics, in order to promote unity of Pushkin's creation with the October revolution and patriotism to Soviet motherland through poetry. *The Gabrieliad* incidentally turned into quite admissible work of literature, but still not for children.

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187   Marina Zaghidullina, *Pushkinskii Mif v XX veke* [The Myth of Pushkin in the 20th Century] (Cheliabinsk, Cheliabinskii Gosudarstvennii Universitet, 2001): 108.

There are different ways to trace changes in the way of telling the story of Pushkin's life and making it clear for the masses. Besides voluminous biographies written by professional scholars, school textbooks also deserve consideration. In fact school textbooks are one of the most efficient instrument to shape the image of a particular figure on mass level, that communicate "officially censored" biography because they contribute to shape a model world with personages of whose level children should attain to. Moreover, taking into account the biographic method of teaching the history of literature that still prevails in educational system, this dimension can bring promising results.

School Curriculum

As regards the question of introducing Pushkin into school curricula, core function of disciplines taught in schools and textbooks as their subsidiary tool must be mentioned: to convince people, particularly school pupils of basic statements of state ideology and give the possibility for emotional incorporation of the pupils with glorious ancestors of the state they live in. This function of textbooks can be spread to any disciplines, but especially visible in school textbooks of history, language, geography and history of literature. Here it is important to mention that although Pushkin all the time was part of school program, as A. Alexandrov mentions in 1937, "the Soviet school suffered a lot for a long time from the lack of attention to the great creative legacy of Pushkin, there was given small amount of classes[188]". In 1936 the Central Committee of Education (Narkompros RSFSR) introduced new school program where Pushkin must have been taught during every grade of primary and comprehensive school. Special syllabus about study of Pushkin at school was printed in amount of 50 000 copies. In some schools there were even introduced special extracurricular "Pushkin classes". Textbooks serve as the main instrument of indoctrination,

188   A. Alexandrov, "Podgotovka i Provedenie Pushkinskogo Iubilea v SSSR" [Preparation for Pushkin Jubilee in USSR and its Conduct], *Pushkin: Vremennik Pushkinskoi Komissii*, issue 3 (1937): 492—517.

and quite powerful instrument both for shaping an image of Pushkin National poet as thus to consolidate identity on every period of pupils growing up and for support of image of Soviet Motherland as the area where Pushkin is everywhere appreciated and finally understood.

1937 "Great" Jubilee and Rhetoric of Soviet Public Celebrations

The "Great" Pushkin Jubilee of 1937, which happened to be the celebration prepared well in advance, remains to be given probably the most careful consideration among both Russian and English speaking scholars who tends to analyze the perception of Pushkin's figure from historical perspective. One would claim that such careful attention is also given to "the starting point" of anniversary tradition – Pushkin days in 1880[189] or the most wide-ranging enterprise – Jubilee in 1999 that took place recently[190]. Still, even monographs devoted to 19th century perception of Pushkin figure and literary legacy, keep reacting on 1937[191]. It is ascertained that Pushkin's commemoration in February 1937 was perhaps the most prominent cultural event of the 1930s. Pushkin was announced to be a proclaimer of communist ideas and ideals. Among the variety of measures to "bring Pushkin closer to Soviet people", there took place mass production and printing of his biography and selection of writings, which have been censored and checked beforehand. In order to understand the widest scale of ideological significance of Pushkin's biography in 1937 and the reason of its striking discrepancy with Pushkin as he was known in 1899 (centenary of his birth[192]) or even in 1880 ("Pushkin days in Moscow" and building of the famous monument authored by A. Opekushin) one should include selection of biographical facts, the Jubilee itself and other enterprises into broader framework of so-called Pushkin Campaign of late 1930s,

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189   See Levitt, *Russian Literary Politics and the Pushkin Celebration of 1880.*
190   See Zaghidullina, *Pushkinskii Mif v XX veke.*
191   See Paul Debreczeny. *Social Functions of Literature: Alexander Pushkin and Russian Culture* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1997): 223-246; Levitt, *Russian Literary politics and the Pushkin Celebration of 1880,* 162-166.
192   See Marcus C. Levitt. "Pushkin in 1899", 183-203.

which included not only festivities but the process of careful adjustment of Pushkin's life story, reorganization of educational system through School Curriculum, also re-shaping of public space by both building new monuments to honor Pushkin (in Leningrad) and giving his name to several public sites.

To begin with the first cliché, I must address Jurii Drujnikov[193] (I will not discuss here ambiguous rating of him as an anti-Pushkin scholar, or a dissident essayist-polemicist, but his position towards the Jubilee, which proved to be pretty influential), the Anniversary of 1937 is perceived as personal project by J. Stalin (the result of Stalin's personal attitude to Pushkin), who firmly exploited Pushkin and nationwide love to poet in order to take advantage of forcible Russification of local "backward" people, who are now given access to advanced Russian culture through revolutional experience. Thus Drujnikov interprets so-called Pushkin myth as an integral part of "super-myth" about Russians as a "big brother" which implies their superiority and messianic role in history. Here I would like to make a reservation that one can perceive Russian people/folk (narod) and Pushkin as Russian poet as initially privileged group in Soviet Union only ignoring the context of 1920s. Drujnikov explains the fact of appealing to Pushkin in N. Timasheff's *Great Retreat* tone, claiming swift return to classical literature and its values in late 1930s which, in its turn, meant "to come back to national shrines and veritable values". The reason of turning to Pushkin becomes quite perceptible War Scare, and Stalin of one's own cowardly accord exploited Pushkin to mobilize the army in early 1940s in order to keep his power. The same level of interpretation one meets reading A. Britlinger's essay on Pushkin's role for Parisian йmigrйs circles in 1937[194]: while propagating the idea of patriotism and people's pride, Soviet

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193 Jurii Drujnikov, *Duel' s Pushkinistami: Polemicheskoe Esse* [The Duel to Pushkin-scholars: a Polemic Essay] (Moskva, 2001 [1992]).

194 Angela Britlinger, *A.S. Pushkin v Parijskoi emigratsii 1937-go goda* [A. Pushkin in Parisian йmigrйs community in 1937] http://www.aleksandrpushkin.net.ru/lib/ar/author/25

authorities must have *unwittingly* (emphasis added) turned their attantion to Russian classics as the objects of veritable love and pride of every Russian. Although Drujnikov's essay mirrors involvement of Pushkin figure in propaganda during war time pretty correctly, it oversimplifies a lot of significant details reflected, for instance, in D. Brandenberger's *National Bolshevism*[195], which will be discussed below.

The only solid monograph devoted to history of so-called Pushkin myth, written in Russian, is *Pushkinskii mif v XX veke* by M. Zaghidullina[196]. The author succeeded in collecting an impressive sum of evidential material on Pushkin Jubilees but failed to interpret it as something more than set of ritual practices. The 1937 Anniversary is interpreted as peak of myth, as certain result of a dynamic process of myth-making. The point of celebrating Pushkin acts as an important tool of self-identification among literate layers of Soviet society – it made possible for them to promote a double separation: to separate themselves from proletarians by being highly-educated in quasi-European style and to separate from Europe by belonging of a Russia culture. Zaghidullina interprets praising Pushkin as driving force of mythmaking, which in return always rests upon basic principles of national consciousness[197]. Pushkin's central role is explained by his tragic death, full of suffering, that equates it with heroic deed. Thus the point of every anniversary would be "to pray for forgiveness of the whole county's sin" towards the poet. Although Zaghidullina notices several features of Pushkin celebrations in quite logical way, such as their mass character, inclusion of festive meals, pilgrimage to Pushkin nooks, exclusion of any criticism against poet, she never turned to any historical explanation of the phenomenon of

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195   David Brandenberger, *National Bolshevism: Stalinist Mass Culture and the Formation of Modern Russian National Identity, 1931-1956* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2002): 115-183.
196   Zaghidullina. *Pushkinskii mif v XX veke.*
197   Zaghidullina, *Pushkinskii mif v XX veke,* p. 102.

Pushkin festivities, except "the essential need of national consciousness", which is pretty shaky argument for Soviet times.

Stephanie Sandler goes further in her interpretation of the "Great" 1937 Jubilee: she gradually compares it with early period of Bolshevik rule in order to emphasize large range while celebrating centenary of Pushkin death[198]. She stresses a certain legitimization that the regime needed, and "the great ghosts of the past" were suited for this task. Sandler depicts Pushkin as an integral part of "mythologized, heroic view of the past" that was established in the period of late 1930s, also Pushkin's ability to see himself as Russian played the crucial role. She mentions several changes in Pushkin's image while adjusting him for the reality of 1930s: his class background was discussed only in order to show that his love for Russian language and people overcame the liabilities of being an aristocrat. Several different points of his biography were overshadowed in order to point out the poet as an exemplary family man and fighter for freedom (in close connection to Decembrist movement) in spite him being a landowner with serfs. He was promoted to be a "proto-Communist" and a prophet of Socialist society, becoming an important element of Soviet *kul'turnost'* as well as a bridge between the intelligentsia and the newly educated masses. Pushkin was also a fitting figure for the state's attempt to create the New Soviet Man – literate, mannered, and cultured. His poetic/creative legacy was adjusted in the same way as biography: by careful selection of lyric poetry for public use (mostly freedom-loving poems) and simplification while interpreting for masses. His writings were praised for their simplicity and clarity. Pushkin was also incorporated into pantheon of Soviet rulers in pretty specific way: in the vestibule of the restored Moika 12 apartment busts of Stalin and Pushkin were placed alongside each other[199]. The practical importance of celebrations

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198   Sandler. *Commemorating Pushkin,* 107-119.
199   Sandler. *Commemorating Pushkin,* 108.

consisted in, inter alia, promoting eradication/cut of illiteracy, in putting more books in schools (since Pushkin's writings were published in huge quantities), promoting his creative works in the libraries (in comparison with lack or even absence of his books in 1920s), preparing teachers better and spreading an ideological message on a local level. Still, in spite of certain amount of important findings, Sandler concentrates on interpreting the Jubilee as Epic Trauma: historical experience of collective trauma lay just beneath the public performances of happiness and achievement. The Pushkin Jubilee provided a blanket cover of optimism beneath grim reality of Terror.

My point of representing three if not canonical but significant interpretations of 1937 events was to mark general tendencies in historiography of so-called Pushkin myth, which is pretty developed today and certainly can't be limited by three names. Unfortunately, frames of a Term paper wouldn't allow me to concentrate more on results of other Pushkin scholars' investigations, but I will bring out general trends. Although the character of the Jubilee festivities is noticed quite correctly, above-mentioned approaches fail to reveal the exact meaningfulness of the 1937 Anniversary and fail to answer the question Why this particular celebration gained all the above-listed indications.

It has been correctly observed that 1937 represents certain peak of Pushkin worship in comparison with early years of Soviet power. Here such commemorative events as Pushkin days of 1921 or 1924, which are to be called "modest anniversaries", are significant. Although the tradition to revere Pushkin as first among Russia's poets didn't vanish after 1917 (the starting point is considered to be Pushkin days of 1880 when monument sculpted by Opekushin was erected in Moscow), till 1937 it remained an object of interest and maintenance only for very limited number of intellectuals, failing to draw intent attention of central authorities (mainly for financial support). The gradual steps of

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nationalization of Pushkin nooks, for instance, Mikhailovskoe or Boldino estates, reflect the lack of any intensive dynamic[200] in this issue. Striking discord with immense scope of 1937 Jubilee is obvious. Nevertheless, in historiography there exists a well-established framework of interpreting the whole set of Jubilee events (1880 – 1999) as links of the same kind. On the contrary I would interpret these commemorative practices as events of false continuity, precisely because of fundamental ideological and motivational discrepancies.

First, Pushkin campaign of 1937 was an extremely successful enterprise, which implies ardent support of people who directly participated in celebration. This makes Drujnikov's statement of Jubilee as set of events imposed "from-above" rather pointless. As K. Petrone claims, three distinct groups were interdependently involved in any Soviet celebration: the central government that set official policies on celebration, the Soviet cadres who controlled celebrations at the local level, and the participants in them[201]. Such structure reveals the multiplicity of celebrations.

Secondly, almost all the scholars introduce the regime's necessity to legitimize its power as one of the reasons of Pushkin's "rehabilitation" and inclusion into newly emerged cultural pantheon, which consisted of heroes of heroic past of Russian history (D. Brandenberger). Here two points are of extreme importance. While speaking of such vague entity as Soviet or Communist regime, it is almost impossible to trace the mechanism of decision-making during preparation for the Jubilee. It would be much more competent to reveal concrete actors of the event, following the division pointed by K. Petrone. The central government's agenda is possible to be revealed through careful analysis of various directives by committees of the Communist Party. To trace the process on the level of the Soviet cadres who controlled the local stratum, one must address the history of Soviet literary

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200   Sandler, Commemorating Pushkin, 89-107.
201   Petrone. *Life has Become more Joyous, Comrades,* 20.

institutions (for instance All-Union Pushkin Committee which had been set up in 1934, Central Executive Committee was founded in 1935), their members and sets of tasks they were responsible for. Only in this way one can mention certain heterogeneity among those who constituted the regime and divide official discourse and personal agenda. The so-called institutionalized Pushkin to be introduced here, since it is known that planning for the 1937 celebration began already in December 1935.

The second point concerns the interpretation of "rehabilitation" of heroes from pre-revolutionary past and their function to promote a newly vision of the USSR's "usable past", now characterized by Russocentric orientation. But let us keep discussing it below.

Thirdly, in order to explain the 1937 "Great" Jubilee as social, political more than literary phenomenon I would rather insist on the necessity to include it into historical context of indiginization (korenizatsia) policy of 1920s – early 1930s (including special approach to treat Russians), its later suppression and consequences as well as identity building trends till the time of the Jubilee. K. Petrone succeeded in contextualizing the Jubilee into general framework of Soviet mass celebrations[202].

Fourthly, I would also add here interpreting the Centenary as the integral part of so-called Pushkin Campaign of late 1930s, which included not only festivities themselves but reorganization of educational system through School Curriculum, and re-shaping of public space by both building new monuments to honor Pushkin (in Leningrad) and giving his name to several public sites. The symbolical act was performed towards A. Opekushin's famous statue to Pushkin in Moscow, which in 1937 was pivoted to look out over the newly widened Gor'kii Street, the figure literally turned its back on the Strastnoi Monastery, which it had faced for over half of century. In order to commemorate 1937 centennial, seven sites

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202   Petrone, *Life has Become more Joyous, Comrades,* 113-149.

were renamed by the central commitee during the jubilee, including Bolishaia Dmitrovka in Moscow which turned into Pushkin Street, the former town of Detskoe selo (before that Tsarskoe Selo), now the town of Pushkin, and the Leningrad Academy Theater became the Pushkin Academy Theater[203]. There must be added that according to the directive of the Central Commitee of the Communist Party (February 9, 1937)[204], the State Museum of Visual Arts was given the name of Pushkin, Moscow Neskuchnaia embankment turned to be Pushkin embankment, the area of Ostankino into Pushkinskoe and finally the Exchange square (Birjevaia Ploschadi) in Leningrad into Pushkin square. Such wide range of Pushkin's penetration into city space indicates an intention to consolidate the highest status of him in the whole Soviet Union. Renamings also took place in many other cities and towns of less significance but the name of Pushkin was all the time given to streets and/or other public sites in the central, nor peripheral part of the area.

And finally fifthly, it is known, that the 1937 Pushkin Jubilee was celebrated geographically much wider than the borders of Soviet Union owing to the existence of specific reference group who kept using the image of Pushkin to promote their own agenda simultaneously with the Soviet festivities, and against Soviet regime. These group included Russian émigrés or Russia Abroad. For the émigrés writers figures like Pushkin were the crucial link to their past as well as to their lost country. Moreover, this symbolic meaning is strong enough for Pushkin to become a kind of patron saint of Russia Abroad from the early 1920s. K. Kunachovich[205] traced the experience of conducting the Jubilee events by members of Russia Abroad and claims them to oppose one another. Moreover, émigrés

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203   Sandler, *Commemorating Pushkin,* 110.
204   Postanovlenie TsIK SSSR, "Ob Oznamenovanii 100-letnei Godovschini so Dnia Smerti Velichaishego Russkogo Poeta A.S. Pushkina ot 9 fevralia 1937" [Decree by Central Executive Committee USSR, On the Occasion of Centenary of Death of the Greatest Russian Poet, A. Pushkin, February 9, 1937], *Pushkin: Vremennik Pushkinskoi Komissii*, no. 3 (March 1937): 491-7.
205   Kunakhovich, "The Pushkin Centennials of 1937: Russians Abroad, the Soviet Union, & the Politics of Russian National Identity".

Pushkin turned to be no less politicized figure as Soviet Pushkin was. Pushkin was adopted to support émigrés brand of nationalism, he was the apolitical unifier, the embodiment of Russia's cultural heritage. The discourses of commemorative events in Moscow and Paris were quite opposite. The matter here lies in the very concept of "Russianness", its different content implied by Soviet government and Russia Abroad. It must be stated, that from the very beginning (1917), émigrés laid claim to be the only "repository" of Rusianness, which they were partially promoted with the help of Pushkin. 1937 Anniversary marked Soviet Russia's claim to perform the same function. Besides the aspiration to weaken Russia Abroad in competition for holding of representative symbols of Russiannes, Soviet Anniversary celebration was to a certain extent designed to attract prominent figures among émigrés to return to the country, where values of Russian "classical" culture, appreciated by émigrés, have been valued over again.

"Mihai Eminescu as a Unitary National Factor"

By this phrase was entitled the conference, held by the Congress of Cultural League on June 28th, 1938 on the occasion of 50th anniversary of poet's death. Such events were led all over Greater Romania, including Romanian Academy. The scale of celebrations, being primarily academic occasion, was incomparable to what happened in the Soviet Union tho years ago, still almost all significant personages of intellectual, cultural and political life of Greater Romania make their contribution to remembrance of the national poet[206]. One of the most influential literary journals, *Convorbiri Literare* [Literary Conversations], devoted the 4 numbers to this cultural occasion (in sum more than 1000 pages). In sum, this issue represented the major standard, composed in Romanian academic culture about Eminescu to 1939. The issue was opened by the word of King Carol II, pronounced on the occasion of

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206   On N. Iorga, C. Rădulecu-Motru and their contribution to 1939 project see Ion Agrigoroaiei,
Basarabia de la Unire la Integrare [Bessarabia from the Unity to Integrity] (Chişinău, 2006): 295-318.

sitting in Romanian Academy. Short official speech of the king nevertheless permits to reveal that Eminescu was especially praised for his ability to formulate proper Romanian intellectual output / thought that made it possible to be known outside of the country[207]. In definition of Eminescu as solid pillar of Romanian culture, there can be seen certain desire to create an image, opposed to Eminescu – extreme conservative political thinker, simultaneously promoted by representatives of extreme rightist movements.

In general the decade of 1930s can be outlined as period, when the image of Eminescu as journalist, publicist and conservative political thinker gained particular importance, which finally resulted in usage of this icon by extremist rightist political groups. This trend was to a certain extent mirrored in textbooks, but no dramatic turn, as it happened with Pushkin, or serious endeavour to compete the canon occured.

Eminescu adopted by Extreme Rightists

In 1905, 16 years after death of Mihai Eminescu, first edition of his social and political essays was collected and published, it belonged to Ion Scurtu, the second one was realised by political thinker A.C. Cuza (leader of the first Romanian fascist party of some influence in Romanian political life). The act of publishing fitted into general trend of Romanian intellectual anti-Semitism and acquired symbolic meaning. In the beginning of 20th century agents of new nationalistic ideology (majority of them were grouping around Nicolae Iorga) discovered journalistic writings by Mihai Eminescu, which soon after coming out was exploited to the full xenophobic nature, nationalistic and anti-Semitic accesses[208]. According to L. Boia, the turn of the century became the period when Eminescu myth took its proper shape, since the poet was "discovered" as an ideologist by the

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207   *Convorbiri Literare* [Literary Conversations]*, no. 6-9 (Iunie-Septembrie 1939, anul LXXII): 731.
208   Bot, *Mihai Eminescu, Poet Naţional Român,* 52, translation from Romanian is mine, A.F.

nationalist wave after 1900[209], and many of Eminescu's ideas about the organic nature of Romanian civilization and the necessity of resisting modernization were incorporated into a new nationalist discourse. The nationalists of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century viewed Eminescu as the primary source of their critique of modernity and democracy[210].

Populist nationalism dominated much of Romania's political, social, and cultural discourse in the interwar period. The process of nation-building was accompanied by the rise of a generalized anti-urban, populist, xenophobic, and anti-Semitic discourse, which favored the growth of fascism[211]. Strikingly, the role of Church in promoting populist nationalism proved to be quite important, including profascist orthodox christian mysticism, which brings us closer to the problem of Romanian Orthodox Church and religious substance (of rituals) in profascist discourse. For instance, the Iron Guard defined themselves as: "An organization based on order and discipline, guided by a pure nationalism, protecting the altars of the church, which its enemies wish to dismantle[212], adopting an apocalyptic, dual vision of the world, portraying themselves as an early Christian army, an knights of the light in perpeual combat with devil[213]. The Legion affirmed its fully identity with the religion of the Romanian Orthodox Chursh, declaring its consubstantial with the national community. Generally orthodoxy can be seen as the most important element that defined Romanian nationalism.

Although Romania recognized the emancipation of the Jews, in Romanian symbolism the Jew was the antipode of the peasant. Being usual topic among intellectual

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209   Boia. *History and Myth in Romanian Consciousness,* 5.
210   Balázs Trencsényi and Michal Kopeček, ed. *Discourses of collective identity in Central and Southeast Europe (1770-1945): texts and commentaries.* Vol. II. National Romanticism – the Formation of National Movements. (Budapest : Central European University Press, 2007): 197.
211   Livezeanu, *Cultural Politics in Greater Romania,* 8.
212   Georgetta Pana, "Religious Anti-Semitism in Romanian Fascist Propaganda." *Religion in Eastern Europe* 26, no. 2 (May 2006): 3.
213   Constantin Iordachi, "Charisma, Religion, Ideology: Romania's Interwar Legion of the Archangel Michael", in *Ideologies and National Identities: The Case of Twentieth-Century Southeastern Europe*, edited by John R. Lampe and Mark Mazower *(*Budapest, New York: CEU Press, 2004): 26.

agenda during 19th century, Anti-Semitism flourished in a newly radicalized context of a stronger Romanian state[214]. The problem of anti-Semitism, mirrored in Romanian legislation is significant here as reflection of the problem's evolution. In 1878 violent protests sparkled and growing Anti-Semitism aroused in response to the request of the signers of the Treaty of Berlin to respect article 44 of the treaty and article 7 of constitution, both of which promised to grant civil wrights and citizenship to the Jews[215]. Finally, a set of laws was adopted in 1938, and on August 8, 1940, King Carol signed a decree, number 2650, concerning the legal situation of the Jews living in Romania, Decree 2651, signed on the same date, forbade marriages between Jews and Romanians with Romanian blood. These two laws of the royal dictatorship, openly inspired by the Nurnberg Laws, are important because they remained in force and served as permanent guidelines for the fascist Antonescu-Sima and Antonescu government; they clearly represented the first Romanian racial laws. The constitution of 1923 granted rights to the Jews, but anti-Semitism had already spread to the general population, aided by repeated economic crises and the diversionary tactics of the Liberal Party and the National Peasant Party and the fascist organizations. After September 6, 1940, a wave of anti-Semitic legislation was enacted by the Iron Guard government led by Antonescu[216].

Turning to Legionary movement, I must quote I. Bot, who claims that from political point of view, extreme right, heiress of nationalistic ideologies, in *statu nascendi* before world war I, is the one which used Eminescu myth for its own legitimization in the most spectacular way. Ambiguous character (the Savior-the Victim) integrated in mythical figure represented additional attraction for legionary discourse. As apostles of national values

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214   Livezeanu, *Cultural Politics in Greater Romania*, 12.
215   Radu Ioanid, "Romania," in *The World Reacts to the Holocaust,* edited by David S. Wyman (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996), 227.
216   Ioanid, "Romania", 229-232.

purification and necessary regeneration of a nation, legionaries *displaced the stress from area of power to area of revolution, and from political domination to consolidation of romanian spirituality*[217.]

Although Eminescu didn't play central role in C. Zelea-Codreanu's, the leader of the Iron Guard, message, mentioning his name as national genius[218] or appealing to his ancestor's spirit (in Iaşi) in For my legionaries functions to sanctify Legionary ideology. Codreanu edited an antisemitic anthology, in which he included, in addition to his mentors, A.C. Cuza and N. Paulescu, extracts from the "classics", among them appeared and Eminescu. Quotations from Eminescu (The Israelite Question) are called upon for evidence to make anti-Semitism justified and reasonable: denying a request of equal civil rights and accusing of commercial expansion[219]. Theodor Armon, in one of his studies of the Iron Guards writes that Codreanu, the leader of the Guards, would acknowledge the profound influence of Iorga and A.C. Cuza's writings published in Semanatorul and Neamul Romanesc newspapers at the beginning of the century[220]. Citing A.C. Cuza and N. Iorga exemplifies the same function: Codreanu concludes from the content of mentioned newspapers three ideals of life for the Romanian people:

1. the unification of the Romanian people

2. the elevation of peasantry through land reform and political rights

3. the solution of the Jewish problem[221]

Later the tendency to declare Eminescu as a precursor was mirrored in Codreanu's collaborator Constantin Papanace and his *Mihai Eminescu un mare precursor al*

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217   Boia, *Istorie şi Mit în Conştiinţa Românească* (Bucure□ti: Humanitas, 1997): 257, cited by Bot, *Mihai Eminescu …,* 52-53.
218   Corneliu Zelea-Codreanu, *For my Legionaries* (Madrid: Libertatea, 1976): 16, 35.
219   Zelea-Codreanu, *For my Legionaries*, 77.
220   Radu Ioanid, "Nicolae Iorga and Fascism." *Journal of Contemporary History* 27, no. 3 (July 1992): 472.
221   Zelea-Codreanu, *For my Legionaries,* 15.

legionarismului românesc, as all antisemitic movements claimed him as a precursor, quite often with little justification, and enobled the nationalist banner with quotations from his articles. As L. Volovici argues, during first decades of 20th century, the Eminescu cult assumed almost religious trappings. His image was superimposed on that of Christ, metaphor of the crucified martyr. E. Lovinescu interpreted Eminescu nationalistyc ideology and his attitude to the "Jewish question" as sacrosanct at his poetry[222]. During 1930's this point was brought to a head: for instance, the author of *Dogmatica antisemitismului romвn* article, printed in *Vremea* in 1938, declared that *there is no important Romanian, no creative scholar in Romanian culture who has not taken part in and not felt the need for the struggle against the Jew.* anti-Semitism is again justified by Emnescu, who is *our greatest poet, he embodies the loftiest thinking, he is the finest poet, and outstanding political ideologist, the perfect journalist*, and Iorga, whose political science will be destructed without anti-Semitism[223]. In the late 1930' s declarations as to the new anti-Semitism's direct descendance from Eminescu's ideology became commonplace[224].

As it was stated above, several basic points of Romanian anti-Semitism are to be found in Eminescu's writings: the rejection of the Jew as a foreigner[225], exclusion of Jews from the majority of activities, the idea of Jewish threat, later turned into stereotypes, the idea of society, cleansed of bourgeois corruption, the idea of *new man*; myth of national regeneration was mostly contributed by N. Iorga. The theme of Jewish danger being synonymous with the Communist threat persisted into the 20th century. The majority of these ideas are impregnated with profascist orthodox Christian mysticism, which brings us

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222   Volovici, *Nationalist ideology and antisemitism,* 11.
223   Cited from Volovici, *Nationalist ideology and antisemitism,* 181-182.
224   Volovici, *Nationalist ideology and antisemitism,* 128.
225   Not only the Jews, but also several not-Romanians, this trend found its progress later, in Constantin Papanace's slogan *Desiudizare, desţiganizare, desfanariotizare* (Eliminate Jews, Gypsies, and Greeks), see Ioanid, *Romania*, 230.

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closer to the problem of Romanian Orthodox Church and religious substance (of rituals) in profascist discourse.

D. Murăraşu can be pointed out among critics, who would promote rightist agenda in articles, mainly devoted to literary analysis of Eminescu's legacy. He was the firs one who published set of Eminescu political writings, and his monograph Naţionalismul lui Eminescu [Eminescu's Nationalism] run into several editions even in our days. Murăraşu descrribed Eminescu as intelligent thinker, obsessed with the idea of nation and national spirit. Eminescu's vision on language was defined as an element of national solidarity and national unity, literature and culture – as the middle ground in expression of national soul. Eminescu wanted Romanian nation to be purified of every foreign element or interference, the poet found something divine in the feeling of identification with mass of his folk[226]. Later the argument was built, basing on the strict connection of thought by Eminescu and German philosophical mysticism – approach, that was used by numerous apologists of rightist agenda in Eminescu's legacy[227].

According to L. Volovici, every new extremist national movement claimed, rightly or wrongly, to descend from the great predecessors, who became *the precursors* of the new current. Any real possibility of using their texts of passages of their writing to justify a slogan, a political program or an antisemitic theory had enormous propagandist and educational impact[228].

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226   Dumitru Murăraşu. „Privire Sintetică asupra naţionalismului Eminescian," [1932] in *Eminescu – Pe mine mie redă-mă. Contribuţii istorico-literare până la 1939* [Eminescu – Return to Myself. Historical and Literary Contributions up to 1939], edited by Cimpoi, Mihai, Victor Crăciun, et al. Corpus Eminescu series, Volume 5 (Chişinau-Bucureşti, 2000): 357, 361.

227   Still, it must be admitted that ardor for German mystical philosophy was really not alien to Eminescu.

228   Volovici, *Nationalist ideology and antisemitism,* 185-186.

Epilogue: Bessarabia - the Place Where Discourses Compete

Chapters above concerned no particular comparison of how were the cults of national poets developed in two countries, but rather parallel outline, using temporal approach. However, there was one particular region where both discourses can be found in simultaneous cooperation, moreover, in competition. I imply the territory between rivers Prut and Dniester, from early 19th century known as Bessarabia, provincial area, which due to its historical past and geographical location, constantly experienced competing political and cultural influences from Russian and Romanian side. Before 19th century the territory was a part of Moldovan (Moldavian) principality, later annexed by Russian Empire in 1812 accordig to the Treaty of Bucharest (1812), concluding the Russo-Turkish War of 1806-1812 . As an outcome of WWI and collapse of Romanov empire, Bessarabia was allotted in Greater Romania in 1918. As one of newly acquired ares, incorporated into Greater Romania, the area go through efforts of Romanization, which faced certain difficulties in integration of the territory into symbolic Romanian space, partially because of remanent Russian influence, especially in cultural sphere[229].

Although in Romania itself poems by Pushkin were known since the second half of 19th century (first translations appeared in 1837 as a response on poet's death) and praised for their literary value[230], when it concerned Bessarabia, Pushkin turned into blur symbolic identification of Russian, either imperial or Soviet, threatened influence. In spite of successful political act of region's incorporation into Romanian state, its symbolic inclusion kept meeting with obstacles of cultural unattractiveness of Romanian cultural qualification standard among certain strata of local intellectuals. It explains why Pushkin's artistic

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229   See Livezeanu, *Cultural Politics in Greater Romania*, 97-112.
230   E. Dvoichenko-Markova, "Otkliki na Smert' Pushkina v Moldavii I Valahii" [Responses to Pushkin's Death in Moldavia and Walachia]. *Kodri*, no. 7 (June, 1974): 135.

influence was symbolically subverted for the purpose of homogenization of newly achieved Bessarabia.

Under these conditions the image of Eminescu gained its function as bearer of "high" Romanian culture, evidence of its achievements, directly competing the influence of Russian heritage, which symbol was Pushkin. In fact, symbolic rivalry between Eminescu and Pushkin either on the pages of local press, or in schools, reflected rivalry between Romanian cultural influence, established within new state, which member Bessarabia was, with Russian influence, which the region inherited from 19th cent. Let me cite an episode from Onisifor Ghibu's article as an example of symbolic competition between poetic figures. Ghibu recounted his recollection about the first congress of pedagogs that took place after Bessarabia joined Greater Romania (article was initially published in 1918). He claimed as if one of participants of the congress, local teacher, expressed his distrust in possibility to nationalize Bessarabia, being guided by personal considerations that Romanians do not have neither proper language, nor literature. But the same teacher, after reading a couple of poems by Eminescu, remained with his eyes moist with tears and exclaimed: "It is even greater than Pushkin!!!" Ghibu describes this incident to be very characteristic, and expresses his satisfaction that after 1918 hundreds and thousands of Moldovans began to get to know, at least partially, poetic legacy by Eminescu, Creangă, Coşbus, Sadoveanu et al., whose writings are cited and read concerning different occasions[231].

Because of difficult economic conditions and certain dissatisfaction with politics towards Bessarabian province within Greater Romania, near the end of 1930s there appeared so-called flow of Bessarabian regionalism. Among participants of that flow were even those who primordially supported the idea and fact of unification with Romanian state.

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231   Onisifor Ghibu. „O Glorie a Culturii Româneşti: George Enescu," in *Prolegomena la o Educaţie Romînească* [Prolegomena on Romanian Education], no. 3. Bucureşti, undated [1927]: 266-267. The article was initially published in *România Nouă* newspaper, no. 53 in 1918.

Nostalgic articles on Bessarabian past, intersected with praising Russian culture for its achievements, appeared in local press. 1937 Pushkin Jubilee logically stood as peak of solid amount of references on the poet in Bessarabian press[232], as a reaction on wide scope of celebrating of notable date. There took place public festivals, official service for the dead in local churches, sittings and round tables in number of cultural institutions. The main emphasis in rhetoric was made on years that Pushkin spent in Kishinev (elaboration of local colour of Bessarabia, Pushkin among gypsies, etc.) or universality of his poetic genius. National-tsaranist literary journal *Viaţa Basarabiei* dedicated a special issue on Pushkin. While discussing Pushkin's Moldovan experience, geographical term Bessarabia appeared quite rarely, but Moldova – it must have reduced regional imagery in favor of image of indivisible Moldovan principality, part of modern Romanian state from 1859. In general set of articles published in *Viaţa Basarabiei,* turned to be an argument in defence of 1918, thus using Pushkin's cult to justify political act of „unification". Local Moldovan population was proclaimed to be the most influential source of inspiration for Pushkin, while he was in Kishinev. The claim that Moldovans were organically closed to such great person of universal genius, as Pushkin, implied universality of Romanian culture. No term "exile" was included in texts, traditional for Pushkin scholars, but "transfer", that enriched poet's personality and saved him from demoralization in spoilt imperial capital. Idealized image of ethnic colour caused descriptions of the area as fertile Southern land, with which provincial charm Pushkin was truly in love. The poet's personal lines about the region, for instance, his notorious "The cursed city of Kishinev", which were used as the main trump by promoters of anti-Russian agenda, were intentionally ignored. Moreover, Pushkin was proclaimed to be propagandist of Romanian life in Russia, and even founder of such literary genre as

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232   See Irina Strelina, ed., *A.S. Puşkin şi Basarabia. Bibliografie* [A. Pushkin and Bessarabia. Bibliography (Chişinău, 1999).

Romanian historic legend (this claim was based on the assumption that, being in Kishinev, Pushkin wrote two novels, based on local legends, but these texts were lost). Influence of Moldovan (which meant Romanian in 1937) milieu was traced in numerous motives from Romanian folk tales, that occurred in Pushkin's works. But the most important implication of Pushkin's closeness to Moldovans consisted in rhetoric of freedom that the poet ardently upheld. Pushkin sympathizes with local peasants, who were not totally, living under foreign rule. It was impossible to make the desire for freedom true within the limits of empire for both, Pushkin and Moldova peasants (it is noteworthy that similar rhetoric was held in the Soviet Union during 1937 celebration, but with intention to promote the idea of people's freedom within the Union). Thus, Pushkin was announced to be promoter of the idea of unfairness of 1812 annexation and, therefore, of correctness and inevitability of Bessarabian incorporation into Romanian state, which was justified historically and now, additionally, by prophetic vision of great Pushkin.

Soviet press, in its turn, specifically reacted on cultural events in Chishinev and attempts to bring together Pushkin and Greater Romania. It was claimed about sufferings of Bessarabians under foreign Romanian rule, warm local response on Jubilee campaign was announced as display of aspiration for high Russian culture by locals in opposition to hate and fear of Romanian authorities towards Pushkin. It was claimed that influence on Pushkin by his Kishinev acquaintances was minimal, on the contrary, it was Russian genius, who seriously influenced Romanian literature and thus left Russian mark on whole modern Romanian literary legacy. This influence, in its turn, was presented as evidence of Russian cultural and general superiority over Romanians, which was nothing but an attempt to justify the Union's claims on Bessarabian region.

Iconoclasm – desire to get rid of Russian influence even visually – in 1937 by order of general Ciuperc inscription on a monument in central park made in Russian was scraped off. Later Soviet Pushkin scholar dramatized this scene claiming that soldiers were scratching Russian letters by bayonets, thus creating the image of military attack on defenseless peaceful poet[233].

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233   Ivan Injevatov, *Pushkin I Moldavskii Narod* [A. Pushkin and Moldovan People] (Kishinev, 1949), 114.

Conclusions

As it was proved in research chapters, both A. Pushkin and M. Eminescu shared the status of national poets for their areas and thus successfully performed several functions, the most important of them – to contribute given identities (class / state oriented in the Soviet union and national / ethnic oriented in Greater Romania); to justify political systems (in Romania by formula of "ethnic creativity").

Certain break in development of Pushkin's cult in comparison with cult's continuity in Romanian case was caused by ideological orientation of Soviet culture during 1920s and specific way of treating Russian nationalism. Political needs of the Bolshevik government implied the desire to compete Great Russian nationalism as oppressors in favor of promoting nationalism of "small" peoples. It was planned that by promoting national institutional forms, Soviet state would succeed in overcoming the threat of nationalism within the socialist state. Pushkin, being first of all representative of "classic", even traditional Russian culture, exponent of Russiannes, which in context of early Soviet state meant Russian imperial identity, ideological competitors of Soviet power. Obviously, such figure could not fit into this paradigm and was excluded from cultural pantheon till the middle of 1930s. Thus in research chapters was given explanation to total disdain of Pushkin in 1920s, that can't be compared with negation of his figure in 1860s under Pisareff's influence.

On the contrary, the cult of Eminescu found its logical development within the limits of newly formed nation-state. Traditionalist discourse in defining the essence of Romanian nation overlapped with Eminescu's own vision of Romanian nation, which supported his position in the pantheon of national heroes.

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Beginning from 1933, the attraction and effectiveness of *korenizatsia* started to go down, and new narrative in national politics was needed. It was found Russian cultural legacy functioned as "ethnic glue" for multiethnic state. Under this conditions number of historical personages were re-introduced in the canon during 1930s, being beforehand re-adjusted for current political and ideological trends. Late 1930s is fairly considered to be a peak of Pushkin's mass praising. 1935-7 – absolute core for shaping the image of Pushkin within the Soviet Union. Pushkin campaign produced the image of Pushkin as first among Russian poets, but simultaneously first Soviet poet. Later on this image experienced certain mutation, becoming more populist and acceptable for mass-appeal, which led to skits like S. Dovlatov's "the Sanctuary" in 1980s. It must be pointed out, though, that cultivation of Pushkin's image for mass-appeal went parallel to development of professional Pushkin studies, concentrated on philological, literary and aesthetic side of poet's creativity. So-called pushkinistika reached quite wide range of elaboration precisely in Soviet time. Still one must admit that even specific comprehensive literary studies played significant role in promoting ideological narrative. But without treating this issue historically, there is a certain risk to turn into simple enumeration of what happened during Anniversary festivities or try to explain it by quasi-mystical approach, such as "the necessity in Pushkin felt by national identity".

The same period of 1930s was characterized by proclaiming Eminescu as ideological predecessor of extreme rightist movements, which was supported by number of rightist-oriented intellectuals. Promotion of the image of Eminescu on of the basic pillars of solid long-standing Romanian cultural tradition can be considered as a counter-project.

The claim that images of illustrious personages, such as national poets, are in straight subjection to political motivation of state authorities can be confirmed by structural

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similarities in both mythologies' development. From late 1940s the image of Eminescu was considerably reshaped in order to meet ideological needs of Romanian Comminists as new dominant political force. The poet was claimed to be supporter of the idea of socialist state system, exponent of national aspirations of Romanian people, not as part of ethnic superiority, but as bearer of multiculturalism idea. This newly built image of Eminescu in 1940-50 and so on strikingly reminds Pushkin's image of late 1930s. There were included similar scenarios of promoting the idea of pro-communist Eminescu, including school curriculum, such narratives as "Eminescu and Stalin" and "Eminescu and working class" were common. For instance, in program on Romanian literature as school discipline for 8-11th grades, issued in 1952 were accurately indicated periods of poet's biography, when he carried away with socialistic ideas, that later found their expression in Eminescu lyrics[234]. Similar discourses can be found in Bessarabia, that was incorporated into the body of Soviet state system in 1940. From late 1940s rhetoric about Pushkin and Eminescu in local media would progress under the label of close spiritual and creative intimacy between two national genies, which much reflect relationships between "two friendly people". Due to temporal arrangement, Eminescu, who was born in 13 years of Pushkin's death, was proclaimed to acknowledge Pushkin as his spiritual mentor, there were also found certain poetic borrowings[235].

Striking resemblance of rhetoric while praising Pushkin and Eminescu can be explained by similar function in newly set up cultural pantheons, but with special emphasis on differently oriented identities (Soviet identity within the socialist state and Romanian national / ethnic identity).

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234   *Literatura Română*, programa pentru clasele VIII-XI. Bucure□ti, 1952. pp. 72.
235   See Wim P. van Meurs, *The Bessarabian Question in Communist Historiography: Nationalist and Communist Politics and History-writing* (New York: East European Monographs: Columbia University Press, 1994).

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